A Study of English Translation of Metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS from Relevance Theory

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Abstract. Metaphors are not only commonly used in literature to captivate readers, but also serve broader pragmatic purposes. However, translating metaphors between languages and cultures faces challenges due to linguistic and cultural differences. This study analyses the English translation of metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG’s Spring in a Pleasure Garden, The Long March and Pure Serene Music· Spiral Mountain, aiming to discuss the characteristics of metaphor translation in Xu Yuanchong’s translation, and find the difficulties in metaphor translation, so as to summarize metaphor translation strategies. It is found that Xu makes full use of the communicative views and contextual views of relevance theory, and employs a large number of literal, free and transformational translation skills. His works successfully reflect the literary image in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS, spreading the great MAO TSE-TUNG Theory and the Long March spirit to the world.

Keywords: Relevance theory; MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS; The Long March; Metaphor; Translation strategy.

1. Introduction

1.1 The literary value of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS

MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS and their ideological connotation portrayed Chinese Communists’ struggle and ideal pursuit. From the mission awareness in “I wonder who. Upon this boundless earth, decide. All beings’ fall and rise.” of CHANGSHA Tune: “SPRING IN A PLEASURE GARDEN” (1925) and the dedication of “Bitter sacrifice strengthens bold resolve; Which dares to make sun and moon shine in newskies.” in SHAOSHAN REVISITED—a lu shih (1959) to the ambitions in “We can bring down the moon from the ninth heaven; Or catch the giant turtles in the sea.” of Tune: Prelude to the Melody of Water Mount Jinggang Reascended (1965) …… All of these describe the lofty ideals of the Chinese Communists vividly. MAO TSE-TUNG wrote a series of poems in memory of triumph in battles, including Pure Serene Music-Spiral Mountain, Tune: Charm of a Maiden Singer — Mount Kunlun, and The Long March. The Long March gave birth not only to heroes and tragedies, but also to poets and art. MAO TSE-TUNG has set a good example for people with his masterful military command art and magnificent Long March poetry.

1.2 Metaphor translation strategies

Metaphor is involved in the whole process of our cognition. The conceptual system on which human thought and language are based is itself constructed on the basis of metaphor. In his book Metaphors We Live By, Lakoff (Lakoff, G. and Johnson, 1980) [2] puts forward three typical metaphors: ontological metaphor, directional metaphor and structural metaphor. In A Discussion of Translation (88-91, 2001) [10], Peter Newmark proposes seven ways to translate common stock metaphors: 1. Literal translation 2. Borrowing 3. Simile 4. Literal translation & Free translation 5. Free translation 6. Delete 7. Literal translation & Interpretation. In recent years, in the field of linguistic research, many scholars have explored the translation of metaphors in literary works from the perspective of linguistics and translation, such as Hu Xuekun’s The Application of Metaphor Translation: A Study of “Besieged City” (2017) and Yang WANG’s Translation Analysis of Metaphor Translation in the Black Slaves (2019). Most foreign scholars’ studies on MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS focus on political thoughts, while domestic scholars also mostly study their
association with Marxism. Although they also attach importance to MAO’s Poems, they are limited to exploring the spiritual connotation, artistic style, and translation strategies in poems, such as Translator behavior research on “Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden: Snow” (2021) by Li Zhengshuan and Zhang Dan and “Feelings of the Greater Self” in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS (2023) by Liu Weiqin and Ma Wanling. However, studies on metaphorical translation of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS are still lacking, with only two in the past decade. One is Li Wei’s “A Study on the English Translation of Conceptual Metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS” (2019); the other is Guo Bin and Li Jie’s A Study on the Cognitive English Translation of Metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS (2023). Additionally, few researches have unveiled the application of relevance theory in Mao’s poems. In view of this, based on the relevance theory of pragmatics, this research will analyze the English translation of metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March poems, and explore the difficulties and strategies of metaphor translation.

1.3 Relevance theory in translation

Relevance theory defines relevance as “the relationship between proposition and a series of contexts”, therefore it is context-dependent. Dan Sperber & D. Wilson, French social cognitive scientists, put forward “Relevance theory” in Relevance: Communication and Cognition (1986). In relevance theory, explicit communication refers to the speaker’s communication behavior, and inference refers to the listener’s communication behavior in order to identify the speaker’s information intention. (Sperber, 1986) Relevance theory has three basic viewpoints: the communicative view, the contextual view and the principle of optimal relevance. (Palmer, 1996) The application of relevance theory in the English translation of metaphors in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS will be described below.

