

# A Comparative Study on Translation of the TCM Terms in the Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version 7)

Ruiqi Luo<sup>1,a,\*</sup>, Jiaxin Zhan<sup>2,b</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Hubei University of Chinese Medicine, Wuhan, Hubei, 430065, China

<sup>2</sup>School of Foreign Languages, Hubei University of Chinese Medicine, Wuhan, Hubei, 430065, China

<sup>a</sup>1627473107@qq.com, <sup>b</sup>1403934553@qq.com

\*Corresponding author

**Abstract:** As the concentrated gem of the TCM culture, the TCM terms are the key to understanding and mastering the professional knowledge of TCM, and also an indispensable part in the communication of the TCM culture at home and abroad. The evolution of the TCM terms is, to a certain extent, a reflection of the development of people's cognitive level. The English translation of the "TCM Treatment" section in the Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version 7) mainly includes the version by the WHO China Office, the version by Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the version by Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Also selecting the three major standards for English translation of the TCM terms, namely, "International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nomenclature of Chinese Medicine", "WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region", and "A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine (Second Edition)", as the basis for comparative study, this paper tries to analyze the English translation of the TCM terms of "TCM treatment" in the "Protocol" from the perspective of cognitive terminology such as conceptualization, categorization, metaphorization, and the world picture, aiming to push forward the standardized English translation of the TCM terms and to promote the exchanges and international communication of the TCM culture.

**Keywords:** English Translation of the TCM Terms, Cognitive Terminology, Conceptualization, Categorization, Metaphorization, The World Picture

## 1. Introduction

Chinese president has repeatedly stressed that TCM is the treasure of ancient Chinese science and the key to unlocking the treasury of Chinese civilization. In recent years, the State has issued a series of policy documents such as the *Law of the People's Republic of China on Traditional Chinese Medicine* and the *Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Promoting the Inheritance, Innovation, and Development of TCM*. Unprecedentedly, the development of TCM has attracted more and more attention from all walks of life in our society. Since the outbreak of the Corona Virus Disease 2019 (hereinafter referred to as "COVID-19"), TCM has intervened in advance and participated in the whole process, showing unique efficacy in all aspects of treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of COVID-19, and making remarkable contributions to the decisive victory of China's fight against the epidemic. Chinese president emphasized: "The combination of traditional Chinese and Western medicine and the combined use of traditional Chinese and Western medicine are a major feature of the prevention and control of the epidemic, and it is also the vivid practice of TCM in inheriting essence, following rules and making innovations."

The wisdom and practice of TCM in the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 are concentrated in the successive editions of the *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19*. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Chinese government has launched ten versions of the treatment protocols. From the first version on 16 January to the seventh version on 4 March and the tenth version on 6 January of 2023, the "TCM treatment" protocol has been continuously improved and optimized, which has played an important guiding role in clinical practice and has greatly reduced the morbidity and mortality rate of patients with COVID-19. The "TCM treatment" protocol in the *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version 7)* (hereinafter referred to as the "Protocol") has been finalized, which was issued by the National Health Commission of the PRC after bringing together experts from all over

the world and carefully summarizing local experience of treating the disease.

Regarding the term “epidemic disease”, *Explanation and Study of Principles of Composition of Characters (Shuo Wen Jie Zi)* put forward that epidemic is a disease that affects all people. Of course, the Chinese people’s cognition of epidemic disease has been constantly changing throughout history. It was first recorded in the *Yellow Emperor’s Canon of Medicine (Huang Di Nei Jing)* that the five kinds of pestilence can spread among people. No matter what happened on children or on adults, the symptoms were the same. In the Sui Dynasty, Chao Yuanfang in the *Treatise on the Pathogenesis and Manifestations of All Diseases (Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun)*, further put forward that epidemic becomes an illness if people are affected by the perverse qi, and then the illness is severely contagious and can even destroy the whole family and extend to outsiders. Wu Youke mentioned in his book *On Warm Epidemics (Wen Yi Lun)*: “The epidemic becomes a disease not because of the cold, or the wind, or the summer-heat, but because of the abnormal qi between heaven and earth.” In the Ming Dynasty, it can be seen that the characteristics of the disease are the same as those of COVID-19 and other modern acute infectious diseases, which are highly infectious, prone to the large-scale epidemics, and have devastating effect on humans. Wang Yuguang et al. pointed out that COVID-19 belongs to the pestilence, and the main nature of this disease is the dampness toxin, which can be also called dampness toxin epidemic<sup>[1]</sup>. Tong Xiaolin et al. believed that the disease was caused by the invasion of cold-dampness on humans, so the COVID-19 outbreak caused by the COVID-19 virus was the “cold-dampness pestilence”<sup>[2]</sup>. Briefly, the authors’ knowledge about the nature of COVID-19 and the means of transmission is constantly updated with the passage of time. At the same time, people’s understanding of the TCM terms, such as “pestilence”, “pestilential qi”, “dampness toxin pestilence”, “cold-dampness pestilence” is in constant change, which embodies the cognitive function of terms--recording knowledge, transmitting knowledge and revealing new knowledge.

