

## TRANSLATION STUDY OF LEXICAL LACUNAS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GESTALT THEORY

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### INTRODUCTION

This article proceeds from the fact that **literary translation** is not a mechanical comparison of the phenomena of two languages, but a cross-cultural transformation of the language, which is an important medium for popularizing traditional culture created in the original language in other cultural regions. At the same time, **imagery** is an important means of embodying the aesthetic and artistic value of literary works, but cultural differences usually lead to the fact that some images of the source text will not be verbalized in the target language, which leads to the emergence of **lexical lacunas**. Therefore, the **relevance** of this study is the ability to systematize the translation techniques necessary to convey the original images in general in the target language and eliminate language lacunas. Taking into account the aesthetic component of literary texts and the basic connotation of K. Koffka's Gestalt theory, the author of this article combines **Gestalt-organizational principles** with the phenomenon of a lexical lacuna arising on the basis of cultural differences, and analyzes the methodological significance of the translation of lacunas through the reconstruction of imagery within the framework of Gestalt theory, which is the **novelty** of this study. The **method** of comparative analysis in Chinese-Russian translation was used in the work, and the **analysis material** is selected from Xiao Hong's novels "Tales of Hulan river". **The prospect of further research** on this topic is to test the gestalt organizational principles for universality, since lexical lacunas can be caused by information processes of a different plan, and this article does not conduct a comparative study of the above organizational principles with all categories of lexical lacunas.

### 1. Aesthetic features of literary translation

Essentially, any form of translation is the activity of converting information expressed in one language into another. But depending on the stylistic affiliation of the text, the definitions of translation also differ somewhat. A **literary text**, as an artistic object, has a relative independence, it is not a simple addition of linguistic components, but a kind of "picture" constructed through language. The content described by each language unit

is aggregated, forming a literary text that has gestalt characteristics (i.e., high-level integrity). Thus, literary translation is a general perception and reconstruction of linguistic information and aesthetic factors in the process of converting units of the source language into the target one. This process involves the participation of the subject, while the translator actively assimilates the **aesthetic and cognitive** information of the source text, making an overall pattern (configuration) with linguistic meaning and artistic picture formed in his mind, and then uses the language structures of the target language to reconstruct the pattern, and finally presents the corresponding text in the target language.

Taking aesthetic factors into account, it can be concluded that the key to the success of literary translation lies in the successful reconstruction of the “overall pattern” created by the author. Therefore, literary translation is also a process of artistic creation, and in this process, the ability of a translator is comprehensively tested, including the ability to understand, the ability to express language, aesthetic ability, and so on. To create any artistic image in the text, one should first of all convey the informational completeness and harmony of the language structure, however, limiting complex translation activities only to language skills is narrow and biased, since translation at the language level is only a surface structure of translation, and the deep structure is manifested in a dynamic the process of the translator’s subjective activity. Being an aesthetic subject in the process of translation, the translator must not only pay attention to the correct or equivalent translation of two language components, but also pay attention to the creation of the same “picture”, that is, use the target language to reconstruct a holistic concept, so that readers of the target text and readers of the source text had the same aesthetic perception.

Therefore, a good and high-quality literary translation needs to maintain harmony between the language level and the “pictorial” level as a whole, that is, a complex transformation of form and content. When interpreting an original work, the translator must consider the linguistic form and aesthetic “picture” embodied by the author as a whole, and how to correctly complete the information through rational analysis. Accordingly, aesthetic meaning in the translation process has become a major difficulty in translation.

## 2. Imagery and lacuna

In the field of linguistics, the “**picture of representations**” considered above is called “**imagery**” by scientists. Imagery is understood as the ideographic expression, which is a holistic and organized cognitive experience that appeared as a result of the interaction of sensory information

and force fields in the brain<sup>1</sup> and forming a kind of mind map<sup>2</sup>. More precisely, an image is a product of the activity of human consciousness, as well as a generally accepted cultural symbol formed in the process of expressing human feelings through representational images of natural and social scenes, as well as unique customs and holidays, which has an intention to integrity and structure, but also an art circumstances that integrates subjective impressions.

