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Ruijie Qiu
School of Foreign Studies,
Yangtze University, Jingzhou,
China

A multimodal approach to subtitle translation of Mulan (1998)

Ruijie Qiu

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Abstract

Mulan, a Chinese heroine featuring patriotic devotion, filial piety, and unwavering courage, is not only one of the epics in Chinese folk tales, but also the pillars of Chinese cultural embodiment. Adapted from Mulan's story, Disney's remake *Mulan* was released in 1998 and displayed a hybrid image of the woman warrior from the perspective of the west. This paper analyzes the subtitle translation of the film *Mulan* (1998) from four aspects: culture, context, content and expression. In addition, this paper investigates the interactions between different modalities and their influence on the subtitle translation. The study employs Zhang Delu's multimodal discourse analysis as the theoretical basis for analysis and discussion. It is suggested that the interaction of different modalities can facilitate the understanding in semantic connotations of subtitles and portray a vivid description of *Mulan* through visual, verbal and audio means.

Keywords: Multimodal discourse analysis, subtitle translation, *Mulan* (1998)

Introduction

The legend of *Mulan*, as the evolution and dissemination of a Chinese culture sign, has been undergoing multiple actions. From folk ballad, poems and novels to films, television series and computer games, the essence of *Mulan* story revolves from filial morality to one's country and parents to typical commitment to one's father and self-success. The first work related to *Mulan* is "The ballad of *Mulan*" (*Mulan ci*), which describes a young girl volunteered to replace her father to serve the country in an invasion. The evidence suggests the folklore descended from Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534 C.E.) and its written form appeared in Song Dynasty (960-1279 C.E.). At the era of Ming (1368-1644 C.E.), it was adapted for *zaju*, a genre of Chinese dramas which provided entertainment through a synthesis of recitations of prose and poetry, dance, singing, and mime, with a certain emphasis on comedy (Or, happy endings). Novels about *Mulan* were dominant in Yuan (1271-1368 C.E.), Ming and Qing Dynasty (1616-1912 C.E.). In the following times, works associated with *Mulan* such as films and television series are in blossom. Disney's animated film *Mulan* (1998) probes into Chinese traditional elements and gains a smashing success worldwide. By incorporating traditional touch with characteristics of the times, the crew transform animated film scenes to tell the story of "female awakening" from a macroscopic perspective in a delicate language.

Classics of *Mulan*'s image is well-rounded and abounding. However, studies on the film *Mulan* (1998) focus on comparisons with previous Disney's series and *Mulan*'s collections, as well as some preliminary explorations of the film's connotations tend to focus on linguistic modality and neglect other modalities such as image, sound, color and animation. Based on the MDA framework, this paper attempts to reveal how different modalities interact to promote the understanding of the film.

Researches on adaptations related to *Mulan*

Mulan ci has been adapted to film and television works in pursuit of social values and morals at different times. Researches on *Mulan ci* and its adaptations are mainly related to the image of *Mulan*, cross-cultural communication, and gender role portrayal.

Corresponding Author:
Ruijie Qiu
School of Foreign Studies,
Yangtze University, Jingzhou,
China

Some scholars focus on the image construction of Mulan and its cultural connotations. Wang and Ba (2022) ^[19] discuss the image construction of Mulan Returning back to Hometown, which is a calendar poster composed in the context of revolutionary period. They explain the gender performativity of the work in awakening patriotism from historical memory, consumer psychology and visual practice. National heroines take a lead in adverse conditions. Mulan's classic image, impressing triumph and patriotism are combined in Hua Mulan's experience. Lu and Jiang (2020) ^[13] explore the image of Mulan in American Children's picture books from cross dressing, gender and women's dilemma. They emphasize the rationality of Mulan's gender and reveal the causes of Mulan's gender dilemma. Chen (2018) ^[2] analyzes verbal and visual translations of Mulan in bilingual picture books. He concludes that Mulan's image has been culturally transformed into an Americanized tomboy.

