

# Translating Video Game Texts: A Boundary Awareness Theoretical Perspective

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**Abstract:** In recent years, domestic games have developed rapidly overseas with remarkable achievements. Chinese-English translation on game texts plays an important role in the overseas expansion of domestic games. Among these achievements, *Genshin Impact* is a typical successful example of domestic games exported, and the linguistic features of this game text are that there are many dialogues, sensory verbs, and multi-verbs. Based on Boundary Awareness Theory, the study analyses the Chinese-English translation of sensory verbs and multi-verbs in *Genshin Impact* using the data collection method, documentary method, and case analysis method. Then it explores the translation techniques of the game texts. It is found that the explicit techniques of adaptation and transcreation are deletion and addition: deleting sensory verbs containing subjective consciousness; adding verbs containing boundaries in multi-verbs.

**Keywords:** Boundary Awareness Theory; Game Texts Translation; *Genshin Impact*.

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## 1. Introduction

Before the advent of arcade games, video games, and other forms in the 1980s, "game" was still offline<sup>1</sup>. With the emergence of digital technology, "game" has become associated with terms such as "video games", "e-sports", "mobile games" and so on<sup>2</sup>. In the contemporary era, video games have evolved from mere forms of entertainment to multifaceted expressions of economic, cultural, and social values. "Game" refers to "video game" throughout the study<sup>3</sup>.

The term "game texts" refers to the symbols embedded in the game or transmitted through the game, represented as the operation of language<sup>4</sup>. According to the content of the text and the plot of the game, game texts can be divided into two categories: system texts and plot texts<sup>5</sup>. System texts include the user interface, introduction, tutorials, etc., and are texts that are not directly related to the game plot. Plot texts include narrative texts and dialogue texts, which are directly related to the game plot<sup>6</sup>. In terms of form, both the system texts and the plot text are fragmented, as evidenced by the fact that they are mostly short words and phrases, which reduces the interface footprint<sup>7</sup>. In terms of content, the system texts are characterized by gameplay, as evidenced by the provision of interactive guidelines for the player, the establishment of an emotional connection, and the use of cultural elements to describe the names of skills, equipment, and items<sup>8</sup>. Plot texts are characterized by a colloquial and culturally

loaded style, as evidenced by the use of lower word domains and more inflectional words<sup>9</sup>.

Chinese online games originated in the mid-1990s, and after more than 20 years of development, Chinese video games have shown a booming trend in overseas markets. According to Newzoo, a game market research organization, the global mobile game market reached a total revenue of US\$90.8 billion in 2021, and China ranked first in the world with US\$31.37 billion, accounting for 34.5 percent of the total<sup>10</sup>. In 2021, the overseas market revenue of China's self-developed games reached US\$18.03 billion, up 16.59% year on year<sup>11</sup>. The total revenue of the top 30 domestic games going overseas reached US\$11.5 billion. It is predicted that the overseas market will grow by 62% in the next two years<sup>12</sup>. Translation plays an important role in the overseas expansion of Chinese games. Therefore, game translation is the focus of academic attention.

This study chooses *Genshin Impact* as an example. *Genshin Impact* is a two-dimensional open-world RPG (role-playing game) developed by domestic game company, miHoYo. Acting as travelers from another world, the players embark on a journey to reunite with their long-lost siblings and unravel the mysteries of themselves, as well as explore the stories of this land named Teyvat.

*Genshin Impact* has become a phenomenal work in the international dissemination of Chinese culture in the digital era,

thanks to its precise audience positioning, innovative cultural expression, extreme technological pursuit, comfortable co-creation ecology, and localization strategy based on players' needs. In 2023, *Genshin Impact* was awarded the PlayStation Partner Award and TGA (The Game Awards), the Oscar of the game industry. In 2021, *Genshin Impact* won the Grand Award, which is given to the top three selling Asian titles in the world, and the TGA Award for Best Mobile Game. The wonderfully rich cultural kernel in Chinese games is the basis for attracting players, while Chinese-English translation is the medium and bridge that ensures such a cultural kernel reaches all corners of the world.

### 1.1. Research Questions

Game translation generally includes two types of forms: Chinese-English translation and English-Chinese translation, both of which focus on exploring translation strategies and techniques. As far as the research on Chinese-English translation of games is concerned, the pre-studies generally discuss the translation strategies of names, plot dialogues, and Chinese elements in games from the perspectives of Purpose Theory, Text Type Theory, Functional Translation Theory, and Ecological Translation Theory. The pre-studies have the following problems:

Fewer studies on Chinese-English translation. The translation of game texts is mostly concentrated in the area of Foreign-Chinese translation skills of imported games, with 21 English-Chinese translations and 17 Chinese-English translations. This gap can hardly provide more references for Chinese-English translation of Chinese games.