Imagery in literary works lies in the fact that the author comprehends, integrates, sublimates and embodies in the text the aesthetic images that he has experienced. As an important object of research in the field of translation, the transfer of imagery is understood as a process in which the translator materializes the aesthetic experience of textual figurative organization, transforms and embodies it in the text in the target language<sup>3</sup>.

As for the **classification of images**, from a linguistic point of view they can be divided into individual and integral. An individual image takes words or phrases as a carrier, and an integral image takes chapters and sections as a carrier. According to various aesthetic aspects, it is divided into two types: the image of nature belongs to the type of imagery, which has nothing to do with personal cultural knowledge or has little connection, the process of aesthetic experience of such an image can be directly completed by physiological stimulation of the brain through visual senses. And the image of the situation makes certain demands on the cultural knowledge and life experience of the aesthetic subject. In this type of imagery, the emotional response of the aesthetic subject cannot be directly stimulated by pure visual feelings, but must create imagination through knowledge and experience, and then associate and complete the picture outside the text<sup>4</sup>.

**The significance of the study of imagery** lies in the fact that imagery is the essence of literary creativity, which is very important for highlighting a topic and creating a situation, and helps the author to consolidate his inner feelings and express his various thoughts. Exquisite and accurate images not only brings readers the pleasure of reading, physical and mental enjoyment, but also helps them to better understand the culture of the source language and form a sense of cultural identity. But for people from different countries, the same image evokes different feelings and contains different

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<sup>1</sup> 王鹏, 潘光花, 高峰强. 经验的完形:格式塔心理学. 山东教育出版社, 2009. P. 82.

<sup>2</sup> 东尼·博赞. 心智图圣经. 孙易新译. 耶鲁出版社, 2007. P. 101.

<sup>3</sup> 苏冲, 文旭. 格式塔意象的传译:认知翻译策略研究. 中国翻译. 2018 (04). P. 11.

<sup>4</sup> 荣宇轩. 从格式塔异质同构看寒山诗中的意象翻译. 古文今创. 2022 (22). P. 119.

connotations. The image has long been a cultural imprint in the hearts of people of different countries and races, causing people to form different thinking tendencies. This not only reflects cultural diversity and originality, but also represents a certain obstacle to intercultural communication. If, in the process of interaction between two languages, the “image” is completely separated from the “meaning” it is supposed to indicate, or people ignore that the same “image” indicates different “meanings” in different social and cultural settings, then there will be lexical lacunas at the language level.

By **lacuna** (Лакуна), we mean the phenomenon of cultural and semantic inconsistency at the level of vocabulary when comparing two languages, that is, a cultural connotation or semantic basis expressed by words in one language does not exist in another. This phenomenon may be more or less obvious and will be gradually verbalized depending on objective needs. There are two forms of such discrepancy between languages: (1) The concept of one language is not verbalized in another language, that is, there is no lexical correspondence, it is REALITY (РЕАЛІЯ). (2) Another form is that a concept in one language has a lexical correspondence with it in another language, but this correspondence is incomplete, the semantic scope is different, and there is an inclusive relationship. At the moment, we call this phenomenon HALF-REALITY (ПОЛУРЕАЛІЯ – semantic reality). All such words that have inconsistencies or incomplete matches when comparing two languages are called non-equivalent vocabulary from the point of view of the source language, and are called lacuna from the point of view of the target language. With this understanding, the term “REALITY” belongs to non-equivalent vocabulary in the source language<sup>5</sup>.

Li Yanxue made a comprehensive analysis of the studies of European, American, Russian and Chinese scientists in the article “Studies of the Lacunarity Phenomenon in Modern Linguistics”<sup>6</sup> and agreed with N. Chomsky, A. Lehrer and V.G. Gak, who believe that the **essential reason the emergence of lexical lacunas is the lack of verbalization**. More precisely, the “image” that is expressed in one cultural group is not actually realized at the language level of another cultural group, or the “meaning” in the target language does not fully correspond to the “image” in the source language, and a fixed mechanism cannot be formed. Therefore, the relationship between imagery and lacuna can be summarized as follows: imagery is formed at the level of thinking and cognition, while the lacuna

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<sup>5</sup> Li Yanxue. Lexical lacunas in Xiao Hong’s novel “Tales of Hulan river”: characteristics and classification. *Закарпатські філологічні студії*. 2022. Випуск 21, Том 2. P. 178.

