

A Study on Translation Variation Strategies of Culture-loaded Expressions in 2022 Government Work Report

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Abstract— Culture-loaded expressions in the 2022 Chinese Government Work Report refer to words or phrases that represent concepts and objects specific to Chinese culture, embodying rich national and regional characteristics. Their translation is crucial for literary translation and cultural communication. This thesis examines 2022 Chinese Government Work Report and its English translation to explore translation strategies for culture-loaded expressions. Following a thorough review and analysis, the following three key findings emerged: First, the 2022 Chinese Government Work Report contains 44 culture-loaded expressions, categorized into four groups: ecological words (1), social words (15), material words (4), and linguistic words (24). Second, the thesis identifies four primary translation strategies employed for culture-loaded expressions: rewording translation, omission, explanatory translation, and translation and writing. Third, the translation variation strategies mainly serve three functions: meeting readers' specific needs, adapting the translation to the target audience's cultural context; reflecting the translator's creativity, demonstrating the translator's ability to convey cultural nuances effectively; and highlighting the values of the original text, preserving the cultural significance and values embedded in the original language.

Keywords— 2022 Government Work Report; Translation Variation Strategies; Culture-loaded expressions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Translation Variation Strategies have been employed in the translation of culture-loaded expressions in various literature masterpiece, including *The Republic of Wine*, one of Mo Yan's most significant works; *The Evolution of Zhuang's Economic Life and Gender Division of Labor*, *Gender Equality of the Zhuang*; *Hong Lou Meng*, known as the encyclopedia of Chinese feudal society and a key player in the dissemination of Chinese culture; *Business Chinese Reading Course of Commercial Cases*. In these studies, diverse translation variants have enhanced the translation's effectiveness, catering to the target language readers' needs and facilitating cultural exchange and dissemination.

However, limitations exist in these studies, such as incomplete analyses of all culture-loaded expressions. Therefore, this thesis innovates in two ways: choice of Government Work Report, by selecting a government report instead of a literary masterpiece, this thesis fills a research gap; detailed analysis of culture-loaded expressions, a comprehensive analysis of each category of culture-loaded expressions provides a deeper understanding of political materials, enabling new discoveries and enhancing the global comprehension of Chinese culture.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recently, more and more researchers have known the importance of culture-loaded words, whose translation has become a hot spot in translated literature studies.

In domestic studies, Hu Wenzhong (1999) distinguishes culture-loaded words from non-culture-loaded words, and believed that culture-loaded words carry national cultural information and reflect the profound national culture. Zhang Hongyan (2000) shows that culture-loaded words are the product of the influence and restriction of a nation's material culture, system custom culture and spiritual culture on its language vocabulary system. Bao Huinan (2001) points out that every country and nation has its own unique development history, social system, ecological environment, religious belief, national customs, etc., so every language is specific. Gan Lin(2022) adopted the literature research method, case study method, parallel text contrast research method, and data analysis method to study the culture-loaded expressions. Ning Qianmei (2023) adopts Professor Huang Zhonglian's Translation Variation Theory as a guide to deal with the difficulties in translation at three levels: words, sentences, and discourse. Zhang Chipeng(2023) studies the interpretation of translation strategies of culture-loaded words from the perspective of cultural "going out" with *The Governance of China* (III).

In foreign studies, J.F Aixela (1996) gave his views on culture-loaded expressions: “Some items appearing in the source text do not have the same item in the target reader’s cultural system or these items are different from the text status in the target reader’s cultural system”. Mona Baker (2000) showed that “Source-language words can express a concept that is completely unknown in the target culture. The concepts discussed can be abstract or concrete. It may involve religious beliefs, social customs, or types of food. These concepts are often referred to as ‘culture-specific’.

III. THEORETICAL BASIS

Professor Huang Zhonglian firstly put forward the concept of “adaptation” in Study on Translation Variation in 1999. Then in 2000, he put forward the Translation Variation Theory (TVT) to explain the changes in translation. Translation Variation Theory, as a new theory, is proposed on the basis of a large number of translation practices. It can not only cater to the needs of information exchange at home and abroad but also provide a new perspective for the study of translation theory in China. After two decades, TVT has developed into a systematic and practical theory, which is recognized by many translation scholars and adopted by various fields.

Variation theory puts forward seven adaptation techniques to guide the translation process, namely, Addition, Edition, Omission, Narration, Combination, Condensation, and Adaptation. According to Huang’s theory, the seven techniques all have their own special effects and values, which are the key to the success of high-quality translation. What’s more, translation variation theory is reader-oriented, and the original information can be conveyed to the target readers in an effective way through various variation translation skills.