Literal translation and free translation are the main translation strategies of game texts translation. The former studies point out that transliteration is used to convey cultural information in the source language, and word-by-word translation is used to disentangle cultural meanings. The latter studies point out that adaptation and transcreation are commonly used translation techniques. Among them, adaptation studies point out that keywords are replaced to match the target language culture, and cultural words are replaced in the source language. The studies of transcreation point out that common expressions are used in the target language culture and neologisms are used to explain the self-made words in games.

In summary, although the academic community has studied the translation techniques of the game, the pre-studies result in the field of free translation are still slightly weak. Even though the academic community proposes that the game translation should adopt adaptation and transcreation, the specific operation is still unsatisfactory. Accordingly, the study takes *Genshin Impact* as an example to explore the Chinese-English translation techniques of game texts. The research question of the study is:

- (1) What is to be adapted when translating game texts and why?
- (2) What is to be transcreated when translating game texts and why?

There are three reasons why the study chooses *Genshin Impact* as an example.

**Firstly, *Genshin Impact* has a great influence overseas.** *Genshin Impact* has been launched in 175 countries and regions and has been translated into 13 languages. It quickly occupied the top of the best-selling list of mobile games in major countries

shortly after its first release and won five international awards in just one year<sup>13</sup>. In 2022, *Genshin Impact* was ranked among the top 10 best-selling works in 87 countries and territories around the world and topped the charts in 41 of those countries and territories<sup>14</sup>.

**Secondly, *Genshin Impact* has a lot of Chinese elements.** *Genshin Impact* has been selected as one of the key national cultural export enterprises and projects for 2021-2022. In *Genshin Impact*, the characteristics of Chinese culture are fully embodied in character design, terrain, living, and plot connotation<sup>15</sup>. For example, silk costumes, martial arts, terraced landforms, garden architecture, tea culture, opera culture, contractual spirit, and collectivism are all typical representatives of Chinese culture.

**Thirdly, *Genshin Impact* is characterized by its language.** *Genshin Impact*, as a domestically produced game, is full of Chinese language features, such as the use of literary language to label campaign names<sup>16</sup>. There is a lot of dialogue in its plot texts, and there are a lot of various types of verbs, such as sensory verbs and multi-verbs.

### 1.2. Research Methods

The data collection method, documentary method, and case analysis method are used.

The data collection method refers to the collection of data characteristics of the object of study. In this study, the data collection method is used to collect the number of dialogues in *Bookworm Swordsman*, a story in *Genshin Impact*, and statistically classify the sensory verbs in it.

The documentary method is used to analyze the pre-studies on game texts translation. The documentary method is a literature-based research method. It involves literature review, content analysis, discourse analysis, text analysis, bibliometrics, and so on. Data and information collection methods include network search, database search, physical collection, and so on<sup>17</sup>. Using the documentary method, the study combs the pre-studies on game texts translation both at home and abroad and discovers the problems of pre-studies.

The case analysis method is a research method that studies and analyses typical events or typical cases to seek ideas, methods, and models for solving similar problems in the field concerned. The study analyses the translation techniques of sensory verbs and multi-verbs in *Genshin Impact*.

### 1.3. Boundary Awareness Theory

Boundary Awareness Theory is based on the traditional translation methodology system and the comparison between Chinese and English, pointing out two basic differences between Chinese and English: Chinese and Chinese users have weaker boundary awareness than English, while English and English users have more forward-looking awareness<sup>18</sup>.

(1) The Boundary Awareness Theory proposes that the differences between Chinese and English are mainly reflected in four aspects: collective consciousness VS individual consciousness, two-dimensional aesthetics (two-dimensional focus) VS three-dimensional aesthetics (three-dimensional focus), subject consciousness VS object consciousness, and expansive consciousness VS compressive consciousness.

**Chinese collective consciousness VS English individual consciousness.** Collective consciousness in Chinese means that Chinese has a weak sense of classification, exclusion, and boundary, which can be seen in the unclear structure in Chinese. The individual consciousness of English refers to the fact that English has a strong sense of primary and secondary consciousness and hierarchy, which can be seen from the characteristics of more distinctive main and subordinate structures in English.

**Chinese two-dimensional aesthetics VS English three-dimensional aesthetics.** Chinese has a strong sense of flatness, the main and secondary are not clear, the focus is not prominent, showing a running flat, and the boundaries are weak. English has clear primary and secondary, each sentence forms a focal point, and the language structure has a strong sense of three-dimensionality.

