

Documentary Subtitle Chinese-English Translation from the Perspective of Functional Equivalence: A Study on the Documentary *China's Fight against Covid-19*

Yeheng Yang¹  and Yi Li²  

¹BA Student of School of Foreign Languages, Guangzhou Xinhua University, Dongguan, Guangdong Province, P.R. China

²Lecturer of School of Foreign Languages, Guangzhou Xinhua University, Dongguan, Guangdong Province, P.R. China

✉ Corresponding Author: Yi Li, E-mail: iliyi42@qq.com

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ABSTRACT

This paper adopts Nida's Functional Equivalence theory and studies the Chinese-English subtitle translation of the documentary *China's Fight against Covid-19*, which was filmed and broadcast throughout China amid the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in the year 2020, and it received positive responses in the country. The research objective is to find out the translation strategies, methods and skills involved in achieving the "most natural" and the "most closest" English expressions to the Chinese source text. In the study, investigations on the equivalence of Lexical level, Syntactical level, Contextual level and Textual level in the subtitle are conducted respectively, and the aforementioned translation aspects are discussed under the guidance of Nida's functional equivalence. The key findings are that the translated texts adopt literal and liberal translation to deal with the Culture-loaded words and four-character idioms on a lexical level. While sentence restructuring, conversion of voice, and conjunction and present particle are used on the syntactic level to make source language and translated subtitle more coherent and authentic. On the contextual and textual level, the target text distinguishes the formal and informal languages through the sentence length and the complexity of the structure. This study offers a practical implication for translating Chinese pandemic discourses into English, and it can also shed light on the study of Chinese narratives during the COVID outbreak and the publicity of the Chinese countermeasures.

1. Introduction

With the progressing of globalization, more and more Chinese film and television works have spread to the outside world and become popular with the western audience. The subtitle translation plays an important role in the subtitle, and the foreign audience must realize the culture and the meaning of the film and television works through the subtitle translation. Nevertheless, owing to the difference in expression and language logy between Chinese and English, high-quality subtitle translation becomes more and more crucial. This paper analyzes the C-E subtitle translation of the CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 from the perspective of Nida's Functional Equivalence.

1.1 Research background

CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19 is a documentary, which is filmed by China Global Television Network (CGTN), and focuses on our government efforts in the fight against the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, China. The two-episode documentary shows the determination of people to overcome the new Coronavirus in Wuhan, Hubei province, under the unified leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. The director of the documentary adopts the forms of news record and combines lots of materials aiming to screen the crucial plots to reflect the 1.4-billion ordinary people how to save themselves under the outbreak of the Coronavirus epidemic and how to embody the Chinese national spirit from the crisis.

The documentary *China's Fight against Covid-19* originates from the real social background with its unique selection of materials. During global epidemic prevention, the documentary has an obvious reference for countries that seek effective measures to fight against the new type of Coronavirus. It is necessary for us to analyze its English subtitle. This research has positive and practical value for the publicity of China's health and the nation image as well as great significance for cultivating Chinese-English translators.

1.2 Research Significance

With China's reform and opening-up policy to the outside world, a more and more excellent film and television work with Chinese characteristics have caught the attention of the western audience. Thus, documentary subtitle translation has begun to receive great attention from domestic scholars and experts in this circumstance.

Due to the limitation of time and space in the subtitle, translators should adopt different translation techniques and strategies to meet the subtitle requirements. Not only that, the translation of subtitles for documentaries of different genres and themes is also different. It is necessary to consider the presentation of the lines of the film and television works and the presentation effect of the subtitles as well as the visual and auditory styles must be consistent.

1.3 Study Questions

Through analyzing the subtitle of documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19* under the perspective of Functional Equivalence, the authors intend to study the subtitle whether to meet the natural closest equivalence or not as well as further deepen the understanding of documentary subtitle. The paper mainly studies the following research questions:

1. How to meet the equivalence in Lexical Level on the subtitle of the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19*?
2. How to meet the equivalence in Syntactical Level on the subtitle of the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19*?
3. How to meet the equivalence in Contextual Level and Textual Level on the subtitle of the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19*?
4. How to make improvement on the subtitle for enhancing the communication effect?

2. Literature Review

There are a lot of researches on subtitle translation under the perspective of Functional equivalence from home and abroad. This chapter reviews the relevant studies on the subtitle translation, such as films and documentaries.

2.1 Previous Studies on Subtitle Translations Applying Functional Equivalence

In recent years, China's reform and opening up keep forging ahead to the outside world. Meanwhile, more and more foreign audience focus on excellent film and television works with splendid Chinese culture. Nowadays, documentaries provide a good environment for the Chinese culture to go abroad as well as serve as a crucial bridge to publicize the Chinese spirit. Under this circumstance, a large number of domestic scholars and experts gradually pay attention to the documentary subtitle translation.