The Chinese government has organized experts to translate the TCM treatment protocols for COVID-19 into various foreign languages, including English, and to share them with the rest of the world. To share the experience and medicines of TCM in the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and to make a greater contribution to the world’s fight against the epidemic, we have to attach great importance to the English translation of the treatment protocols, of which the precise and appropriate translation of the TCM terms is the most important and difficult point. During the epidemic, medical translation teams did a lot of work to strengthen the international cooperation, serve the international patients and provide the world with “Chinese solutions” and “TCM prescriptions”. Translators include volunteers, teachers and students majoring in translation in the TCM universities, academic institutions and in the TCM industry, etc. The translations of the seventh version of the “Protocol” were respectively done by the WHO China Office, Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Due to their academic experience and professional expertise, they have contributed a lot to the promotion of human health and well-being and to the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

## 2. An Overview of Cognitive Terminology

From the cognitive perspective, terms have the functions of recording knowledge, transmitting knowledge, and revealing knowledge. Traditional terminology follows the language-centered principle and the research unit is vocabulary, while cognitive terminology turns to a human-centered research unit that includes not only vocabulary but also discourse. The main research objects of terminology are terms, terminology, and terminology system. It can be said that cognitive terminology is based on the original traditional terminology to review and interpret terms, terminology, and terminology system. Cognitive terminology is the latest trend in the study of terminology. Concepts such as conceptualization, categorization, metaphorization and the world picture are introduced from cognitive linguistics. Cognitive terminology is a branch of cognitive linguistics with terminology characteristics.

### 2.1. Categorization of Cognitive Terminology

Categorization refers to the process in which people classify things according to their similar characteristics and their own experience in the process of understanding the world. Categorization is the very basis of forming concepts, because human cognition starts from categorization. Chen Xue said that both the process of categorization and the process of conceptualization are categorization activities; the difference between them lies in the difference in the outcome and purpose. The process of conceptualization aims to distinguish the smallest units of human experience, whereas the process of

categorization is to link similar units into a larger part<sup>[3]</sup>. Under the framework of cognitive terminology, the terms study has a lot to do with factors such as cognitive mode, human knowledge and experience, and cultural norms, which are related to “categorization”. However, the categorizing method varies from one cognitive subject to another. As a result of categorization, different cognitive categories are created. For example, the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies “*International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nomenclature of Chinese Medicine*” divided terms into “Yin and Yang Five Elements”, “visceral manifestation”, “body official orifices”, “Qi, blood, body fluid spirit”, “meridian”, “etiology”, “pathogenesis”, “diagnosis”, “pattern differentiation”, “treatment principle”, “Chinese herbology”, “Chinese medicine formulae” and so on. In “*WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region*”, it is classified according to “basic theories”, “diagnostics”, “disease”, “therapeutics”, “acupuncture and moxibustion”, “medicinal treatment”, and “classics of traditional medicine”<sup>[4]</sup>.

The categorization of terms can be multidimensional because different people have different understandings of the terms. To a certain extent, the difference in categorization can enable terminologists to understand the expertise from multiple dimensions, thus promoting the construction and standardization of the terminology system. Therefore, from the perspective of cognitive terminology, the categorization shows the cognitive differences of people in the process of understanding things, and also shows the characteristics of classifying terms. Of course, categorization is also influenced by the cognitive subjects’ differences in class, region, profession, cultural level, experience, etc., which tend to make cognitive subjects perceive the same thing from different perspectives<sup>[5]</sup>.

