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THE NEW ECONOMY PRINCIPLE OF SPEECH IN THE TRANSLATION OF MATERIAL CULTURE-
LOADED METAPHOR-WITH EXAMPLES FROM LIN YUTANG'S *MOMENT IN PEKING*

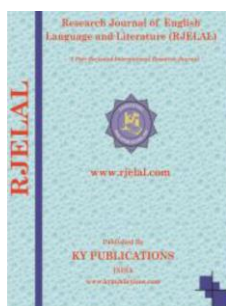
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ABSTRACT

Despite the discussion around the appropriate choice of translation strategy and techniques, this paper borrows Xiang Mingyou's theory of the New Economy Principle of Speech into the translation of the metaphors categorized into the material culture-loaded words and expression, which are named as material culture-loaded metaphors in this paper. To illustrate the guidance of the theory in pragmatic use, this paper analyzes metaphoric text excerpted from an English novel *Moment in Peking* composed by Lin Yutang, a world renowned Chinese writer. Though written in English, *Moment in Peking* is carried with many material culture-loaded metaphors, which have fixed corresponding referents in real world due to the special geographical, historical and ecological conditions unique to China. Pragmatically, the New Economy Principle of Speech is tested to be qualified to be applied in the translation of material culture-loaded metaphors to a broad degree to achieve the maximization of utility of speech.

Key words: the New Economy Principle of Speech, the material culture-loaded metaphors, metaphor translation, *Moment in Peking*

1. Introduction

As summoned by the Belt and Road Initiative and the call of "Chinese culture going global", China is becoming ever eager to introduce itself to the world for the purpose of peace. In the last decade, there have been an increasing number of studies focused on the translation of Chinese cultural works. One of the representatives is Lin Yutang's *Moment in Peking*, which provides a microscope of the Chinese society from the Box movement in 1901 to the beginning of anti-Japanese war.

To learn experience from the classic and its back-translation, scholars have borrowed many literary theories, such as the adaptation theory, reception aesthetics, cross-cultural perspective, relevance theory, for cultural interpretation and have concluded some concrete translation strategies, such as self-translation, transliteration, non-native language writing and textless back translation, and rootless back translation.

As for culture-loaded expressions and metaphors, there have been quite a lot of studies on each field but few saw the combination of culture-loaded metaphors. Targeted at the translation of

material culture-loaded metaphors, this paper skipped over the discussion of translation strategies and borrowed an economics theory of the New Economy Principle of Speech to provide some guiding principles in translating this narrow branch.

2. Literature Review

2.1. *Moment in Peking* and Its Author Lin Yutang

Eighty years ago, Lin Yutang had contributed his effort to introducing Chinese culture to the world by composing *Moment in Peking* and published it in 1939. Since publication, it caused a sensation among foreign readers whose impression of China was still rigidly set by the description in the *Travels of Marco Polo* and the corruptive and conservative ruling under the Qing Government. It turned out to be a great success and earned Lin the nominations for the Nobel Prize in literature in 1975. Having regained its esteem and prosperity eighty years later, China endeavors to introduce its culture to the world with an aim of solving international problems caused by cultural conflicts. In light of literary translation, it is worthy for translation studied to learn some experience from *Moment in Peking*.

As for the back translation of the novel, there has been study comprehensively analyzing the five translations (respectively by Bai Lin, Shen Chen, Zheng Tuo and Ying Yuanjie, Zhang Zhenyu, and Yu Fei) of it from the perspectives of translation strategies, structural level, syntactical level and lexical level. (Ye, 2015) This paper selected the version translated by Zhang Zhenyu under the title of "*Jinghuayanyun*" for the following reasons. First, the translator Zhang Zhenyu is a professional expert in both translation and translation study from Taiwan, who has published several academic works on translation theories, including *Principles of Translation*. Also, he has rich experience in translating Lin Yutang's literary works, among which "*Jinghuayanyun*" is the most well-known and popular one. Secondly, since the first press in 1977 by the Dehua Press, it has become the most circulated translation, which even earned credit from Lin Taiyi, the second daughter of Lin Yutang, who committed approval and recognition to Zhang's

translation. Lastly, it is the most circulated version in mainland China since it was introduced to the mainland in 1987 by Jilin Times Publishing House.