2. Metaphor translation analysis of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS

MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS, as the classic works of excellent Chinese culture, applies three typical metaphors: ontological metaphor, directional metaphor and structural metaphor, among which ontological metaphor is the most common. This research selects MAO’s Long March poems Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden-Snow, The Long March and Pure Serene Music-Spiral Mountain as the corpus to explore the metaphorical translation strategies.

2.1 Metaphor translation analysis of Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden-Snow

Tune: Spring in a Pleasure Garden-Snow is a typical masterpiece of MAO TSE-TUNG’s lyrical song, which connects the great rivers and mountains of the motherland with the bright prospects of China, the great figures of history and the working masses of the proletariat.

Source text: 山舞银蛇, 原驰蜡象。

Target text: Mountains like silver serpents dancing; Highlands like waxy elephants advancing.

In the first sentence, “Mountains like silver serpents dancing” means that the mountain is like a dancing silver snake, and “Highlands like waxy elephants advancing” refers to the plateau like a running white wax elephant. In his translation, Xu uses the “communicative view” of relevance theory to carry out literal translation and free translation of ontological metaphor. Metaphorical translation, as a dual communication process, requires translators to be faithful to the source language. Literal translation can not only retain the cultural connotation and expression of the original text, but also polish the target text. In this sentence, the first metaphorical nounenon is translated literally as “mountain”, and the second is “highland”, which refers to the highland mountain area, achieving semantic equivalence between Chinese and English. The metaphor “银蛇” is literally translated as “silver serpents”. Although “snake” and “serpent” are similar in meaning, the latter is more suitable. The image of “serpent” more conforms to the original text by free translation, because according to the communicative point of view, the translation should not only obey the information connotation of the original metaphor, but also ensure reader friendliness. “蜡象” is literally translated into “waxy
elephants”. It highlights the smooth texture of the elephants, vividly portrays the rhythm of the plateau, which is easy for readers to understand, highlighting the effect of relevance theory in translation. “Dance” and “advance” further highlight the relevance of the body and metaphor. To translate “舞” and “驰”, Xu adopts “dance” to enhance the anthropomorphic color and “advance” to indicate progress respectively, which better reflect Mao’s vision of the great rivers and mountains of the motherland and fully convey the Chinese artistic conception.

Source text: 须晴日, 看红装素裹, 分外妖娆。
Target text: Wait till the day is fine; And see the fair bask in sparkling sunshine; What an enchanting sight!

In the original text, the metaphorical expression “fair bask in sparkling sunshine” encapsulates the vivid image of the North being adorned in red sunlight and white snow, akin to wearing red clothes and wrapping in a white cloak. However, this metaphor may not be immediately clear to target readers without additional context and explanation. According to the communicative view of relevance theory and the principle of optimal relevance, paraphrase is cleverly used and annotations are added here to explain that the snow and ice landscape in the north shines under the clear sky, and the connotation of the source language is clarified. If the sentence is translated literally, it is difficult for the target readers to grasp the meaning. Therefore, in order to provide more relevant information and reduce the inferential efforts of target readers, words or comments should be added to achieve the best relevance for the historical and cultural background implied in Chinese metaphors. The words such as “fair” and “sparkling sunshine” not only convey the essence of the metaphor but also adds artistic beauty to the translation. In this context, the English term “enchanting” effectively captures the semantic richness of the Chinese “妖娆”, fostering a stronger atmosphere and evoking the intended sense of wonder. Although the alternative words “beautiful” and “adorned” can basically express the original meaning, the atmosphere sense is weakened.

Source text: 江山如此多娇, 引无数英雄竞折腰。
Target text: Our motherland so rich in beauty; Has made countless heroes vie to pay her their duty.