## 2.2. Conceptualization of Cognitive Terminology

Concept is the result of human cognition and conceptualization of the world, and conceptualization is the formation of concepts. Concept is the premise of the terminology work, and terminology and concept are closely related. With the improvement of people’s cognitive levels, and the new concepts come into being or replace the old concepts, which will be reflected by corresponding terms. As for the relationship between concepts and terms, Faber points out, “Concepts were abstract cognitive entities that refer to objects in the real world, and terms were merely their Linguistic labels.”<sup>[6]</sup> From the perspective of cognitive terminology, concept refers to the common cognition of cognitive individuals and groups, including personal, social, and national experiences. Individual experience is also related to the social background, culture, and profession at that time. For the field of translation, cognitive subjects are translation experts, scholars, translators, readers, and proofreaders, etc., while cognitive objects are manuscripts, translations, and translation processes. In the process of conceptualization, it is particularly important for the cognitive subject to exert subjective initiative to strip away the logical features and essential properties of objective things and finally elevate them to rational understanding. In the world we live in, concepts require not only linguistic knowledge, but also scientific knowledge and professional knowledge. Terminology is the result of combining these fields of knowledge, then practicing and promoting them. In addition, terminology will be constantly updated with the development and changes of the cognitive subject, cognitive object, and society. A conceptual analysis of terminology helps to reveal the connection between knowledge and language structure. In the framework of cognitive terminology, we first analyze the object of conceptualization—semantics, such as: context, etymology, antonyms, synonyms, etc. In addition, it is important to pay attention to people’s cognitive abilities and combine multiple historical and cultural factors which also highlight the role of the cognitive subject.

## 2.3. Metaphorization of Cognitive Terminology

Metaphorization is the mapping from one conceptual domain or cognitive domain to another conceptual domain or cognitive domain. When people use things or concepts from one domain (origin domain) to perceive and understand things or concepts from another domain (target domain), the conceptual structure is projected from one domain to another, which is called metaphorization. Traditional metaphor theory considers metaphor as a kind of rhetoric, while cognitive terminology believes that metaphor is a way of thinking and a cognitive means, and it changes as terms are produced, used, and develop and change. Cognitive linguist Lakoff first introduced the concept of cognitive metaphor in his book *Metaphors We Live By* in 1980. Since then, people’s cognition has gradually deepened, from concrete to abstract, from known to unknown, opening new horizons of cognitive metaphors. Under the perspective of cognitive research, many fields are involved in

metaphors, such as human body metaphor, international relations theory metaphor, the Internet opinion metaphor, animal metaphor, disease metaphor, multimodal metaphor, and Chinese medical terms metaphor, etc. Metaphors in the framework of cognitive terminology that emphasize the factors of cognitive subjects, and the generation of metaphoric terms is related to society, history, and culture. At the same time, metaphoric terms also reflect linguistic and cultural differences, and they can also reflect the different cognitive methods of cognitive subjects and the national cultural characteristics.

### 3. Analysis of the Translated TCM Terms in the Protocol Based on Cognitive Terminology

#### 3.1. Re-conceptualization of the Translated TCM Terms in the Protocol

Conceptualization is the process of extracting terms and concepts of a term. Re-conceptualization is the process of translating and naming the terms according to the Chinese their definitions. The process of re-conceptualization is often influenced by personal experience, backgrounds, and the contexts.

On the one hand, re-conceptualization is based on personal experience. The theory of semantic triangle explains the triangle relation of terms: the name of a concept is extracted and mapped to an objective object, and the concept is transferred from one domain to another. Wang Yin has put forward the “translation view of cognitive language”, one of which is the “multiple interactivities of translation (translation is a cognitive activity based on multiple interactions)”, which requires the multiple interactions of cognitive subjects (including readers, translators, and authors) with personal experience<sup>[7]</sup>. Accurate translation of terms is the key in TCM translation. The scholar Temmerman stated that cognition is the result of mental construction based on experience<sup>[8]</sup>. In the English translation of the “Protocol”, the translators’ work was influenced by their personal experience. The following is a comparative analysis of the English translation of the term “疫戾” (see *Table 1*). The sources chosen are the version of the WHO China Office (hereinafter referred to as the “Office” version)<sup>[9]</sup>, the version of Beijing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine (hereinafter referred to as the “BUCM” version)<sup>[10]</sup>, and the version of Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine commissioned by the Translation Committee of the World Federation of Chinese Medicine Professionals (hereinafter referred to as the “SUCM” version)<sup>[11]</sup>, and *International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nomenclature of Chinese Medicine* (hereinafter referred to as the “WFCMS” version), *WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region* (hereinafter referred to as the “WHO” version), and *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine (Second Edition)* (hereinafter referred to as the “Wiseman” version)<sup>[12]</sup>.

