



Translation of Personal Address in *Peach Blossom Paradise*

LI Lijun^{[a],*}; BAI Yongju^[b]

^[a]Associated Professor, Foreign Languages School, North China Electric Power University, Beijing, China.

^[b]Postgraduate, Foreign Languages School, North China Electric Power University, Beijing, China.

* Corresponding author.

Received 2 March 2022; accepted 4 May 2022
 Published online 26 June 2022

Abstract

As a literary masterpiece, *Peach Blossom Paradise* has a variety of characters, whose personal address fully reflects the complex interpersonal relationship and diverse characters' characteristics. This paper uses quantitative research methods to classify personal address in *Peach Blossom Paradise* into three categories: name address, personal address and kinship address, and sorts out the translation methods of each type of those personal address. The paper uses Nida Eugene's functional equivalence theory to explore the rationale for the use of each translation method, so we can get the inspiration from it. Through data analysis, it is found that in the translation of personal address the translator employed a variety of translation methods, among which literal translation, free translation, transliteration and variation translation are the most commonly used, and recreation and omission are the supplements, thus achieving maximum equivalence to make the target reader understand the source text as well as the original reader of the text.

Key words: Personal address; Functional equivalence; Translation method; *Peach Blossom Paradise*

Li, L. J., & Bai, Y. J. (2022). Translation of Personal Address in *Peach Blossom Paradise*. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 24(3), 1-6. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/12603>
 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/12603>

1. INTRODUCTION

Peach Blossom Paradise, as a Chinese literary classic that won Mao Dun Literature Prize, has many characters and various personal address, and its personal address has also best reflected the characteristics of Chinese local culture. These characteristics have also become one of the main obstacles in the translation process. The translator's clever treatment in the translation of personal address is an essential factor that makes it nominate for the American National Book Award for translated literature in 2021, which is the first time that Chinese literature has participated in the competition for this award. However, no scholar has discussed this important translation issue in *Peach Blossom Paradise*.

This paper, based on Cao Wei's classification of personal address, discusses the translation methods used in *Peach Blossom Paradise* under the guidance of Nida Eugene's theory of functional equivalence to analyze the use of each translation method. By discussing the translation methods of personal address used in *Peach Blossom Paradise*, we can provide some suggestion for the translation of personal address, so that we can get some inspiration from it.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Chinese appellation is a complex vocabulary system, which is well reflected in *Peach Blossom Paradise*. The translation of personal appellations has always been a major problem in the translation field, and there are currently few literature studies on personal address in *Peach Blossom Paradise*.

2.1 Studies About Personal Address

In recent years, there are still many scholars who have studied personal address from different perspectives:

Zhang Yuting (2016) analyzed ancient Chinese from the perspective of semantics, studying modern Chinese three stages of spouse appellation, clarifying the historical context of the evolution of the spouse appellation system from ancient to modern. Wan Xiaoshuang (2018) firstly described the Guangshui dialect kinship language system in detail from the perspective of dialect, and then compared the Guangshui dialect and Ningguo Hubei dialect kinship language system. Liu Hao (2019) conducted a questionnaire survey from the aspect of language teaching, and proposed that there are repetitions in the compilation of social appellations in *Chinese Course*.

2.2 Studies of the Translation of *Peach Blossom Paradise*

So far, there is only one English version of *Peach Blossom Paradise* on the market which was published by NY Review of Books in 2020, and the translator is Canaan Morse. There are few studies on this translation in China, and it can only be found that Li Mengyu (2021) focused on narrative focus and narrative discourse to explore some deviations between the source text and the target text in terms of focalizations and speech presentation modes.