<sup>6</sup> Ли Яньсюе. Исследования явления лакунарности в современной лингвистике. *Нова філологія*. 2021. № 84. С. 274.

exists at the level of language. The absence of imagery can lead to the appearance of a lacuna, but it must also be emphasized that the presence of a lacuna does not mean “lack of imagery”. This also proves once again that the root cause of the emergence of lexical lacunas is the lack of verbalization, and the breakthrough point for solving this phenomenon is the reconstruction of imagery.

The transmission of cultural images has become an obstacle to literary translation. In the process of such translation, in order to compensate for the lack of information, to eliminate lexical lacunas, to construct or recreate culturally marked images, the unity of aesthetic theories and translation techniques is usually required.

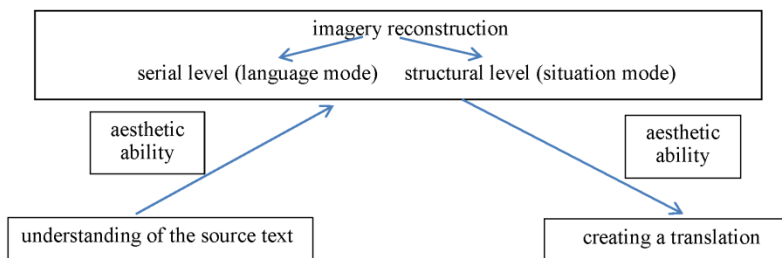
### **3. Gestalt theory and imagery reconstruction**

**Gestalt psychology** is one of the main schools of modern Western psychology, which arose on the basis of an important psychological trend in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century, created and developed in 1912 by German psychologists M. Wertheimer, W. Kohler and K. Koffka. Gestalt is a transliteration of the German word “Gestalt” that roughly means “configuration”. Gestalt psychologists believe that the meaning of Gestalt is to emphasize the **integrity and completeness** of conscious experience. A core belief in Gestalt psychology is holism, the integrity of Gestalt is expressed in the fact that every psychological phenomenon is organized, and the nature of each part of a thing is determined within the whole field, and the whole is not a simple sum of the parts, but something more, the function of the whole is greater than the sum of the functions of the parts. The Completeness of Gestalt, or the so-called “the psychology of completion” in Gestalt theory, is an affirmation of the idea that people tend to express what they perceive in a complete form. Gestalt theory opposes both the elementalism of constructivist psychology and behaviorism, which pays attention only to external behavior and ignores the psychological cognitive mechanism reflected behind it. It advocates the study of direct experience and behavior and includes schema building, the psycho-physical field, etc., in the study of the cognitive mechanisms of the subject.

After the 1930s, in order to include various psychological processes in the scope of their research, the above three psychologists combined the methods and principles of Gestalt theory with aesthetic research and engaged in aesthetic research from a Gestalt perspective. Thanks to this, Gestalt psychology, as a branch of psychology, on par with Western psychoanalysis in the 20th century, began to play an important role in enriching the theory of translation and guiding translation practice. Features of Gestalt – integrity and completeness – force translators, voluntarily or involuntarily, to fill in

the lacunas in the process of recreating the image, striving for “equivalence”, which is a completely natural psychological tendency.

**Imagery reconstruction** is an innovative translation model that emphasizes the “holistic view” in translation and the interactive relationship between aesthetics and imagery in literary works. Based on cultural differences between the source text and the target text, in the process of translation the translator actively assimilates the source text containing lacunas, both aesthetically and cognitively, so that a whole model of the described situation is created, including both linguistic meanings and artistic images, which is then the translator reconstructs using the language structures of the target language, and finally reproduces the aesthetic characteristics of the literary work for the reader in translation<sup>7</sup>. The intermediate link in the reconstruction of imagery is carried out in translator’s mind on the basis of aesthetic abilities, and this intermediate link is checked and balanced by two transformations, namely the transformation of the “structural level – the mode of the situation” and the transformation of the “serial level – the mode of the language”. These two transformations dynamically distinguish between two types of translation – mechanical correspondence and overall equivalence. The imagery reconstruction reflects the translator’s initiative. The process can be simply illustrated as follows:



