Comparative study on WHO Western Pacific Region and World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies international standard terminologies on traditional medicine: Various Patterns Identification/Syndrome Differentiation (Part 2)

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外伤瘀滞证 pattern/syndrome of stasis and stagnation due to traumatic injury: a pattern/syndrome attributed to traumatic injury causing local stagnation of qi and blood, manifested by local ecchymosis, pain and tenderness.

In Chinese language, 瘀 and 滞 are two concepts which are similar to each other in meaning under certain context, but still bear certain difference. Usually瘀 refers to blood stasis, while 滞 refers to any condition of qi that flows slower than usual or stops to flow due to certain factors. That is why in the current translation practice瘀 is often translated as “stasis” while 滞 is frequently rendered as “stagnation”. The Chinese concept 外伤 means injury or damage caused by external factors, similar to trauma or traumatic injury in modern medicine. According to such an analysis, to translate 外伤瘀滞证 as “pattern/syndrome of stasis and stagnation due to traumatic injury” in the WHO International Standard Terminologies on Traditional Medicine in the Western Pacific Region [11] (abbreviated as the WPRO Standard) is, to some extent, reasonable and acceptable. In the International Standard Chinese-English Basic Nominal...
clature of Chinese Medicine compiled by World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies (abbreviated as the WFCCMS Standard), 绘伤筋伤是 translated as “syndrome/pattern of traumatic blood stasis and qi stagnation”, which certainly sounds semantically accurate and structurally concise.

损伤筋骨证 pattern/syndrome of damage to sinew and bone: a pattern/syndrome attributed to traumatic injury causing damage to the tendons and bones, marked by local swelling, pain and impaired movement.

In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), 损伤筋骨 is a common symptom caused by any traumatic injury, but it is seldom taken as a pattern or syndrome in clinical practice. In the Classification and Codes of Diseases and Syndromes of Traditional Chinese Medicine issued by the Chinese government in 1995 and 1997, 损伤筋骨 is not included as a pattern or syndrome. In the current translation practice, 筋 is translated either as “sinew” or “tendon”. Comparatively speaking, “sinew” now is used more frequently than “tendon”.

风寒犯头证 pattern/syndrome of wind-cold invading the head: a pattern/syndrome marked by headache with pain of the nape and back, aggravated by wind and cold, with thin white tongue coating and floating tight pulse.

In TCM, 风寒犯头证 is caused by invasion of pathogenic wind and cold into the head. Apart from the symptoms mentioned in the definition, the common clinical manifestations of this pattern/syndrome also include aversion to cold and dizziness. Wind and cold are the natural changes of weather which are not necessarily the causes of diseases. But if they appear in the time when they should not appear, they may become pathogenic and eventually cause diseases. That is why in the current translation practice, translators tend to use the word “pathogenic”. as a modifier to modify wind and cold or other climatic changes in such cases.

风热犯头证 pattern/syndrome of wind-heat invading the head: a pattern/syndrome marked by headache with a distention sensation, fever or aversion to wind, thirst, flushing of face, reddened tongue tip and edges, thin and yellowish tongue coating, and rapid floating pulse.

In TCM, 风热犯头证 is caused by invasion of pathogenic wind and heat into the head. The analysis about the translation of 风寒犯头证 is applicable to that of 风热犯头证.

风湿犯头证 pattern/syndrome of wind-dampness invading the head: a pattern/syndrome marked by headache with a distention sensation, fever or aversion to wind, thirst, flushing of face, reddened tongue tip and edges, thin and yellowish tongue coating, and rapid floating pulse.

In TCM, 风湿犯头证 is caused by invasion of pathogenic wind and dampness into the head, the translation of which is similar to that of 风寒犯头证 and 风热犯头证. Apart from the symptoms mentioned in the definition, the common clinical manifestations of this pattern/syndrome still include heaviness of limbs, chest distress, anorexia, white and slippery tongue coating and soggy pulse, etc.

瘀血犯头证 pattern/syndrome of static blood invading the head: a pattern/syndrome arising when static blood obstructs the vessels of the head due to traumatic injury, manifested by persistent sharp pain with fixed location, dizziness, forgetfulness, gloomy complexion, purple tongue or purple spots on the tongue, and string-like rough pulse.