*Table 1: Comparison of the “Yili” Translations.*

Translations	English Translations of “Yili”
Office	epidemic pathogenic factor
BUCM	epidemic factor
SUCM	epidemic pathogens
WFCMS	pestilent qi
WHO	epidemic pathogen
Wiseman	perverse qi

*Dictionary of Traditional Chinese Medicine* explains that the term “Yili” refers to the infectious diseases, also known as hostile qi, plague qi, epidemic qi, poisonous qi, foreign qi, and miscellaneous qi, which can be transmitted through air and personal contact<sup>[13]</sup>. The “Office” translated it as “epidemic pathogenic factor”, that is, “infectious disease evil”. The “BUCM” translated it as “epidemic factor”, which is obviously understood as “疫戾”. In short, “疫戾” refers to an evil qi, while “疫疔” refers to the rapid spread of the disease. The “SUCM” translated it as “epidemic pathogens”, which has the feeling of “hostility”. The following three dictionaries understood “Yili” as “pestilent qi” or “perverse qi”. “WFCMS” translated “Yili” as “pestilent qi”. The translated version of the “WHO” is an obvious reference for Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which both translated as “epidemic pathogens”, while “Wiseman” gave a different translation—“Perverse qi”.

On the other hand, re-conceptualization is based on the backgrounds and contexts. It is mentioned by Martínez and Benítez that “in any analysis of the relations between terms and translation, it is necessary to bear in mind that both are conditioned by contextual and cultural factors that operate at the level of the source language and target language.”<sup>[14]</sup> Terms do not exist in isolation, terms should be placed in the context of the text instead. That is to say, translators should translate the terms from the

perspective of the original authors, which coincides with the viewpoint of Wang Yin's "translation view of cognitive linguistics". Translation should try to convey the understanding and description of the "two worlds" of the original author and the original work. The objective world and the cognitive world are the basis for the generation of discourse, and the words and sentences in the language also reflect these two worlds. The following is a comparative analysis of the translation of the TCM term "辨证论治" (see Table 2).

Table 2: Comparison of the "Bian-zheng Lun-zhi" Translations.

Translations	English Translations of "Bian-zheng Lun-zhi"
Office	vary
BUCM	syndrome differentiation and treatment
SUCM	pattern identification and treatment
WFCMS	syndrome differentiation and treatment; pattern identification and treatment (syndrome differentiation / pattern identification and treatment)
WHO	Pattern identification / syndrome differentiation and treatment
Wiseman	identify patterns and determine treatment / determine treatment by patterns identified

Any translator cannot be separated from the context in doing their translation work. Translators should translate the TCM terms based on a full understanding of the context. Only if the translator has the relevant knowledge background of TCM and is familiar with the English terms of TCM can he or she proficiently translate with high quality. Take the term "Bian-zheng Lun-zhi" as an example. The "Office" version simply translated it as "vary", without contextualization but with a strong modern flavor, which was too simple to reflect the characteristics of the TCM terms at all. The "BUCM" version is translated as "syndrome differentiation and treatment", which nominalized the term. The "SUCM" version is translated as "pattern identification and treatment". There was no substantial difference, but it reflected the wording preferences of Chinese and foreign translators. Chinese people prefer to use "syndrome differentiation", while foreigners use "pattern identification" more often. The full translation of the term usually is "treatment based on syndrome differentiation", but in this international exchange settings it feels too academic to facilitate communication. The "WFCMS" and the "WHO" have offered several versions in similar ways. The "Wiseman" version is translated as "identify patterns and determine treatment" or "determine treatment by patterns identified", which verbalizes the noun term.

### 3.2. Re-categorization of the Translated TCM Terms in the Protocol

Recategorization begins within a language system, followed by the transfer of information from the source language to the target language, in order to achieve categorical equivalence between the source and target languages.

"Qingfei Paidu Tang (Lung-cleansing and Toxins-removing Decoction)" is a formula produced in the epidemic, targeting mainly mild, moderate, and severe cases. It is widely used especially in Hubei and other provinces and cities. Qingfei Paidu Tang is composed of four classical prescriptions in *Treatise on Febrile Diseases*: Maxing Shigan Decoction, Wuling Powder, Xiaochaihu Decoction, and Shengan Mahuang Decoction. Huashi Baidu Formula (Dampness-removing and Toxins-removing Formula) is made up of 14 herbs such as ephedra, almond, gypsum, and red peony. It was refined by the first medical teams of China in the process of implementing relief in Jinyintan Hospital and other hospitals in Hubei. The term "毒" is mentioned in both formulas, but in the category of TCM, it is different from that of Western medicine. The word "Du" in TCM has multiple meanings:

