**Review on Chinese Translation of Israeli Comics from the Perspective of Translanguaging----Taking *The Realist* As A Case in Point**

Gao Xiu

Jiangsu University of Science and Technology, Zhenjiang, China

**Abstract:** The comic work *The Realist* (*הריאליסט*) is based on the daily life of modern Israeli Jews, interweaving satire and fantasy, which is resonant and attractive to ponder; its Chinese translation can be regarded as the first work that presents the living conditions of ordinary working-class Israelis vividly through multimodal expressions with images as the mainstay and text the attached, playing an efficient role in aiding the target readers to learn the culture and social life of modern Israel. Inspired by Kobus Marais’ conception of translation (2019) and the translanguaging theory, the present research believes that as a typical example challenging the conventional translation studies subjecting to a linguistic bias, multimodal translation, or to be specific, comic translation in the this research, can be regarded as the translator’s negentropic semiotic work based on his translanguaging repertoire within an appointed translanguaging space to create a new translanguaging space taking consideration of the target readers. With rich Israeli-Jewish cultural connotation, the translation of “The Realist” requires the translator to exert his translanguaging ability to promote the target readers’ perception of the work through interplay between linguistic and semiotic modes while maintaining the thematic interaction with the source to constrain the creation of interpretant/a new translanguaging space, that is the translation work. The analysis of this paper finds that within the constrainedly created translanguaging space, the translator expands the readers’ cognition of Israel-Jewish culture by adding linguistic mode explaining cultural connotation in a number of chapters. However, due to the insufficiency of the translator’s “linguistic repertoire”, the translator’s manipulation of “correcting” in some other cases not only fails to bring Chinese readers the reading experience that those of the source text get, but causes the readers’ failure in getting the meaning of the work properly.

**Key Words:** Comics, Israeli-Jewish culture, multimodality translation, translanguaging

“The Realist” by the well-known Israeli cartoonist Asaf Hanuka has been published weekly in the commercial newspaper *The Calcalist* since 2010, chronicling the author’s real life as an Israeli, father, husband and professional cartoonist. Hanuka surveys the world in images, combining a realistic narrative with sci-fi imagery, using Jewish humor and witty satire to show the existential anxieties and various social contradictions of the general public in Israel in a way that resonates and invites thoughtful reflection. In “The Realist”, Hanuka “does not only provide a visualization of the topic, but he also embeds commentary on the topic by way of written text or visual features that modify the event in some fashion” (Reingold, 2019: 2), attracting readers’ interest not only at home, but also abroad, including China.

Although originally published in Hebrew, it has been translated into more than a dozen of languages; in 2021, it was introduced to China and translated into Chinese by Post Wave Publishing, becoming the first work in China that introduces the current state of ordinary white-collar life in modern Israel through a combination of written text and visual images, offering an opportunity for Chinese readers to observe the reality of Israeli society nowdays from a citizen’s perspective rather than official reports. According to the Douban social networking website,[[1]](#footnote-1) which is regarded as the most popular database for cultural reporting in China, the Chinese translation of this work,现实主义者*xian shi zhu yi zhe* (“The Realist”), is rated highly, scoring an average of 8.5 (with 10 as a full score) and Douban’s own data analysis shows that the percentage of positive reviews reach to 86% among 1777 comments.

As to academic research on this work, it has been found that Matt Reingold has published series of papers as well as book episodes on “The Realist” from various perspectives: racial and ethnic identity problems within Israel (2019)[[2]](#footnote-2), in discussing the role of graphic novels and comics in Israel education, “The Realist” is employed again by him as a case in point to talk about the treatment the Mizrahim Jews receive in Israel that the students should think about (2019)[[3]](#footnote-3), the political nature of the work and the role of montage and mirroring techniques in offering the author’s commentary on Israeli society (2020)[[4]](#footnote-4), the employment of fantastical autography (in “The Realist”) as lens for offering the author’s commentary on Israeli society and his feeling about his experiences (2021)[[5]](#footnote-5). In the light of both silence theories and multimodal discourse theories, Silvia Adler and Ayelet Kohn investigate silence in “The Realist”, examining “what silence promotes and to what extent it serves the narrative between than sound or words when generating criticism, displaying helplessness, coping with traumatic events, etc.” (2020: 5)[[6]](#footnote-6). As one of the studied examples, “The Realist” is taken by Sivia Adler and Ayelet Kohn (2022)[[7]](#footnote-7) in examining the intersection between silence and trauma in graphic narratives. Yet, the exploration of the meaning of this work has not received sufficient attention of Chinese scholars and no relevant research has been conducted in China, especially on its Chinese translation, which is not balanced with its popularity among the target readers. The aim of this paper is to bridge such gap, expecting to benefit more Chinese translations of Israeli (literature) works in the future.

In light of Kobus Marais’ idea on translation (2019) as well as the translanguaging theory, the present research regards comic translation as a typical example challenging the conventional translation studies subjecting to a linguistic bias, believing that multimodal translation, or to be specific, comic translation in this research, can be regarded as the translator’s negentropic semiotic work based on his translanguaging ability. Given this, the paper will mainly focus on answering the following three questions: (1) How the redefined conception of translation by Kobus Marais can interact with translanguaging theory in translating comic works? (2) What negentropic work does the translator do in translating the Israeli-Jewish-culture enriched work “The Realist”? (3) What challenges the translator faces in translating works composed of semiotic modes like linguistic and pictures within a constrainedly created interpretant (translanguaging space)?