The sentence means that the mountains are so beautiful that countless heroes fall for each other. The rivers and mountains in the sentence are metaphorical to the motherland, using part to replace the whole, and the motherland territory is replaced by the most representative rivers and mountains, which is more vivid. Domestic translators’ understanding of “江山” is obvious. “江山” has its own metaphorical connotation, which refers to land and territory. Xu expresses his mind directly by adopting “motherland”, reducing the difficulty of comprehension for readers. The second metaphor, “折腰”, refers to waiting, working hard and rushing about, associated with hard work or fierce competition. Xu translated it as “to pay their duty”, indicating that it is the duty of heroes to fight for the territory and defend the country, clearly and concretely expressing the patriotic responsibility of Chinese heroes.

Source text: 一代天骄, 成吉思汗, 只识弯弓射大雕。
Target text: And Genghis Khan, proud son of Heaven for a day; Knew only shooting eagles by bending his bows.

The line conveys that Genghis Khan, renowned as a paragon of greatness, excels solely in the martial prowess of archery and horseback riding. It employs two metaphors: firstly, likening Genghis Khan to a “generation of heavenly pride,” denoting someone of remarkable accomplishments; and secondly, the vivid imagery of “弯弓射大雕,” representing exemplary martial skills, thereby substituting abstract concepts with concrete visuals to complement the subsequent contrasts between ancient and modern eras and extol the proletarian masses, all while maintaining poetic rhythm. In the translation, rendering “一代天骄” as “Son of heaven” maintains fidelity to the original Chinese expression “天之骄子,” thereby establishing coherence between Chinese and English, resonating with both the connotations of the Chinese term and the sensibilities of English readers. Meanwhile,
the metaphor of “弯弓射大雕” is translated as “shooting eagles by bending his bows,” subtly conveying the notion of exceptional martial prowess.

Source text: 俱往矣，数风流人物，还看今朝。

Target text: They have all passed away; Brilliant heroes are those; Whom we will see today.

The last sentence, “They have all passed away; Brilliant heroes are those; Whom we will see today”, expresses that the heroic figures in history have become the past, the outstanding heroic figures are the contemporary proletarian revolutionaries. As for the understanding of the romantic character, it is necessary to associate it with the second phase, simple literal translation is possible to cause misunderstanding. Based on relevance theory, romantic figures can be associated with great heroes, so it is not difficult to translate them into “brilliant heroes”. The tenor of the metaphor, “the proletariat and its revolutionaries”, is not presented, and its relevance (outstanding contributions) is covered in the vehicle “hero”. In the translation of metaphorical poems, in order to conform to the genre, the translators should try their best to match the rhythm of the original poem, choosing words related to the metaphor and achieve language conciseness.

2.2 Metaphor translation analysis of The Long March

Long March is a great feat unprecedented in human history, and the Seven Rules · Long March is an immortal masterpiece in the history of poetry creation. This poem vividly summarizes the course of the Red Army’s Long March, and warmly praises the revolutionary heroism and revolutionary optimism of the Chinese workers’ and peasants’ Red Army.

When Xu translated the sentence “五岭逶迤腾细浪”, he translated the “逶迤” into “serpentine” vividly. “Serpentine” means “meandering and roundabout”, and also contains the meaning of “like a snake”, which includes a metaphor, because “snake” brings sinister association to people. The translator compares “five ridges” to “snake”, not only accurately expressing the meaning of “逶迤”, but also making readers feel the sinister of trekking through the five ridges. At the same time, the translator compared the “mountain” to “rippling rills” and “mole-hills”, dynamically expressing the steep Wumeng Mountain is only small waves and mud balls for Red Army soldiers, depicting the two “Long March maps” of “climbing over five mountains” and “rushing across Wumeng Mountain” from point to area, showing the brave and tenacious image of the Red Army. The peculiar imagination and exaggerated writing of this sentence demonstrates the poet’s intention to reduce the visual proportion of people, enhancing the great spiritual strength of the Red Army to defy and overcome all difficulties. The dynamic descriptions of “腾” and “走” bring the stationary mountain to life, and also the Red Army’s conquest of the mountain, strengthening the Red Army’s fearless revolutionary optimism. In the line “金沙水拍云崖暖,大渡桥横铁索寒”,”云崖暖” describes a picture of the waves crashing against the cliff, splashing bursts of fog, which equals to steam for the Red Army. The “寒” in “铁索寒” is “cold”, which implies the cruelty of the enemy and the severity of the situation. The translation of this sentence is “Against warm cloudy cliffs beat waves of Golden Sand; With cold Iron-chain Bridge River Dadu is spanned.” Through the literal translation of the contrast of “warm” and “cold”, it shows the magnificent long march to the target language readers. Armed with the spirit of “never afraid of expedition difficulties”, the Red Army crossed the Jinsha River, which was like a landslide, and the Luding Bridge on the Dadu River, with only 13 iron cables left, and also defeated the enemy troops who tried to block the Red Army from crossing the river on the other side. The surging Jinsha River beat the towering cliffs on both sides, and the mountains and rivers were singing for the victory of the Red Army. All these sentences strongly described the Red Army’s conquest of the water.