Firstly, it refers to "poison" as a generic term for drugs in ancient times. *Zhouli- Tianguan zhongzai* says that all the poisons are gathered together and then used by the physician. Thus, it refers to poison and has the properties of poison. Secondly, it refers to toxic and side effects, perhaps due to toxic factors in a certain drug, or may be due to improper combination of adverse reactions. For example, TCM puts forward the "eighteen incompatible medicaments" and the "nineteen medicaments of mutual restraint". Thirdly, it refers to pathogenic qi. For example, *Detailed Analysis of Warm Diseases* says that the symptoms of pathogenic warmth are sore throat, swelling in front of and behind the ears, swelling of the cheeks, and redness of the face... The term "warm toxins" here is the pathogenic qi that causes the disease, called toxin or toxic qi, which equals an intangible "toxin".

In western medicine, the word "Du" refers to "viruses", such as infectious diseases caused by parasites and fungi, which is a tangible "toxin". For example, western medicine considers COVID-19 as an acute respiratory infection, and the treatment aims to kill the virus. In contrast, TCM considers

COVID-19 as a pathogenic factor. After syndrome differentiation and treatment, the “Three Medicines Three Prescriptions” were introduced. Therefore, when translators translate the word “poison” with a deep understanding of it, they will not translate it as “toxin” or “poison” in the same way. It can be translated as “Qingfei Paidu Tang (Lung-Cleansing and Toxins-Removing Decoction)” by adopting the translation method of Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, using the transliteration with explanation. This method allows readers to fully recognize and understand the TCM terms and facilitates the construction of new TCM terms.

### 3.3. Metaphorization of the Translated TCM Terms in the Protocol

A metaphor refers to the mapping of one conceptual or cognitive domain to another conceptual or cognitive domain. Simply put, it is to use what is known to recognize what is unknown. TCM uses familiar adjectives or verbs in naming terms to create vivid images. The following are based on the TCM pulse terms in the “Protocol” (see Table 3).

Table 3: Comparison of the TCM Pulse Terms Translations in the Protocol.

Terms	Office	BUCM	SUCM	WFCMS	WHO	Wiseman
滑脉	slippery pulse	slippery pulse	slippery pulse	slippery pulse	slippery pulse	slippery pulse
数脉	count pulse	rapid pulse	rapid pulse	rapid pulse	rapid pulse	rapid pulse
沉脉	sink pulse	deep pulse	deep pulse	deep pulse	sunken pulse	deep pulse
细脉	fine pulse	thready pulse	thready pulse	thready pulse	fine pulse	fine pulse
浮脉	float pulse	floating pulse	floating pulse	floating pulse	floating pulse	floating pulse
虚脉	weak pulse	weak pulse	weak pulse	feeble pulse	vacuous pulse	vacuous pulse

1) 滑脉 The term for metaphorical cognition is “slippery pulse”, which refers to a smooth, rounded pulse, like a pearl walking on a plate. The word “slippery” means something that is smooth, wet or oily. The metaphorical nature of the term is obvious, as all translations are the same.

2) 数脉 It is recorded in the *Pulse Classic* that the pulse rate is faster than normal. The pulse goes rapidly, more than five times a breath. The word “数”, here pronounced “shuò”, means to move with or be capable of moving with high speed. It is a metaphor for the pulse as the rapidity of the river. The “Office” version gives a different translation—“count pulse”. The word “count” means “count number”, which is obviously interpreted without real understanding and is incorrect both lexically and grammatically. The term “rapid pulse” is more appropriate as a metaphorical cognitive term for “Shuomai”.

3) 沉脉 The *Pulse Classic* says that the pulse is lightly taken without the finger, and is obtained after heavy pressure. The sunken pulse is strong and heavy, like throwing a stone into water, which is then sunken downward. The “Office” version is translated as “sink pulse”, which means to go down below the surface of something, especially of a liquid. The “WHO” version is translated as “sunken pulse”, and “sunken” is the past participle of “sink”. Just like a stone thrown into water, it will be extremely bottomed. “Sunken” is more appropriate than “sink” here, which is a metaphor for the state of a stone sinking into the bottom of the water.

4) 细脉 According to *Traditional Chinese Medicine Dictionary*, it refers to the pulse feeling tiny under the finger and as thin as silk, but the pulse rises and falls to beat the finger clearly. The “Office” version refers to the “WHO” version, which is translated as “fine pulse”. While other versions are translated as “thready pulse”. The term “fine” has a wide range of meanings. Although it means very thin or narrow, it is easily misunderstood by beginners. The term “thready” is an extension of “thread”, which means “a pulse like a thread, a pulse as thin as a thread”, with obvious metaphorical features.