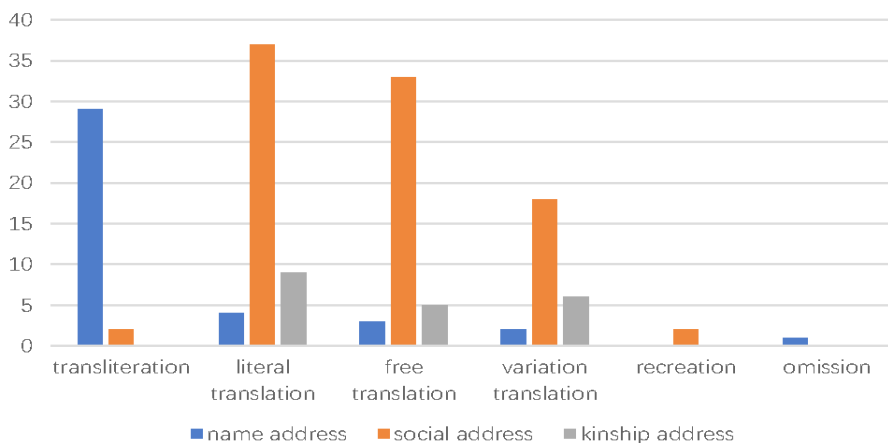


Figure 1
Personal Address Translation in *Peach Blossom Paradise*

In *Peach Blossom Paradise*, there are 17 kinship address, 93 social address, and 40 name address, a total of 150 personal address. Through data analysis, it is found that Canaan Morse mainly adopts the methods of literal translation (33%), free translation (27%), transliteration (21%), and variation translation (17%), and a small part adopts the methods of recreation (1%) and omission (1%). Based on specific data, this paper attempts to analyze the detailed characteristics of each translation method and is illustrated as follows:

4.1 Translation of Name Address

As a carrier of culture, name reflects rich cultural connotation. Names are a cultural phenomenon shared

3. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

American translation theorist Nida put forward the theory of functional equivalence in the 1970s. He put forward four standards for translation: 1) to convey information; 2) to convey the spirit and style of the original; 3) the language is smooth and natural in line with the norms and conventions of the target language; 4) the readers reflect the similarities. In order to achieve these four standards, there will inevitably be some conflicts that are difficult to reconcile between content and form. Nida argues that form should give way to content, because translators should seek equivalence rather than identity, that is, to emphasize the reproduction of the original language information without insisting on preserving its form of expression. This paper, based on Nida's functional equivalence, analyzes the translation method of personal address in *Peach Blossom Paradise*.

4. THE STATISTICAL RESULTS OF TRANSLATION METHODS

Based on Ge Fei's original book *Peach Blossom Paradise*, this paper first conducts a quantitative study on the personal address, marks the translation method after each translation, and uses WORD and EXCEL to calculate various data (see Figure 1).

by all ethnic groups in China and the West. However, due to differences in their cultural and historical backgrounds, religions, and ways of thinking, the differences in name culture are also relatively large. In literary creation, name not only has address function, but also has the literary function of portraying characters and expressing the theme of works. From the data in Figure 2, it can be seen that translators use various translation methods when translating name address, but in most cases, transliteration is used, accounting for 74%, literal translation accounting for 10%, and free translation accounting for 8%, variation translation accounts for 5%, omission accounts for 3%.

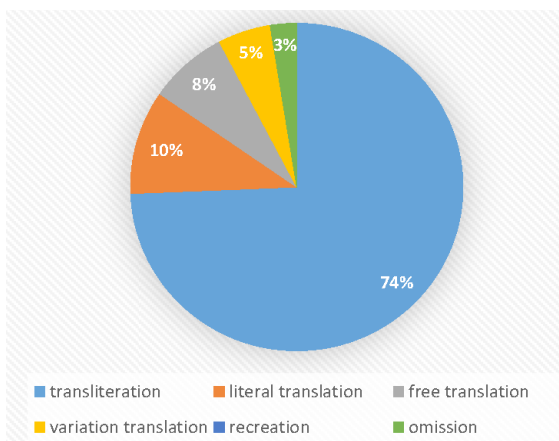


Figure 2
Translation Methods Used in Name Address

4.1.1 Transliteration

In the translation of *Peach Blossom Paradise*, most names are transliterated, accounting for 74%. Transliteration can preserve Chinese culture to the greatest extent, but transliteration can only express pronunciation characteristics and naming conventions, and realize the function of appellation, but it cannot realize the literary function like free translation.