Through vivid examples and artistic metaphors, Xu warmly praised the revolutionary heroism and optimism of the Chinese Workers’ and peasants’ Red Army, thought highly of their bravery and persistence when facing setbacks. According to the relevance theory, the translator deals with the metaphor and contrast in the poem very skillfully, realizing the equivalence of meaning between Chinese and English, and achieving the best relevance and reader friendliness.
2.3 Metaphor translation analysis of Pure Serene Music· Spiral Mountain

The journey of the Long March expresses the iron will of the Red Army soldiers to march forward and the firm belief that the war of resistance will win. *Pure Serene Music· Spiral Mountain* is a victory song in the battle, as well as an uplifting declaration.

Image is the soul of Chinese poetry, which usually contains metaphor. In order to accurately convey the beauty of the original artistic conception of poetry, the translation of poetic images requires translators to have a deep understanding of relevance theory, so as to achieve the best connection between author, translator and reader. As Wu Zhanlei mentioned in the Chinese Poetics [8], “Image poetry focuses on image, turns emotion into image symbols that can be perceived, and finds an objective counterpart for emotion. From the semantic point of view, image is the most basic meaning unit of emotion in poetry.” For the translation of the name of tunes, Xu translated “清平乐” as “Tune: ‘PURE SERENE MUSIC’”. “清” - pure, “平” - serene (calm), “乐” - music. Here, Xu adopts the free translation and makes full use of relevance theory to comprehensively convey the emotional tone of the poem and maintain the beauty of the rhyme.

The first line of the second half of the poem “Of Spiral Mountain at the crest;” followed the lyric of the last sentence on one hand, and then returned to the reality of Spiral Mountain scene on the other hand. “六盘山” is translated into “Spiral Mountain”, in which “spiral” refers to the twists and turns of the mountain, in this way, readers can immediately draw a genetic map of the shape of the mountain in the brain. Such a free translation requires the translator understanding the meaning of the name of the mountain first, that is, distinguishing it from other mountains, and knows the number “six” is a general reference. The second point of the translation is to show the hardships of the Red Army in climbing mountains for the revolution.

“Red flags” refers to the revolutionary battle flag of the Chinese Red Army, in which “red” symbolizes the Chinese revolutionary culture. The translation “flag” refers to a specific square or rectangular flag, which can give readers a clear physical image. Xu translated “漫卷” as “wave (to move freely and gently)”, which shows the dynamic beauty of the red flags, and also in line with the image of the red flag fluttering in the wind. “西风” is translated as “wanton winds from the west”, because “wanton (behave extremely cruelly and brutally)” is a metaphor for the evil reactionary force that suppressed the Chinese revolution. The literal translation of “西风” could have been “west winds”, but the addition of “wanton” is a clever use of the principle of best relevance. By adding meaning to enhance the contextual effect, the target readers can understand the connotation of the original text breezily. The word “wave” is highly condensed to show that the power of the revolution is still strong, clear and free, and the warriors keep fighting in the cusp of the storm, which symbolizes the fire of the hope and metaphorical power of faith.