5) 浮脉 The *Pulse Classic* says that taking the pulse lightly, it should be obvious, and pressed it hard, the pulse strength will be slightly reduced but not empty. This pulse is superficial and can be obtained by taking it lightly. “Fu” is literally translated as “float”. *Binhu's Sphygmology* pointed out that “Fu” is “like wood floating on top of water”. This is why the term “floating” is the most appropriate way to indicate that this pulse is like driftwood floating on water.

6) 虚脉 Feeble pulse refers to a pulse that feels weak when in the three parts of Cun Guan Chi

when lifted and pressed is a general term for a weak pulse. The “Office”, “BUCM” and “SUCM” versions are all translated as “weak pulse”, which means weak or no strength and generally refers to the human body or an organ of the body. The “WFCMS” version is translated into “feeble pulse”, meaning very weak or not showing determination or energy, which metaphorizes the pulse as a feeble state of the body. The “WHO” version is translated as “vacuous pulse”, meaning empty or emptiness, which is inconsistent with the image of “vacuous pulse”. “Xumai” refers to the soft and weak pulse, and the sensation of emptiness is sought and pressed. Therefore, the translation of “feeble pulse” is more in line with human metaphorical perception.

#### 4. Prospect of English Translation of the TCM Terms

The world picture is people’s cognition of the world. The concept of “world picture” was first introduced by the German physicist Hertz at the end of the 19th century. This concept was then introduced to other disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, and philosophy, with the significance of presenting a model for understanding the world. The world picture includes: the world picture of linguistics, the world picture of the nation, the world picture of science, the world picture of values, and the world picture of concepts, which are interconnected and complement each other, and do not exist in isolation. The world picture of the TCM terms is the Chinese understanding and knowledge system of health, disease, physiological and pathological phenomena, the human body, and the relationship between human beings and nature as reflected through the form, content, definition, and connotation of the TCM terms.”

The historical medical and cultural civilization exchanges are two-way, for TCM has also absorbed some excellent achievements of other civilizations, and the world picture of the TCM terms becomes richer. The western spread of TCM is not only a medical transmission, but also a cultural exchange and mutual appreciation. The Silk Road serves a channel to promote trade and cultural exchange between foreign countries and China, and medicines and medical formula from various places were continuously introduced to China through the Silk Road, which was accepted and used by Chinese doctors and had a positive impact on the development of TCM. For example, “Suhe Xiang”, which is mentioned in the “Protocol” for the treatment of critical patients, was introduced to China via the Silk Road. The Latin transliteration of “Suhe” is “storax”. It is mentioned in the *Compendium of Materia Medica* that according to “*Guangzhi*” written by Guo Yigong, this spice comes from the country of Suhe, hence it is named Suhe. The literati of the Han Dynasty liked to wear the sachets made of Suhe, so that they could smell the fragrance before they arrived. In the Tang Dynasty, with the fusion of multiple cultures, Suhe Xiang came to the people, and many poets also used Suhe Xiang to express their feelings. In addition, it is recorded in the *Wuqu Kouzhuan* that King Ashoka of India fell ill and was cured after seven days of seeking Suhe’s herbs<sup>[15]</sup>. In the Western countries, Suhe Xiang was generally used externally, but not orally. However, after it was introduced to China, it was gradually transformed from a feast to a herb for humans as it merged with Chinese culture. According to the literature, during the Han and Jin dynasties, it could be used externally to ward off evil spirits and also taken orally as a medicine; it could be used alone or in combination with other medicines. Therefore, traditional Chinese medicine attaches importance to western aromatic herbs, and Suhe Xiang has been of medicinal value since it entered into China, and its research by medical practitioners has been intensifying, and the results of clinical application have benefited the majority of patients. In recent years, the overseas spread of TCM, especially this overseas fight against epidemics, TCM does not only serve the health of Chinese people, but also betters the health and well-being of human beings, and the world picture of Chinese medical terminology is actually expanding.

By analyzing the English translation of the TCM terms in the “Protocol” and “human” factor, they will reflect the world picture of the TCM terms. The world picture of cognitive terminology emphasizes the “human” factor. The above problems are inseparable from cognitive ability, language and cultural differences. Therefore, studying the world picture is conducive to the effective advancement of terminology work.