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To translate 瘀血 as “static blood” is certainly understandable. However, 瘀血 in Chinese language is almost identical with “blood stasis” in modern medicine. In fact, in the current translation practice, “blood stasis” is usually adopted in the translation of 瘀血. In the definition, “gloomy complexion” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 面色晦, which refers to a morbid condition of the face that looks non-lustrous. The expression “string-like rough pulse” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 脉弦涩, in which 脉 means pulse, 弦 means wiry or taut, 涩 means unsmooth or inhibited.

痰浊犯头证 pattern/syndrome of phlegm turbidity invading the head: a pattern/syndrome marked by headache associated with mental clouding, tinnitus, impaired hearing, blurred vision, stuffiness and a feeling of pressure in the chest and epigastrium, vomiting of phlegm/mucus, white slimy tongue coating and string-like slippery pulse.

In TCM, 痰浊犯头证 is caused by disturbance of the upper orifices by turbid phlegm. The Chinese term 痰浊 simply means turbid phlegm, in which the Chinese character 痰 is an adjective to modify 浊. In TCM, 浊 is either visible or invisible. If it is visible, it refers to the substance discharged from the throat, usually translated as “sputum”; if it is invisible, it refers to a sort of pathogenic substance that may obstruct the meridians to cause pain or mental confusion, usually translated as “phlegm”. In the term 痰浊犯头证, 痰 means phlegm and 浊 means turbid phlegm.

In the definition, “mental clouding” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 眩晕 which is also frequently translated as “mental confusion”. The expression “blurred vision” is perhaps the translation of the Chinese expression 视物模糊 which is also frequently translated as “dim vision”. The expression “stuffiness and a feeling of pressure in the chest and epigastrium” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 胸闷痞闷 in which 胸闷 refers to stuffiness or mass and 闷 refers to pressure or oppression.

肝火犯头证 pattern/syndrome of liver fire invading the head: a pattern/syndrome marked by severe headache associated with flushing face, red eyes, irritability, irascibility, bitter taste in the mouth, reddened tongue with yellow coating and rapid string-like pulse.

In TCM, 肝火犯头证 is caused by hyperactivity of liver fire that disturbs the head. The expression “hyperactivity of liver fire” is a liberal translation of the Chinese term 肝火上炎 which literally means up flaming of liver fire. In the definition, the word “irritability” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 怒, which means hastiness; the word “irascibility” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 易怒, which means too easy to lose temper.

风火攻目证 pattern/syndrome of wind-fire attacking the eyes: a pattern/syndrome marked by reddened, swollen and painful eyes and lacrimation associated with fever, aversion to wind and floating rapid pulse.

In TCM, 风火攻目证 is caused by disturbance of the eyes by pathogenic wind and heat. In the WPRO Standard[11], trials have been made to translate Chinese concepts with similar meaning differently so as to standardize the translation of the concerned terms. In Chinese language, for example, 火 and 攻 are quite similar to each other, though they are two characters. That is why in the current translation practice, the English words “invade” and “attack” are used interchangeably in translating these two Chinese characters. But in the WPRO Standard[11], the English word “invade” is usually used to translate the Chinese character 攻 while the English word “attack” is often used to translate the Chinese character 攻. Such a way of translation is certainly practical for standardization.

风湿凌目证 pattern/syndrome of wind-dampness insulting the eyes: a pattern/syndrome marked by reddened, swollen and painful eyes and lacrimation associated with fever, aversion to wind and floating rapid pulse.

In the Chinese term 风湿凌目证, the Chinese character 雄 means to invade or attack. For the convenience of standardization, it is rendered as “intimidate” in the WPRO Standard[11]. Such a way of translation is certainly reasonable for the sake of differentiation and standardization. However, in other places in the WPRO Standard[11], 雄 is rendered as “insult”, failing to keep a consistency. In the definition, the word “lacrimation” may be the translation of the Chinese term 流泪, which is also frequently translated as “epiphora”. Apart from the symptoms mentioned in the definition, the common clinical manifestations also include profuse secretion in the eyes.