**Reconstruction of imagery has two important functions:** one is to effectively transform both information layers – linguistic and artistic – in the source text, and the other is to achieve overall harmony at the level of the language and the target text, which can allow readers of the target text to gain a double experience – linguistic meaning and situational factors. In the process of reconstruction, the completeness of images, the information content, the harmony of the whole and parts affect the equivalence of the translation and the reception effect of the translation among readers.

<sup>7</sup> 潘美玲. 格式塔理论视角下古典诗歌英译的意象再造—以唐诗英译为例. 兰州教育学院学报. 2020(07). P. 106.

Therefore, from an aesthetic point of view, the key to the success of literary translation lies in the successful reconstruction of *gestalts* (holistic images).

#### 4. Translation of lexical lacunas according to the Gestalt principles of organization

The reconstruction of imagery helps us to form in our minds a certain general picture, which is subsequently expressed by linguistic means, while the language expression is a material carrier for representing cultural information and forming imagery. The application of Gestalt theory in translation is mainly reflected in the aesthetic field of literary translation, its principles of organization are of great importance for the reconstruction of imagery and the formation of translation techniques to eliminate lacunas.

F. Koffka in his book “The Principle of Gestalt Psychology” states that *gestalt* is a product of information organization that reflects the features of this method of organization. As M. Wertheimer writes, “What happens to a part of the whole, is determined by intrinsic laws inherent in that whole”<sup>8</sup>. “Gestalt perception” is different for everyone, the process of perception will have different paths and follow different principles. In the process of reconstruction of imagery, six laws of perception are guided, namely: the law of similarity, the law of closure, the law of figure and ground, the law of proximity, the law of good continuity and the law of *pragnanz*. Accordingly, the Gestalt principles of organization include: the principle of similarity, the principle of closure, the principle of figure and ground, the principle of proximity, the principle of continuity, the principle of *pragnanz*.

Before analyzing the translation techniques of lexical lacunas in accordance with the above organizational principles, let us clarify a few concepts. **The approach to translation** includes: 1. **Translation strategy** is a principle on the basis of which specific translation goals are achieved in translation activities, and represents a “solution” of problems at the macro level; 2. **Translation methods** is a specific approach, steps and means taken to achieve a specific translation goal based on a specific translation strategy in translation activity 3. **Translation technique** is a technology or skill necessary for the specific implementation and application of translation methods in translation activity. According to V.N. Komissarov, the translation strategy is “a kind of translation mindset”<sup>9</sup>. L.L. Nelyubin believes that “the method of translation is an objectively existing pattern of transition from one language to another in translation activity”<sup>10</sup>. And about

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<sup>8</sup> 库尔特·考夫卡. *格式塔心理学原理*. 李维译. 北京大学出版社. 2010. P.560.

<sup>9</sup> Комиссаров В.Н. Современное переводоведение. ЭТС. 2002. С. 356.

<sup>10</sup> Нелюбин Л.Л. Толковый переводческий словарь. Флинта : Наука, 2003. С. 209.

the technique of translation, R.K. Minyar-Beloruhev writes that the technique usually solves a particular problem, it helps to overcome the difficulty that has arisen in the purposeful activity of the translator<sup>11</sup>. If we clarify the difference between these three points, then this will help us to better and multifaceted understand the role of gestalt as the principle of organizing information for translating lexical lacunas in order to achieve the reconstruction of imagery.

#### (1) Principle of similarity

The principle of similarity means that if the stimuli are similar in physical properties, these stimuli are easily perceived as a whole, that is, parts that are similar to each other tend to form a whole more likely. In the context of Chinese and Western cultures, it should be noted that the emotional resonance caused by the same aesthetic imagery is not always consistent. From a cognitive point of view, readers have different ways of deconstructing imagery, and the resulting aesthetic experience is also not the same. For the deconstruction and dislocation of cultural images caused by differences in cultural context, the technique replacement (when images of the source text are replaced with images that are familiar or well recognized by readers of the target language) can be used, thereby activating a familiar cognitive structure.