1. **Multimodal Translation: The Translator’s Negentropic Semiotic Work through Translanguaging (Behavior)**

In developing their theory of multimodality communication, Kress and van Leeuwen defined modes as “semiotic resources which allow the simultaneous realization of discourses and types of (inter)action” (2001: 21)[[8]](#footnote-8), thus various semiotic modes should be included in semiotic resources. Multimodality becomes “the field in which semiotic work takes place”, it “asserts that ‘language’ is just one among the many resources for making meaning” (Gunther Kress, 2012: 38).[[9]](#footnote-9) However, it also needs to figure out that the generation of meaning by semiotic modes in the light of the framework is restricted by a certain culture. In other words, according to a specific situational context, the generation of meaning is composed of semiotic modalities including speech, images, auditory symbols, etc. in a specific way, and is realized through a certain media system.

Thus, it involves the decrease of difficulties in transferring the meaning made by the combination of semiotic resources in multimodal translation to realize trans-cultural communication. Theoretical works has been done since then by many scholars, among which the definition of translation is reconceptualized. Taking consideration of other semiotic systems, Toury extended Jacobus’s typology on translation (intra-lingual translation, inter-lingual translation and inter-semiotic translation), proposing that it can be regarded as transformance of one semiotic entity into another semitic entity. He further defined inter-semiotic translation as transference between two codes being two different semiotic systems (1994: 1112-1113). To impose constraints on semiotic possibilities so to create meaningful responses to an environment, Kobus Marais conceptualized translation “as negentropic semiotic work performed to constrain the creation of interpretants” (2019:157). This conceptualization extends the objects of translation studies to all forms of semiotic work besides interlinguistic translation, including multimodal translation. And the translating activity becomes the translators’ negentropic semiotic work. The constraints rationalize the final translation as a product under the influence or purview of environmental, original/target-cultural or translator-subjective factors.

Similarly, in sharing the acknowledgement that meaning-making should be realized beyond linguistic bias to all forms of semiotic works and stimulating the combination of semiotic resources in communication, translanguaging opens up promising ways of thing about the co-existence and co-occurrence of elements from the repertoire involving not just of different language elements, but also of different modalities, registers, and discourses (Li Wei, 2018:22[[10]](#footnote-10); Mike Baynham & Tong King Lee, 2019:7-8[[11]](#footnote-11)); it can be understood as the deployment of a spectrum of semiotic resources, meaning going between and beyond languages and “it is in the “beyond” dimension where translanguaging affiliates with multimodal studies” (Baynham & Lee, 2019:8). Moreover, the feature that translanguaging can involve myriad processes including translation makes multimodal translation be a type of these progresses.

According to Baynham & Lee (2019:5), the fundamental difference between translanguaging and translation lies in that the former is a variable, contingent aspect of language in use, occurring in the interactional small change that constitutes the activity, while the latter is a heavily regulated and institutionalized practice with its own directionalities and products. Baynham especially points out that “translanguaging provides a way of understanding how communication based on difference, whether linguistic, multimodal, or embodied, is enabled in the repertoire” ((Baynham & Lee, 2019:9); from the translanguaging perspective, it highlights “the processual and emergent aspect of translation”, and thus translanguaging and the notion of repertoire “helps understand the fine-grained activity of translation and can help in developing a dynamic account of translation as activity and practice” (Baynham & Lee, 2019:6). By this it again is emphasized that “translanguaging decisively shifts the focus away from text/context or language/language relations towards language users and their repertoire”. (Mike Baynham & Tong King Lee, 2019: 11). When turning to the framework of Jakobson’s (1959/2012) well-known translation typology, translanguaging can be, in Jakobson’s terms, (1) interlingual (translanguaging), involving the multilingual repertoire, (2) It can also be intralingual (translanguaging), involving relations between registers such as everyday and technical speech or writing, and (3) when different modes come into play, it is described as intersemiotic translanguaging understood as the selection and blending of modal resources. Baynham and Lee further identified two other types of translanguaging, extending from Jakobson’s framework, among which is (4) interdiscursive translanguaging where translanguaging involves interplay and mediation between discourses (2019: 13).

Since the cultural turn of translation studies during 70s-80s last century, translation no longer refers to a single language practice, but multimodal text studies such as movies, children’s books and comics have gradually become the focus of translation studies (Kaindl, 2019). However, most studies on comic translation have focused on text translation, ignoring image studies. Emphasizing the analysis of text elements but ignoring the interaction between graphics and text is a retreat from multimodal studies (Ozturk & Tarakçıoğlu, 2020). It is a conservative even stubborn insistence on single and static meaning and the rejection against the dynamic generation of meaning under the influence of contextual changes; it also is an ignorance of going beyond natural language and making full use of the overall language resources for communication.