Abroad, especially in Western countries, the research on the subtitle translation of film and television works has started early, and the scope is extensive. Wiyati, Suryandari and Ashadi (2019) took the subtitle translation of the Indonesian movie *Kartini* as research material. They discussed the problems and pointed out that the language equivalence should be thought highly of the subtitle translation, especially the word equivalence, grammar structure equivalence and textual equivalence. Wiyati and Setiawan (2018) studied the shift of adjective phrases in the subtitle translation of film *Van Der Wijck*, where they argued that the film subtitle should be changed in level shifts and category shifts. The translator should be familiar with the shifts, equivalence and techniques between the source language and target language. Only in this way can the target audience better understanding the true meaning of the film.

The research above enlightens the authors that the ambiguous words should be avoided in the subtitle translation and the translator should endeavor to select the precise words and phrases as much as possible to convey the source language. At the grammar level, the same grammar structures have the same or similar grammar meaning; thus, sentences with the same grammar structures are preferred in dealing with the subtitle translation. The audience can grab the information and understand what the subtitle conveys quickly. What's more, these methods also give an inspiration to the authors that the shifts are important in the translation, such as category shifts. For example, the sentence "I saw you yesterday" is composed with the subject, predicate, object and adverbial, but the translation in Chinese is "我昨天看到你", which composed with subject, adverbial, predicate, and object. The sentence order is changed. The shifts and precise words selection are significant in translation and make the translated version more precise coherent and authentic.

2.2 Previous Studies on Documentary Subtitle Translation

In China, the studies of subtitle translation are on the phrase of theoretical exploration and fruitful. In 2019, Wu Jingjing did a study on *Application of Functional Equivalence Theory in Subtitle Translation*. Wu (2019) claimed that the subtitle translation should abide by liberal translation and keep the culture connotation and original text. Chen Deyin (Chen, 2017) conducted the subtitle translation from the cross-culture perspective and figured out that the translator should combine various translation methods to eliminate the cultural difference, aiming to achieve the goal of cross-cultural communication among the target and source audience. Kong Lingna, Gu Junru and Wang Lisong (Kong, 2019) studied the documentary *Homeland Dreamland--- The Belt and Road*. They argued that the subtitle translation should adopt different translation strategies and methods under the functional equivalence theory so as to transmit the culture of the source language to the audience and promote understanding and comprehension. Zhao Yaqiu (Zhao, 2019) had researched the subtitle of the documentary *Back to the Village*. She suggested that subtitle translation should be brief and fully expressed due to the limitation of time and space of the subtitle at the bottom of the screen. A good translated subtitle should make the target audience have a similar feeling with the source language audience. Pan Haiou (Pan, 2018) had researched the subtitle translation *Civilization*. Pan pointed out that subtitle was limited by the time and space. The text and screen content should be transmitted and the form should keep concise and short. The original cultural image should be preserved in translating, and the transmission of the image between Chinese and English should be taken into consideration. The original style should embody in the translation as well.

In summary, one of the key points of the subtitle translation above should be concise and short due to the limitation of the space of the subtitle. The translator must be proficient in the culture between source language and target language to eliminate the cultural difference and achieve readers' response. These methods inspire the translators in translation works that comprehension is the first step in translation. Only the translator fully understands and comprehend the script can he adopt concise and precise words to express the cord meaning. Different translation methods are other ways that can add flexibility to the subtitles, making the content more interesting and stimulating the audience's interest during the appreciation.

The methods mentioned above are instructive on the paper, especially in the lexical, syntactic and contextual level. These methods have a great help in terms of wording and syntax, inspiring the translator in studying the translation of words and sentence, and for the revised translation of some words and sentences for improvement. At the same time, these methods allow the translator to familiarize with the common translation techniques, enrich translation experience, and lay a good foundation in translation.

3. Methodology

This paper will focus on the utilization of Functional Equivalence theory in the translation of the documentary subtitle of *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19*. This chapter will introduce the general background of the Functional Equivalence theory.

3.1 Nida's Functional Equivalence Theory

The Functional Equivalence theory was proposed by Eugene A. Nida for the first time in his book *From One Language to Another*. Nida is an eminent American scholar in the field of linguistics and translation. Nida devoted his life to translating the *Bible*. In the process of translating the *Bible*, a theoretical translation theory began to take shape under the practical conditions.

Nida (2004) once defined that the "dynamic equivalence" as the "degree of proximity of the target readers' response in receiving the translated target language should be the same as the source readers to receive in the source language". He also proposed that the translator should follow the natural and closest equivalence between the source language and the target language, first in the aspect of meaning and second in the aspect of style. So, in 1986, Nida (Nida, 1986) changed the "dynamic equivalence" to "functional equivalence" and he thought highly of the form in the process of translation. Nida believed that the best translation should embody the equivalence in form and meaning. According to the essential of translation and the point of linguistic, Nida believed that the dynamic equivalence equals functional equivalence.