The source text must contain certain unique images that originate from the specific historical, social and cultural context of the source language, and can only be recognized and understood by the entire historical population to which they belong. This requires the translator to improve and exercise his cultural imagination, carry out a cultural transplantation of imagery through the target language, and search the cognitive structure for the most relevant symbolic phenomena to replace. This principle is most evident in the lexical lacunas of behavioral culture, which are represented by swear words, in Xiao Hong's novel "Tales of Hulan river". We analyze examples from the perspective of Russian-Chinese translation.

Original: 这还是比较好的，还有更不客气的，一开口就说：“小养汉老婆……你奶奶，一辈子家里外头靡受过谁的大声小气<sup>12</sup>……”

Translation: *Это уже относительно нормально, и еще даже более грубо, как только он открывает рот, говорит: «Шлюха ... Твою мать, я никогда в жизни не терпел обид, ни дома, ни на улице...»*

The **replacement** in this case consists in using, based on the similarity, a certain statement in the target language, which helps to paraphrase

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<sup>11</sup> Комиссаров В.Н. Современное переводоведение: Курс лекций. ЭТС. 1999. С. 100.

<sup>12</sup> 萧红. 呼兰河传. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 56.



the statement in the source language, or replacing the thing in the source language culture with another thing in the target language culture. In the example above, the translator has replaced the image “奶奶 – бабушка (grandmother)” in the Chinese swear word “你奶奶的 – *досл.* твоя бабушка (your grandmother)” to “мать (mother)” in Russian, because in Chinese linguistic culture some kinship addressing terms, such as “奶奶 – бабушка (grandmother)” or “大爷 – дядя (uncle)” + the possessive pronoun “его/её (his/her)” or “твой (your)” can be used as a swear word, but such has never been used in Russian culture, and if it is literally translated as “твоя бабушка (your grandmother)”, it will cause difficulties for readers to understand. Using **idiomatic translation**<sup>13</sup> to select units of imagery that are linguistically and **culturally** equivalent and replace, can reduce cultural strangeness of the source language and facilitate comprehension for readers of the target language.

## (2) Principle of closure

The principle of closure means that at the level of human sensory perception, images will always strive for completeness. When people see an irregular or incomplete form, they experience internal tension, forcing the cerebral cortex to work intensively in order to fill the defect, achieve the completeness of the image and stimulate the further creative function of the subject of knowledge. Gestalt psychology believes that the psychological mechanism of human creativity is often implemented in a closed form, so incompleteness and lacunarity will always push people towards “completeness”. When the reconstruction of the image is not completed, the closure remains a procedural link in the Gestalt activity, and when the reconstruction of the imagery is completed, it will exist as the result of Gestalt activity.

From the point of view of translation, the principle of closure contributes to the extraction and completion of images in the text. The closure of literary translation can be understood from the point of view of two aspects: firstly, it is an additional interpretation of material carriers, such as words, phrases, sentences and chapters in the text, that is, the extraction of linguistic and cultural information from the text in accordance with the context of the translation, and giving him semantic completeness; and secondly, it is a gestalt-understanding of the cultural information behind the text, that is, the creative elimination of lacunas while maintaining the cultural connotations

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<sup>13</sup> 熊兵. 翻译研究中的概念混淆—以“翻译策略”、“翻译方法”和“翻译技巧”为例. *中国翻译*. 2014 (03). P. 85.

Scholars from different countries define the scope of the translation method in different ways. But the types of translation technique are relatively homogeneous.

of the image and its meaning outside the language, so that the cultural images of the source text and the target text can be harmonious and balanced. Therefore, the principle of closure requires the translator to consciously possess the ability to “closure” images, as well as creatively complement cultural connotations. This principle is most evident in the lexical lacunas of material culture, which are represented by the names of the food and products, in Xiao Hong’s novel “Tales of Hulan river”.

