Comparative study on WHO Western Pacific Region and World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies international standard terminologies on traditional medicine: an analysis of the five sensory organs

Zhao-guo LI¹,², Shu-lan PAN²
1. Postdoctoral Center, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai 200083, China
2. College of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai 200234, China

Keywords: linguistics; terminology; translation; English; terms, traditional Chinese medicine; five sensory organs

WHO 西太区与世界中医药学会联合会中医名词术语
国际标准比较研究:五官部分

李照国¹², 潘淑兰³
1. 上海外国语大学博士后流动站，上海 200083
2. 上海师范大学外国语学院，上海 200234

关键词: 语言学: 科学术语; 翻译; 英语; 中医名词; 五官

The terms related to the five sensory organs in traditional Chinese medicine are somewhat limited as compared with those of the basic theory of traditional Chinese medicine. For this reason there are only 28 terms of sensory organs included in WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region (abbreviated as WHO Standard) (2). However, in International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nomenclature of Chinese Medicine compiled by World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (abbreviated as WFCMS Standard) (3), the entries amount to 118 which are almost all the names of diseases. Other terms related to the five sensory organs in WFCMS Standard are included in the section of Body and Orifices (形体官窍).

The ways to translate most of the terms included in the two standards are similar to that in the current translation practice. This is partly due to the fact that the terms related to the five sensory organs are specific in referent and concrete in connotation, making it easier to understand and translate. That is why the English translation of these terms in the two standards is, on the whole, similar to each other. However, subtle differences still can be found in some cases, reflecting the popular practice of English translation of traditional Chinese medical terminologies. Take 轮 in the 五轮学说 for example. It is translated as wheel in WHO Standard but as orbiticus in WFCMS Standard. Take 明堂 as another example. It is translated as bright hall in WHO Standard. But in WFCMS Standard, it is rendered in four different ways: 1) nose; 2) tip of nose; 3) acupuncture chart; 4) another name of Shangxing (GV 23). In the current translation practice, dif-

基金项目: 国家社会科学基金资助项目（No. 08BYY009）; 中国博士后科学基金资助项目（No. 20080430675）

Correspondence: Zhao-guo LI, MD, Professor; E-mail: zhouoshi@163.com; Blog: zhouoshi, blog, 163.com
ifferent translators may follow different methods and have different ideas about how to translate the concepts and terms related to the five sensory organs. However, sometimes different ways of translation reflect different understanding of the original concept. The translation of 明堂 is a typical example of such practice.

In view of the two international standards and in the light of the theory and practice discussed in the book entitled International Standardization of English Translation of Traditional Chinese Medicine: Study of Theory, Summarization of Practice and Exploration of Methods, this article tries to briefly introduce and analyze the English translation of the terms concerning the five sensory organs. In order to make it easier for readers to understand how these terms are understood and translated in these two international standards, the related definitions, according to the descriptions in WHO Standard, are provided as reference.

官窍 orifice of sense organ — a general term for the external opening of sense organs

五宫 five sense organs — a collective term of the nose, eyes, mouth, tongue and ears, associated with five phase theory

七窍 seven orifices — a collective term of the two ears, two eyes, two nostrils and the mouth

上窍 upper orifices — the eyes, ears, mouth and nose

下窍 lower orifices — the anus and genitourinary openings

苗窍 sprout orifices — the sense organs that reflect the change of qi, blood, yin and yang, also known as signaling orifices/sense organs

The so-called 苗窍 just refers to the five sensory organs because the five sensory organs serve just as the sprouts of the five zang-organs in the external part of the body. That is why the five sensory organs are usually called 苗窍, literally meaning sprout orifices, in traditional Chinese medicine. However, in the current translation practice, 苗窍 is often simply rendered as sense organs. To render 苗窍 as sprout orifices in WHO Standard is obviously a literal translation. However, in view of the special rhetoric practice in traditional Chinese medical literature, such a literal translation seems quite significant and reflects the associability and correspondence of traditional Chinese medical terminologies. In WFCMS Standard, 苗窍 is rendered as signal orifices, also appearing quite unique.

