

# Cultural Contrastive Study and Translation of English and Chinese Colour Words

Tianzhu Liang

Institute of foreign languages, Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, 524048, China

**Abstract:** This paper intends to make a cultural contrastive study of English and Chinese colour words from the perspective of history, geographical conditions, thinking mode and folk-custom. Some translation methods are given to attach the importance of cultural interpretation to faithfulness and smoothness in translation practice.

**Keywords:** Colour Words; Cultural Connotation; Translation

## 1. Introduction

Colour words are the words used to describe the colour of various objects. The world is colourful, and colour words are charming as they reflect the culture of various nations. They have not only objective conceptual meaning, but also luxuriant cultural connotation which can arouse people's imagination, namely, reading beyond the colour. Because of the identity of human thinking and influence of cultural identity, there are some common utilization of English and Chinese colour words. For example, "red" means enthusiasm and celebration, "green" life, "purple" nobleness, "white" purity and innocency, and "black" sadness and fear. But semantic asymmetry and lexical gap also exists between English and Chinese colour words because of the cultural differences, which influence directly the communication. For example, the Chinese words "白手(bai shou)" in "白手起家(bai shou qi jia)" means "from nothing", while the English word "white-handed" means innocent; "青眼看人(qing yan kan ren)" means the admiration, appreciation and respect for someone, while "give sb. a black look" means break ones neck; "红眼病(Hong Yan Bing)" has the same meaning with "a green-eyed monster", namely, jealousy, while "red eye" means cheap whisky. "green" doesn't mean indecency or salacity in English. Therefore, "戴绿帽(dai lv mao)" which means the unfaithfulness of wife to husband in Chinese should be translated as "to be cuckolded". In this paper, many translation examples are given to make the contrastive analysis of the utilization and translation of English and Chinese colour words from the perspective of history, geographical conditions, thinking mode and folk-custom.

## 2. Utilization of English and Chinese Colour Words

### 2.1. Common utilization

The physical property of colour is identical to each nation. Because of the influence of identity in language, psychology as well as culture, the use of colour words in Chinese and English has some common or similar points. For example, the red flag—红旗(hong qi), the red couplet—红对联(hong dui lian), the red battle—血战(xue zhan), the yellow skin—黄皮肤(huang pi fu), the yellow fever—黄热病(huang re bing), the double-yellow-line—双黄线(shuang huang xian), the black list—黑名单(hei ming dan), the blackboard—黑板(hei ban), the black market—黑市(hei shi), the White Hall—白厅(bai ting)(means the British government), the White House—白宫(bai gong)(means the American government), white snow—白雪(bai xue), green trees—绿树(lv shu), green years—青春(qing chun), give the green light to—开绿灯(kai lv deng), 放行(fang xing), the blue sky—蓝天(lan tian). In two languages, "red" represents the enthusiasm, shyness, anger or celebration. For example, to roll out a red carpet—铺展红地毯(pu zhan hong di tan), meaning welcome to important guest; "to paint the town red" means revelry; red-letter days—纪念日(ji nian ri), 喜庆的日子(xi qing de ri zi). "black" represents solemnity, badness and evil. For example, black-hearted—黑心肠的(hei xin chang de), black money—黑钱(hei qian), black water—黑水(hei shui) (means dirty water). "gray" represents gloominess. For example, gray weather—阴沉的天气(yin chen de tian qi), gray prospects—暗淡的前景(an dan de qian jing), to look gray—沮丧(ju sang). "blue" represents stillness and sadness. For example, be in a blue mood—不开心(bu kai xin), sing the blues—垂头丧气(chun tou sang qi), a blue monday—忧郁的周一(you yu de zhou yi) (compared with the happy weekend).

“white” represents purity and kindness. For example, a white soul—纯洁的心灵(chun jie de xin ling), a white lie—善意的谎言(shan yi de huang yan). “purple” represents nobleness. For example, be born in the purple—出生于富贵之家(chu sheng yu fu gui zhi jia), marry into the purple—嫁入名门望族(jia ru ming men wang zu).

