Translation Model Construction of "Geda" as a Partitive in *The Lantern Bearer* from the Perspective of Cultural Schema Theory[*]

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The word "geda", as a typical example of partitive in Shaanxi local dialect, appears 40 times in Jia Pingwa's novel *Daideng*, but with varied translation equivalents in its English version *The Lantern Bearer*, where this article raised its doubts about how a proper translation of partitive can transmit culture in a more authentic and loyal way. From the perspective of cultural schema theory, this article takes *The Lantern Bearer*[1] as the basis of text analysis to explore the translation strategy of the partitive "geda" in the context of cultural correspondence before relevant translation models are proposed with the purpose to shed light on Shaanxi local literature translation into English.

Keywords: partitive, geda, cultural correspondence, *The Lantern Bearer*, regional literature

Introduction

Liangci has become an independent word class and denominated in Chinese grammatical system since 1950s. However, there is no such a word class in English. That's partially the reason why the translation confusion arises: Chinese *liangci* has at least seven English equivalents in varied resources, such as measure word, classifier (Wu & Cheng, 2005), quantifier, qualifier, numerative, unit noun (Zhang, 1997: 138), partitive (Quirk et al, 1985: 249-251). The paper prefers to choose the word "partitive" to refer to Chinese *liangci*, which is more consistent with its definition (Liu, 2006). Quantitative relationship is a kind of cognition of the brain for things or events, through which people can get the form and state of things, concretize and enrich the understanding of the details. Cognizing things and storing this cognition forms the schema.

With the development of productive life, partitives are given more attributes, and people's emotions are expressed through the use of partitives. Especially in regional literature, many local words are used as partitives to add details to the subject or to reflect emotions. The word "geda" in *The Lantern Bearer* is a typical nominal partitive, but with different meanings in specific contexts. The cultural schema of "geda" is a cultural correspondence that can be made more relevant to the target language through proper translation.

[1] Written by Jia Pingwa and translated by Carlos Rojas, Professor of Chinese Cultural Studies at Duke University.

Cultural Schema and Translation

The term "schema" was first introduced in 1781 by German philosopher Immanuel Kant in his book entitled *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant believed that schema is an abstraction, a cognitive medium between a concept and a thing (Kant, 1993). Bartlett makes it clear that when new things are encountered, they can only be understood by relating them to existing schemas (Barlett, 1932). Understanding is achieved by comparing and screening the conventional schema in our brain with the new schema. Under this definition, there must be a connection between the knowledge of things in people's brains, taking the perceptions already established in the human brain and adding a connection in order to understand a new thing. With the continuous exploration and development of human society, the knowledge in our mind has developed in the process of forming many modules; such modules are schemas, a neural network.

Regional literature naturally embraces cultural meaning that is endowed with by generations of people. Linguistic text is a concrete expression of culture; thus regional literary texts are actually interpreting the culture inside. Cultural schema theory is a branch of schema theory. Language texts are thought to be the carriers of culture, which is itself a schema. When the content of the text is combined with the cognition already existing in the brain for reflection and comparison, new cognition has formed, and, as a result, becomes a new schema, gradually expanding the cognitive neural network (Jiao & Li, 2011).

In translation practice, to achieve "bridging" must compare our own cultural schema with those of the target languages. As was said by Eugene A. Nida, "Languages and cultures all over the world are amazingly similar and indicated the similarities accounted for 90%" (Xu, 1998). Although there are diverse linguistic texts in the world as the inheritance and summary of cognition, the process of cognition is similar to each other, so does its cultural schema. Therefore, most of the contents can be translated and understood between different cultures. This is called cultural correspondence in cultural schema theory.

