

# A Study of the English Translation of Culture-Loaded Words in *Dream of the Red Chamber* from the Perspective of the “5W” Model of Communication

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## Abstract

As a pinnacle of Chinese classical literature, *Dream of the Red Chamber* is hailed as the “encyclopedia of Chinese classical culture”. The English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang, as well as by David Hawkes and John Minford are selected as research materials. The study examines the translation strategies and methods used by these translators to handle culturally loaded words within the framework of the “5W” model of communication, which is Who, Says what, In which channel, To whom, With what effects. The study aims to provide relevant references for future researchers in the same field and to enhance the dissemination of traditional Chinese culture.

## Keywords

*Dream of the Red Chamber*, Culturally Loaded Words, “5W” Model of Communication, English Translations

## 1. Introduction

The article firstly discusses the background of the research, introduces the status and research ability of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, and its English translation and translation activities, secondly discusses the research methodology chosen in this article, and then discusses the significance of this article in academic research as well as its practical significance, and finally sets out the overall framework structure of the article.

*Dream of the Red Chamber* is the peak representative of Chinese traditional

novel writing, which has a high research value in many fields and a high degree of dissemination, and has been well received by readers for many years. Through *Dream of the Red Chamber*, readers can feel that the author Cao Xueqin integrated the fruits of politics, economy, ideology, culture, art and other fields of the whole society into his works.

### 1.1. Research Background

In terms of cross-cultural communication, *Dream of the Red Chamber* still plays a role that cannot be underestimated. As early as the early 18th century, *Dream of the Red Chamber* was spread overseas, used as a teaching material for foreigners to learn Chinese, and became a shining business card for the Western world to understand the excellent traditional Chinese culture. At the same time, there was also a specific school of study. The term “redology” appeared as early as the reign of Guangxu and continues to this day; the momentum has still not decreased by half.

The translation and introduction of literary classics are crucial for the dissemination of national culture (Mao, 2009). The English translation efforts of *Dream of the Red Chamber* can be categorized into three phases: The first phase (1830-1893) saw four translations, all of which were partial translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber*. The second phase (1927-1958) included three adaptations of the novel. The third phase (1973-1982) produced two complete English translations. One was *The Story of the Stone*, co-translated by David Hawkes and his student John Minford, and the other was *A Dream of Red Mansions*, co-translated by the renowned Chinese translator couple Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang. The Hawkes and Yang translations are the first complete English versions of *Dream of the Red Chamber* to be officially published, and they have long been considered the earliest comprehensive translations both domestically and internationally. These translations carefully selected suitable original texts and incorporated a wealth of contemporary research in the field of Redology during the translation process, striving to fully capture the essence of this timeless masterpiece. As a result, they have received high praise among both professional and non-professional readers worldwide. These two distinguished and classic translations have been selected in this article as the primary research materials.

### 1.2. Research Methodology

*Dream of the Red Chamber*, one of China’s Four Great Classical Novels, represents the pinnacle of Chinese literature. This article examines the translation methods for culturally loaded words in the two selected English translations by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang (Cao, 2008), and by David Hawkes and John Minford (Cao, 1973). Using the “5W” model of communication, the article explores the similarities and differences in translation strategies for culturally loaded words, drawing on specific examples from the translations.

*Dream of the Red Chamber* is regarded as the “Encyclopedia of Chinese

Classical Culture”, and its culturally loaded words encapsulate its cultural essence. These words are vast in number and intricate in nature, posing significant challenges in translation. They are also key to reflecting the essence of traditional Chinese culture. For example, in *Dream of the Red Chamber*, Yang’s and Hawkes’ translations of the word “鼎” (ding) differ significantly. In ancient China, a “鼎” was a common item and a symbol of authority. This word carries deep Chinese cultural significance, with no equivalent term in Western cultures, making its translation challenging. Yang translated it as “tripod” based on its physical characteristics of having three legs, while Hawkes used a phonetic transcription as “ding”. However, neither translation effectively conveys to Western readers what a “鼎” truly is or the cultural connotations it embodies in Chinese culture.

This article employs a literature review and case study methodology to study these culturally loaded words. By reviewing previous research, the study identifies research directions, analyzes explorable areas, and determines the research focus and translation materials. Following this, the selected translations are read in full, and typical cases are chosen based on the classification of culturally loaded words to investigate translation methods. The article also examines the strategies different translators use for these words under the “5W” model of communication.