Others discuss the reasons why there are differences of Mulan's image between Chinese culture and western culture. Fu and Song (2022) ^[4] criticize Disney's newest remake Mulan (2020) for ignoring national features and epochal characteristics. They contend cultural communication must be open, tolerant and respectful instead of being exclusive, oppressive and colonial. Zhang (2021) ^[24] also points out colonialism and stereotypes embedded in the movie Mulan (2020). He explains the cultural gap based on Arjun Appadurai's "intersection model" framework and Immanuel Wallerstein's world system perspective. Xu and Ji (2021) ^[22] compare two versions of Disney's adaptation on Mulan and concludes reasons of animated version's success and life-sized edition's loss. Guo (2019) ^[6] explores semiotic relationships in Chinese culture and western culture from a multidimensional perspective. He analyzes how cross-cultural symbols are adapted in Chinese classical literature such as The Ballad of Mulan.

There are also scholars focusing on the gender role of Mulan's story. Xu (2021) ^[21] discusses the gender narration of Mulan's screen image. She analyzes three new changes in Mulan's narration. That is, gender symbol, gender relationship and women's voice. The three factors are deeply embedded in the newest movie of Mulan, which is the sign of dependent image of Chinese women. Li and Yue (2020) ^[11] investigate whether feminist color has been accurately translated in animated movie Mulan (1998). They detect that it is meticulous translation that makes up the gap emerged in lavish adaptation and promotes cross-cultural transmission. Dawn & Lara (2011) examines the behavioral characteristics and climatic outcomes of gender depictions in Disney's Princess line including Mulan. Their content coding results demonstrate that stereotypes of gender are still universal and male character androgyny is also exhibited in the movie.

In conclusion, studies on Mulan adaptations are diversified, brimming with cultural elements. However, most researches merely focus on textual analysis and other modalities like visual and verbal modalities are scarce, especially on the interactions of different modalities. Considering the reason, this paper is expected to make certain contribution to the cause of Mulan culture.

Multimodal discourse analysis

Early researches on multimodal discourse analysis were based on British linguist M. A. K. Halliday's Systemic

Functional Linguistics. "There are other social signs that are meaningful apart from language." (Halliday, 1978: 108-126) ^[8] "Multimodal discourse" refers to the communication involving multi-sensory practices, such as the activity of imitation and illustration entails auditory, visual and tactile practices. (Zhang, 2009) ^[23] The concept of multimodal discourse analysis was first put forward by American linguist Harris in 1950s.

The development of multimodal discourse analysis abroad is much earlier than at home. Roland Barthes (1977) ^[1] in his Image-Music-Text discusses the interaction of image and text from the perspective of semiotics, which is the first to initiate the topic. Other scholars dive into the topic in social semiotics (O' Toole, 1994; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Royce, 2002) ^[16, 10, 17]. Norris (2004) ^[15] contends that human interaction is not restricted to language, and some non-linguistic signs like gestures and eye contact can achieve communicative purpose. Gupta (2015) ^[7] analyzes cultural elements in images and music. He claims subtitle translation must take additional information into consideration such as music. In China, Li Zhanzi (2003) ^[12] is the first scholar introducing the theory in his Social Semiotic Approach to Multimodal Discourse. Based on Kress & Van Leeuwen's research, he concludes the framework of visual analysis from the perspective of social semiotics. Later, Zhu (2007) ^[25] defines multimodal discourse and analyzes the nature and theoretical basis of multimodal discourse analysis. Hu (2007) ^[9] discusses the distinction between multimodal semiotics and multimedia semiotics and introduces the computer semiotics. Zhang (2009) ^[23] explores the framework of multimodal discourse analysis. The framework mainly consists of five levels: the level of context of culture, the level of context of situation, the semantic level, the formal level and the level of media (substance). Besides, he also studies the relationship between different modalities. This paper will adopt Zhang Delu's multimodal discourse analysis and discuss the subtitle translation of Mulan (2020) from the level of culture, context, content and expression so as to explore how different modalities interact to construct Mulan's image. According to Zhang Delu, culture is the prerequisite for communication, which is achieved through context. And the meaning of discourse is conveyed by the coordination of different modalities at content level, in the aid of media.

Case study

At cultural level

Cultural elements and semiotic resources are fundamental to mode in making meaning. (Royce, 2007: 79) ^[18] As the prerequisite for communication, culture is the mainstay of the traditions, forms and skills of communication. (Zhang, 2009: 28) ^[23] The construction of meaning is in certain cultural context. The level of culture includes genre and ideology. Genre refers to the communicative process or structural potential that concretely realize ideology. Ideology involves the thinking mode, philosophy of life, living habits and other social rules residing in human life. Mulan (1998) is a western insight work embodied profound Chinese cultural implication. Hua Mulan, as Chinese traditional heroine, her classical narration of female image is a kind of ideological state apparatus. The adaptation of Mulan's work also reflects that the trend of social gender simplification and mainstreaming has been maintained. In

Mulan (1998), translators tend to employ domestication strategy when confronting with cultural elements.