In this thesis, there are mainly four variation translation strategies: rewording, omission, explanatory translation, and translation and writing. First, rewording translation refers to the translation method of changing the form or part of the content and even the style of the original text according to specific requirements. Second, omission refers to the translation variation method of selecting the

main content or the content that the reader is interested in of the original text to translate. Third, explanatory translation refers to the translation method of explaining the words, sentences, and even passages in the original text for readers to understand. The explanatory translation method is used in the following three ways: explaining nouns that are not similar to readers, explaining the semantic meaning, and explaining the allusion. Fourth, the translation and writing method refers to translating all or part of the content of the original text with comments, explanations, and expanding contents. There are mainly three methods of writing: add information, comment on the content of the translation, and explain the content of the translation. As we mentioned before, explanatory translation also means adding information in translation. But there are differences between the explanatory translation method and the translation and writing method. The main difference between them is that the explanatory translation method usually adds information closely related to the original text, while translation and writing usually add information more related to the translator’s creation than the original text. Translation and writing shows the translator’s creative translation.

IV. CLASSIFICATION OF THE CULTURE-LOADED EXPRESSIONS

Based on Nada’s classification of culture into five categories, which are ecological culture-loaded expressions, material culture-loaded expressions, social culture-loaded expressions, religious culture-loaded expressions, and linguistic culture-loaded expressions. In 2022 Government Work Report, there is no religious culture-loaded expressions. The author collected and categorized the total number of 44 major culture-loaded expressions, including 1 ecological culture-loaded expression, 4 material culture-loaded expressions, 15 social culture-loaded expressions, and 24 linguistic culture-loaded expressions. In the process of collecting culture-loaded expressions, this thesis mainly uses a parallel text contrast research method to collect and categorize culture-loaded expressions based on an understanding of definitions and categories of culture-loaded expressions. In Table 1, there are four categories of culture-loaded expressions in 2022 Government Work Report.

Table 1. Classification of Culture-loaded Expressions in 2022 Government Work Report

Categories	Amount	Proportion
ecological culture-loaded expression	1	2%
material culture-loaded expressions	4	9%

social culture-loaded expressions	15	34%
linguistic culture-loaded expressions	24	55%
Total	44	100%

First, the ecological culture-loaded expression is 蓝天、碧水、净土保卫战.

Second, the material culture-loaded expressions are 堵点, 饭碗, 炒, 压实.

Third, the social culture-loaded expressions are 全国政协委员, “一刀切”, 运动式, 经济大盘, 紧日子, 精准拆弹, 挺得住、过难关、有奔头, 一技之长, 三百六十行, 先立后破,

通盘谋划, 千家万户, 人民公仆, “四风”, 推诿扯皮.

Fourth, the linguistic culture-loaded expressions are 雪中送炭, “十四五”规划, “放管服”, “一带一路”, “六稳”, “六保”, “放水养鱼”, 帮扶县, 扫黑除恶, 稳中求进, 爬坡过坎, 共克时艰, 行稳致远, 兜住兜牢, 稳字当头

, 粗放型, 因地制宜, 占大头, 双创, “专精特新”, “非农化”, 全民健身蔚然成风, “九二共识”, “台独”.

According to the collection and categorization, we can get the conclusion that linguistic and social culture-loaded expressions are the most, which is rational, because the data is from Government Work Report. As we all know, Government Work Report is to mainly reflect people’s live and country’s economy. So there should be most social culture-loaded expressions to reflect the society and a lot of linguistic culture-loaded expressions to serve for common people.

V. TRANSLATION VARIATION STRATEGIES OF THE CULTURE-LOADED EXPRESSIONS

In 2022 Government Work Report, there are four mainly strategies when translating the culture-loaded expressions. In Table 2, the strategies are showed clearly.

Table 2. Strategies for the Culture-loaded Expressions

Categories	Strategies			
	rewording translation	omission	explanatory translation	translation & writing
ecological		1		
material			4	
social	1	2	12	
linguistic	1	1	20	2
Total	2	4	36	2

First, the ecological culture-loaded expression is “巩固蓝天、碧水、净土保卫战成果”, which is translated as “keeping the skies blue, waters clear, and land pollution-free”. Therefore “保卫战” is omitted in translation to make the meaning clearer to English speaker, and this meets with the principle of information fidelity.