Initially, representative cases of culturally loaded words from the two selected translations are analyzed descriptively. This article focuses on the similarities and differences in the translation strategies adopted by the different translators under the “5W” model of communication, as well as the reasons for their choices and the effectiveness of the communication.

### 1.3. Research Significance

*Dream of the Red Chamber* is a well-known classic literary work in China. Due to its rich content, it is often referred to as the “Encyclopedia of Chinese Culture” and serves as an important medium for studying traditional Chinese culture. “Culturally loaded words” are linguistic carriers of national culture that directly or indirectly reflect the distinctive characteristics of ethnic cultures. These words play a crucial role in the regional transmission of traditional culture. This facilitates the global dissemination of traditional Chinese culture through cultural soft power, enhances China’s cultural soft power and international discourse, and promotes the exchange and mutual learning of excellent cultures worldwide. It aims to present a real, multidimensional, and comprehensive image of China to the world.

This article focuses on the English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, exploring the use of translation strategies and methods for culturally loaded words under the “5W” model of communication. It reviews and summarizes the achievements and shortcomings of translating these culturally loaded words and suggests future directions for improvement. This article lays the foundation for further in-depth research on the English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* within the framework of the “5W” model of communication. The goal is to provide

valuable insights for future researchers in the same field.

## 2. Literature Review

Literature review introduces previous research on the translation of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, then summarizes and categorizes studies on culturally loaded words to identify potential research directions.

### 2.1. Previous Research on the Translation of *Dream of the Red Chamber*

Based on a literature search in the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) database, research on the translation of *Dream of the Red Chamber* has concentrated on the following four aspects: 1) Studies from Different Theoretical Perspectives: Research includes perspectives such as ability of Chinese literary translation, cross-cultural views, relevance theory, conceptual integration theory, eco-translatology, Skopos theory, polysystem theory, reception aesthetic theory, postcolonial translation theory, pragmatic ambivalence, fuzzy aesthetics, and adaptation theory. 2) Analysis of Translators and Translations: Research on translators focuses on their styles and subjectivity. Studies on translations primarily concentrate on the versions by David Hawkes, Lin Yutang, Henry Bencraft Joly, and Chi-Chen Wang. 3) Emphasis on Translation Techniques and Theoretical Research: This includes the use of strategies like domestication and foreignization, and methods such as literal translation, free translation, amplification, omission, substitution, and explanatory translation, along with studies on various translation techniques. 4) Cultural Phenomena and the Dissemination of National Culture in the English Translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber*: Research covers cultural imagery, culturally loaded words, cultural comparison, cultural default, cultural context, and cultural filtering. Studies on national cultural dissemination analyze words of appellation, names of alcoholic drinks, traditional Chinese medicine culture, poetry, slang and idioms, clothing culture, dialects, dish names, metaphors, and ambiguous language in *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

The search results and analysis of publication years show that research on the translation of *Dream of the Red Chamber* has been ongoing and remains a hot topic. The trend indicates that more sinologists are studying English translations within the context of national historical and cultural exchange, rather than focusing solely on linguistic conversion. Research methods and perspectives have diversified, and techniques have expanded, including the use of corpora for data support and the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, making the results increasingly objective and fair.

Previous research on the English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* has generally focused on one of the four aspects mentioned above, with relatively single research methods and techniques. Some studies involve parallel text comparisons, which cover too broad a range without detailed case analysis or sufficient examples to support their conclusions. In recent years, research has increasingly

shifted towards cultural aspects, such as the dissemination of classical culture and national translation competence, aligning with the global trend of promoting Chinese culture. Culture-loaded Words, which encapsulate the essence of regional culture, remain a significant challenge in translation. Research combining the “5W” model of communication with translation strategies for culture-loaded words is rare, and this article aims to contribute to the development of this direction.

## 2.2. Previous Research on the Translation of Culture-Loaded Words

Culture-loaded words refer to phrases and idioms that carry special significance within a particular culture. The appearance and usage of these words reflect the unique behaviors and habits formed by a specific ethnic group through cultural and historical accumulation, distinguishing them from other ethnic groups. Translation, as a means of interlingual communication, is not merely a process of converting linguistic symbols but also a mode of cultural information transfer, as language and culture are inseparably linked. Language serves as the vehicle for culture, while culture provides the essential context for language to thrive. The language of any ethnic group carries the deep cultural connotations of that group, and the vocabulary system of a language can most directly and sensitively reflect the cultural values of its people. Therefore, effectively handling culturally laden words is key to successful translation.