During the practice of translating one language into another language, the translator no need to pursuit word-for-word translation to keep the form of the source language but to transfer the accurate information of the source language to the target readers. The structure of the original sentences can be changed and modified to meet the functional equivalence between the source language and the target language. We may confront no equal words between the source language and target language when we are doing the translation. At this moment, translators should change the way of expressing the sentences and retain the basic meaning of the original sentence

3.1.1 A natural equivalence

Nida and Taber believe that a good translation feels less like a translation when readers listen to it or read it (Nida & Taber, 2004:12), which means that the foreigners feel less misunderstanding and ambiguity when reading or listening to the translation.

In consideration of the target readers and audience's response, the translator should make some changes in the translation, such as adopt different translation techniques or make some essential adjustments in the form of grammar and sentence-style or order, which can play a role in communication and make foreign readers or audience have the same feelings as the source readers and audience. In the aspect of the lexical level, all we can do is that the translation should be as much as close to the source text. We can abandon the formal equivalence and change the ways of expressing to boost understanding among target readers or audience when the meaning and culture cannot be balanced.

3.1.2 The closest equivalence

According to Nida (2001: 18), translation is "the target language used in the closest and most natural reproduction of the original language." That is to say that the translator must adopt some methods to reproduce the original text to fit the requirements of the target readers or audience. Meanwhile, there is no any complete equivalence between two different languages but we can endeavor ourselves to achieve proximity, which means that the translators should not attach importance to the form and structure between source and target language but should pay attention to exactly express the meaning of source language in the target language.

3.2 The Application of Functional Equivalence Theory

The main function of the subtitle is aiming to convey the main meaning to the target audience. Subtitle translation plays a crucial role in external-communicated documentaries and the foreign audience must appreciate it by reading the subtitle. In order to make the target audience fully understand and comprehend, the subtitle should be translated so that it gives rise to the core meaning without setting the target audience to reflect on what the translated text actually means. The functional equivalence theory emphasizes that the target audience's response is one of the determining factors to an excellent translation as well as a successful documentary subtitle translation. Hence, the functional equivalence is quite appropriate to be the guidance in documentary subtitle translation.

In recent years, Chinese film and television works get more and more popular among foreign countries, and lots of researchers devote themselves to improving the quality of subtitle translation to facilitate the culture exchange and eliminate the barriers in culture.

According to Nida (2001), "it is best to speak of functional equivalence in terms of a range of adequacy since no translation is completely equivalent." During the translation process, the translator can make shifts in words and change sentence order according to cultural spreading.

Translation involves the conversion of two languages. The meaning of words is important in maintaining the accuracy of translation at the lexical level. Hence, the translator can take measures, such as amplification and omission, to attain functional equivalence.

Li Zhijuan (Li, 2019) reminds us that "English sentences think highly of the formal level and express the meaning through the meaning of vocabularies, the language form and the relationship between the sentences." Thus, the translator can change the sentence order and employ segmentation to make sentences clearer and more coherent in translating. Under the guidance of functional equivalence, she also reports that English translation needs to deal with language and cultural differences flexibly at the level of contextual information and does not need to be strictly constrained to the form of expression of the original text.

The effective expression in contextual and textual level can definitely affect the audience's understanding of the subtitle information. Meanwhile, the effective translation of the text content also enhances the translated script's logic, making the subtitle language more suitable for the source language.

4. Results and Discussion

This section will make a concise introduction to the translation methods used in the subtitle of the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19*.

4.1 Lexical Level

Words are the basic elements of the sentences, so the sentence's comprehension largely depends on understanding every simple word. Sometimes we cannot comprehend the meaning of the words, so we may feel perplexed by the whole sentences. Thus, this section will concentrate on translating the culture-loaded words, four-character idioms and some colloquial words under the guidance of different translation skills.

4.1.1 Culture-loaded words

Culture-loaded words not only carry abundant cultural connotation, but also merely exist in a single culture. Thus, there is not any equivalence in another language or culture. When we are translating, it is difficult and challenging for us to completely and exactly convey the core cultural connotation of the words and make the target audience fully comprehend the meaning.

Example 1:

ST: 氧气瓶子一晚上消耗三四十罐,都是我们护士自己搬,然后他们就频繁地换下去,都成了女汉子。

TT: We used 30 to 40 tanks of oxygen every night. Our nurses had to carry and change the tanks on their own. They all showed how strong they were.