## 2.2. Different utilization

### 2.2.1. Contrast of colour words from the perspectives of Chinese and English history, geographical conditions

China is an inland and agricultural country with an ancient civilization. Yellow Emperor is Chinese ancestor, and Yellow River basin is the birthplace of Han culture. The respect to land makes Chinese people advocate yellow. This advocacy can be reflected in yellow land, yellow crops, yellow skin and yellow imperial robe and crown. Yellow is the imperial colour which represents nobleness, supremacy and holy. But for western countries, this colour is offensive. In Bible, Judas who betrayed Jesus is on yellow, therefore yellow is given the meaning of timidity, impudicity. For example, yellow belly—胆小鬼(dan xiao gui), yellow dog—卑鄙的人(bei bi de ren), yellow looks—阴沉的眼神(yin chen de yan shen), yellow streak—性格懦弱(xing ge nuo ruo), yellow press—黄色报刊(huang se bao kan) (publishing some words of vulgar taste or sensational reports to attract readers), yellow dog contract—黄狗合同(huang gou he tong) (the illegal contract signed by capitalists' pressure about money and unemployment). Anglo-Saxons are the ancestor of British and American people, they lived in a seagirt island country. The emperors of cippus were on purple. Maritime civilization and cippus culture make British and American people advocate blue and purple as noble colour of royalty. For example, blue-brick university—有优良传统又有地位的大学(you you liang chuan tong you you di wei de da xue), have blue blood—具有王室血统(ju you wang shi xue tong), bluebook—蓝皮书(lan pi shu) (official report released by royal government of British), blue committee—一流的委员会(yi liu de wei yuan hui), blue ribbon jury—德高望重的陪审团(de gao wang zhong de pei shen tuan), raise sb. to the purple—黄袍加身(huang pao jia shen), 立某人为王(li mou ren wei wang), the purple airway—英国王室专用的飞机跑道(ying guo wang shi zhuan yong de fei ji pao dao).

### 2.2.2. Contrast of colour words from the perspectives of different thinking and behavioral modes

The differences between Chinese and British thinking and cognitive style influence directly the use of Chinese and English. The above-mentioned “红眼病(hong yan bing)” well explained the situation that people get angry, cry with red eyes because of jealousy, which reflects the comprehensive thinking mode of Chinese. Chinese attach importance to intuition, imagination, comprehension and similarity in spirit, they have overall grasp and pay attention to subject and object based on actual conditions, expressing the sentiments and aspiration by object. Also, western use “green” to indicate jealousy, which is based on their epistemology. They think that green planet is the positive symbol, which results in a provocation to other colours. The abstract analysis thinking mode of British and American people is reflected by this thought. British and American people attach importance to demonstration, reason, logic and impersonality, they think of people by object and pay attention to external knowledge. For example, A blue steak refers to the one whose outside is seared, but the inside is usually cool and barely cooked. 肉未煮熟透的牛排(rou wei zhu shu de niu pai). In Chinese, “red” is used to describe the raw steak with blood, but western choose cool tone word “blue” to express the raw and cold feeling of raw steak. And Chinese get used to take colour of all objects which is similar to red as “red”, for instance, taking the crimson blood-replenishing sugar as “red sugar”, but its colour being more similar to brown, therefore, “brown sugar” in English is more objective. In addition, users of two languages describe the same phenomenon or object with different colour words because they observe the phenomenon or object from different perspectives and use words of different colour categories. For example, after collision, human skin and flesh has multilayer and unclear colours, the observing and describing perspectives are also various. Chinese choose the cool tune word “green” from comprehensive category and “purple” from derivative category to describe it, while English words “black and blue” from main category are used. So “被打得青一块, 紫一块(bei da de qing yi kuai, zi yi kuai)” is translated as “to be beaten black and blue”, there are no differences between two expressions.