Previous research on the translation of culturally loaded words has been combined with various translation theories, involving related theories and research perspectives such as functional equivalence theory, Skopos theory, translator behavior criticism, schema theory, cultural soft power, cultural translation perspectives, eco-translatology, relevance theory, thick translation theory, cognitive poetics, and reception aesthetics.

Regarding the translation of culturally loaded words in the English versions of *Dream of the Red Chamber*, some studies have approached it from a macro perspective, treating a particular category of culturally loaded words as a whole, such as social cultural words or material cultural words. Other studies have taken a micro perspective, focusing on specific categories such as clothing cultural words, poetry cultural words, or culinary cultural words. These studies have examined the semantic and cultural connotations of culturally loaded words, achieving notable results.

Previous research has found that the translation by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang tends to use more literary and complex words, aiming to preserve traditional Chinese culture and help Western readers understand and accept the input of foreign culture. The study of translation strategies and methods for culturally loaded words in *Dream of the Red Chamber* generally divides these strategies into domestication and foreignization. Foreignization is used to faithfully introduce the source culture, while domestication promotes the acceptability of the text within the target culture (Qian & Ji, 2011).

From the perspective of the adaptation and selection theory, the English translation characteristics and strategies for culturally loaded words in *Dream of the Red Chamber* indicate that Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang primarily adopted a source-culture-centered literal translation method. This approach achieves optimal conversion of culturally loaded words between Chinese and English across linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions with a high degree of integration. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods, it was found that in the version co-translated by David Hawkes and John Minford, domestication is used more frequently than foreignization, with translation methods predominantly involving substitution and literal translation.

In the context of the global dissemination of Chinese culture, more researchers are exploring the role of culturally loaded words with distinct regional characteristics in translations from multiple perspectives. Combining translation theories with cultural insights, they are increasingly focusing not only on the linguistic and communicative aspects of translation but also on the deeper implications of how the translation of culturally loaded words facilitates the global reach of Chinese culture.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1. Overview of the “5W” Model in Communication

Communication is an ancient social phenomenon that has existed since the emergence of humanity. Initially, humans exchanged thoughts and emotions through physical objects and gestures, later through spoken and written language, and now through mass media such as print and electronic media. With the continuous evolution of communication practices, the field of communication studies emerged (Chen, 1996).

American political scientist Harold D. Lasswell, a foundational figure in communication studies, introduced the “5W” model of the communication process in his 1948 article, “*The Structure and Function of Communication in Society*”. This model was the first to analyze human communication activities systematically, defining the scope and basic content of communication studies, and has had a profound influence.

Lasswell’s “5W” model represents a linear communication process: Who (the communicator)→Says What (the message)→In Which Channel (the medium)→To Whom (the receiver)→With What Effect (the effect) (Lasswell, 1948). 1) Who: The communicator is responsible for collecting, processing, and transmitting information. The communicator can be an individual, a group, or a specialized institution. 2) Says What: This refers to the content of the message, composed of a meaningful set of symbols. Symbols include both linguistic and non-linguistic signs. 3) In Which Channel: The channel is the medium through which the message is transmitted. Channels can be interpersonal media like letters and telephones or mass media like news, radio, and television. 4) To Whom: This denotes the receiver or audience, which includes all recipients such as readers, listeners,

and viewers. The audience is the ultimate target of communication. 5) With What Effect: This refers to the reaction of the audience upon receiving the message, encompassing cognitive, emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral responses. The effect is a crucial measure of the success of the communication activity (Dong, 2008).

Lasswell posited that the communication process involves five elements: communicator, message, channel, receiver, and effect. These elements do not exist in isolation but rather interact and influence each other throughout the communication process.

### 3.2. Application of the “5W” Model in Translation

The essence of translation lies not in the language itself but in the transmission of ideas and cultural content. Understanding and conveying the meaning intended by the original text is paramount (Wang, 2019). As a highly practical science, communication studies offer valuable insights for translation. German translation theorist Christiane Nord posits that the sender-receiver model in communication is analogous to the source-target language model in translation, making cross-linguistic translation a special form of communication. Domestically, Professor Lv Jun proposed in 1997 that incorporating translation studies into the framework of communication studies has significant practical relevance (Lv, 1997). Professor Zhang Shengxiang believes that translation and communication represent the interplay between the internal logic and external manifestation of human activities. Studying translation through the lens of communication elements introduces a novel approach to translation research (Zhang, 2013).