2.2 The Material Culture-Loaded Metaphor

The notion of material culture-loaded metaphor refers to a specified branch of material culture-loaded words and expression, which derived from applying Nida's identification of the five major elements of culture into the study of culture-loaded words and expression. (Yang, 2014) In *Toward a Science of Translating*, Nida identifies five major elements of culture, namely, material, social, religious, linguistic, and esthetic elements (Nida, 1964:55). As an inseparable part of culture, Yang (2014) held that language is culture-loaded and should also consist of the five parts. To be specific, Yang listed four categorizations in pragmatic use, which are material culture-loaded words and expressions, social culture-loaded words and expressions, religious culture-loaded words and expressions and linguistic culture-loaded words and expressions. (Yang, 2014) Material Culture-Loaded Words and Expressions have fixed corresponding referents in real world due to special geographical, historical and ecological condition. However, Yang concluded the five transition techniques to deal with these categorized culture-loaded words and expression but provided little exemplary analysis to prove the pragmatic function of the categorization due to a lack of time and energy. Therefore, this paper functions as a supplementary analysis of the material culture-loaded words and expression, or metaphors to be specific, with the New Economy Principle of Speech.

As some study denotes, the study on the corpus of metaphor will focus on its cultural perspective in the future. (Xue & Xiang, 2018) Hopefully, this paper will contribute to it from the narrow perspective of material culture-loaded metaphors.

2.3 The New Economy Principle of Speech

The New Economy Principle of Speech is a renovation of the traditional economy principle of speech, which was proposed against redundancy to express the main idea in a quick and easy way from

the perspectives of phonology and syntax. Xiang (2002) deemed that economy of speech should be the maximization of utility of speech through optimal distribution of linguistic resources. After thorough understanding of the rules governing the distribution of speech, he formulated a new economy principle consisting of five maxims: the maxim of general equilibrium, the maxim of common premises, the maxim of satisfaction adequacy, the maxim of conformity and the maxim of the effectiveness of speech. The New Economy Principle of Speech is introduced into the study on translation for its goal of achieving the maximization of utility of speech between the addresser and recipient whose relationship is similar to that of translator and reader. There also exists an imagined communication between translator and reader within the translator's mind. To maximize the utility of translation, translator also needs to take into full consideration the reader's requirements and to optimize the distribution of linguistic resources to fulfill their requirements. Meanwhile, the New Economy Principle of Speech itself also has some flaws needed improving. It plays a role in explaining langue and parole but it is not applicable for every phenomenon but comparatively useful in certain cases. (Hu, 2010)

3. The New Economy Principle of Speech

The new economy principle of speech consists of five maxims, that is, the maxim of general equilibrium, the maxim of common premises, the maxim of satisfaction adequacy, the maxim of conformity and the maxim of the effectiveness of speech. (Xiang, 2002)

According to the maxim of general equilibrium, the addresser's verbal input should match the recipient's psychological needs, which are under the potential influence of factors such as the shared experiences, intensity of communicative motivation, the degree of profit or loss to the recipient, and the status between addresser and recipient with regard to their rights, authority, power and social distance (surplus, deficit or equilibrium).

Another closely relevant principle is the maxim of common premises, which denotes that the

presuppositions of the speech should be known to both addresser and recipient. In this case, it requires addresser to make a prediction of recipient's experience. If the prediction is matched with the pragmatic situation, the verbal input will sufficiently meet the recipient's requirement. Otherwise, there will be communication obstruction.

The next maxim of satisfaction adequacy requires the addresser, who plays the role of the actor of the speech event and the operator of the distribution of resource, to avoid the self-centered orientation and to take full consideration of the recipient's satisfaction adequacy. It is aimed to accord with the least effort principle on the premise of avoiding communication block or error.