### 2.2.3. Contrast of colour words from the perspective of national lifestyle

Xiaoping YAO has ever mentioned that it is proved by archaeology and anthropology that red is the earliest used natural colour pigment and decoration colour. (Xiaoping YAO, 1988). Not only because people treasure and like red, it's also related to the fact that red is easier to produce than green or blue. Due to its practicability and happy associations with fire, red is used to symbolize celebration, happiness, success, warmth and prosperity in China; magnates in Tang and Song dynasties resided in

(wealthy homes with red-lacquered doors), wore (red), sat in (red-lacquered carriage); red face in opera symbolizes the faithfulness and sincerity; in traditional wedding, the red word, red candle, red bridal veil and red dress of bride make associations to more and more thriving and prosperous life after marriage while bringing festive atmosphere. Modern enterprise gives few part of its profits to partners, which is named “分红(participation in profit)”. The new word “网红(wang hong)” indicates those who get famous because of certain events or behaviors on internet or life. While for western nations, red which is similar to the colour of blood or fire symbolizes atrocity, bleeding, radicalness, danger, tension and obscenity, for example, red hands—血腥的手(xue xing de shou), red activities—暴力行动(bao li xing dong), a red revenge—血腥复仇(xue xing fu chou), a red battle—血战(xue zhan), a red light district—红灯区(hong deng qu) means brothel in Chinese, a red alert—红色警报(hong se jing bao), issued when air raid, rainstorm or typhoon occurs, or as the traffic light representing danger, no entry signal and indication of sent off in athletic contest. Colour taboo is thus generated. The glittering white banding stars cluster in summer night is called “银河(Yin He)” in Chinese, “the milky way” in English. Silver is the main currency in circulation in ancient China. People constantly used it, it’s involuntary for people to describe colour with it. And western nations take the milk as main food, it’s natural for them to describe the colour of stars cluster as milky. In addition, the differences of dietary habit between Chinese and British people are also reflected in description of food colour, for example, as rice is used to describe faint yellow in Chinese; while in English, “cream” or “butter—yellow” is used to describe this colour, because cream and butter are usual food in western dining-table. In English, “salmon” is used to express orange red, for instance, salmon color. “lobster” is used to express bright red, thus an idiom going as “red as a lobster”. These two kinds of seafood are rare in China, so there are no such colour expressions in Chinese. It follows that the cultural connotation of colour words gives various extension to them. If without cautious consideration, translation mistakes could be made because of cultural conflict and finally result in communication obstacle.

### 3. Translation Methods and Skills of Chinese and English Colour Words

#### 3.1. Literal translation for colour words with common meaning

Mr. Peiji ZHANG summarized the translation standards as “faithfulness” and “smoothness” (Peiji ZHANG, 2009). “faithfulness” requires to be faithful to the content

of original text, to keep the style of original text, including nation style, era style, type of writing and author’s personal language style. The translator can neither modify, nor distort, nor omit, nor add, nor delete randomly the content of original text. And the translator cannot destroy or change the style of original text, cannot replace the style of original text with his own style. “smoothness” requires a clear and fluent translation, pursues not only the formal equivalence, but also pragmatic equivalence and accurate translation of implication of original text. There are no word-by-word translation, hard translation, no obscure and unfluent translation, no ungrammatical, incoherent and confusing phenomenon in translation. Literal translation and free translation can be combined to make the translation faithful to the original text, to reproduce the culture of original text and to really achieve “faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance”. For colour words which have common denotative meaning or connotative meaning, literal translation can be used. For example, 血红(xue hong)—blood red, 红如玫瑰(hong ru mei gui)—as red as a rose, 红牌(hong pai)—a red card, 红灯(hong deng)—red traffic lights, 红灯区(hong deng qu)—the red light district, 黑市(hei shi)—black market, 黑手党(hei shou dang)—black hand, 黑名单(hei ming dan)—black list, 黑暗的前途(hei an de qian tu)—black future, 黑色魔术(hei se mo shu), 巫术(wu shu)—black magic, 黑死病(hei si bing)—black death, 黑洞(hei dong)—black hole, 紫衣(zi yi)—purple clothes, 绿叶(lv ye)—green leaves, 绿色革命(lv se ge ming)—green revolution, 绿色奥运(lv se ao yun)—green olympic, 绿色食品(lv se shi pin)—green food, 金牌(jin pai)—golden metal, 黄牌(huang pai)—yellow card, 黄页(huang ye)—yellow page, 黄热病(huang re bing)—yellow fever, 蓝海(lan hai)—blue sea, 蓝图(lan tu)—blue print,

(1) The uniforms were no longer of grey cloth but were grass green throughout, as delicately and attractively coloured as the fields.