Firstly, uncertainty of the world picture in English translation exists because of the polysemy of the TCM terms. The phenomenon of polysemy in the TCM terms is more common. In addition to the “toxin” mentioned above, there are also “qi”, “warm”, “heat”, “cold”, “cool” and so on. The “Gong” of “Angong Niu Huang Wan” in the “Protocol” has many meanings in TCM. Firstly, “Gong” refers to one of the five tones. In the palace of spleen sound, its sound is heavy, grand and majestic, large and gentle. Secondly, “Gong” refers to the place where the spirit of the five Zang-organs is located. *Suwen-Shengqi Tongtian Lun* says that Yin is transformed from the five flavors; The five palaces store Yin and can also

be damaged by the five flavors.” Thirdly, “Gong” also refers to women’s uterus, which is also a metaphorical method. In Western medicine, it refers to the reproductive organ of the female and has the role of presiding over menstruation and gestating the fetus. Fourthly, “Gong” also refers to the palace, the place where the monarch lives. Here it refers to the heart palace. TCM believes that the heart is an important organ of the human body. The heart is in the pericardium, because the pericardium is compared to “Gong”. Translating “Angong Niu Huang Pill” into “Peaceful Palace Bovine Bezoar Pill” will mislead readers. When translating the TCM terms, the translator should first clarify the concept of the source term, and then give the term an English name to improve the quality of translation. Unlike the polysemous phenomenon of “Gong” in the TCM terms, Western medicine’s cognition of “Gong” is relatively simple. Although the term “uterus” also reflects a metaphorical phenomenon, its connotation is much simpler. Therefore, to a certain extent, the polysemy of the TCM terms has brought about uncertainty of the world picture in the translation process.

Secondly, ambiguity of the world picture in the English translation arises due to the complexity of the conceptual boundaries of the TCM terms. In the “Protocol”, one medicine is mentioned in the treatment of mild patients with cold dampness and stagnation of lung syndrome: Jiao San Xian. Although it looks like one herb, it is actually composed of three herbs: burnt malt (Jiao Mai Ya), burnt hawthorn (Jiao Shan Zha), and burnt medicated leaven (Jiao Shen Qu). The three herbs are used together because burnt malt can digest starchy food, burnt hawthorn can digest meat or greasy food; and burnt medicated leaven is good at digesting rice and noodles. The TCM terms have a strong cultural heritage of traditional Chinese medicine. Thus, the ambiguous translation of “Jiao San Xian” is not conducive to the accurate transmission of information. Besides, the translator’s ambiguity of the TCM concepts reflects his or her way of perception. To correctly reflect the world picture of TCM, the translator should pay more attention to the completeness and accuracy of the translation.

Thirdly, regularity of the world picture in English translation is caused by strictness of the TCM medications. To share the experience and medicine of TCM in the prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and to contribute the wisdom of TCM to the world, the highest percentage of the TCM terms in the “Protocol” is Chinese materia medica terms. However, in the “Protocol”, the characteristics of some materia medica used in different states are not reflected. For example, ephedra and raw ephedra. The Latin name in parentheses is the same—Ephedrae Herba. Similar examples include almond and bitter almond, ageratum and patchouli, raw licorice and roasted licorice, etc. Translators who are not familiar with the medicinal characteristics of TCM cannot accurately reflect the world picture of TCM in a foreign language and culture. Therefore, translators should be more rigorous in their translations, gain a deeper understanding of the differences between drugs in different states, and distinguish between raw and prepared medicinals, and between geoauthentic medicinal materials and non-geoauthentic medicinal materials.

The above-mentioned problems in the English translation reflect the unique way of cognition and understanding of the TCM terms by the cognitive subject of the Chinese language. To sum up, research on the world picture in the TCM terms is conducive to grasping the rules of terminology development and understanding the cognitive status of the cognitive subject in the English translation of the TCM terms.

## 5. Conclusions

The progress and level of terminology work are closely related to the experience of cognitive subjects and the degree of social development. If the terminology of a discipline is not standardized, and the concept of the terminology is vague, then the theoretical system of the discipline will become chaotic. As far as cognitive subjects are concerned, there will be different understandings of the same term, and even its scientific nature will be questioned by people. Therefore, it is particularly urgent to promote the standardization of terminology.