Example 1

Mode		ST	TT
Visual mode	Auditory mode		
The outlook of fire beacon towers; Soldier's look of panic;	Up-tempo music; Dense drumming;	We're under attack! Light the signal!	有人偷袭, 快点烽火

A beacon tower is a high platform used in ancient China to light smoke and fire to transmit important news. It is an important military defense facility in ancient times, which was built to prevent enemy invasion, and in the event of an enemy situation, smoke would be applied in the daytime and fire would be lit at night, connecting the platforms to transmit the news. It is the most ancient but effective way of news transmission. In ancient times, unlike nowadays all kinds of communication equipment being available, beacons were utilized to report the enemy's situation. The military fortress was equipped beacon towers every certain distance. When the enemy invaded, the beacons were set on fire one after another to convey the alarm. When the lords saw the fire, they sent their troops to resist the enemy. Beacon platforms were usually chosen to be easy to look out for each other on a high hill. On the platform there was a watchman's house and the equipment for burning smoke and

setting fire. Below the platform there were soldiers living in the guard's house.

The scene presented is of the Imperial City being attacked by the Huns and the soldiers panicking and going on alert. The first object presented in the screen is a panoramic view of the beacon, where watchtowers can be found at regular intervals. When the enemy is detected, the soldiers are busy but organized, lighting up the beacons as efficiently as possible to transmit military information. Based on the subtitle text merely, the general information of transmission is provided, while the visual modality presents the specific way of signal transmission, explaining the beacon platform, a unique way of transmitting military information in ancient China. In conjunction with the information in the scene, the translator adopts the domestication strategy to specify the information in the subtitle text.

Example 2

Mode		ST	TT
Visual mode	Auditory mode		
The worried face of Mulan's father; Mulan's father bent down to pray for blessings.	Lightly music	I'm going to pray some more.	我还得去再求祖宗

In the second case, the word "祖宗" has been added, as Chinese have a traditional habit of praying for blessings from their ancestors. Chinese religion is based on their family. Each family has its own "god", the "ancestor". With "ancestors" as the object of worship, the ancestors' tablets are supreme. The ancestors' tablets move with the family, and major problems were waited to be dealt with in front of the ancestors' tablets. The reverence for ancestors is both a repressive force and a spiritual bond based within the bloodline, enhancing family and clan identity, a sense of mission and responsibility. China's self-sufficient natural economy has given birth to the one-household "ancestor worship", with the family as the unit and the bloodline as the link. The picture shows that Mulan's father was praying for Mulan in front of the ancestral hall, blessing her to find a good family in the matchmaking. It was suggested in the second shot that tablets of ancestors were lined up one by one, and incense was offered in front of the tablets. Mulan's father was devoutly praying for Mulan's marriage.

Correlating with the images, the translator adds the object of praying.

The first shot presents an encounter between Mulan and her father, where Mulan's reckless demeanor causes her father to worry about the ensuing marriage match. The second shot shows Mulan's father kneeling before the family shrine and praying for Mulan. In addition to providing the process of Mulan's father praying for blessings, the shot also shows the environment where ancestral tablets stand in the shrine, alongside incense and other sacrificial products. On the sole basis of the subtitle text, it can only be known that Mulan's father is going to pray for luck, but nothing is known about how to pray for luck, whereas the information in the scenes provides more details, and the translator adds the information about the ancestor based on the information provided by the scenes.