**Chinese subject consciousness VS English object consciousness.** Chinese people exhibit a consciousness of subject-object division in their thinking, while English speakers show a binary subject-object consciousness. The lexicon and syntax of the two languages are characterized by different modes of thinking. The different thinking modes can be seen in three aspects. Firstly, Chinese mixes some subjective speculations in the narrative, while English tends to state objective facts. Secondly, Chinese intentionally or unintentionally blurs the perception of the event, while English describes it more accurately. Thirdly Chinese has a weak sense of time, while English has a strong sense of time.

**Chinese expansive consciousness VS English compressive consciousness.** Chinese has superlatives, repetition of nouns, and hyperbole, and uses fewer false words, which have rhetorical significance or serve the function of chapter articulation. English is more refined, as evidenced by the abundance of derivatives, intransitive verbs, and a variety of words that can express both process and result. The various tense markers in English reflect a strong sense of rules and boundaries.

(2) The second difference between Chinese and English is reflected in prospective awareness and retrospective awareness. Specifically, English leans towards factual awareness, while Chinese tends towards potential awareness; English emphasizes result awareness, while Chinese emphasizes process awareness; English favors deductive awareness, while Chinese favors inductive awareness; English tends towards contrastive awareness, while Chinese tends towards comparative awareness; English expresses object awareness, while Chinese expresses event awareness; English expression emphasizes variation awareness, while Chinese expression emphasizes repetition awareness.

**Chinese potential awareness VS English factual awareness.** Chinese often use words like “possible” “may” and “can” which have a certain degree of flexibility and do not make precise judgments about things and objects. In contrast, English tends to speak more factually. In simple terms, Chinese often leaves room for interpretation in speech, while English generally speaks definitively.

**Chinese process awareness VS English result awareness.** Chinese focuses on processes, while English emphasizes results. This requires occasional prospective process descriptions in Chinese-English translation for smooth expression.

**Chinese inductive awareness VS English deductive awareness.** Due to the lack of stable tense markers in Chinese, its

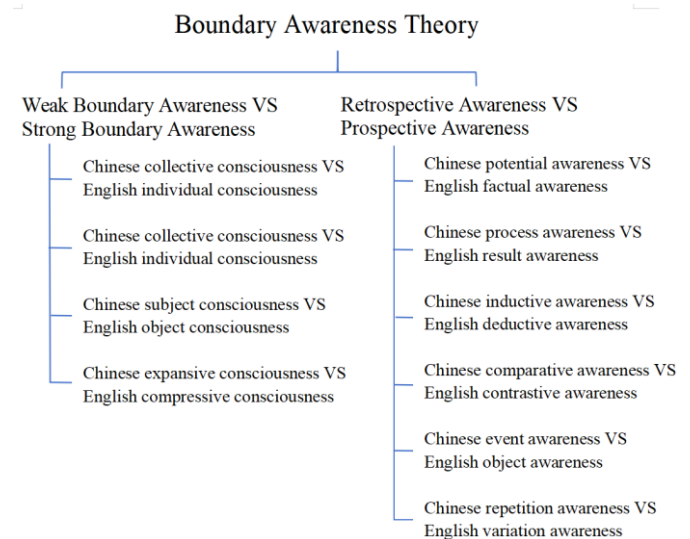
event expression relies heavily on time and logical sequence, resulting in inductive expressions. In contrast, English often presents the main theme first, states the core viewpoint, and then elaborates, forming deductive expressions.

**Chinese comparative awareness VS English contrastive awareness.** Chinese has many incomparable forms that may be translated into English as comparative or even superlative forms. Conversely, English comparative or superlative forms, in English-Chinese translation, need to be translated into non-comparative or superlative forms in Chinese.

**Chinese event awareness VS English object awareness.** Chinese expresses event awareness, while English expresses object awareness. Event-oriented expressions describe the state of events and existence, while object-oriented expressions often involve abstraction and definition of events.

**Chinese repetition awareness VS English variation awareness.** The use of pronouns is also more frequent in English than in Chinese. English dislikes formal repetition or repetition of meaning and often uses synonyms or pronouns instead. Therefore, Chinese-English translation needs to avoid formal repetition, while English-Chinese translation needs to consider whether to use zero-form repetition or repetition of similar language structures.

(3) Based on the differences between Chinese and English, the Boundary Awareness Theory points out that Chinese translation into English needs to enhance the boundaries of the translated text, while English translation into Chinese needs to try to dissolve the boundaries in the language. When translating from Chinese to English, the expression needs to be prospective, while when translating from English to Chinese, the expression needs to be retrospective. (See Map1)



Map 1: Boundary Awareness Theory

#### 1.4. Research Outline

The study consists of four chapters:

Chapter 1 provides a detailed description of the whole task, introducing the research background, questions, methods, and theory of the study.