五轮 five wheels — five regions of the eye from the outer to the inner: the flesh wheel, blood wheel, qi wheel, wind wheel and water wheel, also the same as five orbiculi

The idea of 五轮 first appeared in a canon about ophthalmology (《眼科龙木论》), including flesh wheel (肉轮), blood wheel (血轮), qi wheel (气轮), wind wheel (风轮) and water wheel (水轮). The so-called flesh wheel refers to the upper and lower eyelids pertaining to the spleen; the so-called blood wheel refers to the blood vessels over the canthus pertaining to the heart; the so-called qi wheel refers to the white part of the eye pertaining to the lung; the so-called wind wheel refers to the black part of the eye pertaining to the liver; and the so-called water wheel refers to the pupil in the eye pertaining to the kidney. To translate 五轮 as five wheels is the common way used in the current translation practice. Such a way of translation appears clear and understandable and is thus accepted by many translators. We can find such a translation even in the Chinese-English Dictionary of Traditional Chinese Medicine published in 1980s. In WFCMS Standard, 五轮 is translated as five orbiculi which sounds more technical, but identical with five wheels in connotation.

In view of the rhetoric and semantic features of the original concept, to render 五轮 into five wheels seems to be more significant because many of the terms of traditional Chinese medicine were actually common expressions popularly used in ancient times.

八廓 eight belts — a collective term of the eight external ocular regions

The idea of 八廓 first appeared in a collection of ophthalmology (《眼科龙木集》) compiled by a Daoist (道教道人). The so-called 八廓 actually refers to the eight divisions or directions of the eyes. These eight divisions were named differently in history after eight materials and phenomena in nature or bagua (八卦 or eight diagrams). The locations of 八廓 and their correspondence to the viscera and clinical significance are still under debate. For this reason, it is not widely used in clinical practice as compared with that of 五轮. In WFCMS Standard, 八廓 is rendered as eight regions. In order to make the meaning clearer, perhaps it is necessary to use the word ocular as a modifier no matter to translate 八廓 into eight belts or eight regions.

气轮 qi wheel — the bulbar conjunctiva and
sclera
水轮 water wheel — the pupil
血轮 blood wheel — the canthus
风轮 wind wheel — the cornea
肉轮 flesh wheel — the eyelids

In the WFCMS Standard, the five wheels are rendered respectively as qi orbiculus, water orbiculus, blood orbiculus, wind orbiculus, flesh orbiculus.

大眦 inner canthus — the canthus closer to the nose, the same as greater canthus
小眦; 小眦 outer canthus — the canthus closer to the temple, the same as lesser canthus

泪堂 lacrimal orifice — the opening from which tears flow

In the WFCMS Standard, 泪堂 is rendered as lacrimal punctum. Punctum is a Latin word which means point or sharp. The plural form of punctum is puncta. Comparatively speaking, the translation of 泪堂 is easier to understand.

白睛 white of the eye — the white opaque part of the outer surface of the eyeball

黑睛 dark of the eye — the transparent membranous structure forming the central anterior part of the eye, i.e. the cornea

瞳神 pupil — the opening at the center of the iris, posterior to the cornea, through which light enters the eye

神水 aqueous humor — the fluid produced in the eye, occupying the space between the crystalline lens and cornea

神膏 vitreous humor — the clear eyeball colorless transparent jelly

The terms of 瞳神, 神水 and 神膏 all contain the Chinese character 神 which literally means god or magic or mysterious, reflecting the idea of Chinese people in ancient times about these three concepts. In both international standards, these three concepts are rendered respectively as pupil, aqueous humor and vitreous humor according to their actual connotation.

目系 eye connector — the cord connecting the eye with the brain

目眶; 目眶骨 eye socket — the bony cavity that contains the eye

目上? 眼上眶 mesh above the eyes — upper palpebral musculature

目下网 sinew mesh below the eyes — lower palpebral musculature

In WFCMS Standard, 目上? 眼上眶 and 目下网 are rendered respectively as meridian/channel sinew mesh above eye and meridian/channel sinew mesh above eye. The so-called 目上? 眼上眶 and 目下网 are also known as 目上眶 and 目下眶, referring to the upper eyelid and lower eyelid. The Chinese character 网 literally means net and net can be used to control and restrain something. To translate 目上眶 into sinew mesh above the eyes and 目下眶 into sinew mesh below the eyes seems too complicated and unclear. In fact upper eyelid and lower eyelid are the natural equivalences of 目上眶 and 目下眶.

Besides, there are still two more terms in traditional Chinese medicine closely related to 目上眶 and 目下眶. They are 目上弦 and 目下弦 which refer to margin of upper eyelid and margin of lower eyelid. The Chinese characters 弦 and 弦 are different and cannot be rendered the same.

明堂 bright hall — an ancient term for nose, especially the apex of the nose

In WFCMS Standard, 明堂 is rendered in four different ways: 1) nose; 2) tip of nose; 3) acupoint chart; 4) another name of Shangxing (GV 23).