Second, there are four material culture-loaded expressions. No 1 is “突破供给约束堵点”, which is translated as “eliminate the bottlenecks”. No 2 is “饭碗牢牢端在自己手中”, which is translated as “a secure food supply”. No 3 is “房子是用来住的、不是用来炒”, which is translated as “houses are for living in, not for speculation”. No 4 is “压实地方属地责任”, which is translated as “local governments fulfill their responsibilities”. All of the four expressions are

translated by the strategy of explanatory translation, because this can help English speakers easy to understand. Third, there are 15 social culture-loaded expressions. No 1 is “千家万户”, which is translated as “millions of families”. This is the method of rewording translation, just like to translate “千万家户”. No 2 is “着力稳定宏观经济大盘”, which is translated as “strive to maintain stable macroeconomic performance”. So “大盘” is omitted. No 3 is “掌握一技之长”, which is translated as “acquire marketable skills”. So the skills can make the meaning clear enough. And the following social culture-loaded expressions in Table 3 are translated by the method of explanatory translation. They are explained in the translation to achieve the goal of being clear to the readers.

Table 3. 12 Social Culture-loaded Expressions Expressions

Source Text	Translation
全国政协委员	the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)
“一刀切”	one-size-fits-all
运动式	campaign-style approaches
过紧日子	keep its belt tightened
精准拆弹	defusing risks through targeted efforts
通盘谋划	overall planning
支持这些行业企业挺得住、过难关、有奔头	stay afloat and get through challenging times with bright prospects
让三百六十行行行人才辈出	large numbers of talented people to come to the fore in all sectors
先立后破	establishing the new before abolishing the old
无愧于人民公仆称号	and truly serve as public servants of the people
驰而不息纠治“四风”	work ceaselessly to oppose pointless formalities, bureaucratism, hedonism and extravagance
推诿扯皮	buck passing in government

Fourth, there are 25 linguistic culture-loaded expressions. No. 1 is “促进全民健身蔚然成风”, which is translated as “promote extensive public fitness activities”. Therefore, “蔚然成风” is omitted. No. 2 is “社会政策要兜住兜牢民生底线”, which is translated as “social policies should meet basic living needs”, and this is the rewording strategy. No. 3 is “六稳” and No. 4 is “六保”, whose translation are “stability on six key fronts” and “security in six key areas,* (* The six fronts refer to

employment, the financial sector, foreign trade, foreign investment, domestic investment, and expectations. The six areas refer to job security, basic living needs, operations of market entities, food and energy security, stable industrial and supply chains, and the normal functioning of primary-level governments.)” So, they are translating the expression with explanation through adding information. And the next 20 linguistic culture-loaded expressions are in table 4, which are translated by the method of explanatory translation.

Table 4. 20 Linguistic Culture-loaded Expressions

Source text	Translation
雪中送炭	timely assistance
“十四五”	the 14th Five-Year Plan
“放管服”	delegate power, improve regulation, and upgrade services
“一带一路”	The Belt and Road Initiative
“台独”	“Taiwan independence”
“放水养鱼”	nurture business growth
帮扶县	counties to receive assistance
扫黑除恶	crack down on organized crime and root out local criminal gangs on an ongoing basis
稳中求进	pursuing progress while ensuring stability
爬坡过坎	keep pushing to overcome them
共克时艰	overcome all difficulties together
行稳致远	overcome all difficulties together
稳字当头	make economic stability our top priority
粗放型发展	extensive development model
因地制宜	in light of actual conditions and motivate all stakeholders to pursue development endeavors

占大头	the lion's share
双创	entrepreneurship and innovation
“专精特新”	specialized and sophisticated enterprises that produce new and unique products
“非农化”	use cropland for any purpose other than agriculture
“九二共识”	the 1992 Consensus

As we all know, loyalty is a prerequisite, but readers must also be the center. Since the target text readers have different cultural backgrounds from the original text, the special needs of the target text reader should be considered.

VI. CONCLUSION

This thesis investigates the translation strategies employed for culture-loaded expressions in the 2022 Government Work Report, drawing upon Translation Variation Theory.

This study identifies the quantify, distribution and categories of culture-loaded expressions in the report. Besides. It also analyzes the translation strategies used to render these expressions.

In the 2022 Government Work Report, social and linguistic culture-loaded expressions are the most prevalent. This reflects the report's focus on societal well-being and the fact that the target audience is primarily Chinese, resulting in the use of Chinese idioms. Consequently, the most frequently employed translation strategy is explanatory translation, which aims to enhance comprehension for readers from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Future research may explore the use of computer assistance to collect and categorize culture-loaded expressions, enabling the analysis of larger datasets. This technological advancement could further enhance our understanding of translation strategies and cultural exchange.

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