Chapter 2 focuses on the pre-studies on the game text translation strategies and techniques.

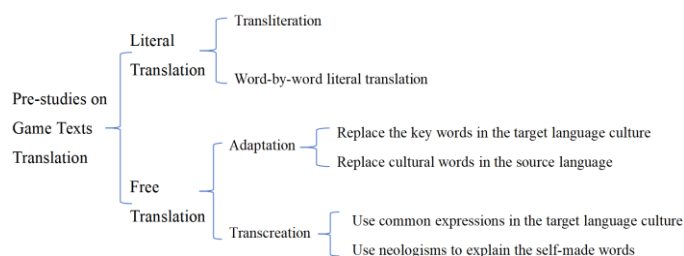
Chapter 3 analyzes translation techniques of game texts

collected from *Bookworm Swordsman*, a story in *Genshin Impact*, based on the Boundary Awareness Theory.

Chapter 4 is a conclusion, including the major findings, significance and limitations.

## 2. Literature Review

To collect the data on Game Text translation, the study will review the literature according to the chart as follows. (See Map2)



Map 2: Pre-studies on Game Translation

The China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database is an effective platform for us to search for previous research on game translation. Using keywords, “游戏文本翻译”, we got 14 journal papers and 71 theses and dissertations. Finally, 9 journal papers and 26 thesis and dissertations were related to game translation.

The pre-studies abroad are searched from the Web of Science (WoS) database. Using the keywords: “video game translation”, we got 117 papers in its Core Collection in the last 5 years. After the selection of categories: “language and linguistics”, 14 papers are related to the game translation strategies. Most of them are translation studies in Japanese, Arabic, Persian, etc. Only 3 papers discuss translation between Chinese and English.

Among the total 38 papers mentioned above, 17 papers belong to Chinese-English translation studies and 21 documents belong to English-Chinese translation studies. (See Table1)

Table 1: The Numbers of Pre-studies

		C-E translation	E-C translation	Sum
CNKI	Journal Papers	5	4	9
	Thesis and Dissertation	11	15	26
WOS		1	2	3
Sum		17	21	38

These papers focus on translation strategies, including literal translation and free translation. Among them, 11 papers are related to literal translation, and 12 papers are related to free translation. The results of pre-studies on literal translation and free translation are as follows.

### 2.1. Pre-studies of Literal Translation on Game Text Translation

Literat translation is used in part of game texts. Literal translation is the translation that restores the literal meaning of the original text to the maximum extent possible<sup>19</sup>. As mentioned above, 11 papers are related to literal translation.

The pre-studies on literal translation at home point out that transliteration is used to convey cultural information in the source language, and word-by-word translation is used to disentangle cultural meanings.

The pre-studies abroad do not mention literal translation.

The detailed translation techniques of literal translation on game texts translation are as follows.

Firstly, **transliteration is used to convey cultural information in the source language**. Transliteration is the conversion of the letter system or the transmission of sounds from the source language to the target language<sup>20</sup>.

[1]ST: DOTA2

TT: 刀塔2

[Analysis]Example 1 is an English-Chinese translation. “DOTA2” is short for “Defense of the Ancients 2”, the name of a video game. “Defense” means the act of protecting somebody or something from attack, criticism, etc. In Chinese, “刀” is a common weapon used in ancient wars. “塔”, one of the typical buildings in ancient China, was used in ancient wars to monitor the battlefield environment and information transmission<sup>21</sup>. This is a transliteration.

Secondly, **word-by-word translation is used to disentangle cultural meanings**.

[2]ST: 祁云修为太浅，如果境界够高，便会察觉到此时在这女媧宫窥探的**神识**有十几道之多，分别来自不同方向。

TT: If Qi Yun is powerful enough, he would notice that there are more than a dozen mind senses in different directions snooping in the palace at the same time.

[Analysis]Example 2 is a Chinese-English translation. “神识” is a fictional concept often found in Chinese works on immortality. In this example, “神” refers to the character’s thoughts, and “识” refers to his perceptions. The term “神识” refers to the power of an immortal cultivator to detect other people through his or her mind by releasing long-distance senses. The translation uses “mind sense” to directly translate the source and essence of this power, incorporating Chinese mythological elements into the translation<sup>22</sup>. This is a word-by-word translation.

### 2.2. Pre-studies of Free Translation on Game Texts Translation

Free translation mainly focuses on adaptation and transcreation. Free translation refers to the expression of cultural information in free translation. Free translation takes into account the smoothness and beauty of the translation based on retaining the original meaning. As mentioned above, 12 papers are related to free translation.