The Cultural Correspondence of "Geda"

In the English lexical classification, partitive is a noun, a special kind of noun used to express quantity. However, in the Sino - Tibetan language family, it exists as a separate lexical category and has become a feature of the language family. Partitives are mainly divided into nominal and verbal partitives. "Geda" discussed in this paper is a typical nominal partitive. Under the category of nominal partitive, there are also proper nominal partitive and borrowed nominal partitive. The latter one means that in the process of expressing quantitative relations, a noun is borrowed as a unit of measurement to express quantitative relations. In particular, this phenomenon is more common in *The Lantern Bearer*, where the author even uses specific dialect words to express quantity relations, which makes the text very distinctive in terms of regional culture. At the same time, this characteristic also becomes a problem to be solved by concentrating on the translation.

It is with no difficulty to find that although the classification and understanding of partitives are different between English and Chinese, the expression of such quantity relations is common in social life. A partitive is a concept of the number of things, which exists in our brains in different cultures. Therefore, it is reasonable to be backed up by cultural schema theory to understand that the translation of partitive can better help readers understand. In other words, quantitative relationships are commonly known and understood as schema in the human brain, and can be understood and become new schema by "making connections" when encountering new things. This further supports the translatability of partitives.

The word "geda" expresses a unit of measurement, and there is no cultural conflict or omission in itself. Therefore, in the translation process, translators need to translate based on their own understanding of bilingual culture, so that readers of the target language can understand the quantitative relationship between things. In the cultural schema theory, the translation of "geda" is to establish association, i.e. a cultural correspondence.

There are many instances in *The Lantern Bearer* where the word "geda" is borrowed as a partitive, but the author chooses different methods and forms of translation.

Why is this? In fact, this is a phenomenon of "multiple subjects in one partitive", that is, a single partitive can be used to express multiple things of different nature, form, and size (Wang, 2008). Since there is a difference, translators should consider the specific context when translating. In other words, the translation of "geda" belongs to the cultural correspondence, but the correspondence is not equal. It is, therefore, suggested that actual situations should be taken into account and form a correlation between the same partitive "geda" and different schema, and the established correlation is dynamic and functionally equivalent.

The Translation of "Geda" in *The Lantern Bearer*

Carlos Rojas's translation of "geda" in *The Lantern Bearer* is divided into two main cases: the actual meaning and the category meaning. The actual meaning refers to the context in which the word "geda" is used as a unit of measurement, clearly specifying the number of things and giving the reader a detailed understanding, a kind of figuration. As for the category meaning of "geda", the quantity it expressed cannot be calculated in the context, but is a kind of abstraction as a generalization, leaving room for readers' appreciation in their imagination. In both cases, Carlos Rojas used different ways of translation: (i) a n_1 of n_2 construction for "numbers + AB" Pattern; (ii) a n_1 of n_2 and one n. after another for "one AB one AB + n." Pattern; (iii) adjective; (iv) n_1s of n_2s construction for "AABB" Pattern; (v) zero partitive for "ABEF" Pattern.

A N_1 of N_2 Construction for "Numbers + AB" Pattern

The most basic function of nouns borrowed as partitive is to express quantitative relationships. Therefore, if the partitive is really only stating a fact in the text, it is necessary to express it strictly. The most common way is to translate it based on a n_1 of n_2 construction.

Table 1

A N_1 of N_2 Construction for the Solo Pattern of "Numbers + AB"