服装不再是灰色的(fu zhuang bu zai shi hui se de), 一律是草绿色的(yi lv shi cao lv se de), 和春天田野的色彩一样(he chun tian tian ye de se cai yi yang), 娇嫩美观(jiao nei mei guan)。

(2) The man was a tall fellow with long hair and more white than black to his eyes.

这是一个高大身材(zhe shi yi ge gao da shen cai), 长头发(chang tou fa), 眼球白多黑少的人(yan qiu bai duo hei shao de ren)。

(3) He was dressed in a European style suit of a pale grey material with pale blue stripes.

他穿着一身浅灰色底子淡蓝色条纹的西装(ta chuan zhe yi shen qian hui se di zi dan lan se tiao wen de xi zhuang)。

(4) Her face was white with fear.

她吓得脸发白(ta xia de lian fa bai)。

(5) Crows are black all over the world.

天下乌鸦一般黑(tian xia wu ya yi ban hei)。

### 3.2. Free translation for colour words with different meaning

One colour object in Chinese (English) should be understood as another colour in English (Chinese). It's necessary to pay attention to the correspondence of colour while translating to avoid mistakes. For example, 黄色电影(huang se dian ying)—blue film, 黄道吉日(huang dao ji ri)—a white day, 青红皂白(qing hong zao bai)—black and white, 黄袍加身(huang pao jia shen)—raise sb. to the purple, 紫袍(zi pao)—scarlet robe, 紫铜(zi tong)—red copper, 紫竹(zi zhu)—black bamboo, 被打得青一块, 紫一块的(bei da de qing yi kuai, zi yi kuai de)—be beaten black and blue, 黑面包(hei mian bao)—brown bread, 红茶(hong cha)—black tea, 红葡萄酒(hong pu tao jiu)—purple wine, 红糖(hong tang)—brown sugar, 红眼病的(hong yan bing de), namely jealous—green-eyed, 红人(hong ren)—white-haired boy/ blue-eyed boy

(6) Little Mary's father told her a ghost story that made her turn blue with fear, which made her mother go black in the face.

小玛丽的父亲讲了个鬼故事把玛丽吓得脸发青(xiao ma li de fu qin jiang le ge gui gu shi ba ma li xia de lian fa qing), 这却让玛丽她妈气得脸上发紫(zhe que rang ma li ta ma qi de lian shang fa zi)。

(7) Telling the blue jokes should be considered as a kind of sexual harassment.

讲黄(荤)段子也应该被认作是某种程度的性骚扰(jiang huang (hui) duan zi ye ying gai bei ren zuo shi mou zhong cheng du shang de xing sao rao)。

(8) There is wool so white but a dyer can make it black.

近朱者赤近墨者黑(jin zhu zhe chi jin mo zhe hei)。

(9) I happened to meet a tall and stout man with gray hair, who turned out my deskmate 30 years ago.

我遇上一个人又高又大(wo ou yu shang yi ge you gao you da), 满头白发的男人(man tou bai fa de nan ren), 竟然是我 30 年前的同桌(jing ran shi wo 30 nian qian de tong zhuo)。

(10) My finger was caught in crack of the door and got pinched black and blue.

我的手指夹在门缝里(wo de shou zhi jia zai men feng li), 压得又青又紫。(ya de you qing you zi)

B. In case that the colour words in Chinese (English) have the same denotative meaning but not the connotative meaning while translating into English (Chinese), literal translation with supplemented explications can be adopted. For example, 红包(hong bao)—a red paper