The last sentence “With the long cord in hand today; When shall we bind the Dragon Gray?” is similar to the end of the first part of the poem, directly expressing the inner feelings and aspirations from the real scene of the moment. The “仓龙” here comes from a Tang Dynasty commentary by Yan Shigu quoting Fu Qian of the Han Dynasty: “仓龙，太岁也.” “仓龙” is the same as “苍龙”, representing the evil spirit in ancient time, so here its tenor is Chiang Kai-shek reactionary clique. As for the translation of “苍龙”, Xu adopted “dragon gray” in terms of the rhyme. “苍” means “gray”, “dark” or “white”, but considering the tenor is “enemy”, Xu uses “gray”, which implies “dark forces” through the context view of relevance theory. It is a negative metaphor that exactly accords with the connotation of the image of “enemy” in the original text, so the best relationship between the emotional attitude of the source language and the target language is realized here. “When shall we bind the Dragon Gray?” The question is not a helpless exclamation of the poet’s lack of confidence in the victory of the enemy, but a natural revelation of the poet and the Red Army soldiers’ eagerness to completely destroy the enemy. These two sentences not only reveal the core theme, but also the climax of the whole poem. The poet held the “long cord”, indicating that he was ready for defeating and capturing the dragon. The word “when” expressed the poet’s inner desire to fight at this time.
Relevance theory is a bridge between source language author, translator and target language reader, and plays a decisive role in Chinese-English metaphor translation. The translation of poetic images requires the translator deeply mastering the cultural connotation of the source language and the target language, and making decisions among free translation, zero translation and transliteration. While translating MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS, the translator should not only pay attention to the meaning, but also strive to restore the beauty and rhyme of “form” and “spirit”, so as to achieve a complete combination of “meaning”, “form” and “spirit”. In addition, he should pay attention to the special historical background of MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March poetry creation, and make in-depth study of relevant documents, so as to translate its literariness and artistry accurately and thus achieve the best correlation between the source language and the target language.

3. Difficulties in metaphor translation of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS

In their book Metaphors We Live By, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson assert that metaphor is not merely a rhetorical device but also a crucial cognitive mechanism. To translate metaphors between Chinese and English, however, presents formidable challenges stemming from various factors. The translation of metaphor in MAO TSE-TUNG’s Poetry requires consideration of three major complicated factors: cultural differences, linguistic constraints and abstract concepts.

First and foremost, cultural disparities greatly affect the translation quality, as metaphors often draw their significance from cultural contexts that may differ significantly between Chinese and English societies. A commonplace metaphorical expression in one language may lack an equivalent in the other due to differences of historical backgrounds, social norms, and national beliefs. For example, “长缨” in Pure Serene Music· Spiral Mountain is a challenge for translators because it requires the readers understand the image of Chinese weapons.

Moreover, linguistic constraints pose another obstacle, especially when metaphors rely on wordplay, idiomatic expressions, or language-specific puns. Preserving the original wit and humor during translation requires inventive solutions to navigate these linguistic intricacies. Take “等闲” in The Long March as an example, it is a classic way of expressing easiness, but hard for the target readers to understand. Therefore, the translation “slight barriers” perfectly indicates the original meaning in the poem, constructing a bridge between Chinese writers and English readers.

In the end, dealing with abstract concepts compounds the translation challenge, as many metaphors involve distinctive emotions or ideas. Translators must possess a profound understanding of these underlying concepts and employ language that effectively conveys the intended meaning while resonating with the target audience. It can be seen in Xu’s translation of “淡” in the Pure Serene Music· Spiral Mountain, which is translated into “light”. In addition, the metaphor translation here also shows Xu’s consideration of rhythm.

In conclusion, translating metaphors between Chinese and English demands a nuanced understanding of the intricate interplay among cultural, linguistic, and contextual factors. Success in the translation of Mao’s Poetry requires not only linguistic proficiency but also a profound appreciation of the cultural subtleties.

4. Metaphor translation strategies of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS

The translation of MAO TSE-TUNG Long March poems should follow the strategy of applying foreignization and domestication as a supplement, and considering the principle of free translation and the combination of form and spirit. Without losing the original meaning, the original form and rhyme should be guaranteed as much as possible, and the history should also be fully studied so that foreign readers can understand the original MAO TSE-TUNG thoughts.
4.1 Foreignization mainly and domestication partly

Lawrence Venuti believes that domestication is the process of localizing the source language by catering to the target language or the readers of the translation, using expressions that are familiar to the target readers. This helps readers better understand the translation and enhances its readability. (Venuti, 1995) [5] Foreignization, on the other hand, brings the reader closer to the author and the original text, emphasizing the preservation of cultural differences, retaining and reflecting the characteristics and linguistic features of foreign cultures, allowing the readers to feel on the scene. MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March poems are so special that its translation should display MAO’s sentiments and aspirations as much as possible. Therefore, a translation strategy that primarily employs foreignization and secondarily domestication should be adopted.

