

# ON THE TRANSLATION OF CHINESE CULTURE-LOADED WORDS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DOMESTICATION AND FOREIGNIZATION

Culture-loaded words- also known as “lexical gap”—refers to that the information the words in the source language carried have no equivalents in the target language. And the characteristics of the culture-loaded words make it difficult to find the corresponding words and expressions in the target language in the process of their translation.

Meanwhile, while translating the culture-loaded words, there are commonly two strategies—“domestication” and “foreignization”. With the continuous improvement of China’s international status, the foreignization strategy, which renders Chinese culture as the end-result, will be more and more widely used in the translation of Chinese culture-loaded words.

This thesis respectively discusses the specific translation approaches under the guidance of “domestication” and “foreignization”. Both “domestication” and “foreignization” are indispensable in transcultural translation; needless to say, naturalized translation has its significance of existence; however, with the advent of globalization, as foreignization of Chinese culture-loaded words can not only accurately convey the meaning of the words, but also facilitate the spread of oriental culture,

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thus to achieve the maximum transmission of Chinese culture and to promote the mutual understanding and exchange between the east and west; so as a result, foreignization would be more and more widely accepted by the world.

In practice, we usually have two main methods of domestication. One is “Free Translation”, and the other is “Substitute method”. From Chinese to English translation, for example,

“静悄悄的缝鞋垫”

In this words, “缝” means “stitch, sew” and thus there is no equivalent word in English, so we, through applying the free translation method, translate the words into this:

“Remaining silent, grandmother was stitching a shoe sole.”

As for substitute method, I hereby quote another example: “雌老虎” “tigeress” in Chinese stands for courage, vitality and strength, and has the connotation of “shrew”, however, in English, “tigeress” doesn’t have such connotative meaning; this is called lexical gap or glossary vacancy, The phenomenon of lexical gap, a commonly encountered problem in cross-cultural communication, often causes trouble to translation in cross-cultural communication.

So in this case, we have “lioness” in English as an substitute for tigeress as it has the corresponding cultural connotation like “tigeress”.

However, although domestication is quintessential in Chinese-English translation, yet with the fast development of China, foreignization will definitely play a more and more important role in the translation as it helps to spread the Chinese traditional culture to the world and promote

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the equality of cultures.

Foreignization has several concrete methods either:

### 1. Transliteration

We take this method as we cannot find equivalents in English for the Chinese words, for example, 共产党-"Kuomintang", "民主党"- "malatang", "花旦"- "huadan" "喇嘛"- "lama", etc.

### 2. Transliteration plus annotation

“抽签” translate into :“zhuazhou, a child told by his/her parents to choose one thing among many others to show his/her future”.

### 3. Literal translation

Literal translation, as its name suggests, means to translate literally. For example:

“纸老虎” paper tiger

“鱼米之乡” a land of fish and rice

“三峡工程” the three gorges project

### 4. Literal translation plus annotation

This method can maintain the culture background. For example:

三个代表(Three Represents)(the Communist Party of China represents the trend of development of advanced production forces, the orientation of advanced culture, and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people in China)

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Some people have an iron rice bowl (a stable, lifelong job regardless of one's performance).

To conclude, translation is not a bilingual communication, moreover, it's a cross-culture communication. In order to bridge the language barriers and realize the information exchange of cross-culture, we can adopt the strategy of "giving priority to domestication while using domestication strategy as a supplementary". And with the enhancing cultural development and assimilation, this strategy will become more and more feasible.

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