The pre-studies on free translation at home point out that adaptation and transcreation are commonly used translation methods. Among them, adaptation studies point out that keywords are replaced to match the target language culture, and cultural words are replaced in the source language. The study of transcreation points out that common expressions are used in the target language culture and neologisms are used to explain the self-made words in games.



The pre-studies abroad do not mention literal translation.

(1) Adaptation is a translation by rewriting the content of the original text, changing the word order, and adjusting the structure of the original text. The detailed translation techniques of adaptation on game texts translation are as follows.

Firstly, **keywords are replaced to match the target language culture.**

[3]ST: The Sad Mummy

TT: 殇之木乃伊

[Analysis]Example 3 is an English-Chinese translation of a character's title. This character is set as a short zombie with a moss-colored bandage all over his body, who has miserable background and dies alone. In Chinese, “殇” refers to those who died in childbirth or died for their country<sup>23</sup>.

Secondly, **cultural words are replaced in the source language.**

[4]ST: 艾斯: 最近你们两人都在很努力地街头表演, 有什么目标了吗?

陆逊: 小丑的目标是努力表演, 宣传马戏团, 终有一日要和团长等所有团员们一起上红馆!

艾斯: 怎么才上红馆? 应该上春晚才对!

陆逊: 喔! 春晚春晚!

TT: Ace: You two really work hard at the performance. Do you have any plans?

Lu Xun: I hope that one day our circus can tour around the country with you, commander.

Ace: And then tour around the world, right?

Lu Xun: Yeah, yeah, tour around the world!

[Analysis]Example 4 is a Chinese-English translation, in which “春晚” is short for “China Media Group Spring Festival Gala”. In the original text, “春晚” has Chinese culture and rhymes with “红馆”, a small fork stage, forming a contrast and highlighting the humorous effect. In the English translation, “春晚” is treated as a “tour around the world”<sup>24</sup>.

(2) Transcreation is applied in the unique expressions that distinguish one game from others. Transcreation is a kind of free translation that requires creativity on the part of the translator<sup>25</sup>. The detailed translation techniques of transcreation on game texts translation are as follows.

Firstly, **common expressions are used in the target language culture.**

[5]ST: For the darkness!

TT: 黑暗万岁!

[Analysis]Example 5 is an English-Chinese translation. This sentence is a line that is shouted when a character is charging. The translation, borrowed from Chinese culture, uses “万岁”<sup>26</sup>.

Secondly, **neologisms are used to explain the self-made words in games.** Game designers are fond of using words that belong to existing Standard English, then slightly changing one or

more letters in that word while keeping its overall appearance.

[6]ST: Stompa

TT: 蛮人巨车

[Analysis]Example 6 is an English-Chinese translation. “Stompa” is the name of a car, which is derived from “stomp”, meaning to walk with heavy steps often because the stepper is angry. “蛮” means roughness and toughness, and is often used in Chinese culture to refer to the image of a strong and fierce man<sup>27</sup>.

### 2.3. Summary

This chapter finds that pre-studies mainly discuss English-Chinese translation, with relatively few pre-studies focusing on Chinese-English translation of game texts. In addition, pre-studies generally point out that literal translation and free translation are common translation methods for game text translation. However, it is found that there are still deficiencies in free translation when dealing with game text translation. Pre-studies have not carried out in-depth research on the “degree” and “scope” of adaptation and transcreation, so what to adapt and why? What to transcreate and why? There is no satisfactory way. Accordingly, the study intends to take *Genshin Impact* as an example and explore the translation techniques of *Genshin Impact* under Boundary Awareness Theory, and the specific research questions are:

(1) What is to be adapted when translating game texts and why?

(2) What is to be transcreated when translating game texts and why?

Chapter 3 takes *Genshin Impact* as an example to explore the Chinese-English translation techniques of game texts.

## 3. Translation Techniques of *Genshin Impact*

Chapter 2 has combed the translation methods of game texts in the pre-studies and finds that adaptation and transcreation still need to be explored in depth. We will discuss the “degree” and “scope” of adaptation and transcreation in game text translation. This chapter takes the *Bookworm Swordsman*, a story with many dialogues in *Genshin Impact*, as a case study, and analyses the translation techniques of sensory verbs and multi-verbs in the texts.