Original: 公园里边卖什么的都有，油炸糕，香油揪饼，豆腐脑<sup>14</sup>。

Translation: *В парке продается все, жареные пирожки из клейкого риса и красной фасоли, блинчики с кунжутным маслом, простокваши из соевого молока...*

The principle of closure indicates that human thinking tends to “close the circuit” and gets used to clearly explain even those images that are incomprehensible. Therefore, **compensation in explanatory translation**<sup>13</sup> are more universal than the replacement method, especially since when using explanatory translation, compensation is not limited to Russian established phrases and similar cultural phenomena. When the phenomenon of cultural lacuna cannot be perceived or is difficult to be perceived by the readers of the target text after transliteration or literal translation, then compensation in explanatory translation is the most used by translators. In the example above, the author wanted to convey the lively situation in the park and show readers all kinds of snacks with local Chinese specialties. The names of unfamiliar products belong to lexical lacunas in material culture. If these words are transliterated and explained in footnotes outside the text, this will not only affect the reader’s impression of what they read, but also destroy the effect of the cheerful scene in the park, which the author emphasized. Therefore, the translator should use the method of compensation in translation in order to convey the characteristics of snacks in an explanatory form. For example, “油炸糕” – “жареные пирожки из клейкого риса и красной фасоли (fried glutinous rice and red bean patties)”, “豆腐脑” – “соевый кисель с соленным супом (soy jelly with salty soup)”.

### (3) Principle of figure and ground

The principle of figure and ground means that within a certain line of sight, due to various needs, some objects will take an important place and become a figure, while relatively minor objects will become a background to set off the prominent position of the figure. This principle emphasizes the special presentational relationship between figure and ground. The greater

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<sup>14</sup> 萧红. 呼兰河传. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 176.

the degree of difference between them perceived by people, the more obvious the picture represented by the figure.

There are often overlapping “pictures” (situations/scenes) in a literary work, and at this time it is necessary to deliberately separate the figure from the ground, realizing that the part that is emphasized becomes a clear figure, and the rest – secondary components – become the background. Therefore, if the translator, when translating, can catch the relationship between the figure and the ground, then the overall imagery of the picture of the source text can be well represented in the translation. A clear figure and ground will allow readers of the target text to have a better aesthetic experience.

This principle is most evident in the lexical lacunas of conceptual culture, which is represented by Classical Chinese Poetry, if we again take examples from Xiao Hong’s novel “Tales of Hulan river”.

Original: 两个黄鹂鸣翠柳，一行白鹭上青天<sup>15</sup>.

Translation: *Когда две иволги сочно щебечут среди изумрудных ив, а вереница белых цапель устремляется прямо к голубому небу.*

It is significant that the principle of figure and ground reminds us that it is worth paying attention to layering when forming imagery, so that some objects stand out, forming a figure, and the rest of the objects recede into second place, becoming the background. The above example uses **imitation translation**<sup>13</sup> and the translation technique – **addition**, the Russian word “когда” is added, so that the chirping of two orioles becomes the background for a string of herons flying into the blue sky. Such a translation adds the background of time and sound to the visible picture. The words “сочно” and “прямо” also add beauty and rhythm, and combine movement and stillness. In this example, the relationship between figure and ground has been reproduced, so the beauty of poetry has been preserved in the translation. Therefore, if the translator can catch the connection between them when translating, the overall imagery of the original poetry can be well represented in the translation.

#### (4) Principle of proximity

The principle of proximity means that human thinking unconsciously considers parts that are close in space or closely related in time as a single whole. The definition of language components in translation is the result of the organic combination and interaction of adjacent language elements, and the close combination of language components becomes a whole, which contributes to the accuracy of the translation expression, thereby providing the reader with the opportunity to experience a subjective aesthetic experience.

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<sup>15</sup> 萧红. 呼兰河传. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 92.

The translator cannot blindly pursue the meaning of the language unit and ignore the purpose of the original author's use of the language. The translation must have both the same intentionality as the original and structural similarity. Based on the aesthetic psychological isomorphism of the source text, the translator thinks about how to choose the appropriate lexical expressions, sentence patterns in the target language, as well as correct word order, etc., and finally reconstruct the internal imagery of the source text in the appropriate form of the target language. This principle is most evident in the lexical lacunas of conceptual culture, which are represented by color terms, in Xiao Hong's novel "Tales of Hulan river".