The maxim of the effectiveness of speech focuses on speech utility instead of speech effect. It defines speech utility as message carrier that helps adjust the interrelationship between addresser and recipient. Speech utility is aimed to improve the recipient's psychological states to the degree that they are ready to conduct the speech act willingly. However, whether the speech act can be fulfilled, which belongs to the range of speech effect, is restricted to the difficulty of the speech act and the recipient's competence.

The fifth maxim of conformity suggests that one be bound to observe the cultural definition of morality, believes, values and norms, such as the incompatibility between superiors and inferiors, true and false, beauty and ugliness and so on. Meanwhile, one is also under the charge of social conventions and language structures

All the five maxims are interdependent and intertwined to distribute linguistic resources with the purpose of the maximization of utility of speech. With conformity, addresser tends to estimate the verbal input and the recipient's psychological needs to achieve general equilibrium by taking into considerations like some potential factors, common premises, and the recipient's satisfaction adequacy. In the end, speech utility can be tested by the maxim of the effectiveness of speech.

4. Exemplary Analysis Through the New Economy Principle of Speech

The following text from *Moment in Peking* will be chosen and analyzed with the new economy principle of speech. The translation of culture-loaded metaphors in this paragraph well illustrates how five maxims are integrated in the target language and make the reader better understand the source language in the cultural context.

Original text:

... (the Boxer) who had grown in power and popularity and swarmed over the countryside... They roamed the street, hunting and killing "First Hairies" and "Second and Third Hairies." The "First Hairies" were the foreigners; the "Second and Third Hairies" were the Christians, clerks in foreign firms, and any other English-speaking Chinese... The city was truly more in the hands of the Boxers than of the government... If Peking was in a state of pandemonium, Tienstin was in a state of hell...

— — *Moment in Peking* By Lin Yutang

Translation :

那时义和团势力日盛，渐得人心，在乡间聚众滋蔓，势不可侮.....他们各处游荡，寻找“大毛子”、“二毛子”、“三毛子”，全部予以杀害。“大毛子”是指洋人，“二毛子”“三毛子”指信教的，在洋行做事的，以及说英语的中国人.....北京城与其说是仍在朝廷手里，莫如说是遭受了拳徒的控制.....因为北京是个修罗场，天津就是个大地狱.....

— — *Jinghuayanyun* Zhang Zhenyu Trans

4.1 Analysis from the maxim of conformity

Before translating, translator is required to observe the cultural definition of morality, believes, values and norms from the maxim of conformity, such as the incompatibility between superiors and inferiors, true and false, beauty and ugliness and so on. Meanwhile, translator is also under the charge of social conventions and language structures. With regard to the back-translation of *Moment in Peking*, translator is also responsible for the truthful

depiction of the historic event without breaking Chinese conventions. As for the translation of the above citation, it concerns the historical background at the beginning of the 20th century when China was deeply trapped in both national conflicts and foreign invasion. To translate it in a responsible and just way, the translator needs to do a basic research of the historical facts at that time in order to convey the historical information within the citation.

The Boxers Movement only lasted for a short period from the autumn of 1899 to September 1900. However, the short-lived movement was complicated in terms of its organization, purposes, and the deeds they committed. There is no claim but some rumors about the origin of the primitive Boxers. One thing for sure is that the organization of these Boxers was loose due to the fact that anyone could join in it regardless of their social classes, gender or any other aspects. Moreover, there were divisions of official or non-official organizations. The former were recruited and paid by the Qing Government for their services and loyalty, while the later were much loosely organized with barely any limitation on membership. By the way, some non-official organizations would be squashed by the Qing Government for their rebellion or misdeeds. Thereof, the Boxers mentioned in the above citation should come from the non-official organization, which featured setting altars and bullying both Chinese and foreigners.

With regard to the maxim of conformity, the translator is bound to observe the cultural definition of morality, believes, values and norms, such as the incompatibility between superiors and inferiors, true and false, and so on. In this case, the overall Boxers shouldn't be judged only by the non-official ones who committed misdeeds. It is responsible for the translator to distinguish the official ones from other violent bullies that claimed themselves Boxers.