Like any other cultural product, comics undergoes cross-border transmission, and for this to happen, comics must be adapted and translated for the target market. And this kind of translation must be trans-language, trans-cultural and trans-technical (Appadurai,1996). Compared with natural language, the deep connotation of image is not fixed and unique, their illocution remains imprecise compared to language. It is “exactly this uncertainty of semantics opens up a wide field of interpreting for image mode, which can culture-specifically vary greatly” (Kaindl, 2013: 265). Comic theory, also, posits that linguistic and non-linguistic signs cannot be considered apart in narrative terms; meaning is made by the combination as well as interaction between the two parts. As Kaindle has proposed that close focus should be paid on the interaction modalities between different modes from perspective of transfer; and since translation studies mainly concerns the communicative correlations between semiotic resources, he further suggests three types of relations between different modes in meaning-making:

1. the illustrating function, whereby the modes basically transport the same information and thus support each other in there meaning; (2) the commenting or extending function, whereby the modes supplement each other in their meaning, add something or concretize it; and (3) the contradictory function, whereby the meaning between the modes contradicts each other. (Kaindl, 2013: 265)

Comics is a kind of translanguaging communication mechanism including multimodal modes like image and text; its meaning is constructed through the interaction between the modes involved based on the author’s own cognitive ability, combining with his personal experience, attitudes, values and ideology formed by interacting with others under specific social-historical conditions; manipulating any one of the modes can change the relationship between them, thereby affecting the meaning constructed. As translation is a cross-language and cross-cultural communicative behavior, it is inevitable for translators to intervene in these modes intentionally or unintentionally when translating comics.

In light of the above-introduced theoretical frameworks, the comic work “The Realist” as well as its Chinese translation will be analyzed to answer the rest two questions: (2) What negentropic work does the translator do in translating the Israeli-Jewish-culture enriched work “The Realist” into Chinese? (3) What challenges the translator faces in translating works composed of semiotic modes like linguistic and pictures within a constrainedly created interpretant (translanguaging space)?

1. **Multimodal Expression in “The Realist” and It Chinese Translation**

“The Realist” employs multimodal relationships featuring images as the mainstay and linguistic text as attached to show the life states of ordinary working class in Israel. The combination of various modes stimulates and makes good use of readers’ different senses to enable them to understand the meaning of the work based on shared or similar life experiences and feelings. It is rich in themes, ranging from marital relations, parenting, personal social interaction, to racial discrimination, immigration resettlement, and national security. Although it is the author Hanuka’s autobiography, everything shown not only empathizes with Israeli readers, but also resonates with international readers.

For example, the comic chapter titled “ילד גדול” (“Big Child”) depicts that Hanuka sent his son to kindergarten. Faced with the crying son who refused to leave, Hanuka taught him to be “אתה צריך להיות אמיץ ובוגר”(“You have to be brave and mature”), but when his son was already attracted by the Lego blocks in the kindergarten, And while having a great time, the belated father, burst into tears alone because of his feelings of reluctance to leave his son as an afterthought, and the education of his son to be brave and mature has no effect on himself; he himself became a big child. Though a few lines of words and nine pictures convey simply the daily life of Hanuka and his son on a certain day, they also reflect the daily life of almost all families with young children in Israel and even the world. The “to be brave” education is the choice of most parents, but it is not only Hanuka who cannot manage it, but also thousands of parents who love their children deeply like him.

Though the title is translated into “坚强的心*jian qiang de xin*”(“Brave Heart”) in the Chinese translation, readers can experience the deep meaning constructed through the contrast between the text and the crying father and son in the picture within the translanguaging space created by the interaction between pictures and texts, and make Chinese readers understand that this kind of “separation experience” between parents and children is not limited by national boundaries, and readers can empathize with each other.

Generally, the Chinese translation, “现实主义者 *xian shi zhu yi zhe*”(“The Realist”) represents or transfers the visual features of the original work such as pictorial content, color matching ratio, while translating the text into Chinese. The translator transplants the feature of translanguaging communication through the combination of pictures and texts into the translated version, which restores the overall effect of the original work to a large extent, allowing the readers of the translated text to experience the exotic characteristics within the translanguaging space and to gain a thematic understanding of the Israeli-Jewish modern life. Operationally, the translator of “The Realist” rewrites the linguistic signs written over the work (in speech balloons, captions, onomatopoeia, other lettering spread throughout the background) in Chinese and generally leave the non-linguistic, picture portion of the page unchanged but adjust the layout order of them (actually the linguistic textual order as well) from right-left order into left-right order. One of the obvious differences caused by such adjustment lies in that the protagonist Hanuka becomes right-handed in the Chinese translation from left-handed in the Hebrew one; of course, this change has nothing impact on the target readers’ interpretation of this work. However, the adjustment itself is a kind of negentropic semiotic work performed by the Chinese translator to cater for the target readers’ reading habit from left to right to understand conveniently and properly.