Example 1:

宝琛	Baoshen
王七蛋	Wang Qidan
王八蛋	Wang Badan
秀米	Xiumi
梁红玉	Liang Hongyu
丁树则	Ding Shuze
唐六师	Tang Liushi
谭水金	Tan Shuijin
高彩霞	Gao Caixia
谭四	Tan Si

Transliteration is used when the translator lack literary context. It is also sometimes difficult for Chinese people to guess the true intention of the original author to name the characters, so the transliteration method is sometimes the best choice to avoid some unnecessary semantic problems. In the translation of such names, the translator has adopted the method of transliteration. Even in the original text, the names of these people have no special metaphorical meaning, so the translator chooses transliteration here is the best option.

4.1.2 Literal Translation

Literal translation is the second most used method in name address translation, accounting for 10%.

Example 2:

翠莲	Lilypad
喜鹊	Magpie
老虎	Tiger
无忧	Carefree

The literal translation method is based on foreignization. When the words in the two cultures refer

to the same meaning, the equivalent words can be used for literal translation. Equivalent words such as “magpie”, “tiger” and “carefree” can be found in English, so Canaan Morse chose to use literal translation when translating such words.

4.1.3 Free Translation

The free translation method is the method under the domestication strategy, accounting for 8% of the name address. This method can reflect the meaning of the characters’ name.

Example 3:

红闲	Crimson
碧静	Turquoise
马弁	Stable boy

If we study the name carefully, we can see that its meaning is not completely translated. For example, “Hongxian” is translated as crimson, the meaning of the word “hong” is translated, but the meaning of the word “xian” is not reflected, and the same case of “Bijing”, the word “jing” has not been translated, and “Maben” is translated as stable boy. Although it is the same as his identity and its meaning, it is not like a personal name in English. In fact, Chinese names often have far-reaching and rich meanings, and are a profound reflection of Chinese culture. Therefore, it is not easy to achieve complete equivalence.

4.1.4 Variation Translation

According to Xiong Bing(2014) variation translation means that the content or theme of the translation is different from the original. Sometimes in order to achieve a specific translation purpose, or in order to meet the specific needs of the target language readers, the method of re-translation may be used. In the translation of name Address, variation translation accounts for 5%. It can be seen from the following case analysis that variation translation, as a supplement, is essential for the translation of name address.

Example 4:

小桃红	Peach Pit
-----	-----------

It is worth noting that the translation of “Xiaotaohong” is “Peach Pit”, which vividly reflects the image of “Xiaotaohong”, beauty and disaster. “Xiaotaohong” is a little prostitute raised by Master Xue in the novel, and she is loyal to Master Xue on the surface. In fact, he secretly colluded with Li to frame Master Xue, that is, she set pit to Master Xue. The translation of “Peach Pit” not only translates the literal meaning of “Xiaotaohong”, but also corresponds to the text, implying her insidiousness.

4.1.5 Omission

The translator boldly adopts the omission translation method for the insignificant figures’ name in the original text.

Example 5:

Source Text: “原来，这妇人住在长江对岸的长洲。她的儿子……名唤蔡小六，去年夏天不慎从山崖上摔下山涧死了。留下一个年轻的媳妇和一双儿女。”

Target Text: “The old woman said she was from Changzhou, and lived on the far bank of the Yangtze. Her son had been a medicinal herb harvester until last summer, when he fell over a mountain cliff and died, leaving behind a young wife and two children.”

It can be seen that “Cai Xiaoliu” is also an irrelevant character who was briefly mentioned by the author in the original text. The translator directly chooses to ignore his name, which has no effect on the storyline and character relationship of the original text, and reduces the English readers’ reading burden.

4.2 Translation of Kinship Address

The kinship address is an extremely important and huge part of the modern Chinese personal address. Human kinship can be roughly divided into two categories: immediate relatives and collateral relatives. The kinship personal address is sometimes not used to address relatives, but is used to address people other than relatives. This phenomenon is actually a transformation of the kinship personal address (Cao,2005). This phenomenon is also involved in *Peach Blossom Paradise*. In the translation of personal address the translators adopted different translation methods, as shown in Figure 3.