Example 3

Mode		ST	TT
Visual mode	Auditory mode		
The eunuch is reading the royal decree.	Melodramatic music; A couple of drum beats.	Report tomorrow to the Wu Zhong camp.	明日午时, 军营报到

This example adopts the technique of addition and omission, emphasizing the time of reporting while blurring the place of reporting, which implies the Chinese understanding of time. Unlike the West, the Chinese are accustomed to a twelve-hour system. Based on the movement of the sun and the moon, as well as human customs and production activities, the twelve-hour system is the longest-used ancient

timekeeping system. "午时" also called Midday generally refers to 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. This is the time when the sun is at its fiercest, the *yang* reaches its limit, and *yin* will be produced. Chinese don't think of *yang* in all its aspects, but rather consider that this is the time when *yin* begins to rise, and in a sense this time is the point of transition between *yin* and *yang*. In ancient times, people took the time

when the sun traveled to the middle of the sky as the time for trading, and the initial activities of such an exchange of goods took place in the mid-sun hour. Therefore, “午时” is a good point for all activities to begin.

The footage centers on a situation where the eunuch reads out an imperial decree. The eunuch, as the main participant in this scene, must behave in accordance with his special identity. Therefore, in this example, the translator has considered the identity of the characters in the scene and translated his expressions in a way that is more in line with the identity of eunuchs in the context of ancient China.

Table 1: The adoption of Chinese culture-loaded words in *Mulan* (1998)

ST	TT
Honorable ancestors	列祖列宗
Matchmaker	媒婆
Uphold the family honor	光宗耀祖
a silk purse	窈窕淑女
a great hairdo	高耸云鬓
a pendant	玉坠子
a proclamation	谕令
an order	诏书
manly and tough	不让须眉
Picky	鸡蛋里挑骨头
Counsel	宰相
Hat	乌纱帽
Things will work out	船到桥头自然直

Mulan culture is rooted in Chinese culture and is a recognizable story to Chinese people. In consideration of the understanding level of the target language viewers, in the process of translating the words with strong cultural color in film and television works, the cultural flavor needs to be maintained. Different from traditional text translation,

subtitles appear simultaneously with other semiotic resources such as pictures, music and sound effects and they can construct the whole discourse meaning and convey the emotions to the audiences. The Chinese culture-loaded words such as Chinese idioms and proverbs are usually brief and concise, which exactly adapts to the characteristics of subtitles. Clan ideology is one of the most prominent pillars of Chinese culture. Most of Chinese culture such as loyalty, filial piety and three cardinal guides and five constant virtues was derived from ancestral family philosophy. That's why words related to family are translated with a recurring expression such as “列祖列宗” “光宗耀祖”. In addition, the ancient Chinese emperor had a supreme status, and expressions related to the emperor also displayed a strict hierarchy, with some special expressions that could only be used by the emperor himself, such as “谕令” “诏书” and so on.

At contextual level

Communication is promoted under certain context. Context of situation refers to the whole environment in which a text is produced, that is, the social environment of information exchange. The contextual level is comprised of three parts: discourse field, discourse tenor and discourse mode. Field of discourse refers to what is happening in the communicational form of the film. Tenor of discourse involves the features of diverse participants and the relationships among the participants. Mode of discourse refers to the functions assigned to different modalities. In a specific context, communication is not only influenced by cognitive context, but also restricted by the situational context. Contexts are categorized into linguistic and non-linguistic contexts according to the factors that are relied upon in linguistic communication. The same word may have different meanings in different contexts, which requires the translator to make the most appropriate translation based on the linguistic context.

Example 4

ST	TT	Situational Context
Wish me luck.	祝我好运	Field of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> was ready to attend matchmaking. Tenor of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> and her father. Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are complementary relationship.
I should have prayed to the ancestors for luck.	我早该求祖宗保佑的	Field of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> was ready to attend matchmaking. Tenor of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> 's mother. Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are non-complementary relationship.
Besides, I've got all the luck we'll need.	我已经有了这个幸运符	Field of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> was ready to attend matchmaking. Tenor of discourse: <i>Mulan</i> 's grandmother. Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are complementary relationship.

In the first situational context, *Mulan* rushed at her father without any fine posture. Her father can't help but sigh at the sight, lamenting that he will have to pray to the ancestors to bless *Mulan*'s matchmaking endeavors. Given the circumstances, *Mulan* says goodbye to her father and sets out to prepare for her matchmaking. “Wish me luck” is the word of farewell, which serves as interpersonal function. Therefore, it is translated as “好运” with the method of literal translation. In the second situational context, *Mulan*'s mother had been waiting outside the matchmaker's house for *Mulan* to show up, but *Mulan* delayed in showing up. Her

mother feared something was wrong, so she began to regret not giving *Mulan* an earlier blessing. Departing from *Mulan*'s mother's beliefs, *Mulan*'s grandmother did not believe in the old ways, holding that people had passed away, and that it was more useful to place hope in living good luck charms such as crickets. In view of the characters' different identities and perceptions, the translator handles their words with free translation to make their expressions more in line with the situational context and the characters' identities.