Moreover, a quite apparent difference manipulated in the Chinese translation is that the handwritten linguistic text is changed into typed one. By doing so, there is no need for the translator to think about the necessity to adjust the word space, line space, line breaks and alignment according to the shape and size of the frame, but it would be hard for the target readers to get the tone of the speaker and the situation of the plot presented by the changing of the font shape, the stroke thickness and weight in the original work. As a work that tells stories with pictures, it is necessary to make the linguistic text of a comic work a part of the pictorial mode and contribute more power to the narrative of the picture than the meaning of the text itself. In this way, the readers can feel the protagonist’s or other character’s yelling through the wild and powerful word expression, or find the character’s physical or mental unfitness through the trembling and thin words, or experience the character’s whispering through the small and dense words he utters to someone else. When it comes to the comic translation, Federico Zanettin stresses that “comics are primarily visual texts which may (or may not) include a verbal component, and that in the translation of comics interlingual interpretation happens within the context of visual interpretation” (2008: 12).

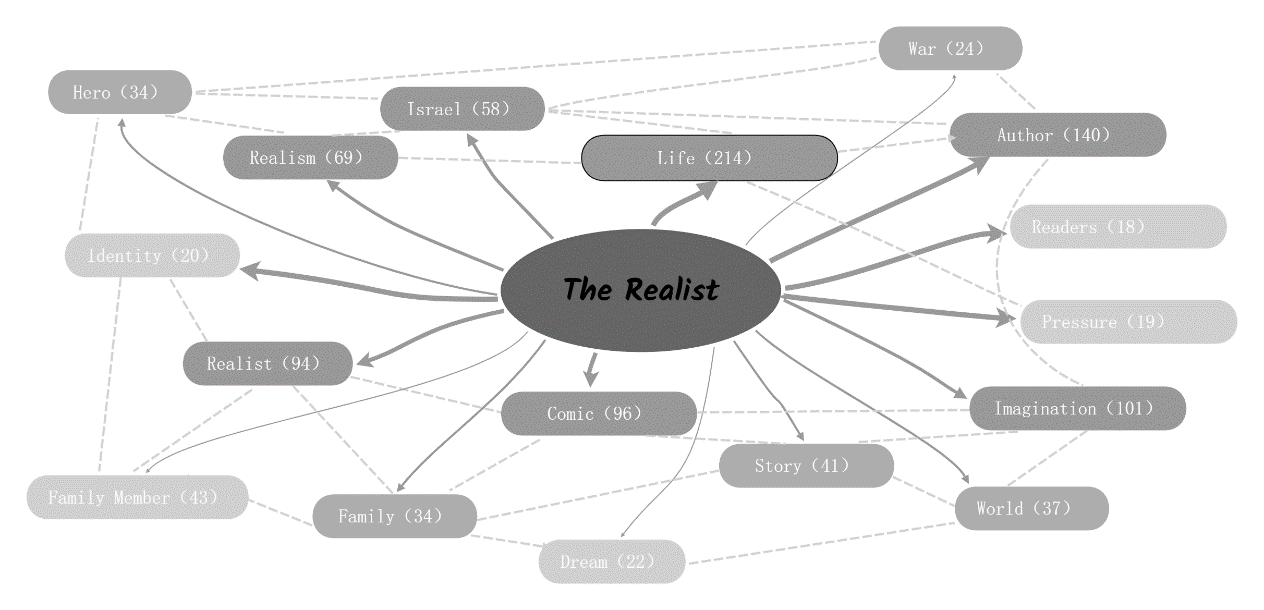
From the point of the idea introduced above, the Chinese translator of “The Realist” seems to have failed to follow this feature. In the first chapter sharing the same title “The Realist” of the work, when working on creating new comic works, the protagonist Hanuka receives a call from the landlord, telling him that they cannot rent the house anymore because the landlord is going to sell the house and the family of Hanuka has three months to move out. The sudden news upsets Hanuka, but at the same time he knocks over the ink bottle, thus destroys the work he is working on, as a result of these two bad news, Hanuka gets irritated and cannot help cursing “שיט” (“shit”, see the picture on the left in **Figure 1**). The cursing word in the original version is in a larger size than other words, expressing the protagonist’s strong feeling of irrigation and complain so to utter such cursing loudly; and, of course, it therefore further leads to the landlord’s misinterpretation that he is the object of this cursing, so he questions back “סליחה?” (“Excuse me?”). However, the Chinese translation ignores the feature of the enlarged word size, leaving this word the same as others in the same size and font as typed version (see the picture on the right in **Figure 1** in which the very word is translated into “妈的! *ma de*”**)**, lessening the visual sense of its pictorial mode and decreasing the impacting force to the target readers to feel the protagonist’s irritation and shock by the two concurrent events.

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**Figure 1**

1. **The Reception of the Chinese Translation and the Translator’s** **Negentropic Semiotic Work via Translanguaging**

As to the Chinese readers’ cognitive apprehension and interpretation of the work, according to the high-frequency keywords obtained via Python from short comments on this book published on Douban, the topic with the highest word frequency is “life” with a word frequency of 214 (**Chart** **1**), which shows that the topic of “life” is the most concerned or understood by Chinese readers. The reason is probably to be that due to the common or similar life experience, readers of the target text can understand the deep meaning contained in those chapters without additional background information or explanation. As the repeated theme of “The Realist”, “life” is vividly displayed from different angles in quite a number of chapters in the work. When reconstructs the translanguaging space of translation, the translator only needs to translate the language of the text, properly convey the intent and the meaning of the original work, and then can offer the target readers an experience as that that the original readers feel, effectively realizing the communicative purpose of translanguaging practice.