外伤目络证 pattern/syndrome of traumatic injury of ocular vessel: a pattern/syndrome marked by swollen and painful eyelid dark purple in color,
or the white of the eyes turning into red or dark purple, or pain of the eyes with fundus bleeding. In TCM, 外伤目络证 is caused by injury of ocular collaterals due to trauma. In this term, the Chinese character 络 refers to the branches of meridians, which is usually translated as “collateral” rather than “vessel”. Thus it is better to translate 络 as “ocular collateral” instead of “ocular vessel”. Of course “collateral” can also be understood as the branches of vessels. However, traditionally TCM pays much more attention to meridians than vessels.

虫积化疳证 pattern/syndrome of worm accumulation transforming into malnutrition: a pattern/syndrome that arises when intestinal parasites deprive the eyes of nourishment, and that manifests in impaired vision, night blindness, dryness of the eyes and photophobia.

In TCM, 虫积化疳证 is caused by consumption of nutrient qi by roundworms, resulting in deficiency of qi and blood that fail to nourish the eyes. The Chinese concept 疳, also known as 疳积, refers to a severe case of infantile malnutrition due to deficiency of the spleen and lung, manifested as pale complexion, hectic fever, flushed cheeks in the afternoon, lassitude, dry cough or sore-throat, night sweating, etc. The cause, pathogenesis and clinical manifestations of 疳积 are complicated and difficult to be accurately translated into English. In the early period, 疳积 was often liberally translated as “infantile malnutrition complicated by tuberculosis” because it often occurs in babies. Later on it was gradually shortened as “infantile malnutrition”. In the West, some translators transliterated 疳积 as “gan”, a new trial indeed.

肝火燔耳证 pattern/syndrome of liver fire blazing the ear: a pattern/syndrome marked by painful distension in the ears, congestion or perforation of tympanic membrane, or discharge of pus and blood from the meatus, associated with tinnitus, dizziness, bitter taste in the mouth, reddened face and eyes, vexation, irascibility, reddened tongue with yellow coating and rapid string-like pulse.

In TCM, 肝火燔耳证 is caused by interior superabundance of liver fire that runs upwards to scorch the ears. In this term, the Chinese character 燔 literally means “burn” or “scorch”. In the WPRO Standard\(^1\), 燔 is translated as “blaze”, sounds more vivid than “burn” and “scorch”. In the definition, the expression “painful distension in the ears” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 耳内胀痛 which literally means distending pain in the ears or distension and pain in the ears. In the phrase 脓肿, 肿, which means distending, modifies 痛, which means pain. The word “vexation” may be the translation of the Chinese expression 心烦 which is sometimes also translated as “dysphoria”.

风热犯耳证 pattern/syndrome of wind-heat invading the ear: a pattern/syndrome marked by distension and obstruction in the ear, congestion of the tympanic membrane or a feeling of pressure in the ear, associated with tinnitus, headache, fever with slight aversion to wind and cold, thin yellow tongue coating and rapid floating pulse.

In TCM, 风热犯耳证 is caused by invasion of exogenous pathogenic wind and heat that stagnate in the ears. In the definition, the phrase “distension and obstruction in the ears” seems to be a combined translation of two Chinese terms 风热耳聋, which literally means obstruction and stagnation in the ears, and 耳内胀痛 which literally means distension and oppression in the ears.

湿热犯耳证 pattern/syndrome of dampness-heat invading the ear: a pattern/syndrome marked by redness, swelling, pain, erosion, exudation, incrustation of the meatus or auricle, or discharge of thick yellow pus from the ears, or distension of the ears with tinnitus, yellow slimy tongue coating and rapid slippery pulse.

In TCM, 湿热犯耳证 is caused by invasion of pathogenic dampness-heat into the ears. In the definition, the translation of the related Chinese terms and expression are quite equivalent to the original ones. For instance, “redness, swelling, pain, erosion, exudation, incrustation of the meatus or auricle” are almost identical with 耳道或耳廓红肿疼痛, 肿胀, 流液, 结痂 in Chinese. The word “slimy” in the definition is obviously the translation of the Chinese character 脓 which is also frequently translated as “greasy”. Comparatively speaking “slimy” seems better than “greasy” in revealing the meaning of the original Chinese character.