鼻准 tip of the nose — the most distal portion of the nose, the same as apex nasi

山根 root of the nose — the upper portion of the nose, which is situated between the eyes, the same as radix nasi

顴; 鼻梁 bridge of the nose — the part of the nose formed by the junction of its lateral surfaces, the same as dorsum nasi

真牙 wisdom tooth — the third molar tooth

舌下 uvula — the pendular fleshy lobe in the middle of the posterior border of the soft palate, usually referring to uvula palatina

喉核 throat node — faucial or palatine tonsil, a pair of prominent masses that lie one on each side of the throat

喉关 throat pass — the part of the throat formed by the tonsils, uvula and back of the tongue

喉位 pharynx — the part of the throat through which food or drink is swallowed

喉底 retropharynx — the posterior part of the pharynx

In WFCMS Standard, 喉核 is rendered as tonsil. Such a translation is undoubtedly correct and technical because 喉核 is something physiological. To render 喉核 into throat node sounds a little strange because node means something different in medicine. In WFCMS Standard, 喉关 and 喉底 are rendered as isthmus of fauces and posterior laryngeal wall, sounding somewhat obscure. Comparatively speaking, throat pass seems...
clearer and easier to understand.

Pre-nasopharynx — the upper part of the pharynx continuous with the nasal passages.

The terms mentioned above are the basic ones related to the five sensory organs in traditional Chinese medicine. In both international standards, most of these terms are translated literally as usually done in the current translation practice. Though literal translation of these terms seems obscure in meaning and rigid in structure, it is now the popularly used way to deal with traditional Chinese medical terminologies that are simple in structure and significant in connotation. The translation of "installed" into sprout orifices and "five wheels" into five wheels are the typical examples of such a common practice.

In some cases, liberal translation is adopted to deal with some other terms that are complicated in connotation, such as rendering "inflammation" into lacrimal orifice, "dampness" into white of the eye, "darkness" into dark of the eye, "mind" into pupil, "water" into aqueous humor and "vitality" into vitreous humor in WHO Standard. The liberal translation of these terms, generally speaking, has revealed the basic connotations of the original concepts and is thus acceptable.

REFERENCES
1 World Health Organization Western Pacific Region. WHO international standard terminologies on traditional medicine in the Western Pacific Region. 2007.

第 6 次全国中西医结合男科学术会议征文
及男科诊疗提高班报名通知

中国中西医结合学会男科专业委员会将于 2009 年 4 月下旬在湖北省武汉市召开第 6 次全国中西医结合男科学术会议，并同期举办全国中西医结合男科诊疗提高班。现将有关事项通知如下。

1 征文内容 （1）中医，西医、中西医结合诊治男性不育症、前列腺疾病、性功能障碍、性传播疾病，中老年男性部分雄激素缺乏综合征、男科杂病的随访对照研究，临床病例报告，临床经验总结以及新技术、新方法等，与男科疾病相关的妇科和内分泌科等相关学科的最新研究进展；（2）中医、西医、中西医结合男科基础实验研究以及科研方法学和相关动物模型的制备与评价；（3）男科疾病综合治疗方案评价研究；（4）男科疾病诊疗规范的示范研究。

2 征文要求 （1）正文字数在 3000 字以内，附 800 字以内摘要，请注明作者姓名、单位、通讯地址、邮政编码、电话，并加盖单位公章。（2）征文一律使用电子邮件提交，邮件主题请注明男科征文。

3 男科提高班授课内容 男性不育症、性功能障碍、前列腺疾病、性传播疾病、男科杂病等中西医治疗最新进展以及男科疾病系列中西医结合诊治指南。该班为国家级医学继续教育项目（编号 380500002），学业结束后，经考核合格，授予学分 11 分。

4 男科提高班授课老师 聘请贾金铭、周智恒、张敏建、宋春生、张武、刘继红、杨为民、邓春华、姜辉、郭军、邓岩、董维妙、宋明军等男科专家教授传授。

5 男科提高班报名方法 欲参加学习班者，请于 2009 年 4 月 15 日前寄报名费 100 元。汇款地址：北京市海淀区北洼路 50 号国家中医药管理局基本药物临床应用基地；邮政编码：100193；联系人：王涛、王小刚、刘继红；电话：027-62989353；E-mail：zxnk2008@126.com。会议具体时间、地点将另行通知。

中国中西医结合学会男科专业委员会
2008 年 12 月 9 日