E.g. s	Texts	Texts from *Daideng*—带灯 and *The Lantern Bearer*
E.g. 1	ST1	刘秀珍原来不吃辣子不吃蒜，现在也是端一碗捞面捏**一疙瘩**蒜，或者一手拿了蒸馍一手拿根青红辣椒蘸了盐，一口馍一口辣椒，口舌就辣得吸溜着但话不停。 (Jia, 2013: 227)
	TT1	She originally didn't eat garlic or hot peppers, but now would hold her bowl of noodles and take **a knot of garlic**, or else she would hold a steamed bun in one hand and a sprig of hot green pepper dipped in salt in the other, alternating between a bite of the bun and a bite of the pepper—and even though her mouth got so hot that she would have to slurp his saliva, she nevertheless continued talking nonstop. (Rojas, 2017: 327)
E.g. 2	ST2	竹子还担心带灯会不会就踩到泥水，没有，她每一步都走在黑处，而且时不时弯下腰了，把干路面上的砖头挪去，甚至**一疙瘩**牛粪猪屎也都踢开。 (Jia, 2013: 344)
	TT2	Moreover, Daideng would periodically lean over and push aside a brick in the middle of the road, and sometime would even kick aside **a pile of** cow or pig droppings. (Rojas, 2017: 502)
E.g. 3	ST3	元天亮是走了，他真是一位锦云君子啊，**一疙瘩**的云，沿山峦飘荡。 (Jia, 2013: 349)
	TT3	It was true that Yuan Tianliang had left—he was truly a brocade cloud gentleman, a **knotted** cloud floating along the mountain ridge. (Rojas, 2017: 510)

Table 1 to be continued

E.g. 4	ST4	张正民，七十岁。红光声朗，经常穿有民政字样的大衣，到处高八度说理，嘴角总有**两疙瘩**白沫。 (Jia, 2013: 112)
	TT4	Zhang Zhengmin. Seventy years old, he has rosy cheeks and long voice, and often wears the type of coat issued to government employees. He is always chattering, and perpetually has **a couple of beads of spittle** on his lips. (Rojas, 2017: 154)
E.g. 5	ST5	带灯坐在综治办里吃纸烟，从门里往外看，杨树和院墙之间的那个蜘蛛网没有了，而汉白玉井圈里栽着指甲花也全被雨水打得稀烂，泥是**红一疙瘩**，绿**一疙瘩**。 (Jia, 2013: 278)
	TT5	Daideng was sitting in the office of social management smoking a cigarette. She was gazing out the window, and noticed that the spider web positioned between the poplar tree and the courtyard wall was missing, and the nail polish plants that had been planted inside the white jade well ring had been drenched by the rain, and the resulting mud was **a mixture of** red and green. (Rojas, 2017: 402)

The "bead" in "a couple of beads of spittle" as in E.g. 4 is undoubtedly a noun, which reduces a partitive back to a noun or a noun structure. Translation as such is actually a process of deconstruction of ST and reconstruction of TT, as in "a knot of garlic" in E.g. 1 and "a pile of cow or pig droppings" in E.g. 2. If compared E.g. 3 with E.g. 1, 2, and 4, it takes no effort to see it through that "a knotted cloud" in E.g. 3 is a variety of "a knot of cloud" as in E.g. 1, 2, and 4.

E.g. 5 is special in that (i) it's a twin pattern of "numbers + AB" (i.e. the pattern repeats itself twice); (ii) it is "numbers + AB + adj./n." pattern, whereas the former ones are "numbers + AB + n."; (iii) it is patterned as "adj/n. + numbers + AB", a reverted one of "numbers + AB + n.". In this light, the reverted pattern "红一疙瘩，绿一疙瘩" is also possible to be translated, according to the translation model of "a n.$_1$ of n.$_2$ construction", into "a mixture of red and green".

Constructions of "A N.1 of N.2" and "One N. After Another" for "One AB One AB + N." Pattern

The "geda" in the above three examples, "一疙瘩一疙瘩的农舍" (E.g. 6) and "一疙瘩一疙瘩的瓦碴云" (E.g. 7), can be expressed in such a pattern as "one AB + one AB". Each "geda" not only expresses quantity but describes the shape they form when "farm houses" lying together, "tile-shaped clouds" forming clusters and clusters, and "flies" flying in crowds were seen from afar.