As a unique form of communication, applying communication research methods to translation allows for a more profound understanding of its core aspects. This approach can yield conclusions that accurately reflect the nature of translation and provide significant guidance for translation practice. It enriches and deepens translation research, promoting a more comprehensive and systematic understanding of the field (Xie & Liao, 2016).

## 4. Case Study of English Translation of “*Dream of the Red Chamber*” under the “5W” Model in Communication Studies

Nida (1945) categorizes culture into five types: 1) ecological culture; 2) material culture; 3) social culture; 4) religious culture; and 5) linguistic culture. Correspondingly, cultural load words can also be classified into five types: ecological cultural load words, material cultural load words, social cultural load words, religious cultural load words, and linguistic cultural load words. In this section, based on the classification of these cultural load words, we will select these five types of cultural load words to explore the similarities and differences in translation strategies of the Yang translation and the Hawkes translation under the “5W” model in terms of content selection for communication, and discuss the underlying reasons behind them.

#### 4.1. Linguistic Cultural Load Words

Linguistic cultural load words reflect prominent characteristics of language in specific cultural and linguistic systems, including aspects such as phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, and rhetoric. They are a category of words that most vividly embody cultural characteristics within a language system, such as idioms, proverbs, sayings, allegories, aphorisms, slang, and metaphors. Among them, the use of proverbs is particularly effective in character portrayal in the text.

Example 1:

Original Text: 碟大碗小，磕着碰着。

Yang's Translation: What family doesn't have a few tiffs and squabbles?

Hawkes's Translation: Every family has its little troubles. That's as natural as plates clinking in a picnic-hamper.

The meaning of this proverb is metaphorical, indicating that there are often disputes and conflicts within a family. In this case, the two translators employed different translation strategies. Yang used a domestication strategy, employing a free translation method. He simplified the cultural elements involved in this proverb, retaining only its core meaning of "minor disputes", aimed at reducing reading difficulty for the audience while maintaining sufficient reading interest. On the other hand, Hawkes used a foreignization strategy, combining literal and free translation methods, preserving the cultural elements of the source language to help readers better understand the culture of the source language country.

#### 4.2. Religious Cultural Load Words

Religious cultural load words generally involve aspects of religious structure, relationships, norms, and phenomena.

Example 2:

Original Text: 世人都道神仙好，唯有功名忘不了。

Yang's Translation: All men long to be immortals.

Hawkes's Translation: Man all know that salvation should be won.

“神仙” (shénxiān) is a concept from Chinese Taoism. Taoism is the only religion originating in China and founded by Chinese people, thus also known as an indigenous religion. China is deeply influenced by Taoist culture and admires the state of transcendence and immortality represented by “神仙”. Yang's translation employed a foreignization strategy, translating it as “immortals”, conveying the meaning of transcending the mundane and achieving eternal life, thus promoting Eastern indigenous culture to the outside world. In contrast, Hawkes adopted a domestication strategy, translating it as “salvation”. “Salvation” is a concept from Christianity, stemming from the doctrine of original sin, which posits that humans are born sinful and must continually repent to gain God's salvation and enter the ideal world of Christianity. Hawkes's choice facilitates understanding for Western readers by using familiar Christian terminology, blending more Western cultural elements into Chinese culture and reducing the audience's unfamiliarity with exotic cultures (Zuo, 2009).

From the perspective of the disseminator—translators, their task is not only to translate language but also to translate culture at various levels. Literary translation actually serves a diverse readership, and translators must consider readers from various cultural backgrounds. Hawkes's translation has gained widespread acceptance in English-speaking countries because it better serves and empathizes with readers, while conveying the spirit of the original work to readers of the translation, allowing them to enjoy the work as the original readers did, thus fulfilling the task of cultural dissemination more effectively (Feng, 2008).

### 4.3. Social Cultural Load Words

Social cultural load words refer to cultural vocabulary that pertains to social structure, relationships, norms, and phenomena, including political systems, customs, family relations, social order, and appellation.

Example 3:

Original Text: 独有一个买办名唤钱华，因他多日未见宝玉，忙上来打千儿请安，宝玉忙含笑携他起来。

Yang's Translation: One of them, Qin Hua, who had not seen Baoyu for some time, stepped forward and fell on one knee.