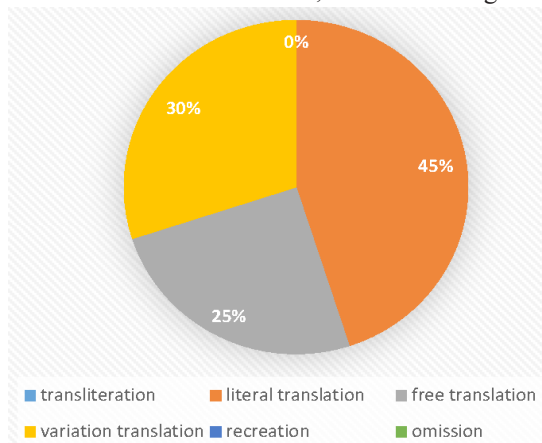


Figure 3
Translation Methods Used in Kinship Address

4.2.1 Literal Translation

In the translation of kinship address, the literal translation method accounts for the largest proportion, reaching 45%.

Example 6:

表舅 Uncle

大舅 Uncle

闺女 Girl/daughter

姨妈 Aunt

媳妇 Daughter-in-law

大侄子 Nephew

孟婆婆 Grandma Meng

In English, there are corresponding names for the basic kinship relationship, so translators mostly choose literal translation. But in *Peach Blossom Paradise* there are also some complex Chinese kinship relationships. Therefore,

other translation methods are needed to in the translation of kinship address that is unique to Chinese.

4.2.2 Variation Translation

In different situations, the same kinship address has different meanings in Chinese. Canaan Morse is very flexible when translating kinship address, and often uses variation translation when translating the kinship address.

Example 8:

Zhang Jiyuan said to Mei Yun:

ST: “妹妹的身子是否也想姐姐这般雪白?”

TT: “I wonder if the girl’s body is as white and soft as yours?”

Here, the translator does not literally translate “Jiejie” and “Meimei”, but uses personal referential pronouns. If the author transliterates “Jiejie” and “Meimei” into “elder sister” and “younger sister”, Zhang Jiyuan and Mei Yun and Xiumi are not siblings, and Mei Yun is actually Xiumi’s mother, Zhang Jiyuan call them sisters, which is a cultural phenomenon unique to Chinese. “Jiejie” and “Meimei” are used as a personal pronoun to shorten the relationship between each other. If the translator chose literal translation, it would obviously cause misunderstandings to the readers because English speaking countries do not have such a rich culture of kinship address. Therefore, it is appropriate to adopt the variation translation method here.

Example 9:

ST: “母亲让秀米叫他表叔，后来又改口让她叫表舅。这时，那个名叫张季元的人忽然开口说话了：‘你就叫我表哥吧’。”

TT: Mother initially told Xiumi that he was a cousin, but later instructed her to call him Uncle. To this, the man named Zhang Jiyuan spoke up. “Just think of me as your elder brother.”

“Biaoshu” should correspond to uncle from one’s father’s side in English, uncle should correspond to uncle from one’s mother’s side, and “Biaoge” should correspond to cousin. Obviously, if the translation is based on the original character relationship, the original concise title will become protracted and lengthy, and the reader will also be confused. Here the author subtly adopts the method of variation translation, which makes the translation smooth and natural, makes the originally complex character relationship simple and clear to the reader, and does not affect the overall character relationship and plot development of the article.

4.2.3 Free Translation

Free translation in the translation of kinship address accounts for 25%. The meaning of most kinship address can be translated properly through this method. But here we need to notice that there are still some culture factors cannot be expressed by the translation method.

Example 10:

干爹: godfather

义子: godson

The translator translated the “Gandie” and “Yizi” in the original text into godfather and godson in English. Although the meanings correspond, there are cultural differences. Godfather in English means any man who serves as a sponsor for a child at baptism is closely related to religious belief, and the relationship between “Gandie” and “Yizi” in Chinese is a personal relationship based on family affection and friendship.