Table 2

Three Varieties for Twin Pattern of "One AB One AB + N"

E.g. s	Texts	Texts from *Daideng*—带灯 and *The Lantern Bearer*
E.g. 6	ST6	现在我坐在坡上有整群的蝇蠓飞舞，望着山脚下**一疙瘩一疙瘩**的农舍和对面高低浓淡错落有致的山头，我就感觉到我是一辈子在这山里了。 (Jia, 2013: 111)
	TT6	Now I am sitting on the hill, where there is a swarm of fly midges, and if I look down toward the base of the mountain I see **a row of** farm houses, in front of which there is an array of mountains of irregular heights. Seeing this, I feel as though I've been living in the mountains my entire life. (Rojas, 2017: 152)
E.g. 7	ST7	这当儿，天上红堂堂的，**一疙瘩一疙瘩**的瓦碴云像是铁匠炉里的火炭。 (Jia, 2013: 138)
	TT7	At that time, the sky was bright red, and was filled with **one** tile-shaped cloud **after another**, like coals in a blacksmiths furnace. (Rojas, 2017: 192)

However, as we have mentioned, it is important to choose the appropriate schema according to the specific context in which appropriate partitives are used. Thus, although E.g. 6 to 7 use the same partitive in Chinese, they need to be transformed in an appropriate way. In *The Lantern Bearer*, Carlos Rojas, the translator, followed the same method of conversion to a n.$_1$ of n.$_2$ construction to use "a row of farm houses" in E.g. 6. He also creatively used "one tile-shaped cloud after another" in E.g. 7. However, the translation models, "one n.

after another" and "countless n." for "one AB one AB + n." Pattern may result in an inevitable pity acknowledged in the translation circle, i.e. these translation versions, though having fulfilling the purpose to express quantity, may miss the vivid images Jia Pingwa, the author of the novel, intends to describe and convey in his writings.

Transformation to Adjective

Partitives, not only have the ability to express quantity relations, but have a certain modifying effect. The phenomenon of "multiple partitives of one subject" is a typical example (See Table 3).

Table 3

Multiple Partitives Modifying One Subject—Take "Dengzi"—凳子—as an Example

E.g. s	Multiple partitives	Connotation	English Translation
E.g. 8	一个凳子	It is a stool (to express the quantity).	A stool
E.g. 9	一张凳子	It is narrow and long.	A stool
E.g. 10	一条凳子	It is large in surface area.	A stool

In view of cognitive linguistics, partitives are essentially the result of people's classification of the external material world (Zhu, 2006). When describing the same object, different partitive are chosen to match its different characteristics.

Take "stool" as an example. One of the Chinese equivalents of "stool" is "dengzi" -凳子, which embraces multiple modifiers as partitives: "ge" -个- used to express quantity, "tiao" -条- used to mean it is narrow and long, "zhang" -张- chosen to indicate its large surface area respectively. They are used as modifiers to describe a stool from different perspectives. Employing partitives as modifiers sheds lights on Carlos Rojas' translation as well as seen in E.g. 11 and 12 in Table 4.

Table 4

Partitives Transformed to Adjective for "Numeral + AB" Pattern (Solo & Twin)

E.g. s	Texts	Texts from *Daideng*—带灯 and *The Lantern Bearer*
E.g. 11	ST11	元天亮是走了，他真是一位锦云君子啊，一疙瘩的云，沿山峦飘荡 (Jia, 2013: 349)。
	TT11	It was true that Yuan Tianliang had left—he was truly a brocade cloud gentleman, **a knotted cloud** floating along the mountain ridge (Rojas, 2017: 510).
E.g. 12	ST12	老鼠在跑，蛇也在跑，老鼠和蛇搅在一块跑，老鼠跑着跑着就被水冲得没影了，而蛇从水面掠过去，爬上了树，树上满是蛇，还有**一疙瘩一疙瘩**的苍蝇。 (Jia, 2013: 272)
	TT12	Rats and snakes were scurrying around underfoot, but while the rats were flushed away by the flood waters and disappeared, the snakes managed to climbed up trees, to the point that the trees came to be full of snakes. There were also **countless** flies. (Rojas, 2017: 392)

The choice of different partitives can be associated with different schema in the human brain, reflecting the characteristics of the subject. That is to say, the partitive itself is not only a unit of measurement, but also supplements certain knowledge information and increases the understanding of the target language readers.