Hawkes's Translation: One of their number, a buyer called Qian Hua who had not seen Bao-yu for some considerable time, hurried forward, dropped on his right knee, and touched his hand to the ground in the Manchu salute. Bao-yu smilingly extended a hand to raise him up.

In this example, it describes Qin Hua, a steward, stepping forward to converse with Baoyu. The social cultural load word “打千儿请安” is translated differently by Yang and Hawkes as “fell on one knee” and “dropped on his right knee, and touched his hand to the ground in the Manchu salute”, respectively. This term is a product of the historical continuity of society and belongs to the typical feudal society in China, particularly reflecting traditional feudal etiquette.

Both translators used an expansion translation method to describe the gesture of “请安” (qǐng'ān) or paying respects. Hawkes provided a more detailed description of this gesture and supplements it with its association with Manchu etiquette. By doing so, the translators addressed cultural gaps for the target language readers, enhancing the dissemination of the translation by enriching the reader's understanding of the cultural context.

### 4.4. Material Cultural Load Words

Material cultural load words refer to the vocabulary naming and using material products created by human invention, along with the technologies and tools associated with them. These words are often related to food, clothing, utensils, tools, etc.

Example 4:

Original Text: 又行了半日，忽见街北蹲着两个大石狮子，三间兽头大门，门前列坐着十来个华冠丽服之人。

Yang's Translation: After what seemed a long time they came to a street with two huge stone lions crouching on the north side, flanking a great triple gate with beast-head knockers, in front of which ten or more men in smart livery were sitting.

Hawkes's Translation: After being carried for what seemed a very great length of time, she saw, on the north front of the east-west street through which they were passing, two great stone lions crouched one on each side of a triple gateway whose doors were embellished with animal heads.

This example describes Lin Daiyu's first encounter with the scene at Ningguo Mansion. Ningguo Mansion's gate is a triple gate (referring to the space between two pillars; thus, two pillars form one “间”), a strict hierarchical designation for mansions under feudal systems. The material cultural load word here is “三间兽头大门” (sān jiān shòu tóu dà mén), translated differently by Yang and Hawkes using literal methods, differing mainly in their translation of “兽头” (shòu tóu), which refers to animal heads decorating the gate.

Ancient Chinese gate guardians symbolize protection and security for the household. Translators should reflect this cultural nuance in their translations, which primarily depends on whether they truly grasp the original work and can identify and reproduce its literary characteristics (Wills, 1982). Yang translated it as “beast-head”, emphasizing the fierce, intimidating, and guarding aspects typical of ancient Chinese gate guardians. In contrast, Hawkes translated it as “animal heads”, focusing more on the decorative aspect of the gate guardians without highlighting the hidden meanings behind these symbols. This difference in translation reflects the translators' understanding of the cultural background of the source text. Yang, as a native speaker of the source language, effectively presented the symbolism of the ancient Chinese gate guardians, while Hawkes's translation may not fully convey the complete cultural context of ancient Chinese feudal society to Western readers.

#### 4.5. Ecological Cultural Load Words

Ecological cultural load words refer to vocabulary used by a particular ethnic or cultural group to name and describe things and concepts with biological attributes and natural elements encountered in their interaction with nature. These words are often related to flora, fauna, geographical environments, astronomical phenomena, and natural resources (Guan & Xiang, 2024).

Example 5:

Original Text: 衡芜满净院，萝薜助芬芳。

Yang's Translation: Alpinia fills the courtyard free from dust, By climbing fig its fragrance reinforced.

Hawkes's Translation: Fragrance of flower-drifts in these quiet confines, Mingles with headier scents of eglantines.

衡芜 (héng wú) refers to two plants: “杜衡” (dù héng) and “芜菁” (wú jīng), collectively referring to creeping herbaceous plants with fragrance growing on the

ground. 萝薜 (luó bì) refers to climbing plants, specifically vining plants such as ivy and figs. Yang employed a foreignization strategy, translating the plant names directly as “Alpinia” and “climbing fig”, accurately conveying the botanical information from the original text. In contrast, Hawkes adopted a domestication strategy, using a fuzzy translation method by translating “薜萝” as “flower” and using “flower-drifts” to vividly describe the fragrance drifting in the courtyard, retaining the poetic essence of the original. Additionally, for “萝薜”, Hawkes replaced it with the name of a plant—eglantines familiar to the target language audience, aiding in their understanding and facilitating the dissemination of the source culture. The reception of Chinese cultural information by readers of the translation is a crucial measure of the success of Chinese culture in reaching a global audience (Wang, 2015).