Original: 有的着蛋青市布长衫, 有的穿了藕荷色的, 有的银灰的<sup>16</sup>.

Translation: *Кто-то был в матерчатом длинном широком платье цвета скорлупы утиного яйца, другие – в цвете лотоса или серебра.*

In the example above, the author used three words to describe the popular color of clothes at the time. Using images of specific things to express color is a common way of describing the Chinese, for example, "蛋青色" in the text is a color between голубым (blue) and серым (gray), but it is not the светло – зеленый (light green) that Europeans understand it to be. Of course, if we translate this color according to the chromatic ordinal, it will also lose the beauty of the original language. Therefore, according to the writer's habits of the author, we use the material carrier of the color to describe it. Although we often say "银灰色" as "серебристо – серый (silver-gray)", but here we still use the **variation translation**<sup>17</sup> and the technique of translation – **reconstruction**, so that these three words that describe color are unified and close in linguistic expression, thus forming a single whole.

#### (5) Principle of continuity

The principle of continuity means that if there is an intersection between the perceived elements, they are more likely to unite in a group in the perception of the cognitive subject. This principle enables people to enhance the perception of grouped information and creates order in the processing of elements of perception. For example, an arc consisting of a series of unconnected small dots will be perceived as a continuous line, not as individual dots. This principle of continuity should also be considered in the reader's perceptual experience of reading the translated text, it is most evident in the lexical lacunas of material culture, which are represented by the names of medicines, in Xiao Hong's novel "Tales of Hulan river".

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<sup>16</sup> 萧红. *呼兰河传*. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 47.

<sup>17</sup> 熊兵. 翻译研究中的概念混淆 – 以“翻译策略”、“翻译方法”和“翻译技巧”为例. *中国翻译*. 2014 (03). P. 86.

Original: 他是不会写字的, 他就用嘴说: “车前子二钱, 当归二钱, 生地二钱, 藏红花二钱, 川贝母二钱, 白术二钱, 远志二钱, 紫河车二钱<sup>18</sup>……”

Translation: *Он не умеет писать, поэтому говорит: «два цзян чэ цзынь цзы, дан гуй, шэн ди, цан хун хуа, чуань бэй му, бай шу, юань чжи, цзы хэ чэ...»*

In the example above, we are talking about a situation where a Chinese medicine doctor writes a prescription, so the reader has learned in the context that the following content is about medicinal material. In order for readers to get a coherent reading experience, the translator prefers to use **such a translation technique as transcription and footnote in literal translation**<sup>13</sup>. Of course, we can also translate the names of medicinal materials in the original into Russian, for example, “车前子– подорожник (plantain)”, “川贝母 –сычуаньская фритиллярия(Sichuan fritillaria)”, “白术 – атрактилоды (atractylodes)”, but few readers really care what medicine the doctor prescribes in the text, obviously, the translation of the medicine names is no longer the key, and it is more important to maintain a smooth reading experience for the reader here.

#### (6) Principle of pragnanz (Principle of simplicity)

The principle of pragnanz was introduced by M. Wertheimer. Briefly, it can be formulated as follows: psychological organization will always be as “good” as the prevailing conditions allow. But here the term “good” is not defined. This principle of pragnanz is also called the principle of simplicity. It means that when confronted with a set of ambiguous or complex objects, the human brain tends to make them as simple as possible. It includes the following properties: regularity, symmetry, unity, etc.<sup>19</sup>. The principle of pragnanz comes from the tendency to minimize in terms of quantity, order, meaning, etc. when organizing material. As we know, Gestalt has the characteristics of integrity and completeness, this is the result of the interaction of its principles of organization, but the principle of pragnanz is the core of these principles, and each such principle corresponds to it.

The principle of pragnanz requires translators to remove some of the original content or abandon a certain rhetorical format in translation in order to achieve accurate imagery when lacunas arise due to cultural differences and linguistic differences. The translator uses the technique deletion to eliminate some decorative elements so that it will not affect the reader’s imagination. The principle of pragnanz is most evident in the lexical lacunas

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<sup>18</sup> 萧红. *呼兰河传*. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 127.