*A practical dictionary of Chinese Medicine (Second Edition)* compiled by Nigel Wiseman et al. in 1998, *WHO International Standard on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region* in 2007, and *International Standard Chinese-English in the Western Pacific Region* have laid a solid foundation for the realization of the standardization of the TCM terms translation. Wiseman adopts a literal translation method, with specialized terms being translated mainly by imitation, or by creating new terms based on the original definitions. The “WHO” translation is concise, effective in conveying information in limited time, and strives for structural correspondence between the translated terms and the TCM terms. The translation of “WFCMS”, on the other hand, is more specific, adding translations of the names of



specialized terms such as meridian points, extra-meridian points, and auricular points, and in the chapter on “materia medica” clearly indicates the three translations of each medicine into Latin, Chinese Pinyin, and English. Each of the three has its own merits, but there are questionable aspects in the final realization of the international standardization of the English translation of the TCM terms. For example, a series of “syndromes” are mentioned in the “Protocol”—cold-dampness stagnating in the lung, damp-heat accumulating in the lung, damp toxin stagnating in the lung, cold-dampness obstructing the lung, epidemic toxin blocking the lung, flaring heat in both qi and ying phases, internal blocking causing external collapse, qi deficiency of the lung and spleen and deficiency of qi and yin. From “deficiency” to “exhaustion”, there are intermediate zones such as “weakness”, “insufficiency”, “depletion”, “collapse”. The English standard of these near-sense terms should also be translated differently. That is, they should be expressed by different translated names, showing the characteristics of increasing or decreasing degrees. Some are translated as “collapse”, and some are translated as “desertion”, so the phenomenon of confusing term translation is not uncommon. The lack of standardization of the TCM terms is extremely detrimental to the international dissemination of the TCM culture. Therefore, to standardize the TCM terms and systematize the discipline theory, we must pay attention to the problems with English translation of the TCM terms.

In this epidemic, the remarkable effect of TCM in epidemic prevention is obvious to all. China has formulated eight versions of the *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19* with TCM characteristics. In addition, effective medicines and formulas have also been introduced, such as “Three Medicines and Three Prescriptions”. China has actively exchanged and shared its experience with other countries in the prevention, control and treatment of TCM, making a great contribution to helping the world win the battle faster and better, and serving the health and well-being of mankind.

## References

- [1] Wang, Y. G. et al. (2020). *Clinical Features and Syndrome Differentiation of Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia in Traditional Chinese Medicine*. *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 4, 281-285.
- [2] Tong, X. L. et al. (2020). *Discussion on Traditional Chinese Medicine Prevention and Treatment Strategies of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) from the Perspective of “Cold-dampness Pestilence”*. *Journal of Traditional Chinese Medicine*, 6, 465-470+553.
- [3] Chen, X. and Lu, Y. X. (2017). *An Introduction to Cognitive Terminology* (PP 119, 142, 213). Beijing: Commercial Press (CP).
- [4] Li, Z. J. (2008). *International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nomenclature of Chinese Medicine*. Beijing: Peoples Medical Publishing House (PMPH).
- [5] World Health Organization. (2007). *WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region*. Manila: World Health Organization (WHO).
- [6] Pamela, F. B. (2009). *The Cognitive Shift in Terminology and Specialized Translation*. *MonTI - Monografías de Traducción e Interpretación*, 107-134.
- [7] Wang, Y. (2005). *A Cognitive Linguistic View on Translation*. *Chinese Translators Journal*, 5: 15-20.
- [8] Rita, T. (2000) *Towards New Ways of Terminology Description: The Sociocognitive-approach*. *Lexikos*, 14, 434-439.
- [9] WHO China Office. (2020). *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19(Trial Version7)*. [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/topics\\_665678/kjgzbdffyq/CERC/P020200318837942843337.pdf](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/topics_665678/kjgzbdffyq/CERC/P020200318837942843337.pdf).
- [10] National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine. (2020). *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version 7)*. <http://ghs.satcm.gov.cn/gongzuodongtai/2020-03-20/14089.html>.
- [11] National Health Commission of the People’s Republic of China. (2020). *Diagnosis and Treatment Protocol for COVID-19 (Trial Version 7)*. <http://images.mofcom.gov.cn/is2/202003/20200327002342635.pdf>.
- [12] Nigel, W., & Feng, Y. (1998). *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine (Second Edition)*. Brookline: Paradigm Publications.
- [13] Li, J. W. (1999). *Dictionary of Traditional Chinese Medicine*. Beijing: Bulletin of Medical Research.
- [14] Montero, M., & Pamela, F. B. (2009). *Terminological Competence in Translation*. *Terminology*, 1, 88-104.
- [15] Zhao, H. X. (2013). *Study on the Communication of Music and Dance between Tang Dynasty and India*. *Journal of Chang’an University (Social Science Edition)*, 2, 24-26+37.