Dialogue is an important part of the game's plot text and plays an integral role in moving the plot forward. The study selects a story containing a great deal of dialogue in *Genshin Impact* titled *Bookworm Swordsman*. *Bookworm Swordsman* is Xingqiu's personal story. Xingqiu, the disciple of the Guhua Clan and second son of the Feiyun Commerce Guild manager, has a chivalrous heart and yearns for justice and fairness for all. *Bookworm Swordsman* tells the story of the traveler meeting Xingqiu who was looking for an out-of-print book, only to find that Chang the Ninth, who had a collection of books, was unfairly forced by debts. Xingqiu read the book while investigating secretly, and finally used his wisdom to help Chang the Ninth out of trouble. He fulfilled his desire to read and did good deeds for others without leaving his name. There are many dialogues in *Bookworm Swordsman*. The number of dialogue parts in this story is as follows: (See Table2)

Table 2: Numbers of dialogues in *Bookworm Swordsman*

	Act 1	Act 2	Act 3	Act 4	Sum
Paimon	20	12	29	17	78
Xingqiu	32	14		34	80
Traveler (Player)	11	9	18	9	47
Chang the Ninth	20		11	17	47
Xu			21	4	25
Centry Maocai		5		4	9
Agent		5		3	8
Other Characters	26	9	30		65

3.1. Translation Techniques

This section analyses the translation techniques of sensory verbs and multi-verbs in the texts.

3.1.1. Translation Techniques on Sensory Verbs

Sensory verbs refer to verbs related to the five sense organs involved in the cognitive process, that is, the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and hands, which are used to perceive the world. Sensory verbs are divided into three categories: sensory action verbs, sensory perception verbs, and sensory link verbs<sup>Error! Reference source not found.</sup>. Sensory action verbs are characterized by intention and place more emphasis on the action itself. Sensory perception verbs are characterized by results and place more emphasis on the effects produced by the action. Sensory link verbs are characterized by state and emphasize the state of the subject. The study sifts and collates the Chinese sensory verbs in *Bookworm Swordsman* and analyses their English translation. There are 76 Chinese sensory verbs in the selected dialogue stories. Among them, there are 58 sensory action verbs, such as “听” and “看”; 5 sensory perception verbs, such as “说是”; and 13 sensory link verbs, such as “看起来”, “看样子”.(See Table3)

Table 3: Numbers of Sensory Verbs in *Bookworm Swordsman*

Classification	Examples	Amount	Emphasis
Sensory Action Verbs	“说”“看”	58	Action
Sensory Perception Verbs	“说是”	1	Effect
Sensory Link Verbs	“看来”“看样子”	13	State
Sum		76	

Due to the abundance of sensory action verbs and sensory link verbs, the translation techniques of sensory action verbs and sensory link verbs are explored. It is found that based on Boundary Awareness Theory, Chinese sensory verbs with objective information need to be translated, while Chinese sensory verbs with subjective awareness need to be deleted.

[1]派蒙: 听说你这里有很多绝版的藏书, 我们想借《提瓦特游览指南》的璃月篇看一看。

Paimon: We’ve heard you’ve got tons of old books lying around, and we wanna borrow the Liyue volume of the *Teyvat Travel Guide*.

[Analysis]Example 1 is Traveller and Paimon borrowing a

book from Chang the Ninth. Traveller and Paimon are looking for the Liyue volume of the *Teyvat Travel Guide*. Before the dialogue takes place, they asked the bookstore owner if they can buy this book, but they were told that the book had been sold out. According to the bookstore owner, Chang the Ninth collects all kinds of books. So, they approached Chang the Ninth and asked to borrow the out-of-print book *Teyvat Travel Guide* to read.

There are two Chinese sensory action verbs in this sentence, “听说” and “看一看”. In this sentence, “听说” is translated as “we have heard”. In other words, “听” is translated as “hear”, which is a direct translation, while “说” is deleted. The other Chinese sensory verb “看一看” is deleted. In conclusion, these Chinese sensory verbs are translated by direct translation and deletion.

Boundary Awareness Difference points out that Chinese does not distinguish between subject and object, with strong continuity and weak boundaries. Both “听” “说” and “看” have a strong sense of subject consciousness. But “听” occurs objectively, while “说” and “看” does not. As mentioned above, “听”(hear) is an action that actually happened in the previous plat. It is what they heard that led them to the next action of coming to borrow books. But “说”(say) and “看”(read) do not actually happen. In English, the subject and object are divided separately, showing the characteristics of strong boundary awareness. So “说” and “看” are deleted. This is an adaptation. When translating from Chinese to English, Chinese sensory verbs with objective information are translated, while Chinese sensory verbs with subjective awareness are deleted.

[2]行秋: 请回吧, 强买强卖的事我是不容的, 何况还是于我有恩的常九爷。

昌虎: 你小子, 看来又想帮老常出头?

Xingqiu: Please leave this place. I will not tolerate an attempt to coerce an honest trader—especially when the one you seek to threaten is one to whom I owe a debt of gratitude.

Changhu: It’s cute that you wanna stick your neck out for Chang, and all...