“女汉子” is a culture-loaded expression in our social culture. According to the definition that “女汉子” refer to those who think of themselves or considered by the public to be similar to the men. In daily life, they are uninhibited and not afraid of hardship and be forthright in life. In the documentary, the nurses are called “女汉子” on account of that they carried and changed the tanks on their own like a tough man. The translator adopts an object clause to show nurses’ manhood so as to vividly convey the original and inherent meaning, which aims to make the target audience more clearly about the documentary. “They all showed how strong they were.” also express the tenacity and active in responding against the Coronavirus epidemic.

Example 2:

ST: 养兵千日, 用兵一时。

TT: Thousands of days of training, just for one day's battle.

Four-character idioms are the essence of Chinese culture, precipitating the excellent and brilliant culture. In the process of C-E translation, four-character idioms are the most critical to translate from Chinese to English. There are no any accurate words or phrases to replace the Chinese idioms in English. According to Nida's theory that the meaning should be given priority, thus, the translator uses the method of literal translation to express “养兵千日” as “Thousands of days of training”, and equivalent functional translation to express “用兵一时” as “just for one day's battle”. This translation not only saves the space in the subtitle, but also conveys the inherent meaning of these two idioms.

Example 3:

ST: 春运使事情更加严峻,这是地球上最大的人口迁移。

TT: What complicated things even more: the Spring Festival travel rush, the largest human migration on the planet.

In this example, “春运”, a culture-loaded word, is short for Spring Festival and transportation, which means a large-scale transportation pressure phenomenon during the Chinese lunar New Year. It may be perplexing for foreigners to comprehend this culture-loaded word for the first time. So the translator translates “春” into “Spring Festival”, and “运” into “travel rush”. Travel rush vividly depicts the speed and quantity of people moving around. This translation can facilitate the target audience understanding the core meaning

4.1.2 Liberal translation

Liberal translation accounts for the meaning of the sentences by adopting words and phrases in the target language, which are different from the original form of the source language. Liberal translation simply retains the content of the source language but not retain the equivalence of the form between the source language and target language. There are many colloquial and conventional words in the documentary CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19. The confusion may strike the foreign audience because of their supposed inadequate knowledge of the Chinese culture. Therefore, the translator adopts the method of Liberal translation in order to make the foreign audience understand the meaning when watching the documentary.

Example 4:

ST: 因为整个传染病医院,一个是危重病人需要,比如上呼吸机,监护仪不能停,如果一停,靠医生护士去捏皮球会很危险很麻烦,怕影响病人救治。

TT: This hospital for infectious diseases was meant to treat those in critical condition. So if ventilators and monitors went down due to a power outage, medics would have to use manual re-breathing pumps.

In this case, the doctor described the whole situation of rescuing the patients when receiving the reporter's interview. The doctor said that “捏皮球” was used under emergency circumstances, such as power cut-off and the ventilator could not work normally. So doctors hereby must take medical operation with the manual re-breathing pumps to help patients get breath again. The manual re-breathing pumps were commonly known as “皮球” in the medical field in China. There is no exactly equal word in the English language to express the meaning of “捏皮球”. So, the translator expresses the real meaning by connecting the screen on the documentary and translates “捏皮球” into “use manual re-breathing pumps”, which meet the requirement of functional equivalence and make the target audience understand the meaning of the text documentary.

Example 5:

ST: 如果我这个事情我不做，我说句不好听的话，我连吃饭的资本都没有了。

TT: If didn't do it, then we don't have the right to call ourselves doctors.

The doctor says “吃饭” in the documentary is not the real situation of having meals but a metaphor. “饭” hereby means a right or a qualification, which means earning one's living in English language. In this specific context, it means to practice medicine or qualify as a doctor. If the translator translates the “吃饭” into “having meals”, the audience may feel confused and cannot get the logic of this sentence. Therefore, the author adopts “we don't have the right to call ourselves doctors.”

Example 6:

ST: 你自己觉得挺得意的？我妈啥也没说，她说你得瑟个啥。

TT: You are looking all proud of yourself? She didn't say much, just told me there's no reason to show off.

“得意” and “得瑟” are two common spoken words in Chinese daily life, which refer to no corresponding words in the target language. In the footage of the documentary, the reporter asks Fengfeng, who buys the medicine for the people, how he can bring many such packages of medicine at the same time. Fengfeng says he comes up with a method to hang the medicine around his body, feeling very proud and satisfied while talking to the reporter. Hereby, “得意” and “得瑟” refer to be proud, satisfaction and show off respectively. So the translator translates “得意” into “proud of yourself” and “得瑟” into “show off”, which helps the target audience get the information directly and know the subtitle as the original audience.

Example 7:

ST: 我说散开散开，但两秒钟就又排满了。这黑压压的一片。

TT: I asked everyone to spread out, but within seconds people flooded back in again. It was so crowded.