In the translation of kinship address, the translation method of recreation, omission and transliteration is not involved. The reason is that kinship address is system is closed and fixed, so it is hard and inappropriate to recreate terms for it. And transliterating the kinship address can cause confusion for the target audience.

4.3 Translation of Social Address

The personal addresses that represent the various social roles that people play are called social addresses. Social address mainly includes job address, personal address for identity and neighbor relationship. There are many social addresses involved in *Peach Blossom Paradise*, especially nicknames. The nicknames of characters can more vividly and accurately reflect the characters’ personality and build the characters’ image. Another type of social address that appears in large numbers in the original text is professional title, which, like nicknames, has profound cultural connotations, which is a huge challenge for translators to translate. For social address translators, various translation methods are also used, as shown below:

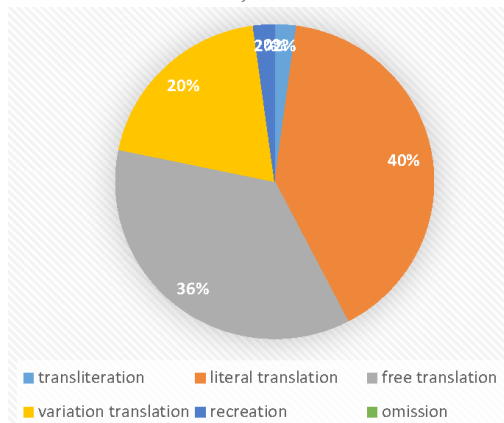


Figure 4
Translation Methods Used in Social Address

4.3.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation account for 40%, which is the most part among the translation methods used in the translation of social address. Words in both cultures refer to the same thing and can be translated literally by equivalent words. For example, many of the physical material stuff can be found in both English and Chinese culture. Although there are differences in culture, people live together on the earth, have similar physiological and physical foundations, and have a lot in common in terms of physiological substances, so the same equivalent words that exist in culture can be translated literally. Therefore, Canaan Morse uses a lot of literal translation when translating such physical terms.

Example 11:

大金牙 Yellowtooth

大嘴 Bigmouth

六指人 Six-fingered man

铁背李 Steelback Li

In the original text, these nicknames vividly reflect the appearance characteristics of the characters. The translator adopts the method of literal translation, which can be said to completely restore the characters in the original text, and at the same time, based on a shared understanding of the physical characteristics of these characters, readers can understand the image characteristics of the characters easily.

4.3.2 Free Translation

The translator also adopted a large number of free translation when translating those nicknames, which accounts for 36% in the translation methods.

Example 12:

狐狸精 a vicious slut and a witch

In the original novel, Gao Caixia’s son Tan Si was in love with Xiumi and followed Xiumi wholeheartedly to make a revolution. However, when the school was in danger of survival and their safety was also threatened, Tan Si still did not abandon Xiumi, so Gao Caixia scolded Xiumi as “Hulijing”. “Hulijing” is a culturally loaded word. There are many stories about “Hulijing” in ancient China, most of which are enchanting and evil images. There is no exact corresponding word in English. Here the author translates it into a vicious slut and a witch, this translation has expressed its meaning appropriately.

Example 13:

黄毛丫头 A stubborn empty-headed little girl

老不死的 Dried-up old bastard

死狗 The dumb cur

老鬼 Old bastard

穷棒子 Beggar

These address words are unique expressions in Chinese, and it is difficult to find corresponding words in English, but the translator conveys the meaning of them skillfully through free translation.

4.3.3 Variation Translation

There are many culturally loaded words with Chinese characteristics in social addresses. In order to facilitate the understanding of the text for Western readers, this domestication method is adopted to simplify the complexity to achieve basic semantic equivalence. In the translation method of social address, the use of variation translation accounts for 20%. In the translation of the social address of *Peach Blossom Paradise*, the translator boldly uses variation translation, but his translation omits the translation of some words, thus only conveying part of the meaning.