envelope containing money as a gift, tip, or bonus. 黄粱美梦(huang liang mei meng)—golden Millet Dream from the story of a poor scholar who dreamt he had become an official but awoke to find the pot of millet still cooking on the fire; pipe dream. 黄巾起义(huang jin qi yi)—the Yellow Turban Uprising (a large peasants uprising at the close of Eastern Han Dynasty). hite collar—白领阶层(bai ling jie ceng), most of them are brain worker. golden collar—金领族(jin ling zu), they are versatile talent with professional skill and also operation and management knowledge. black humour—黑色幽默(hei se you mo), describing the absurdity of the world and social pressure to individual in a humorous way. Blue book—蓝皮书(lan pi shu), means the official report released by royal government of british. Red Book—红皮书(hong pi shu), means the british official Registry, in particular the namelist of british nobility or gentlemen in the 19 century. White book—白皮书(bai pi shu), means the official documents of U.S. and Portugal. Yellow book—黄皮书(huang pi shu), means the official documents of French. Green book—绿皮书(lv pi shu), means the official documents of Italy. Red book—红皮书(hong pi shu), means the official documents of Spain. white information—白信息(bai xin xi), means someone's credit worthiness information known by Banks or similar institutions are all good. gray area—灰色地区(hui se di qu), indicates the area where most workers are unemployed. red cap—红帽(hong mao), indicates gendarme in UK, and removers who carry baggage for passengers in railway station in U.S.

(11) He always dreams of gaining an American green card.

他总是梦想有一天能得到美国绿卡(ta zong shi meng xiang you yi tian neng de dao mei guo lv ka), 即美国永久居民身份证(ji mei guo yong jiu ju min shen fen zheng)。

(12) This small supermarket provides people with a variety of household appliance to choose, including white goods and brown goods.

这家小超市给人们提供了各种各样的家电选择(zhe jia xiao chao shi gei ren men ti gong le ge zhong ge yang de jia dian xuan ze), 包括白色货物(bao kuo bai se huo wu), 即冰箱(ji bing xiang)、洗衣机等外壳为白色的家电产品以及棕色货物(xi yi ji deng wai ke wei bai se de jia dian chan pin yi ji zong se huo wu), 即电视(ji dian shi)、录音机(lu yin ji)、音响等外壳为棕色的电子产品(yin xiang deng wai ke wei zong se de dian zi chan pin)。

(13) Unfortunately, in order to boost sales, a lot more editors and reporters began to stress yellow Journalism.

很不幸(hen bu xing), 为了促销(wei le cu xiao), 更多的编辑与记者开始强调黄色新闻编辑作风(geng duo de bian ji yu ji zhe kai shi qiang diao huang se xin wen bian ji zuo feng), 即不择手段地夸张(ji bu ze shou duan di kua zhang), 渲染以招揽或影响读者(xuan ran yi zhao lan huo ying xiang du zhe)。

Some of colour words in English (Chinese) don't have corresponding colour words while translating into Chinese (English), translation should be flexible. According to its cultural connotation, free translation can be adopted. For example:

(14) Peter is a blueblood. But he was in a blue mood just now because he was turned down by a beautiful pink collar falling in love with a white man, who was nothing but a black smith. Fortunately, before he saw red, Peter came across a more charming golden collar showing great interest in him, which has tickled him pink.

彼特是一个贵族(pi te shi yi ge gui zu), 但刚刚却忧郁寡欢(dan gang gang que you yu gua huan)。原来他被一位漂亮的粉领拒绝(yuan lai ta bei yi wei piao liang de fen ling ju jue), 而粉领爱上一个忠实可靠的人也只不过是一名铁匠(er fen ling ai shang yi ge zhong shi ke kao de ren ye zhi bu guo shi yi ming tie jiang)。幸好(xing hao), 生气之际(sheng qi zhi ji), 彼特偶遇到一位更有魅力且对他颇感兴趣的白领女(pi te ou yu dao yi wei geng you mei li qie dui ta po gan xing qu de jin ling nv), 这让他实在高兴(zhe rang ta shi zai gao xing)。

In this example, the colour words in English are explained to express its connotative meaning while translating into Chinese, without using the colour words. Because in Chinese, "blue" means wonderfulness, longing, "white" purity, reactionary, "black" evil, badness, "red" happiness, "pink" love. All of them don't have the meaning in translation of example. If they are translated literally, the cultural conflict will be generated, and the expressions will be confused.

(15) 她脸上黄巴巴的气色已经褪去(ta lian shang huang ba ba de qi se yi jing tui qu), 露出红润而透着柔和的光泽(lou chu hong run er tou zhe rou he de guang ze); 眉毛长得浓密起来(me i mao zhang de nong mi qi lai); 枯涩的眼睛也变得黑白分明(ku se de yan jing ye bian de hei bai fen ming le), 水汪汪的了(shui wang wang de le)。

The yellowish dryness disappeared from her face, giving place to a shiny, soft glow. Her eyebrows became thick while her once dull eyes were bright, clear and limpid.