In this example, the documentary shot shows that numerous people with symptoms appear in the hospital. “黑压压” means a state that lots of people are standing in line for the treatment. Nowadays, people always use this word to describe somewhere packed with throngs and crowds. If the translator expresses the word “黑压压” into “black”, the target audience will be perplexed by the meaning. In order to make the target audience have the same response to the Chinese audience, the translator translates “黑压压” into “crowded”, which conveys the sheer size of the population and reflects the virulence of the Coronavirus.

Example 8:

ST: 当时我们的考虑让现在已有的医院改造成能够救治确诊患者的医院，让方舱医院作为轻症患者的医院。

TT: At that time, we considered modifying existing hospitals to allow them to take in more confirmed cases while temporary hospitals were used for mild cases

During the Conronavirus epidemic, the Chinese government converted the public gymnasiums into temporary hospitals so as to cure the patients with mild symptoms. These hospitals are temporary, which means they should be closed when the last patient recovered and discharged from the hospital. Therefore, the translator translates the “方舱医院” into “temporary hospitals” according to its feature and property.

4.1.3 Literal translation

The literal translation is the first method that comes to our mind when we are translating. The literal translation is a method to maintain the form of the source language and target language. Therefore, translators sometimes endeavor to pursue literal translation in the subtitle translation.

Example 9:

ST: 为了排查更多的新冠肺炎感染者，李枫要走访“网格”里的1000多位居民了解他们的健康状况。

TT: To uncover any Coronavirus cases, Li Feng has to check and verify the health status of a thousand residents in what she calls the “grid”.

“网格” is a culture-loaded word which means the Wuhan city standardizes the urban community grid on the basis of a standard of 300-500 households or 1000 permanent inhabitants and equips grid workers in accordance with the standard of “one grid one grid worker” since 2019. The basic daily work of the grid is serving community residents so as to meet their basic requirements. In this example, the translator adopts the translation method of literal translation to deal with it, instead of the literal translation with annotation on the screen, which meets the form equivalence of the functional equivalence and saves space. What's more, the target audience can infer the meaning of “grid” from the synchronized screen of the documentary.

Example 10:

ST: 妈妈去打怪兽了知道吗？不要打怪兽。那你去打怪兽？

TT: Mom is going to fight the monster. No. Don't leave me. Sweetheart, mom has to go.

In this example, the mother is telling her young child that she will fight against the Coronavirus. Here, the mother uses a metaphor to compare the Coronavirus as a monster, which aims to make her child understand and also in line with child's logic. Thus, the translator retains this style and handles it with literal translation to retain the original taste of the text. In this context, the “fight the monster” is for the target audience to comprehend and achieve the rule of functional equivalence.

4.2 Syntactical Level

Due to the different way of thinking, there is a huge difference in Syntactical Level between Chinese and English. Chinese is a parataxis language with more short and active sentences while English is a hypotaxis language with more long sentences and passive sentences. Syntactical Level equivalence refers to the style and characteristic that can be reproduced as much as possible under the premise of keeping the original language. The translated text should not be restricted to the formal equivalence of the source language but the content equivalence. Hence, the translator must accurately distinguish the discrepancy between these two languages and make some changes in restructuring the sentences to maintain the original and core meaning of the source language and cater to the language habits of the target audience.

4.2.1 Sentence restructuring

Due to the distinct difference between Chinese and English, sentence restructuring is the most-needed procedure in C-E translation. The translation itself is the restructuring of the language. The author must adopt methods to adjust the order of the lexeme in the process of translating so as to make the foreign audience get the meaning.

Example 11:

ST: 不过由于早期的很多症状和流感相似，新冠肺炎被错认成普通流感。

TT: However, it was mistaken for the common flu due to the many similar early symptoms between influenza and COVID-19.

According to the different structure between Chinese and English, Chinese insist on the reason at the beginning of the sentence, while English insists on the result. The Functional Equivalence prefers the content to the form. Thus, the translator adjusts the structure of the original sentence during the process of translating, where he puts the result “it was mistaken for the common flu” at the beginning. The sentence “由于早期的很多症状和流感相似” is adjusted as an adverbial clause of cause in the end, which not only consists with the English language but also makes the sentence more authentic and concise.

Example 12:

ST: 一些已收治不明原因肺炎患者的医院，尽管拉响了警报，但没有及时采取措施。

TT: And while some hospitals that had taken in patients with unknown pneumonia had raised an alert, they were slow in taking action.

In this example, the “一些已收治不明原因肺炎患者的” is a long prepositive attributive of the word “医院”. The translator transforms the pre-attribute to the post attributive, which makes it clear for the target audience to figure out the structure and component of the sentence as well as in accordance with the logy of the English and the functional equivalence.

Example 13:

ST: 2月初, 因做手术而被感染的周宁医生· 身体康复重返前线

TT: In early February, Dr. Zhou Ning who was earlier infected while performing a surgery recovered and returned to the frontline.