Firstly, the strategy is determined by the international environment, MAO TSE-TUNG’s unique identity as a poet, and the purpose of the translation. Secondly, it is affected by the specific literary and cultural nature of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS. The distinctive Chinese elements in MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS, such as names of poetic forms, people, and places, should be translated with a foreignization strategy to preserve Chinese elements as much as possible, allowing foreign readers to experience the charm of a different culture and stimulate their desire to explore more about China.

4.2 Free translation in the majority

Focusing on the essence and spirit, the translation of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS, which are “full of dynamism and tension, reflecting rapid changes, and mostly feature grand and expansive imagery” (Zhou Xian, 2002:72) [12], should aim to convey the deep meanings of the original poems while preserving their form and charm by free translation. Free translation, in the context of MAO TSE-TUNG’s poetry, holds significant value for several reasons. First, it preserves the essence of Mao’s poetry, which often conveys deep political and ideological messages intertwined with Chinese culture and symbolism. The translator should focus on the essence and underlying meaning of the original poems, even if deviating from a literal translation. Second, it captures poetic nuances. Mao’s poetry often employs various literary devices such as imagery, symbolism, and metaphor to convey ideas poetically, and free translation allows the translator to convey the emotional and aesthetic qualities of the poetry in the target language. Third, it adapts to cultural context. Mao’s poetry reflects the socio-political climate of his time and carries specific cultural references that may not resonate with audiences outside of China. It is free translation that allows for adaptation to the cultural context of the target audience, making the poetry more accessible and relevant to readers from diverse backgrounds. Overall, free translation plays a crucial role in preserving the essence, capturing the nuances, and ensuring the relevance and accessibility of MAO TSE-TUNG’s poetry to diverse audiences around the world.

4.3 Thick translation with references

The literary value of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS is self-evident. The translation of MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March-themed poems, reproducing their literary nature, is crucial. First, the literary nature of MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March-themed poems is reflected in their grand imagery and expansive artistic conception. The poems depict the towering Kunlun Mountains, the rushing and surging Jinsha River, and the “thousands of leagues flies snow” and snow-covered scenery of the northern country. Second, the literary nature of MAO TSE-TUNG’s Long March-themed poems is reflected in the depiction of objects that combine motion and stillness, with both the static beauty of “Green mountains like the tide; The sunken sun blood-red.” and the dynamic beauty of “Mountains like silver serpents dancing; Highlands like waxy elephants advancing”. In translation, it is necessary to strive to convey the artistic conception of motion and stillness, and transmit the lively sensation of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS. For example, in *The Long March*: “The Five Serpentine Ridges outspread like rippling rills; The pompous Wumeng peaks tower but like mole-hills” transforms static mountains into dynamic entities through the use of language like “outspread,” vividly bringing to life
the image of the Red Army traversing rugged terrain. MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS are literary treasure, and translators should not only accurately translate their literary essence but also consult literature to accurately understand the background of MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS’ creation. With the help of literature, translators can deepen their understanding to make the translation more accurate.

5. Conclusion

Scholars both at home and abroad have been dedicated to studying MAO TSE-TUNG POEMS. His Long March-themed poems are a testament to the Red Army’s Long March, with widespread influence and value. Metaphor translation is one of the challenges in Chinese-English translation. Due to significant differences in cultural cognition, the same concept is often expressed with different metaphors, and the same metaphor may convey opposite concepts. Considering the special status of Mao’s Long March-themed poems and their unique literary value, the translation strategy of “foreignization dominants and domestication supplies” has been widely adopted. Conveying the “authentic flavor” of MAO TSE-TUNG’s thoughts is the foundation of metaphor translation. Given the limited direct correspondences between English and Chinese metaphors, the principles of Relevance Theory serve as a crucial guiding framework for metaphor translation. In practice, translators must employ a flexible array of translation methods, taking various factors into account and possessing a deep understanding of the linguistic characteristics and cultural contexts of both languages. This multifaceted approach ensures that translations accurately capture the cultural and aesthetic nuances in the original metaphors, thereby enhancing their effectiveness and fluency.

References