**Chart 1** ***Visualized High-Frequency Keywords[[12]](#footnote-12)***

However, the Israeli-Jewish customs, festivals, living conditions and other culture-specific elements involved in “The Realist” make the translator face the problem of translation voids when translating; even if the source language can find its Chinese equivalent by linguistic mode, the connotation this equivalent carries is not necessarily the same to the source or could not be got by the Chinese readers. Moreover, if the corresponding pictorial mode transplanted to the translation still cannot benefit the target readers to figure out the connotation and the meaning the original authors hopes to communicate, then the translator’s negentropic semiotic work fails. The translation product or the interpretant does not make sense to the target readers, no matter how clear the linguistic or textual meaning is to the translator himself/herself. In this case, the translator needs to seek for other solutions to realize the successful communication rather than simply translating the linguistic text and transplanting the pictures.

1. **Negentropic Semiotic Work of Supplementing Linguistic Footnote as Created Interpretants**

In the Chinese translation “现实主义者*xian shi zhu yi zhe*” (“The Realist”) the most frequently employed translation strategy by the translator is adding footnote at the bottom of the corresponding page, in which additional information is provided in linguistic mode for the target readers to refer to. That is to say, the negentropic semiotic work the translator has done is to enlarge the volume of linguistic mode, broadening target readers’ cognitive view and extending their knowledge about Israeli-Jewish culture. In chapters titled “光明节 *Guang Ming Jie*” (“Chanukah”), “普林节 *Pu Lin Jie*” (“Purim”) and “独立日 *Du Li Ri*” (“Independent Day”), the translator makes the meaning of the combination of text and picture clearer by adding an asterisk in the upper right corner of the caption and explaining those terms refer to festivals in Israel for at the bottom of the same page.

In these cases, the translator’s translanguaging practice of adding footnote increases the target readers’ reading quantity but decreasing their understanding on what those culture-specific terms stand for or refer to. The negentropic semiotic work of the translator lies in helping the target readers to understand the meaning of the chapters, feeling the foreign experience of the locals when they celebrate these festivals. To a great extent, it is a kind of fidelity to the original work. In discussing the fidelity in comics translation, Érico Gonçalves de Assis states that “faithful translators would be those who acknowledge and brand the text as a foreign, presenting this foreign aspect to the reader” (2016:8-9). The fidelity that the translator conducts in translating these several chapters is right emphasized by his supplementary of the footnote, impressing the target readers that those are Israeli-Jewish specific festivals. The interaction between the linguistic mode, including the added explanation in the footnote, and pictorial mode highlights the foreignness to the target readers without disturbing the meaning that the author hopes to convey.

It is also a manifestation of the translator’s “communication” with the original work and the deployment of a spectrum of language resources (translanguaging between linguistic mode and non-linguistic mode) mobilizing his translanguaging repertoire based on the translator’s interpretation of the author’s communicating intention via translanguaging between linguistic mode and non-linguistic mode. To a certain extent, it works as a supplement to the target reader’s translanguaging repertoire as well: through this work as well as the additional information given by the translator, the Chinese reader acquire some Israel-Jewish culture-specific festivals and their names by the linguistic verbal mode and how the local people celebrate them by the pictures. With the translanguaging use of both linguistic and non-linguistic language resources, the target readers cognitively get a vivid and comprehensive perception of the Israeli-Jewish cultural knowledge of various festivals as well as the locals’ life, getting them ready for further understanding of more Israeli-Jewish works with such knowledge.

Of course, the translator’s negentropic semiotic work of supplement of additional information via linguistic mode also affects the relationship between text and picture, and thus has an impact on the transmission of translanguaging meaning. In the chapter titled 90 שניות (“90 Seconds”), the translanguaging space constructed by the linguistic mode of these two words and the father and son flying downstairs, disheveled men and women in the pictorial modes can hardly create a tense atmosphere to the Chinese readers who have no idea about what happens, nor it is enough to make them get the connotation of the author’s translanguaging behavior employing text and pictures, though the linguistic mode is translated into its Chinese equivalent “90秒*Jiu Shi Miao*”(“90 Seconds”). Translanguaging believes that the language users can emerge a language (possibly from different language systems) that matches the situation according to the specific communication situation naturally and without preset, so as to achieve the purpose of communication (Zheng Liqin, 2020, 58, my translation). As a translanguaing behavior-conductor and the creator of a new translanguaging space (the translation), the translator explains to and makes the Chinese readers, who has no knowledge about the Israelis’ living condition, realize the concrete meaning of 90 seconds by adding a footnote (see the picture on the right in **Figure 2**)without disturbing the pictorial expressions: “After the siren sounds, there will be 90 seconds for people to rush to the shelter room to escape from the bomb; and one needs to wait 10 minutes before returning to normal life after the explosion sounds until the next siren sounds.” By this, the target readers can realize that 90 seconds means the limited time for the locals to escape from dodging rocket attacks which is unimaginable for those who never experience this; together with the pictorial modes, the target readers get how tense the situation is and how eagerly the locals are expecting peace indicated by the work.