The attributive is very common in both Chinese and English or any other language in the word. When you get involved yourself in studying, you will figure out that Chinese prefers the premodifier before the nouns while the English prefers the postmodifier before the nouns, especially the nouns are modified by complicated modifiers. In this example, the translator adopts an attribute clause to modify the subject “Dr. Zhou Ning”, which is highly common in English.

4.2.2 Conversion of voice

Active voice is commonly used in Chinese while passive voice in English. It is necessary to change the voice in the process of C-E translating. The Conversion of voice can better suit the habit of the native English speaker and make them clearly comprehend the translated text.

ST	TT
Example 14: 在打仗的过程中要求民众要躲到地下掩体里边去是为使他能够保存生命,免受到伤害。	During a war, people <u>are required</u> to hide in bunkers so that they can survive and avoid injuries.
Example 15: 武汉外环上面到武汉的所有的高速路口全部上了警力· 像这些市内可以出城的快速路也上了警力。	All the junctions on the outer ring leading to Wuhan <u>were staffed</u> with police, as well as other roads in and out of Wuhan.
Example 16: 要一张床空出来了· 哪怕是床上遗体还没抬走就已经开始来预订床位了。就到这样的程度。	Even if doctors were still removing a deceased body, that bed <u>was already reserved</u> for the next patient.

The original sentences in example 14 and 15 are in active voice in Chinese, but the translator changes it into passive voice in English. We do not exactly know the doer of the “要求” and “上”. Therefore, the translator transforms the active voice to the passive voice and no need to abide by the structure of the original sentence, which help do avoid the blunt translation and make the sentence more logical. In example 16, the original sentence stresses the tension of the hospital bed. The translator turns the active voice into a passive voice to convey the darkness of that situation and make the target audience give rise to the same feeling as the source audience.

4.2.3 Conjunction

Chinese is characterized by parataxis and the sentence mostly connects by the relation of inner logy. On the contrary, English is featured by hypotaxis and the sentence mostly concatenated by a conjunction to express the inner logical and semantic relation. Hence, the frequency of utilization of conjunction is high in English, and we have to add conjunction in the subtitle C-E translation.

Example 17:

ST: 湖北省和武汉市都迎来了新领导· 逾620名公职人员受到纪律处分。

TT: Both Hubei Province and the city of Wuhan ushered in new leaders, while over 620 Wuhan government officials and employees received disciplinary punishments.

The original sentence in Chinese indicates a progressive relationship between these three clauses. The sentence "over 620 Wuhan government officials and employees received disciplinary punishments" is the reason of the previous two sentences. So, the translator takes amplification and adds a conjunction "while" to link the sentence together as well as to make the target audience get the meaning as the source audience, which meets the requirement of the functional equivalence.

Example 18:

ST: 看着病人那么重，收不进去，心里很伤感。

TT: It made me feel really depressed. At the hospital, I saw patients who were in serious condition but couldn't be admitted.

The original sentence in Chinese does implicate adversative relation. There are no adversative conjunctions in the sentence but for its internal logical relation. In order to make the target audience have the same feeling as the source audience, the translator adds the conjunction "but" in the subtitle and meets the requirement of the functional equivalence, and the accuracy of the source language can be maintained.

Example 19:

ST: 12月份，我们不知道，医院还没有接触过的病人。

TT: We weren't aware of it back in December as the hospital simply didn't have such patients.

There is a causal relation between the sentence "We weren't aware of it back in December" and "the hospital simply didn't have such patients." The translator adds a conjunction "as" so as to illustrate the logic of the sentence. What's more, the translated version is shorter than the source text, which meets the requirement of the functional equivalence.

Example 20:

ST: 那时候我没有见到整个的设计图纸，整个流程能不能满足对于抗击新冠这种传染病的要求。

TT: I didn't get to see the blueprint of the hospital, so I was worried if the process would meet the requirements of fighting the novel Coronavirus.

There are two clauses that are separated by a comma. This type of sentence is very common in Chinese. We will clearly figure out there is an implicit causal relationship between these two sentences. Hence, the translator adds the conjunction "so" to link up these two clauses, which retain the original meaning of the Chinese subtitle and make the sentence more coherent.

4.2.4 Present participle

In this section, we will talk about the present participle. The "V-ing" form is common in English, which can serve as the components of attributive, predicative, complement and adverbials. In subtitle translation, the usages of present participle can make sentences fluent and cater for the target audience in understanding the core meaning.

Example 21:

ST: 为了解决床位严重短缺的问题，数十家综合医院开始进行改造，把常规病房改为收治新冠肺炎重症患者的隔离病房。

TT: To meet the acute shortage of beds, dozens of general hospitals began modifying their regular wards, turning them into quarantine rooms for treating Coronavirus patients in serious condition.