## 5. Conclusion

Key findings, limitations, recommendations for future researchers in the same field, and solutions for current shortcomings are included in the conclusion.

### 5.1. Key Findings

This study selected two English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Yang Hsien-yi and his wife Gladys Yang, and David Hawkes and his son-in-law John Minford, as the research materials. Through categorizing cultural load words into five types, this study explores the translation strategies employed by Yang and Hawkes under the “5W” model of communication: subject, content, channel, audience, and effect. The study reveals similarities and differences in their approaches to translating cultural load words.

Yang adopts a domestication strategy and a paraphrasing translation method when translating cultural load words, aiming to make the text more accessible and understandable to the target audience. In contrast, Hawkes uses a foreignization strategy, combining literal translation with adaptation, thereby preserving elements of the source culture to enhance the reader’s understanding of the original culture. For instance, in translating religious cultural load words, Yang employs a foreignization strategy to propagate Eastern indigenous culture, while Hawkes employs a domestication strategy to facilitate comprehension and reduce foreignness for the audience. Both translators employ an expansion translation method when translating social cultural load words, meticulously showcasing ancient Chinese feudal social customs. This approach aids target language readers in better understanding the cultural context of the original author’s era, thereby enhancing their experience of foreign cultures. Regarding material cultural load words, both Yang and Hawkes utilize a literal translation method, differing in their depth of understanding of the source culture. Nonetheless, both achieve the goal of helping target language readers comprehend foreign cultural knowledge and achieve the dissemination of the source culture. In translating ecological cultural load words, Yang adopts a foreignization strategy to faithfully convey the original meaning,

while Hawkes employs a domestication strategy, using fuzzy translation and substitution methods to preserve the poetic beauty of the original.

In summary, in the translation process of different types of cultural load words, Yang tends to use a foreignization strategy more often, aiming to promote traditional Chinese culture effectively. In contrast, Hawkes frequently adopts a domestication strategy, considering the degree of acceptance of foreign cultures by the target audience. “Domestication” and “foreignization” in translation are not contradictory but complementary (Guo, 1998). Therefore, both translators of the two versions use various translation methods based on their understanding of the source culture and the acceptance level of the target audience, striving to achieve the best dissemination effect of the original text.

## 5.2. Limitations of the Study

One limitation of this study is the selection of only one example from each category of cultural load words due to space constraints. This approach may present a biased and incomplete view of the translation strategies employed by Yang and Hawkes. Future studies could benefit from including a broader range of examples within each category to achieve a more comprehensive analysis.

Another limitation stems from the relatively limited availability of widely recognized English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber*. This study’s reliance on a single translation may not fully demonstrate the application of the “5W” model of communication in different contexts. Future research could address this limitation by considering a wider array of translations, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding of how translation strategies influence cultural dissemination.

The “5W” model, traditionally applied in communication studies, operates on a linear, one-way flow of information, often lacking direct feedback from the audience. In the context of printed book dissemination, translators may struggle to gauge the real-time needs and responses of readers, potentially hindering a full understanding of interactive communication dynamics. This limitation underscores the need to explore more interactive models that better reflect the complex social and communicative processes involved in translation and cultural dissemination.

## 5.3. Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies can leverage technological tools to systematically analyze and select specific cultural load words in translations. This approach would combine universality and specificity, enhancing the objectivity and depth of translation studies. Integration of quantitative and qualitative methods could further enrich the study of cultural load words in English translations, offering a more nuanced understanding of their impact.

Researchers can conduct comprehensive analyses of sales and popularity of various English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* to provide a more

objective assessment. Exploring multiple dimensions can expand the scope of research, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration with sociology, philosophy, and other disciplines to uncover new perspectives on the value of these translations. Such interdisciplinary approaches can shed light on how the “5W” model operates within different cultural and historical contexts, adapting to contemporary developments.

Further exploration into other cultural phenomena within English translations of *Dream of the Red Chamber* can deepen the accurate representation of Chinese traditional culture and its underlying philosophies in the target language. This endeavor not only enhances the understanding of Chinese culture internationally but also sets a precedent for future translations of classical Chinese literature, thereby elevating the global dissemination of Chinese cultural heritage.

These recommendations aim to address the identified limitations and pave the way for more comprehensive and insightful research into translation studies, particularly in the realm of cultural load words and their impact on cross-cultural communication.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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