痰湿犯耳证 pattern/syndrome of phlegm-dampness attacking the ear: a pattern/syndrome marked by distension and pressure in the ears associated with dizziness, tinnitus, heaviness of the head and nausea; or thin purulent discharge from the ears, impaired hearing and visible fluid horizon through the drum membrane, slippery slimy tongue coating and string-like slippery pulse.

In the previous terms, such as 肝火燔耳证, 疳
In the definition, the expression “thin clear secretion” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 清鼻涕 which is also frequently translated as “thin snivel” or “thin nasal discharge”.

风热犯鼻证 pattern/syndrome of wind-heat invading the nose: a pattern/syndrome marked by nasal obstruction and discharge, swollen nasal conchae and congested mucous membrane with thick secretion, impairment of the sense of smell, associated with fever and slight aversion to wind and cold, thin yellow tongue coating and floating rapid pulse.

In TCM, 风寒犯鼻证 is caused by the invasion of pathogenic wind and heat into the nose. In the definition, the expression “nasal obstruction and discharge” seems to be the translation of the Chinese term 鼻塞流感 which means nasal obstruction with snivel discharge. The expression “impairment of the sense of smell” is certainly the translation of the Chinese term 嗅觉减退 which is equivalent to hyposmia in modern medicine.

气虚耳窍失充证 pattern/syndrome of qi deficiency with hearing loss: a pattern/syndrome attributed to weakened healthy qi with the clear yang qi failing in ascending, and marked by tinnitus like the sound of cicadas, impairment of hearing, associated with dizziness, lack of strength, shortness of breath, reluctance to speak, pale tongue and weak pulse, the same as the pattern/syndrome of hearing loss due to qi deficiency.

In 气虚耳窍失充证, the Chinese expression 失充 means lack of sufficient nourishment, not hearing loss. In Chinese language 失聪 (loss of hearing) and 失充 (lack of nourishment) appear similar to each other in pronunciation, but different in meaning. In the definition, the expression “reluctance to speak” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 懒言 which is also frequently translated as “no desire to speak”. Comparatively speaking, “reluctance to speak” sounds much better than “no desire to speak” in structure and rhetoric.

风寒犯鼻证 pattern/syndrome of wind-cold invading the nose: a pattern/syndrome marked by stuffy runny nose or nasal itching with sneezing, pale mucous membrane of the nose with thin clear secretion, associated with aversion to wind and cold, thin white tongue coating and floating tight pulse.

The so-called 风寒犯鼻证 may refer to 风寒袭鼻证 (pattern/syndrome of wind-cold assailing the nose) in TCM which is caused by the invasion of pathogenic wind and cold into the nose. The common clinical manifestations still include swollen nasal turbinates. In the definition, the expression “thin clear secretion” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 清鼻涕 which is also frequently translated as “thin snivel” or “thin nasal discharge”.

风寒袭喉证 pattern/syndrome of wind-cold assailing the throat: a pattern/syndrome marked by painful, itchy and slightly swollen throat dark red in color associated with hoarseness, fever, aversion to cold, absence of sweat, stuffy nose and floating tight pulse.

The Chinese character 腹 in 风寒袭喉证 is also
quite frequently translated as “attack” or “invade” in the current translation practice, making it difficult to differentiate the Chinese concepts of 攻 (attack), 克 (invade) and 击 (assail). However, in the WPRO Standard\(^1\), these three concepts are translated separately as noted in the above.

风热侵喉证 pattern/syndrome of wind-heat invading the throat: a pattern/syndrome marked by painful swollen throat or enlarged congested tonsils, with discomfort in swallowing and hoarseness of voice, fever, slight aversion to wind and cold, mild thirst, thin yellow tongue coating and rapid floating pulse

In 风热侵喉证, the Chinese character 侵 is quite similar to 袭 as in 风寒袭肺证. In the WPRO Standard\(^1\), the Chinese character 侵 is usually translated as “injure”. But in 风热侵喉证, 侵 is translated as “invade”, not only failing to keep a consistency, but also creating certain confusion with the translation of 克.