In this example, "turning" plays a role as an adverbial clause of the result. In English, this kind of method is very common in dealing with the structure of sentence. The translator adds the present participle word "turning" embodies not only the functional equivalence, but also the decision of the Chinese government to fight against the Coronavirus and try full their best to heal the patients.

Example 22:

ST: 中央政府做出另一项紧急决定从全国各地派遣医疗队支援武汉。

TT: So, the central government made another emergency decision, sending in medical workers from other parts of China to assist Wuhan.

The “sending” in this example plays a role as an object complement to show that our government’s accurate judge of the epidemic and its decisive decisions result in valuable treatment time in the fight against the epidemic. At the same time, the emergent action also reflects the China’s spirit of monolithic solidarity and not to shrink from hardships and crisis.

Example 23:

ST:

1月25日大年初一,近平主持召开中央政治局常务委员会会议,他向奋战在疫情防控一线工作的全国广大医务工作者和同志们表示衷心的感谢。

TT : On January 25th, the first day of the Lunar New Year, Xi Jinping chaired another Politburo Standing Committee meeting, expressing his gratitude towards medics and people working at the frontline.

In this example, “expressing” leads as an adverbial clause of purpose which conveys the encouragement of our Party and government to the medical workers and the determination to fight against the epidemic. Moreover, the translator adopts the form of the present participle, which conveys the meaning logically and concisely and retains the original sentence’s core intention. The target audience can easily get an understanding of the meaning without thinking deeply.

4.3 Contextual Level and Textual Level

Contextual and textual level equivalence is comparable to stylistic equivalence in the translation. Nida (2004) emphasized the importance of the stylistic equivalence in the book *The Theory and Practice of Translation* by saying “though style in the secondary to content and text, it is nevertheless important.” The language of the documentary *CHINA’S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19* is mainly character interviews and monologues. The language style is divided into formal language and informal language. The usage of vocabulary and sentence pattern is based on literal translation, focusing on the form equivalence of the source language and the target language.

Example 24:

ST:

2月2日, 中国提出了“四应”要求, 应收尽收、应治尽治、应检尽检、应隔尽隔。如果要实现所有患者尽快“应收尽收”, 每天都需要建成两座火神山规模的医院。

TT : On Feb 2nd, China started implementing the policy of ensuring that all those in need were tested, isolated, hospitalized or treated. If all of them were to be immediately accommodated, two Huoshenshan hospitals would have to be built every day.

“应收尽收、应治尽治、应检尽检、应隔尽隔” are four-character structures during the period time of the fight against COVID-19. The four-character structures here are translated with passive voice, which is in accord with the language habit of English countries and the translator also endeavours to retain the meaning of the source language at the same time. This translation from primly saves the space of subtitle and makes the source language and target language appear simultaneously in the subtitle. The target language audience can totally understand what these four-character structures convey.

Example 25:

ST:

1月25日大年初一,近平主持召开中央政治局常务委员会会议,他向奋战在疫情防控一线工作的全国广大医务工作者和同志们表示衷心的感谢。这次会议首次提出疫情防控已经成为中国当时最重要的工作。习近平强调各级政府必须按照全面动员、全面部署、全面加强工作。

TT : On January 25th, the first day of the Lunar New Year, Xi Jinping chaired another Politburo Standing Committee meeting, expressing his gratitude towards medics and people working at the frontline. The meeting made containing the spread of the epidemic the most important task for China. Xi also stressed that governments of all levels must be mobilized to strengthen their work and undertake comprehensive plans.

President Xi Jinping put forward this sentence at a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. This is a high-level conference in China, so the language and format of the content are highly formal. This translation shows that the translator pays attention to the form of the source language when making subtitle translation. The translator also adjusts the position in the translation, conveying that the purpose of “mobilization” is to “strengthen the work”, which strengthen the internal logic between sentences. It also reflects the equivalence between the contextual and textual level. If the

underlined sentence adopts the translation method of Example 24, like "Xi Jinping also stressed that governments of all levels must be mobilized, deployed and strengthened." This translation does not accurately convey the internal logical connection of these sentences, and the target language audience may not be able to complete interpretation at the first time.

Example 26:

ST:

中国它还是一个集体主义。也就是说因为你救治的它不是一个个人的个体的问题了。抗疫的过程已经不单单是个医疗问题，它已经影响了整个的经济的文化的社会的各个方面了。我们觉得把这个事情，如果能够尽快地把它做好，实际上对于社会各个方面都是一种英雄主义。

TT : China has a collectivist society. Your efforts in saving lives aren't just an individual matter. The fight against the epidemic is no longer just a medical issue, but also an economic, cultural and social issue. We feel that if we can do our job well and swiftly, then it's a form of heroism for society.