<sup>19</sup> 库尔特·考夫卡. *格式塔心理学原理*. 李维译. 北京大学出版社. 2010. P. 89.

of behavioral culture used, for example, in Xiao Hong's novel "Tales of Hulan river", which are represented by agricultural vocabulary.

Original: 老厨子该收柴收柴, 该担水担水, 假装没有看见<sup>20</sup>.

Translation: *Старый повар все еще выполняет свою работу, делая вид, что не видит, что происходит.*

The above example can be literally translated as "Старый повар должен дрова набрать – и он их принес, должен воду начерпать – и он и ее принес, делая вид, что не видит, что происходит вокруг (The old cook has to gather firewood – and he gathered it, he must draw water – and he drew it, pretending not to see what is happening around)". If the translator uses literal translation, the full meaning of the message will remain unclear to the reader. In this example, we are talking about the fact that the villagers are surprised by the fight between two men and are actively discussing it, while the old cook remains indifferent, and against the backdrop of general excitement, his indifference looks even more contrasting. If the translator blindly adopts the literal translation method in order to preserve the literal meaning, it will make the reader not understand the reason why the author wrote the farm work of cook. In the original text, "to gather wood and draw water" is a common cooking behavior in the Chinese countryside. Farmers bring firewood from the yard to the house and carry water from the wells that every household has. When the description does not affect the development of the plot and the characteristics of the work, the translator needs to use **deletion in the transcreation**<sup>17</sup> in order to increase the readability of the translated text and reduce culture shock among the readers of the target text.

In eliminating the lexical lacunas of material, behavioral and conceptual culture based on Gestalt principles of organization, such as the principle of similarity, closure, figure-ground, continuity, *pragnanz* and proximity, we can follow the translation strategy "Domestication comes first, and exoticization in second place. First use intratextual interpretation, and then extratextual interpretation". Accordingly, then we have to apply such translation methods as idiomatic, explanatory, imitation, variational, literal and transcreation, as well as such translation techniques as replacement, compensation, additions, reconstruction, transcription, footnote, deletion, in order to implement an effective transformation of lexical lacunas in the text in the target language and ensure the unity of the meaning of literary works existing in different languages, in terms of aesthetic imagery and linguistic expression.

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<sup>20</sup> 萧红. 呼兰河传. 天津人民出版社. 2015. P. 182.

## CONCLUSION

Combining the principles of gestalt organization with lexical lacunas in Xiao Hong's novel "Tales of Hulan river", the following **conclusions** can be summarized briefly: when eliminating lacunas 1) the principle of similarity requires translators to use the method of idiomatic translation and such a translation technique as replacement; 2) the principle of closure requires translators to use the method of explanation translation and such a translation technique as compensation; 3) the principle of figure and ground requires translators to use the method of imitation translation and such a translation technique as an addition; 4) the principle of proximity requires translators to use the method of variational translation and such a translation technique as reconstruction; 5) the principle of continuity requires translators to use the method of literal translation and such a translation technique as transcription and footnote; 6) the principle of pragnanz (simplicity) requires translators to use the method of transcreation and such a translation technique as deletion. Meanwhile, the following translation strategy must be observed: Put "domestication" in the first place, and "exoticization" in the second place; first use a descriptive translation in the text, and if this is not possible, use a footnote outside the text.

## SUMMARY

The phenomenon of lexical lacunarity is a concentrated manifestation of the heterogeneity of the national language and culture and is the main obstacle to intercultural communication. The literary text has unique aesthetic characteristics, as well as lexical lacunas containing various cultural connotations, which requires translators to have good aesthetic perception abilities in the translation process in order to reconstruct the imagery of these lexical lacunas in the absence of verbalization. Gestalt theory and its principles of organization can serve as a methodological guide to eliminate lacunas and reproduce the imagery of source texts from an aesthetic point of view both at the level of thinking and at the level of language, which requires translators to formulate appropriate translation strategies and methods in accordance with various types of lexical lacunas, as well as combine translation techniques such as compensation, replacement, annotation, addition and omission, reconstruction and deletion with the principles of aesthetic organization.

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