毒热攻喉证 pattern/syndrome of toxic heat attacking the throat: a pattern/syndrome marked by redness, swelling and pain of the throat with difficulty in swallowing or even ulceration and suppuration with fetid mouth odor, intense fever, thirst, reddened tongue with yellow coating and rapid forceful pulse

The Chinese concept 毒 is traditionally translated as “toxin” which has almost become the standard translation of 毒. However, in the translation of the related term, 毒 is usually translated according to the terms in question, not always rendered as “toxin”. In the dictionary of A Concise Dictionary of Traditional Chinese Medicine\(^1\), for instance, 毒攻黄仁 is translated as “infectious iridocyclitis” and 毒痢 is translated as “fulminant dysentery” because they are equivalent to infectious iridocyclitis and fulminant dysentery respectively in modern medicine.

气滞痰凝咽证 pattern/syndrome of qi stagnating and phlegm congealing in the throat: a pattern/syndrome marked by depressed mood, discomfort sensation of a foreign body present in the throat, swelling of the pharyngeal mucous membrane, slimy tongue coating and string-like slippery pulse

The so-called 气滞痰凝咽证 is a pattern/syndrome of phlegm congealing in the throat due to qi stagnation. In this pattern/syndrome, 气滞 (qi stagnation) is the cause of 痰凝 (phlegm congealing). So the proper translation of this term should be “pattern/syndrome of phlegm congealing in the throat due to qi stagnation” or “pattern/syndrome of qi stagnation with phlegm congealing in the throat”.

胃火牌证 pattern/syndrome of stomach fire blazing the gums: a pattern/syndrome marked by red, swollen and painful gums with exudation of blood and pus between the teeth, thirst, fetid mouth odor, constipation, reddened tongue with yellow coating and rapid pulse

As mentioned above, to translate the Chinese character 燃 as “blaze” in 胃火牌证 is quite expressive, though it is also frequently translated as “burn” or “scorch”. In the definition of this term, “fetid mouth odor” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 口臭 or 口气臭秽 which is also frequently translated as “foul breath”.

湿热蒸齿证 pattern/syndrome of dampness-heat steaming the teeth: a pattern/syndrome marked by toothache or dental caries with pain aggravated by heat, sweetness and sourness, or red swollen gums, fetid mouth odor, reddened tongue with yellow slimy coating and rapid slippery pulse

In TCM, 湿热蒸齿证 is caused by interior accumulation of dampness and heat that fumigates and steams the teeth. In this term, the Chinese character 蒸 literally means steaming, traditionally used to describe the scorching and fumigating effects of dampness-heat upon certain part of the body. In the definition, if “sweetness and sourness” is changed into “sweetness and sourness in the mouth”, it may sound clearer.

虚火灼龈证 pattern/syndrome of deficiency fire scorching the gums: a pattern/syndrome marked by dried and atrophied gums with exposure of the dental roots, looseness of the teeth with dull pain, associated with vexing heat in the chest, palms and soles, flushed cheeks, reddened tongue with little moisture and rapid fine pulse

In TCM, 虚火灼龈证 is caused by deficiency of yin fluid that fails to nourish the gum and deficiency-fire that scorches the gum. In TCM, 虚火 refers to the fire caused by deficiency of yin. It does not mean that the fire itself is deficiency. To make the meaning clearer, it seems necessary to use a hyphen to connect deficiency and fire. In the definition, “exposure of dental roots” is obviously the translation of the Chinese term 齿根宣露 which is sometimes simply translated as “gingival atrophy”. Comparatively speaking, “exposure of dental roots” seems more expressive and appears quite equivalent to the original term. Still in the definition, “vexing heat in the chest, palms and
soles” is certainly the translation of the Chinese term 五心烦热 which is also frequently translated as “feverish sensation over five centers”. In TCM, 五心 literally means five centers, referring to the chest, two palms and two soles.