This text was extracted from the interview between the doctor and the reporter. The whole style of this text is informal, colloquial and repetitive. In the first sentence, "它" refers to "China". Thus, the translator adopts omission in the target subtitle, retaining and presenting the real subject "China". In the second sentence, "它" is the object of "救命" in the source language. Obviously, the doctor saves people's lives during the fight against the epidemic. Thus, the translator translated "它" into "saving lives", which conforms to the contextual and textual level. China regards the epidemic to a fight to defend people's health, so the translator translates "抗疫的过程" into "The fight against the epidemic". "The fight" not only shows the severity of the epidemic but also conveys the determination of the Chinese government to totally defeat the epidemic. Besides, it is consistent with the name of the documentary, reflecting the equivalent of the contextual and textual level.

The above changes are based on the English language habits to deepen the audience knowledge and understanding of the documentary content in the target language.

Example 27:

ST:脾气还挺大?

TT: Pretty hot temper?

Example 28:

ST: 怎么琢磨出来的?

TT: How did you come up with this?

Example 29:

ST:饭自己准备吗?

TT: Prepare the meals yourself?

The above sentences are dialogues between the reporter and the residents from the documentary. They are more colloquial than the monologue because they belong to the loose and incomplete fragment. The translator endeavors to remake the primary traits of the source language for the purpose of attaining the functional equivalence between the original text and the translated text. In example 27, the translator uses an incomplete sentence to retain the source sentence's original favour and informal pattern. In example 28, the translator adopts a collocation "come up with" to preserve the thinking process of the original sentence. In example 29, the author uses an imperative sentence to save the oral style of the source sentence.

4.4 Suggestion for Improvement

Due to the limitation of this paper, there are many other cases that are not discussed. The following suggestion may provide some help for scholars to conduct further research and improve subtitle translation.

Firstly, the translator should pay more attention to the Chinese characteristic and historical meanings when translating the Chinese four-character idioms and culture-loaded words. Firstly, the word "女汉子" is translated as "They all showed how strong

they were" according to the inner meaning and relation of the sentence. Nevertheless, we can as well translate "女汉子" as "They are all tough women". The word "tough" means persistent and dauntless. The word "tough women" relevantly describes that the medical workers are not afraid of hardship, do not easily ask for help, and take care of everything independently.

Secondly, the word "方舱医院" is translated as "temporary hospitals" in the subtitle. However, we can also figure out that "方舱医院" can be translated into "makeshift hospital" or "Fangcang shelter hospital". Scholars in the future can adopt different translation expression on this word.

Thirdly, the sentence "不过由于早期的很多症状和流感相似·新冠肺炎被错认成普通流感" is translated into "However, it was mistaken for the common flu due to the many similar early symptoms between influenza and COVID-19." The subject "it" may cause confusion and the target audience don't actually know what does it mean and take some time to comprehend until the end. Hence, this sentence can be modified as "However, COVID-19 was mistaken for the common flu due to the early similar symptoms with influenza." This version keep the formal equivalence with the source language and the audience can easily know that the COVID-19 was diagnosed as influenza at the beginning.

5. Conclusion

This paper is carried out with 29 examples to study the subtitle translation of the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19* from the perspective of functional equivalence.

5.1 Major Findings

This paper adopts the theory of functional equivalence to analyze the subtitle of documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19* from lexical, syntactical, contextual and textual level. The major findings of this paper as follows:

First of all, from the lexical level, the documentary *CHINA'S FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19* is one of the documentaries against the Coronavirus, embodying the unique experience in the field of curing the patients with Coronavirus. Thus, some culture-loaded words and sentences with Chinese features are shown in the lexical and syntactic levels. The translator should convey the core meaning of the words and sentences with different translation skills, such as adaptation, amplification, and omission. The target audience response should also be focused on.

Secondly, the subtitle is strictly restricted by time and space. The subtitle content should be in brief and express no more than the two lines at the bottom of the screen. In addition, on the contextual and textual level, the translator should integrate the voice, images, style and translated text into one. The translation should be consistent with the source style and be effective and concise for the target audience' to comprehend.

In conclusion, the translation of the documentary subtitle should be loyal to the source text and think highly of the audience response. When in the process of translation, the translator should be exactly aware of the selection of the translation strategies and methods in the aspects of the lexical, syntactical, contextual and textual level.

5.2 Limitations and Suggestion

First, subtitle translation is a large and complex process, requiring the translator should be well familiar with the culture between source and target language. Due to the lack of limitation in my knowledge and personal ability, the cases quoted above could not express my opinion by combining the theory.

Secondly, the other cases in the documentary do not be discussed from the other translation methods and strategies. I sincerely hope the further research will cover and analyse the subtitles from different theories, perspectives and strategies.

Last, it is found that there are still shortcomings in the aspects of Suggestion for Improvement, hoping the scholars and experts could make more improvement in the field of subtitle translation.

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