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**Figure 2 *Chinese Version of “90 Seconds”***

With the additional footnote, the supplementary text converts the graph-text relationship from what Kaindle named “the illustrating function, whereby the modes basically transport the same information and thus support each other in their meaning” into “the commenting or extending function, whereby the modes supplement each other in their meaning, add something or concretize it” (Kaindl, 2013: 265). The translanguaging space reconstructed by the graphic-text interaction makes the target readers more aware that the tension is the result of war conflicts; and in the face of such sudden air strikes, the locals are not unconscious or simply wait to die, but are familiar with the coping strategies. Moreover, it also expands the target readers’ cognitive knowledge and can more effectively understand similar chapters later presented, such “מדרגות נעות” (“Escalators/Moving Stairs”), “60 קילומטר” (“60 Kilometers”) (their Chinese translations are “滚梯*Gun Ti*”(“Rolling Stairs”) and “60千米*Liu Shi Qian Mi*”(“60 Kilometers”) respectively) and so on.

In these cases, translanguaging as a theoretical lens offers the analysis of the negentropic semiotic work of translation an approach of thick translation as reworked by Appiah (2012), but the focus is the translator and his repertoire rather than the text/context or language/language relations. Of course, the premise for the translator’s successful operation is that he has the translanguaging repertoire for him to recognize the culture-specific expression and can figure out its connotation. Actually, in some other case-chapters, the problem the translator faces is that he fails to recognize the original author’s communication technique or he himself actually could not realize the connotation contained in a certain expression as a result of his insufficient transalanguaging repertoire.

1. **Challenges the Translator faces in Negentropic Semiotic Work Dealing with Certain Expression**

As a work characterized by satire on Israeli social issues, another theme repeatedly referred to in “The Realist” is that of racism. Since the founding of the state, a large number of Jewish immigrants have poured into Israel. Due to the various encounters brought about by the author’s Jewish-Arab identity, he pays special attention to racial discrimination in Israel. To be specific and the main one is the contradiction between “Mizrahi Israelis” (that is, Jewish immigrants mainly from Arab countries) and “Ashkenazi Israelis” (that is, Jewish immigrants mainly form European countries). Although both are Jews, the latter’s sense of superiority is much higher than the former; “*Mizrahim* were given housing in towns that in the periphery of the country and positioned away from the cultural and economic centers during the 1950s and 1960s” (Reingold, 2020:7) and the “only way [for the Mizrahi Israelis] to experience upwards mobility was to adopt Ashkenazi customs and abandon their own” (Reingold, 2020:7; the square bracket is added by the author of this paper).

These encounters are not new to Hanuka: Born in Israel in 1974, Hanuka’s parents encouraged him from an early age to hide his Mizrahi or Judeo-Arab identity and blend into the Jewish-Israeli society and this has also been presented in the work. In the chapter titled “סמבוסק מהחלל החיצון (Samossa from Outer Space)” in “The Realist”, the author’s mother and grandmother communicated in Arabic (the languages of both Arabic and Hebrew are given in the original work), but when the author who couldn’t understand the language asked her mother, the reply he got was simply “…זה לא משנה” (It doesn't matter/That is not important). The mother refused to let her children learn to use Arabic, trying to get them out of the identity of “Mizrahi” from the language habits. However, Hanuka felt it hard to fit into the Israeli society as a result of the lack of Mizrahi cultural icons in 1980s Israel nor he saw famous *Mizrahim* in mainstream society that he could admire (Reingold, 2020:2).

In his “The Realist”, Hanuka presents this problem through the dynamic integration of linguistic and pictorial modes from various angles, like those with the titles of “שיקוף” (Mirroring/Reflection), “המחלקה לתקשורת חזותית” (Department of Visual Communication), “בן כלאיים” (Hybrid Son), “יהודי טוב” (A Good Jew). And therefore, this sets challenges for the translator that whether he can discover the problem in time and then transfer it on to the target readers properly. In some case-chapters, the race problem is embodied evidently and the Chinese readers can get their meaning more or less properly via difference of skin colors shown in the pictorial mode, and the organic interaction between linguistic text involving “种族 *zhong zu*” (race) and pictures even without the translator’s negentropic semiotic work.

However, those chapters referring to racial problem but does not point it out clearly are the big challenge to the translator. More probably, the translator himself may not recognize the indication of racial problem, not to mention to make it clear for the target readers. Or even worse, the translator’s unproper manipulation might lead the readers furtherer away from getting the indicated meaning. Taking the above-mentioned chapter, “סמבוסק מהחלל החיצון (Samossa from Outer Space)”, as an example: in its Chinese translation the caption is translated into “来自外太空的萨莫萨*Lai Zi Wai Tai Kong de Sa Mo Sa*” (“Samossa from Outer Space”), and all the Hebrew in this chapter is translated into Chinese, from which the target readers get that the twin brothers cannot understand the language their mother and grandmother speak but have the curiosity to figure it out. However, the mother invites the son to try a freshly backed Samossa instead of answering his question on the language properly, leaving the protagonist boy in confusion. The puzzle and bewilderment brought by the language problem makes the boy feel that the Samossa he eats is no longer a food of the earth but from outer space. In the Chinese translation, the translator creates such kind of feeling for the Chinese readers as well by the strategy of leaving the Arabic text untranslated.