Example 5

ST	TT	Situational Context
So heed my word! Because if the army finds out you're a girl, the penalty is death!	听清楚了！如你被发现是女儿身,就只有死路一条!	Field of discourse: Mulan was on the way to enlist in the army. Tenor of discourse: Mulan and Mushu. Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are non-complementary relationship.
Come on! Scare me, girl.	求求你 吓吓我吧	Field of discourse: Mulan got up on the first training morning. Tenor of discourse: Mulan and Mushu. Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are complementary relationship.
And there's nothin' you girls can do about it.	你们这些娘娘腔绝撵不到我	Field of discourse: Mulan was showering in the river. Tenor of discourse: Mulan and other barracks members Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are non-complementary relationship.
You don't meet a girl like that every dynasty.	这么好的姑娘可不是每天都有	Field of discourse: Mulan went home. Tenor of discourse: The Emperor and Captain Li Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are non-complementary relationship
A girl worth fighting for	佳人等着我	Field of discourse: The march was departing to the front. Tenor of discourse: Mulan and other barracks members Mode of Discourse: Visual mode and linguistic mode are complementary relationship

The first cut is Mulan disguising herself to ready herself to replace her father in the army, and on her way to the barracks, she encounters Mushu, a serpentine salvation sent by her ancestors. Mushu warns Mulan of the risks of disguising herself to join the army. This is the first time Mulan and Mushu have met, and neither is familiar with the other, so the wording is more formal. The source text does not reflect the variation in Mushu's usage, but the translator has incorporated the situational context and echoed the progression of the plot. The second shot shows Mulan getting ready for her first day of training. Mushu teaches Mulan to kick others' butts with a war face if someone bully her. By doing so, a tough-looking warrior is revealed. The focus of this conversation between Mulan and Mushu is not on Mulan's identity as a woman, but on the warrior ethos of the recruits. In the third shot, several people in the camp are rushed together. Several people introduce themselves to each other, and when it's Yao's turn, his outward appearance is strong and full of beard, thus showing his arrogance and haughtiness in the face of Mulan and others. The subtitles are translated to fit the characters as closely as possible. Mulan declined the emperor's appointment and only wanted to return to her family. She is about to embark on her journey back home and does not wait for Captain Li's confession. Looking at Mulan's faraway back, Captain Li hesitated to say anything, his heart is full of thoughts. The

Emperor saw what was on Li's mind, so he used one sentence to point it out. At this point in the picture there is a clear distinction between the status of the two men. The emperor persuades his subordinate with the attitude of an elder and a person of high position. The handling of the subtitle translation is also in line with the emperor's superior status. The last shot is a choral pep talk before going into battle. This is in the form of a song that expresses what is on the minds of the soldiers, so it should be translated in line with formal written expressions.

At content level

At the content level, the multimodal discourse is represented by verbal and non-verbal symbols which implies three types of meaning: ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning and textual meaning (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996) [10]. In film Mulan, the meaning of discourse is mainly reflected in the textual meaning and interpersonal meaning. In terms of verbal symbols, textual meaning is expressed by cohesion, thematic structure and other information constructing sentences. Non-verbal symbols are demonstrated in the cohesion between subtitles and visual images. Interpersonal meaning implies the relationship among author, text and readers. (Zhu, 2007: 3) [25]

Example 6

Form	Linguistic mode	ST: A single grain rice can tip the scale. TT: 一粒米可以改变斤两。
	Visual mode	The emperor's gesture of a small amount
	Auditory mode	Tense music that sets the mood for the approaching enemy and the critical moment of a close calling for recruits
Meaning	Ideational meaning	A grain of rice; A scale
	Interpersonal meaning	The audience is associated with the idea that even a small soldier can achieve great deeds.
	Textual meaning	follow the past and herald the future; a coherent transition to a new recruitment drive