[Analysis]Example 2 is Changhu’s reaction to Xingqiu’s obstruction. Chang the Ninth forces Chang the Ninth to provide him with goods at a 30% discount, forcing Chang the Ninth to pawn his collection of ancient books in preparation for the loan. Xingqiu, on the other hand, borrows out-of-print books from Chang the Ninth and wants to repay him by seeking justice for him. Xingqiu calls himself a disciple of the Guhua Clan, but the Guhua Clan is a defunct martial arts school. Changhu hears this and becomes even more rampant, preparing to attack Xingqiu with soldiers from Fatui. Fatui is a well-trained fighting organization. Therefore, Changhu judges that Xingqiu is impossible to defeat the Fatui and mocks him for his fool.

There is one Chinese sensory link verb in this sentence, “看来”. In this sentence, “看来” is deleted.

Boundary Awareness Theory points out that Chinese people exhibit a consciousness of subject-object division in their thinking, while English speakers show a binary subject-object consciousness. The Chinese word “看来” actually expresses the speaker’s opinion and is not meant to be seen by eyes, representing Chinese subject consciousness. In contrast, English has object

consciousness. So “看来” is deleted. The translation uses “cute” to imply the speaker’s emotion, which is a transcreation. That is to say, the translation technique of Chinese sensory verbs with subjective awareness is deletion.

### 3.1.2. Translation Techniques on Multi-verbs

Multi-verbs are two or more verbs contained in a single sentence. Multi-verbs are presented in Chinese as run-on sentences. Run-on sentences mean one small sentence after another, which can be broken or joined in many places. The study explores the translation method of Chinese multi-verb based on Boundary Awareness Theory. It is found that verbs containing boundary awareness in multi-verbs need to be added.

[3] 纪芳:不过他住的地方很难找,要先沿着轻策庄后山的栈道一路爬上去...

Jifang: The place where he lives is difficult to get to. You need to head to the mountain just behind Qingce Village, then follow the wooden walkway all the way up...

[Analysis]Example 3 is a route for Traveller provided by bookstore owner Kifang. Traveller and Paimon want to buy the Liyue volume of the *Teyvat Travel Guide* at the bookstore, but they are told that this book has been sold out. The bookstore owner then suggests that they look for Chang the Ninth to borrow this book because Chang the Ninth collects many out-of-print books. Therefore, the bookstore owner introduces Chang the Ninth’s identity and address, which is used to help Traveller visit Chang the Ninth. Qingce Village is a village in the game situated in a remote area and built on a mountain, with a wooden walkway leading to several houses in the back of the mountain.

There are three verbs in this sentence, namely “住” “找” “爬”. This reflects the multi-verb characteristic of Chinese. The Boundary Awareness Theory points out that Chinese has a two-dimensional defocused awareness, while English has a three-dimensional focused awareness. It can be seen in English structure as each sentence forms a focal point due to the clear separation of primary and secondary. In this sentence, the English translation is divided into two sentences. The first sentence treats “住”(live) as a verb in an attributive clause and “找”(get) as an infinitive. In addition, “is” is added to indicate the state of “difficult”. This translation brings out the focus of the action and shows the three-dimensionality of English. In the second sentence, the verb phrase “head to the mountain” is added, and “then” is used to connect the two verbs: “head” and “follow”. This translation has a clear chronological order and enhances English boundary awareness. In short, “is” and “head” are added. This is an adaptation. In other words, the translation technique of addition in multi-verbs refers to increasing verbs containing boundary awareness.

[4]派蒙: 结果你只是换了个地方看书吧!

Paimon: When actually all you meant was you wanted somewhere new to park your backside while you read your book!

[Analysis]Example 4 is Paimon’s flirtation with Xingqiu. Xingqiu claims that he has something else to do before splitting up with the Travellers, and agrees to find another location where they can meet and share their findings. However, when Traveller and Paimon arrive at the meeting after their investigation, they find Xingqiu is reading his book. Paimon teases that Xingqiu was not involved in the investigation, but wanted somewhere new to read

his book.

There are two verbs in this sentence, namely “换” and “看”. This is a reflection of multi-verbs in Chinese. Boundary Awareness Theory points out that Chinese has two-dimensional aesthetics, while English three-dimensional aesthetics is evidenced by its language structure, which is characterized by a strong sense of boundary. There are four verbs in the English translation, namely: adding “mean” to emphasize the content of the object clause, treating “want” as the verb in this object clause, adding “park” as an infinitive to express purpose, and treating “read” as a verb in the temporal clause to express simultaneous occurrence. park has a meaning that is not found in the original Chinese text. The reason for adding “park” instead of other verbs is the action of the characters in the plot. It can be seen that he rests himself while reading his book, which is described as “park”. (See Figure1) All in all, this translation treats multiple verbs as different grammatical components, which reflects English three-dimensional awareness and is a sign of strong boundaries. Among them, “mean” and “park” are added. This is a transcreation because these are actions that are not reflected in the source text. That is, verbs containing boundary awareness in multi-verbs need to be added.