From the perspective of translanguaging practice/communication, the two different natural languages of Arabic and Hebrew as well as the pictures compose the translanguageing repertoire in the translanguaguing space of the original work. In the work itself, the unrecognized Arabic language is out of the protagonist boys’ translanguageing repertoire, thus creating their sense of strangeness and curiosity. While the combination of natural languages, Arabic and Chinese (translation of the Hebrew), and the pictures composes the translanguaging repertoire in the Chinese version; the untranslated Arabic still carries with it the strangeness to those Chinese who do not know this language. The translator dynamically chooses his negentropic semiotic work of simply translating the Hebrew into Chinese, but intentionally leaves the Arabic language untranslated, making it clear for the target readers that the theme of this chapter is that the protagonist boys have the problem in understanding their mother and grandmother’s communicating language and the curiosity to figure out.

However, it has to be clarified that more work has been done in the Chinese translation. The translator explains that the untranslated text is Arabic by a footnote at the bottom of the same page, though without giving any explanation of its meaning. Therefore, the negentropic semiotic work of the translator is limited to his introduction of the language as Arabic through additional linguistic mode rather than offering explanation of the meaning this work actually means to convey. But this linguistic mode supplementary does not benefit the Chinese readers to acquire the connotation that the mother has her predicament of unable to teach her children Arabic language or to the explain the reason that they are suffering from racial discrimination as *Mizrahim*. The negentropic semiotic work does not help but factually lessens the Chinese readers’ feeling of strangeness and unfamiliarity of “outer space” created by a foreign language (the Arabic), because the supplementary in the footnote actually is the answer to the protagonist boy’s question proposed to his mother in the work.

It is disappointing to find that this is not the only challenge that the translator fails to recognize about racial problems the author hopes to figure out in the work. The above case presents the racial problem from the Mizrahi Israelis’ own perspective and their effort to change this situation, while the chapter titled “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” presents the same problem from the Ashkenazi Israelis’ perspective. “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” is actually how the female character (a white bank manager) addresses Hanuka, the author and the protagonist, in this chapter, “אני מצטערת מר חתוכה לאור החוב הקיים לא נוכל לאשר את ההלוואה” (I'm sorry, Mr. Hatuka, in light of the existing debt, we will not be able to approve the loan); on the surface, it is the white manager’s “slip of the tongue”, however, it reveals the cruel reality that Hanuka’s, the protagonist, social position has been judged by his skin color and appearance as a Mizrahi, which cannot be changed by his family name. The white bank manager distinguishes his identity subconsciously, thus rather addresses him as “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” than “מר חנוכה (Mr. Hanuka)”.

According to another chapter titled “Way of Peace”, it is known that the family name “חנוכה מזרחי” (Hanuka Mizrahi) was given to the author’s grandfather by the Labor party (the party in power at that time) after the founding of the Israel country to indicate the family’s identity as the second-class Israelis. It was the protagonist’s, also the author’s, father changed the family name into “חתוכה” (Hanuka), omitting the other half “מזרחי” (Mizrahi) with derogatory meaning. Obviously, this chapter plays the role of intertext to “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” under analysis. According to the intertextuality, it can be found that the family, and to extent to the Mizrahi Israeli group, hope to alter the unfair treatment they suffer. The behavior of changing the family name from “חנוכה מזרחי” (Hanuka Mizrahi) into simply “חתוכה” (Hanuka) proves that the family care how people locate their identity and their image in the eyes of the others, expecting no discrimination and truly integrating into Israeli society. Accordingly, it can be seen that “חתוכה” (Hanuka) as the author’s family name has special significance to him, and it is a manifestation of his family’s desire to get rid of the status of “second-class Israelis”. Moreover, the caption “Way to Peace” indicates that the peace problem not only involves between different countries or races, it is even one worth more people’s attention among the Jews in Israel.

However, such expectation is broken by the bank manager’s mistake reflecting her subconscious distinguishment of Mizrahi Israelis from Ashkenazi Israelis. Therefore, in the dialogue, her unconsciously employment of the family name “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” that she thinks fitting the protagonist’s identity implies her mentality of judging Hanuka as not being Jewish enough or not being superior enough. This seemingly “slip of the tongue” expression is similar to the interrogator’s denial of Hanuka in the chapter titled “To Confess Honestly”: “Looking at you, you cannot make me think of the Chanukah Festival”. In manifesting Ashkenazi Israelis’ racial discrimination against Mizrahi Israelis, the bank manager’s and the interrogator’s expressions work as different tunes rendering with equal skill.