4.2 Analysis from the maxim of general equilibrium

As signified in the maxim of general equilibrium, many influential factors are also shown within the context including intensity of communicative motivation and the degree of profit

or loss to the recipient and the status between the addresser and recipient with regard to their rights, authority, power and social distance. More or less, the obviously negative calls also revealed the superior status of the Boxers in rights, authority, power and social distance integrated as well as the loss of the recipient. Therefore, to make up for the loss of the recipient and to achieve the equilibrium between the addresser and the recipient, the addresser used some words and expression to show his potentially negative judgment toward the movement such as “swarmed”, “roamed” and the added information that “if Peking was in a state of pandemonium, Tienstin was in a state of hell”. In this way, the loss burdened by the recipient is able to be reduced in a way close to the target culture, such as “pandemonium” and “hell”.

In the back-translation, Zhang basically preserved the author's way of dealing with the general equilibrium between the addresser and the recipient. The translation covers both the historical calls and their referents but makes no division between the the “Second and Third Hairies” and blends them together as the original text did, which lacks consideration of the targeted Chinese readers' intensity of communicative motivation. In light of the Chinese readers' strong communicative motivation, it is better to modify the original text and provide a clear explanation of these categories by adding some truthful information.

4.3 Analysis from the maxim of common premises

The material culture-loaded metaphors here are “Boxer”, “First Hairies”, “Second and Third Hairies”, “pandemonium” and “hell”, which have fixed corresponding referents in real world due to special geographical, historical and ecological condition. This excerpt mainly describes a historical peasant movement happening in China of the late Qing Dynasty from 1899 to 1900. In the movement, a group of non-official Boxers claimed to be invulnerable to gun shots and bullied both foreigners and Chinese by a set of special fist position, which was similar to boxing in form but distinctively different from the sports of boxing in essence.

Considering the special event, it should be considered whether addresser and recipient share the common premise or how much they share it. This Boxer movement was complicated and it actually went through two stages with distinct purposes. In the early stage, it was a civil war aroused by national conflicts between the ruling Manchus and the ruled Han people. It was initiated by some covert groups in Shandong and Hebei province with the aim of overturning the Qing Government. In the later stage, however, after a series of imperial threats, the Boxers joined hands with the Qing Government to fight against the foreign invaders during the Siege of the International Legations in 1900, despite that the joint ally between Boxers and Qing Government were caused more by interest than by patriotism. Thereof, it can be deducted that the description should be located in the later stage of the Box movement. This kind of phenomenon may leave to English readers an impression that the Boxers are some kind of extreme patriots who loathed not only evaders but also any Chinese suspiciously committing the crime of treason.

For English readers, their psychological need while reading *Moment in Peking* is limited to the abuses imposed by Boxers on both Chinese and foreigners in China. In light of its back-translation, Zhang basically literally translated the original text without any organizations, leaving the Chinese readers in confusion about what is the division between “Second and Third Hairies”. In fact, the two calls all referred to Chinese, but the former signified Chinese people who believed in Christianity or Catholicism while the later denoted the Chinese who spoke foreign language, received foreign education or bought foreign products. It is necessary for translator to dig out the historic facts and provide a more clear explanation for target Chinese readers.

4.4 Analysis from the maxim of satisfaction adequacy

According to the maxim of satisfaction adequacy, addresser is required to consider the recipient's requirement and from the perspectives of the four factors mentioned above. First, the

addresser should predict whether the recipient possesses the shared experiences and presuppositions needed for understanding. Considering the publish time of the book, that is, in 1939, it was a special time node when China was deeply endangered by the Japanese invaders and the European continent was invaded by the German Nazis and the Second World War broke out in full swing. Judging by the historical background, that the addresser started the book with retrieving the 1899-1900 peasant movement in China may function in many ways. It not only reminded the readers at that time of invasion itself, both in the past and at present, but also brought their attention back to the real situation of China. In this way, it was based on the prediction that the English readers had little experiences of Chinese culture and the reality of China so that it tried to preserve any detailed information with the adaption of both foreignization and domestication. For example, the contemplative calls coined by the Boxers such as “大毛子”、“二毛子”、“三毛子” were preserved literally as “First Hairies” and “Second and Third Hairies”. However, with the prediction that the English readers had no presuppositions of these calls, Lin added some explanation closely after these calls—“The ‘First Hairies’ were the foreigners ; the ‘Second and Third Hairies’ were the Christians, clerks in foreign firms, and any other English-speaking Chinese”.