To activate the cultural schema of the target language readers, we need to find the appropriate category expressions. In E.g. 11, the word "geda" describes the large and loose Cumulus, and the translation is intended to convey both the number of clouds and the characteristics of the partitive. To achieve this, the author chose to transform it into an adjective, modifying the subject, with "a" to express the quantity, while it is translated into "countless" when the pattern of "one AB + one AB" is used to mean "many" or "numerous" in the context.

Construction of N.1S of N.2S for "AABB" Pattern

As was born in Dihua Township, Shangluo, southern part of Shaanxi Province, Northern China, Jia Pingwa prefers to use in a crazy way of Shaanxi local words in his writing. According to statistics, "geda", presented in different patterns, is used 36 times in *The Lantern Bearer*. As for "AABB" Pattern, Carlos Rojas takes the construction of n_1s of n_2s in his translation as seen in Table 5.

Table 5

N_1S of N_2S for "AABB" Pattern

E.g. s	Texts	Texts from *Daideng* and *The Lantern Bearer*
Eg.13	ST13	现在也一样看见天上**疙疙瘩瘩**的花梢云，就是云的底部是瓦黑厚重，顶部是亮丽活泼，心里便激动我是那云，一定要尽心让自己光亮成晴天，可不敢让乌黑占了上风。 (Jia, 2013: 187)
	TT13	Now, I similarly see **clumps of** clouds in the sky, except that the bottoms of the clouds are dark and thick while the tops are beautiful and lively. I excitedly imagine that I'm that cloud, and become determined to become a clear sky, and not let the dark wind escape. (Rojas, 2017: 266)

Partitive are seldom used alone and are often paired with number words to form a complete structure of quantitative expressions. When discussing the translation of partitive, the translator still needs to take the specific situation into account.

The superposition of partitive as "AABB" Pattern is generally descriptive or modifying, except that the superposition of partitive can also be used as a definite article (Zheng, 2003), which is also based on the derivation of the function of partitive. The special usage of partitive makes the syntactic function changeable and various. Therefore, the translation should be appropriately transformed according to the specific context. In E.g. 13, "clumps of" is used to modify "clouds" in the form of a definite article to describe a clump of clouds assemble in such a merrily way that Daideng imagined herself to be one of them, free in life and light in heart.

Zero Partitive for "ABEF" Pattern

As mentioned in Table 3, the vivid and rich expression of partitives in Chinese cannot be introduced but lost in their English translation into "a stool". It's self - evident that no partitive is used in "a stool". This situation can be defined as "zero partitive" translation, which is also employed by Carlos Rojas in his translation of *The Lantern Bearer* as in Table 6.

Table 6

Zero Partitive

E.g. s	Texts	Texts from *Daideng* and *The Lantern Bearer*
E.g. 14	ST14	我看见各家院里墙头上**疙瘩成行**成串挂着的柿饼，蔓菁，南瓜。 (Jia, 2013: 339)
	TT14	I notice that in the courtyard of each house, the courtyard walls are covered with strings of persimmons, turnips, and squash. (Rojas, 2017: 492)

Conclusion

With the deepening of globalization, the exchange between different regional cultures has become increasingly close. The translation of regional literature is a top priority, and there are indeed differences between different cultures and language families. Understanding and correctly translating partitives can help target language readers better appreciate the charm of literary works. This paper discusses the strategies of translating partitives from the culturally loaded partitive "geda", with a view to contributing to more local

literature "going global" with the help of the six translation models constructed for translating "geda" as a partitive! Future research in this field is suggested to go further to make comparison between different English versions of Jia Pingwa's novels translated by different translators to test the reliability of these translation models.

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