Figure1 “park your backside”

## 3.2. Summary

This chapter takes the *Bookworm Swordsman*, a story with many dialogues in *Genshin Impact*, as a case study, and analyses the translation techniques of sensory verbs and multi-verbs in the texts. Sensory verbs refer to verbs related to the five sense organs involved in the cognitive process. And multi-verbs are two or more verbs contained in a single sentence.

After analysis based on Boundary Awareness Theory, the study found that Chinese sensory verbs with subjective awareness need to be deleted. Verbs containing boundary awareness in multi-verbs need to be added. Deletion and addition are the techniques of adaptation and transcreation mentioned above.

## 3. Conclusion

### 4.1. Major Findings

Domestic games play an important role in the dissemination of Chinese culture overseas, and the plots of the games are told through the game texts, which are mostly dialogues. Therefore, the Chinese-English translation of domestic game texts is very important for the overseas development of games. Pre-studies on game text translation are focused on literal translation and free translation. The former studies point out that transliteration is used

to convey cultural information in the source language, and word-by-word translation is used to disentangle cultural meanings. The latter studies point out that adaptation and transcreation are commonly used translation methods. Among them, adaptation studies point out that keywords are replaced to match the target language culture and cultural words are replaced in the source language. The studies of transcreation point out that common expressions are used in the target language culture and neologisms are used to explain the self-made words in games. However, pre-studies have not carried out what and why to be adapted and transcreated. The study uses the collection method, documentary method, and case analysis method to analyze the translation techniques of sensory verbs and multi-verbs based on Boundary Awareness Theory in *Genshin Impact*. Deletion and Addition are the techniques of adaptation and transcreation. The major findings are as follows:

**Chinese sensory verbs with subjective awareness need to be deleted.** Sensory verbs refer to verbs related to the five sense organs involved in the cognitive process. Boundary Awareness Theory points out that Chinese exhibits a consciousness of subject-object division, while English shows a binary subject-object consciousness. The lexicon and syntax of the two languages are characterized by different modes of thinking. This requires translators to identify sensory verbs with subjective meanings when translating game texts represented by *Genshin Impact* in Chinese-English translation. Sensory verbs that are actually presented in the sentence and are the focal information are translated, while sensory verbs with subjective awareness are deleted, to describe objective things or phenomena.

**Verbs with boundary awareness in multi-verbs need to be added.** Multi-verbs are two or more verbs contained in a single sentence. Boundary Awareness Theory points out that the Chinese two-dimensional aesthetic is characterized by the blurring of boundaries in sentences, the lack of distinction between the main and secondary clauses, the lack of focus, and the formation of action in a coherent, sequential, and orderly manner. English three-dimensional aesthetics is evidenced by its language structure, which is characterized by a strong sense of three-dimensionality. This requires the translator, when translating the game texts represented by *Genshin Impact* in Chinese-English translation, to determine the primary and secondary actions according to the context, and to find the imagery that creates a relationship with other imagery as the focus of the sentence, and then reflect the hierarchy of the remaining verbs. If verbs containing boundary awareness exist in the source texts, it is important to clarify the orientation of these actions, showing the boundaries by addition.

Based on the two findings above, the thesis believes that adaptation and transcreation are indeed the best methods for translating game texts from Chinese to English. Among them, deletion and addition are the techniques of adaptation and transcreation. The study points out the positions and reasons to be added or deleted when translating game texts from Chinese to English.

## 4.2. Significance and Limitations

The study has both theoretical and practical significance. The study of the English translation techniques of *Genshin Impact* can provide practical guidance for the English translation of similar domestic game products and theoretical support for the translation techniques of other game translators. With the help of the

conclusions of this study, other English translators of domestic games can, based on Boundary Awareness Theory, realize a better Chinese-English cultural conversion through the translation of Chinese sensory verbs and multi-verbs, to help domestic games go to the international market through Chinese-English translation.

The study's primary limitations are twofold. On the one hand, the sample size of the study was small: only one plot text from a certain game is analyzed. The research results still need to collate translation techniques from a large number of game texts to achieve universality. On the other hand, the research sample is of a single type, only one dialogue plot in the game text is selected, ignoring other narratives, system texts, etc. The applicability of the research results is biased toward dialogue texts and cannot represent all kinds of game texts.

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