阴虚咽喉失润证 pattern/syndrome of yin deficiency with dryness of the throat: a pattern/syndrome marked by a scorching feeling in the throat with itching, mild pain and hoarseness, or sensation of presence of a foreign body in the throat, dry and slightly reddened pharynx or local ulceration, reddened tongue with little moisture and rapid fine pulse.

In TCM, 阴虚咽喉失润证 is caused by deficiency of yin fluid that fails to nourish the throat. In this term, the Chinese expression 失润 means lack of necessary moisture. That is to say 阴虚 (yin deficiency) has deprived 咽喉 (throat) of necessary moisture. So the proper translation of this term might be “pattern/syndrome of yin deficiency with scanty moisture in the throat”.

毒火攻唇证 pattern/syndrome of toxic fire attacking the lips: a pattern/syndrome marked by red swollen lips with severe pain or local ulceration with discharge of fetid pus, intense fever, thirst, reddened tongue with yellow coating and rapid pulse.

The so-called 毒火攻唇证 is caused by superabundant fire toxin that scorches the mouth and lips. In the definition, “intense fever” may refer to high fever. In the current translation of TCM, the English word “intense” is usually used to modify “fire” rather than “fever”.

湿热蒸口证 pattern/syndrome of dampness-heat steaming the mouth: a pattern/syndrome marked by redness, swelling and pain of the mucous membrane of the mouth, or ulceration in the oral cavity with discharge of fetid pus, or reddened, swollen and ulcerated lip with inflamed angular rhagades, reddened tongue with yellow slimy coating and rapid soggy pulse.

The so-called 湿热蒸口证 in TCM is caused by interior accumulation of dampness and heat that fumigate the mouth and lips. The common clinical manifestations also include erosion of sarcolemma and spreading impetigo. In this definition, “inflamed angular rhagades” seems to be the translation of the Chinese term 口角红赤皴裂 (redness and rhagades of the mouth corner), looking concise and self-evident. The expression “rapid soggy pulse” seems to be the translation of the Chinese term 脉濡数. Literally the Chinese character 濡 in 脉濡数 means something like dampness or wetness, indicating that the pulse is superficial, weak and small. This kind of pulse is easily to be felt when lightly touched but may disappear when pressed hard. In an ancient classic entitled Canon of Pulse (《脉经》), it says that “濡 means easiness to feel the pulse which appears as light and floating as a sheet of silk in water”.

湿热蒸舌证 pattern/syndrome of dampness-heat steaming the tongue: a pattern/syndrome marked by a reddened, swollen and painful tongue, even with festering ulceration and yellow slimy tongue coating.

The so-called 湿热蒸舌证 is caused by interior accumulation of dampness and heat that fumigate the body of the tongue. The common clinical manifestations still include soggy and rapid pulse.

热毒攻舌证 pattern/syndrome of heat toxin attacking the tongue: a pattern/syndrome marked by redness, swelling and pain of the tongue or a part of the tongue with impaired lingual movement, fever, thirst and rapid forceful pulse.

The so-called 热毒攻舌证 is caused by superabundant fire and heat toxin that attacks the body of the tongue. The common clinical manifestations still include protrusion and pain of certain part of the tongue. In the definition, “impaired lingual movement” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 舌体活动不灵 (inflexibility of the tongue in movement) which is also translated as “difficulty of the tongue in movement”.

血瘀舌下证 sublingual blood stasis pattern/syndrome: a pattern/syndrome marked by the development of a sublingual dark purple mass, purple tongue or purple spots on the tongue, and impaired motility of the tongue.

In TCM, 血瘀舌下证 is usually caused by blood stasis congealing below the tongue. It is also frequently translated as “pattern/syndrome of blood stasis below the tongue”. Comparatively speaking, “sublingual blood stasis pattern/syndrome” seems more concise. In the definition, “impaired motility of the tongue” seems to be the translation of the Chinese expression 舌体运动不灵 (inflexibility of the tongue in movement) which is also translated as “difficulty of the tongue in movement”. In the WPRO Standard[41], 舌体运动不灵 is sometimes translated as “impaired lingual movement”, sometimes as “impaired motility of the tongue”, seeming still in need of consistency.
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