Similar to Lin’s situation, Zhang finished the translation of *Moment in Peking* in 1961, more than twenty years later after the publishment of the novel and nearly sixty years later since the happening of the Boxer Movement. At that time, commonly speaking, the target Chinese readers possess as little detailed information about the historic event as English readers at the publish time did. Therefore, it is also needed in back-translation to provide some clear explanation of the details of the historic event on the presupposition that the target Chinese readers hold little information and details about the Boxer Movement.

4.5 Analysis from the maxim of the effectiveness of speech

Finally, we can test the speech utility of the excerpt through the maxim of the effectiveness of

speech. From the perspective of recipient’s psychological states, it can be deducted from the hot sale and wide circulation of *Moment in Peking* that addresser successfully led the English readers accept it willingly. Moreover, the value of this novel also won the Nobel Board’s recognition by receiving the nomination of the Nobel Prize in literature in 1975. In light of the interrelationship between addresser and recipient, Lin always held the life attitude that “两脚踏中西文化，一心评宇宙文章”，which literally means one mind seeks the learning of ancients and moderns; two legs straddle the cultures of East and West. So he noted in preface that “This novel is neither an apology for contemporary Chinese life nor an expose of it...It is neither a glorification of the old way of life nor a defense of the new. It is merely a story of how men and women in the contemporary era grow up and learn to live with one another.” In doing so, he built a harmonious relationship with the recipients.

As for Zhang’s back –translation to the novel, Zhang basically transferred Lin’s original work literally without digging more detailed information about the historical facts, leaving the targeted Chinese readers an impression that all the Boxers were patriots in appearance and irrational bullies in essence. In this way, the translator and the targeted Chinese readers reach a consensus that the Boxers Movement was negative, which was a partial judgment against the truth. To some degree, the translator successfully achieves the speech utility that enables the targeted Chinese readers’ psychological states to the degree that they are ready to recognize the misdeeds conducted by some Boxers, but it is necessary to note that such phenomenon is just part of the historical events and to make a clear division between the official and non-official Boxers. To be more exactly, the translator needs to be responsible for the targeted Chinese readers on the basis of full comprehension of the Boxers Movement mentioned in the original text, or at least the translator should engage the targeted Chinese readers to get ready psychologically to know that this bully phenomenon is only part of the Boxers Movement and they can explore the detailed facts about the event on their own.

5. Conclusion

This paper found the coincidence between the New Economy Principle of Speech and the patterns showed in Lin's work. By analyzing a representative excerpt from *Moment in Peking*, it was proved that the New Economy Principle of Speech is pragmatically qualified to be applied in the translation of material culture-loaded metaphors to a broad degree to achieve the maximization of utility of speech. The translation of material culture-loaded metaphors follows the pattern of the New Economy Principle in three steps. First, the addresser should follow the maxim of conformity before starting to translate. With conformity of the general accepted norms and values and many other social agreement, it can be guaranteed that the translation will be accepted by the target readers. Secondly, addresser should observe the principle of the maxim of general equilibrium, the maxim of common premises and the maxim of satisfaction adequacy while distributing linguistic resources to achieve the purpose of the maximization of utility of speech. In the final step, the maxim of the effectiveness of speech helps exam the speech utility of the translation.

However, despite all the discoveries mentioned above, there is still room to explore the application of the New Economy Principle in the translation of other culture-loaded words and expression, much more than the material culture-loaded metaphors. Hopefully, this paper would contribute to the study on the corpus of metaphor from the narrow perspective of material culture-loaded metaphors.

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