However, in the Chinese translation “哈努卡先生，接受审核*Hanuka Xian Sheng, Jie Shou Shen Cha*”(Mr. Hanuka Receives Reviewing)，the translator recognizes and corrects “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” into “מר חנוכה (Mr. Hanuka)” in both the caption and the textual part when the bank manager addresses the protagonist. It is not hard to speculate that the translator recognizes it as a mistake, since “חתוכה (Hatuka)” has appeared again and again as both the author’s family name and that of the protagonist’s in the work. The correction is due to the translator’s translanguaging repertoire got or accumulated in translating this this name repeatedly during the translation process. And the correction can also be regarded as the translator’s dynamic negentropic semiotic work in helping the target readers to recognize it is the same Mr. Hanuka as always is in the work though the bank manager’s mistake. Or even the correction is the result that the translator regards “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” as a typographical error, so change it into the right version in the translation.

But it is right such correction proves that the translator fails to realize the mistake is actually a presentation of racial discrimination against Mizrahi Israelis the author wants to express. The denial of the protagonist’s family name as “חתוכה” (Hanuka) but “חתוכה (Hatuka)” interacts with the pictorial mode showing Hanuka’s image as one with a head of an atomic mushroom cloud in red color formed after a nuclear explosion rather than a normal human head. “By means of this speech act, [the bank manager] silences her addressee, maybe even erases his identity” (Adler and Kohn, 2020:17). A person’s name is considered to be connected with his identity. The name is a well-defined and bounded system of terms, […] the rules of symbols that define a person. This is a general rule in the cultures of all nations in the world. (Mei Xiaoyun, 2008:157). Name is a symbol of personal existence and one of the elements for identifying an individual. Therefore, the bank manager’s “slip of the tongue” is endowed with a special connotation: such mistake puts Hanuka in a state of “silence”, even to some extent, it is a denial of Hanuka’s existence, turning him into a transformed people with a head of an atomic mushroom cloud in red color. “This transformation grants silence its essential communicational power, as a vessel for feelings”, stands the protagonist’s screaming “I blew up when I heard it” or “his man is a ticking bomb” (Adler and Kohn, 2020:17-19). In the Chinese translation, the correction of Hanuka’s family as right erases the meaning explained above, breaking the effect made by the interaction between the linguistic expression of “מר חתוכה (Mr. Hatuka)” and the pictorial mode. Generally, as a result, in conveying the indication that the Mizrahi Israelis suffers from racial discrimination, the translator’s negentropic semiotic work of correcting the bank manager’s mistake plays quite the opposite effect in the Chinese translation.

William once pointed out that translanguaging means that the user receives information through a medium of a language and uses it by himself through the medium of another language. Before the information is successful used, the user must fully understand it himself (1996: 64). The correction that the translator makes in his translation makes the ironic effect constructed by the original work completely lost, embodying the translator’s failure in figuring out the connotation carried in the mistakenly spelt word. It quite possibly is the result of the translator’s own lack of cognition on the Mizrahi problem in Israel. In the recreated translanguaging space, the corrected word cannot interact with the picture in which the protagonist becomes a silent man without a normal human head, placing himself in a state of disappointment or anger.

1. **Conclusion**

Based on Kobus Marais’ conception of translation as the translator’s negentropic semiotic work to constrain the creation of interpretants and the translanguaging theory, this research analyzed the Chinese translation of a multimodal-comic work by the Israeli comic artist Asaf Hanuka. The present research believes that as a typical example challenging the conventional translation studies subjecting to a linguistic bias, multimodal translation, or to be specific, comic translation, can be regarded as the translator’s translanguaging behavior: s/he keeps the feature of the combination use of different semiotic resources, that are verbal mode and pictorial mode, in translating under the constraints of the original work, the translanguaging space. With the translators’ translanguaging repertoire, s/he tries his or her best to negentropic the multimodal expressions for the target readers, creating a new the translanguaging space (the translation product or interpretant) under the influence of target culture.

In researching the Chinese translation of the comic “The Realist”, it is found that with rich Israeli-Jewish cultural connotation, the translator is required to exert his translanguaging ability to promote the target readers’ perception of the work through interplay between linguistic and semiotic modes while maintaining the thematic interaction with the source to constrain the creation of interpretant (a new translanguaging space), that is the translation work. Facing such rich Israeli-Jewish cultural connotation, the negentropic semiotic work that the translator can conduct can be to enlarge the volume of linguistic mode, broadening target readers’ cognitive view and extending their knowledge about Israeli-Jewish culture. In the relevant cases, the translator’s translanguaging practice of adding footnote increases the target readers’ reading quantity but decreasing their understanding on what those culture-specific terms stand for or refer to. The negentropic semiotic work of the translator lies in helping the target readers to understand the meaning of the chapters, feeling the foreign experience of the locals when they celebrate these festivals.

However, it has to be confessed that the premise for the translator’s successful negentropic semiotic work to constrain the creation of interpretants through translanguaging is that he has the translanguaging repertoire for him to recognize the culture-specific expression and can figure out its connotation. The fact is that it is impossible for the translator to recognize or figure out the connotation of each chapter every time. Oppositely, the translator’s negentropic semiotic work of superfluous explanation/addition or unproper correction of a certain expression are quite possibly lead to the target readers’ failure in understanding the true intention of the work.

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