The enemy is approaching and there is an emergency at the border. Music in the background emphasizes the tense and critical situation at a time when the armed forces are insufficient to fight the oncoming enemy. The emperor orders the conscription of new soldiers, with the aim of selecting mainly men of valor and resourcefulness." Rice" and "scale" are not unfamiliar to the audience, so the example will remind the audience that even a grain of rice has its own weight, and even small people have great

potential, which is even more inspiring. In terms of form, the gestures of the characters in the visual modality explain the meaning of the subtitle information, and the background music in the auditory modality sets the atmosphere of the imminent war. In terms of meaning, the single modality of linguistic text alone has the ideational meaning of "a grain of rice". However, besides the words, considering the visual modality of the movie picture, the gesture shown on the image has the ideational meaning of "tiny", and thus the

audience will associate "a grain of rice" with "tiny", embodying the interpersonal meaning. At the same time, it also sets the stage for the following scene, in which Mulan is portrayed as a woman who still performs an important role in saving the dynasty. Therefore, the textual meaning at the meaning dimension of multimodal communication is also well reproduced in the Chinese subtitles; moreover, the

beginning and the end of the movie echo each other, forming a complete narrative of the movie's story. In summary, the subtitle translation of the details here conveys the three discourse meanings of the content level in multimodal communication.

Example 7

Form	Linguistic mode	ST: Yao: Yeah. Ahh, you ain't worth my time. Chicken boy. Mushu: Chicken boy? Say that to my face, ya limp noodle! TT: 姚：有，你不值得我浪费时间。胆小鬼。 木须：胆小鬼？有种当我面说，低能懦夫！
	Visual mode	Facial expression: Mushu's face of outrage Body movements: Yao made a punch which injured others
	Auditory mode	Background music: Tense music that sets the mood for the two men's clash of swords and conflicts. Pitch and tone of speech: Shouting at the top of their lungs and disobeying each other.
Meaning	Ideational meaning	A coward
	Interpersonal meaning	"Limp noodle" made it clear to the audience that the speaker was mocking another character.
	Textual meaning	The meaning of the discourse is not apparent.

When Mulan reported to the army and lined up, Mushu and Yao had a conflict over insulting titles. Yao called Mushu "chicken boy" and Mushu called the other "limp noodle", leading to a chaotic scene. Therefore, in order to emphasize the conflict between these two people, the translator adds a pejorative color, translating them as "胆小鬼" and "低能懦夫" respectively, which not only fully conveys the interpersonal meaning, but also perfectly fits the whole scene of tension at that time.

At expression level

The expressive level consists of the linguistic media and non-linguistic media. At the level of linguistic media, both sound symbols and writing symbols are used to construct meaning. (Zhang, 1999:11) Accent, tone, voice, and the layout of the subtitle all play a role in conveying the meaning of the language. Facial expressions, gestures, body movements and other factors spread non-linguistic information.

Example 8

Linguistic mode	Subtitles	ST: You are a disgrace! TT: 你实在是太不像话！
	Visual mode	Facial expressions: The matchmaker was very angry; and Fa Mulan hung her head in shame Body movements: The matchmaker's hips were on fire and she ran all over the house. Mulan fanned the fire bigger and threw tea all over the matchmaker. Image: Mulan tried to help but made the matchmaker embarrassed.
Auditory mode	Pitch of voice	The matchmaker raised her voice.
	Background music	Depressing music
	Other sounds	The sound of a fire burning The sound of water splashing

The expressive level of the entire multimodal communicative scene here includes both the verbal sentences in the subtitle and other non-verbal modes. Based on the literal meaning of the subtitle, the matchmaker says that Mulan is a disgrace, which undermines the positive image of Mulan. Mulan is portrayed in a positive light throughout the movie. The matchmaking is a failure of Mulan to provide help but a botched rescue attempt, so the matchmaker is furious, and Mulan's performance of does not conform to the traditional portrayal of a girl at that time. However, it is precisely because of this coincidence that the story of Mulan's later military service in place of her father, and her contribution to the dynasty, can make the image of Mulan more fleshed.

Conclusion

The English subtitles of the Mulan build a bridge of cultural communication and are an important way to understand traditional Chinese culture. The movie adopts multimodal discourses such as text, picture, music, and so on, and flexibly handles the translation of Chinese cultural elements,

so as to achieve the mutual integration of multimodal symbols in film and television texts, and jointly construct the image of Mulan's loyalty and filial piety, which is of great significance for telling a good Chinese story.

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