“黑白分明, 水汪汪的(hei bai fen ming, shui wang wang de)” in original text is used to describe the clear and bright eyes, it's perfect to translate it as “bright, clear and limpid” and unintelligible to translate as “black and

white”. Such words have a great proportion in English and Chinese. In following examples, only connotative meaning but not colour words have been translated: red-letter-days 一喜庆的日子(xi qing de ri zi) (as red characters on calendar are almost holidays and festivals), paint the town red 一狂欢庆祝(kuang huan qing zhu), red-haired person—奸诈之徒(jian zha zhi tu), red neck—没有见过世面的乡巴佬( mei you jian guo shi mian de xiang ba lao), blue jokes 一下流玩笑(xia liu wan xiao), to blue-pencil—校阅(jiao yue), in a blue mood-情绪低落(qing xu di luo); out of the blue—突爆冷门(tu bao leng men), blue revolution—性解放运动(xing jie fang yun dong), blue gown—妓女(ji nv); a true blue—忠实可靠的人(zhong shi ke kao de ren); blue-sky thinking—不拘一格地思考(bu ju y ge de si kao), blue-sky bargaining—漫天讨价(man tian tao jia), green back—美钞( mei chao), in the green tree—在年富力强时(zai nian fu li qiang shi), green in judgement—涉世未深, 缺乏判断力(she shi wei shen, que fa pan duan li), green horn 一无经验易受骗的人(wu jing yan yi shou pian de ren), green goods—新鲜货(xin xian huo), a green hand—新手(xin shou), Green Christmas—是指温暖晴好天气下的圣诞节(shi zhi wen nuan qing hao tian qi xia de sheng dan jie); green Sunday—则指复活节过后的第二个周日(ze zhi fu huo jie guo hou de di er ge zhou ri); yellow boy —[英]金币(jin bi); yellow dog contract—签定的非法合同(qian ding de fei fa he tong); yellow pepper—成熟的辣椒(cheng shu de la jiao), yellow soap—家用肥皂(jia yong fei zao), purple prose—绚丽矫饰的散文(xuan li jiao shi de san wen), marry into the purple—是指嫁入名门望族(jia ru ming men wang zu), the purple Airway—英国王室专用的飞机跑道(ying guo wang shi zhuan yong de fei ji pao dao), white coffee—加牛奶的咖啡(jia niu nai de ka fei), white Smith—银匠(yin jiang), white wing—街道清洁工(jie dao qing jie gong), show the white feather—向对手屈服(xiang dui shou qu fu), a white-faced man—不健康的人(bu jian kang de ren), a white crow—罕见之物(han jian zhi wu), a white alert—解除警报(jie chu jing bao), white slaver—逼良为娼的人(bi liang wei chang de ren), white war—经济战, 无硝烟的战争(jing ji zhan, wu xiao yan de zhan zheng), in the white—尚未完工(shang wei wan gong), the white way—商业街(shang ye jie), white sheep 一白羊、出于污泥不染者(bai yang, chu yu wu ni bu ran zhe), black sheep 一害群之马, 败家子(hai qun zhi ma, bai jia zi), a black lie—不可饶恕的谎言(bu ke rao shu de huang yan), in sb's black books—失宠於某人(shi chong yu mou ren), brown rice—糙米(cao mi), grey matter—智力(zhi li), grey beard—老人, 尤指圣人(lao ren, shengren), pink

slip(american oral)—解雇(jie gu), pink Lady 一鸡尾酒(ji wei jiu) (mixture of brandy and gin plus juice), pink elephants—幻觉(huan jue), Pink tea—上流社交活动(shang liu she jiao huo dong), in the pink—非常健康(fei chang jian kang), the pink of politeness—十分彬彬有礼(shi fen bin bin you li). 红心(hong xin)—loyal heart, 红娘(hong niang)—go between, 红白喜事(hong bai xi shi)—weddings and funerals, 红榜(hong bang)—honour roll, 红豆(hong dou)—love pea, 红利(hong li)—dividend, 网红(wang hong)—Internet star, 戴绿帽子(dai lv mao zi)—to be cuckold, 白费劲(bai fei jin)—in vain, 青云志(qing yun zhi)—high aspirations; 黄花女儿(huang hua nv er)—virgin, 黄梅季(huang mei ji)—the raining season, 黄梅戏(huang mei xi)—a form of regional drama popular in central Anhui province.