Example 14:

薛举人 Master Xue

陈老板 Mr. Chen

老板娘 His wife

师娘 His wife

In the above translation, only the role of the characters is translated, but the unique cultural address in Chinese is completely destroyed. Chinese culture attaches great importance to the seniority among people, so the teacher's partner and boss's partner are also given a respectful title, but there is no such cultural context in English, so it is difficult to translate the words "Shiniang" and "Laobanniang".

4.3.4 Recreation

In the translation of social address, the translator chooses to create words with similar pronunciation or meaning in English to achieve the same equivalent reading experience for the target readers as the readers of the source language.

Example 15:

嘟嘟宝 Little Deedlydo

臭屁宝贝 Fartypants

In the original text, Mei Yun called her grandson "Dudubao" "Choupiabaobei". The translator translates "Dudubao" into "Little deedlydo" and "Choupiabaobei" into Fartypants. Obviously, there is no word "deedlydo" in English, the translator created this word in combination with its Chinese pronunciation. In Chinese, "Dudubao" has no special meaning, it just expresses the cuteness of the chubby face of a child. This English translation is actually a combination of transliteration and recreation, which translates the cuteness of the original characters. Similarly, Fartypants is the result of a combination of free translation and recreation by the translator.

5. CONCLUSION

Through data analysis, we can find that Canaan Morse used various translation methods when he translated the personal address in *Peach Blossom Paradise*. The most commonly used methods are still transliteration, literal translation and free translation. It is worth noting that the translator also used a high frequency of variation translation in the translated text to effectively achieve the equivalence of the personal address in the source language and the target language. This also shows that variation translation is a very flexible and useful workaround when translating personal addresses. what's more, recreation, which is rarely used in this English translation version, has creatively and skillfully conveyed the cultural information of the source language to the maximum extent to the target language readers, which means recreation is an essential supplement in the translation of personal address.

However, there are still many shortcomings in this study. In the research process, although we have seen the operability and scientific advantages of quantitative research in the translation studies, there is still a lot of subjectivity in the classification of translation methods. Besides, the translation methods used by the translator in translating personal address are difficult to define, and even overlapping, which is also an obstacle for the data collection and analysis. Further studies will be done in the future to make the research more scientific and applicable.

REFERENCES

- Cannon, M. (2020). *Peach blossom paradise*. New York: NY Review of Books, Incorporated, T.H.E.
- Cao, W. (2005). *Appellation and addressing terms in modern Chinese*. *Journal of Jiangsu University(Social Sciences)*, 7(2).
- Coulmas, F. (2001). *The handbook of sociolinguistics*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.
- Ge, F. (2004). *Peach blossom paradise*. Shenyang: Chunfeng Literature Publishing House.
- Li, M. Y. (2021). Focalization and speech presentation modes in *Peach Blossom Paradise*. *Modern Linguistics*, 9(3), 719-728
- Liu, H. (2019). *Research on the teaching of social address terms in Chinese course*. Lanzhou: Institutional Repository of School of Chinese Language and Literature.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A textbook of translation*. New York: Prentice Hal.
- Tan, Z. X. (1999). *Nida's theory on translation*. Beijing: China International Translation and Publishing Corporation.
- Wan, X. S. (2018). *A research on the kinship terms of Guangshui dialect in Hubei Province*. Changsha: Master Thesis of Hunan Normal University.
- Xiao, J. Y., & Pang, J. X. (2007). Literary contextual constraint on the translation of name metaphors: A case study of the English translation of *The Story of the Stone*. *Journal of Zhejiang University (Humanities and Social Sciences)*, 37(5).
- Xiong, B. (2014). Conceptual confusion in Translation Studies: Take translation strategy, translation method and translation technique as an example. *Chinese Translators Journal*, 35(3).
- Zhang, Y. T. (2016). *Analysis on the semantic and cultural connotation of Chinese spouse appellation*. (Master's thesis). Nanjing: of Nanjing Normal University.