(16) Since she turned manager, the company has been in the black while ours has been in the red.

自从她当上经理(zi cong ta dang shang jing li), 公司就开始盈利了(gong si jiu kai shi ying li le), 而我们的公司却经营亏损了(er wo men de gong si que jing ying kun sun le)。

(17) Although he has green fingers, yet he is a green hand in doing business.

虽然他擅长园艺(sui ran ta shan chang yuan yi), 但他对做生意来说是一名新手(dan ta dui zuo sheng yi lai shuo shi yi ming xin shou)。

(18) When she gives a dinner party, she always does it up brown.

她举办晚宴时(ta ju ban wan yan shi), 总是操办得尽善尽美(zong shi cao ban de jin shan jin mei)。

(19) No one will defend him who shows the yellow belly. 没有人为怯懦的人辩护(wei you ren wei qie nuo de ren bian hu)。

(20) The opportunity one luckily gets is but once in a blue moon.

能幸运地得到这样的机会实在千载难逢(neng xing yun de de dao zhe yang de ji hui shi zai qian zai nan feng)。

(21) His conduct was believed to be the pink of perfection.

人们相信他的品行十全十美(ren men xiang xin ta de ping xing shi quan shi mei)。

(22) In American political elections the candidates that win are usually the ones who have green power backing them.

在美国政治竞选中获胜的候选人通常都是些有财团支持的人物(zai mei guo zheng zhi jing xuan zhong huo sheng de hou xuan ren tong chang dou shi xie you cai tuan zhi chi de ren wu)。

(23) You cannot expect Mary, who is only eighteen and as green as grass, to do business with such sophisticated people.

你不能指望玛丽同如此老练的人做生意(ni bu neng zhi wang ma li tong ru ci lao lian de ren zuo sheng yi), 她只有十八岁(ta zhi you shi ba sui), 还毫无经验(hai hao wu jing yan)。

(24) In order to survive the fierce market competition, many supermarkets have launched a white sale.

为了能够在激烈的市场竞争中存活下来(wei le neng gou zai ji lie de shi chang jing zheng zhong cun huo xia lai), 许多超市都开始举行大减价活动(xu duo chao shi dou kai shi ju xing da jian jia huo dong)。

(25) The thief was caught red-handed while he was just putting the diamond in his pocket.

那小偷正要把那钻石放入自己的衣裳是被当场抓获(na xiao tou zheng yao ba na zuan shi fang ru zi ji de yi shang shi bei dang chang zhua huo)。

(26) 不许他给我们集体脸上抹黑(bu xu ta gei wo men ji ti lian shang mo hei)。

We're not going to let him bring shame on our collective.

(27) 烈士们的鲜血没有白流(lie shi men de xian xue mei you bai liu)。

The martyrs didn't shed their blood in vain.

(28) 我们必须赤胆忠心为人民(wo men bi xu chi dan zhong xin wei ren min)。

We must serve the people with devotion.

(29) 经历了一次地震灾难后(jing li le yi ci di zhen zai nan hou), 他们已学会看破红尘了(ta men yi xue hui kan po hong chen le)。

After a disastrous earthquake, they learned to be disillusioned with the world of mortals.

(30) 近朱者赤(jin zhu zhe chi), 近墨者黑(jin mo zhe hei)。

He who keeps company with the wolf will learn to howl.

It shows that the meaning of most colour words in Chinese and English are different except few colour words which have common meaning in two languages. The reason is the cultural differences in history, geography, thinking mode and folk custom between two nations. In translation practice of two languages, cultural interpretation of the colour words plays an important role. Only right understanding of its meaning and right selection of translation method can reproduce the cultural connotation of colour words, and can realize "faithfulness" and "smoothness" in translation and communication.

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