

Translanguaging as a Method in Literary Works: A Case Study of the Chinese Literary Work *Food Is Heaven*

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Abstract—*Food Is Heaven*, written by Ge Liang (2022), has achieved phenomenal success since its publication. The innovative use of vernacular and classical Chinese, vivid narration of food, and multilingual interactions among characters have introduced readers to translanguaging aesthetics. Translanguaging, as a methodological and theoretical framework of language communication and human cognition (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2018, 2022a), is regarded as a literary device in *Food Is Heaven*. The lens of translanguaging emphasizes multisensory, multimodal, multisemiotic, and multilingual communication, fostering creative and critical approaches to meaning-making by transcending the boundaries of semiotic and linguistic divides. Literary works, serving as imaginative reflections of daily practices, bridge the gap between reality and imagination, embracing creative and aesthetic narrations in their meaning-making. However, few studies have explored literary works in light of translanguaging. This article aims to explore how translanguaging is employed as a literary device through a case study of the phenomenal Chinese book *Food Is Heaven*, written by Ge Liang (2022). Through the lens of translanguaging, we examine the creativity and criticality of the writer's innovative language philosophy, exploring how translanguaging is employed to break linguistic and semiotic boundaries, offering readers an embodied reading experience.

Index Terms—translanguaging, creativity and criticality, *Food Is Heaven*, literary device, language philosophy

I. INTRODUCTION

Food Is Heaven, the latest novel by Ge Liang, was published in 2022 by People's Literature Publishing House. Since its publication, the book has garnered overwhelming praise from literary reviewers, who have described it as “The Evolutionary History of Lingnan Cuisine (岭南饮食流变史)” and “The Spiritual Journey of Chinese People (中国人的精神旅途史).” These comments reveal, to some extent, the writer's continuous commitment to imaginative and innovative writings, aimed at exploring literary meanings for its readership.

Born in 1978, Ge Liang dedicated his twenties to literary writing, earning recognition as one of the most promising writers in contemporary Chinese literature. He has received numerous awards, including the Lu Xun Literary Prize, one of the most prestigious literary awards in China, which he was awarded for his work *Hair Cutting* (2020) in 2022. Additionally, his works have been translated into English, French, Italian, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and other languages. Ge is well known for his prolific output in novel writing and has three published novels: *Scarlet Finch* (2009), *Paper Hawk* (2016), and *Food Is Heaven* (2022). His works also include short stories such as *Hair Cutting* (2020), *Enigma* (2006), *Raccoon* (2013), and *Year of Drama* (2012) as well as collections of essays such as *Reflection of the World* (2016) and *Pears and Dates* (2023).

Ge's works value situated scenes, innovative writing techniques, elegant narration, and precision of language (*Scarlet Finch*, 2009; *Year of Drama*, 2012). As a master of language, he excels at evoking a subtle sense of beauty through refined language (*Scarlet Finch*, 2010; *Paper Hawk*, 2016). Throughout his writing career, Ge has developed his own language philosophy, emphasizing that language is not merely a tool for conveying the story, but an essential part of the narrative itself (*Paper Hawk*, 2016; *Hair Cutting*, 2020; *Tile Cat*, 2021). In other words, the manner in which he used language in his novels is not solely a matter of style but extends beyond its linguistic dimension in pursuit of underlying beliefs about humanity, rendering the stories more meaningful to their readership. This language philosophy shapes his literary creations and has an overall impact on his work.

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Food Is Heaven (2022) is a novel that focuses on the theme of food, offering a portrayal of China's modern history through the rise and fall of several families. This novel demonstrates the writer's conscious pursuit of his language philosophy in literary narration. For this purpose, Ge dedicated several years to conducting documentary research to uncover the "hidden history" of languages and weave historical materials into the experiences of the main characters in situated scenes. He highlighted translanguaging practices in daily life, such as the situated usage of dialects (e.g., Cantonese, Wu, and Northeastern Chinese), mixed usage of vernacular and classical Chinese, and creative employment of professional jargon and slang associated with food. The sophisticated and diversified translanguaging practices serve as evocative and abundant examples for the analysis of his language philosophy presented in this article.

II. TRANSLANGUAGING AS A LITERARY DEVICE

Translanguaging theory, rooted in foreign language acquisition and education, has promoted the active use of multiple languages and all other meaningful resources in applied linguistics and critical discourse studies (Li, 2011a, 2011b, 2018, 2022a). Driven by Li and others, the translanguaging theory has gradually evolved into a practical and influential linguistic communication and cognition theory. Over the past two decades, it has been applied as a literary device to a wide range of lived realities in the humanities, social sciences, and beyond (Li & Shen, 2021), including bi-/multilingualism (Garcia & Li, 2014, 2022), visual art (Lee, 2015), translation and interpreting (Baynham & Lee, 2019; Han et al., 2023; Runcieman, 2021), language policy and planning (Zhu & Li, 2016; Pennycook, 2016; Han & Yang, 2022; Li, 2022b; Wen et al., 2022), daily life (Mazzaferro, 2018), and literature (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016).

In their task-based research, Ebe and Chapman-Santiago (2016) employed translanguaging as a literary device (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 57) and regarded it as a "legitimate form of communication" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 73) through which the effects of home-school cultural connections are achieved, contributing significant communicative meanings and pedagogical implications. As a literary device, translanguaging has achieved its meaning-making through translanguaging practices in literary creation by valuing all available resources beyond language. The translanguaging approach achieves meaning-making by subtly combining the characters' various communication modes (verbal, visual, gestural, and embodied) to convey abstract and intangible emotions and feelings. However, the boundary-breaking perspective of translanguaging also enriches the readers' sense of experience by shifting their attention from purely verbal content to the imagery of facial expressions, body gestures, or inner activities of characters, thereby enabling a richness of meaning and a variety of integrated experiences (Li, 2022a, p. 2). Therefore, in literary narration, multilingual practices foster a "sense of connectedness" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 66) among the writer, the text, and the readership, achieving a "legitimate form of communication" (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 73). In return, this literary achievement is best captured and inspired by creativity and criticality, as Li Wei has unequivocally stated:

[C]reativity can be defined as the ability to choose between following and flouting the rules and norms of behavior, including the use of language. It is about pushing and breaking the boundaries between the old and the new, the conventional and the original, and the acceptable and the challenging. Criticality refers to the ability to use available evidence appropriately, systematically, and insightfully to inform considered views of cultural, social, political, and linguistic phenomena, to question and problematize received wisdom, and to express views adequately through reasoned responses to situations. (Li, 2011a, p. 1223)

The creative and critical perspective of translanguaging also provides a new conceptual framework that promotes literary innovation: innovation beyond language as abstract codes to meaning- and sense-making; combination of a wider range of multisemiotic resources to offer original and dimensional views of "cultural, social, political, and linguistic phenomena"; and employment of translanguaging as a literary device.

III. TRANSLANGUAGING IN FOOD IS HEAVEN

Employed as a literary device, translanguaging is highlighted in the novel *Food Is Heaven*. Through innovative language use, Ge further develops his language philosophy to present a vivid multilingual, multisemiotic, and multisensory world of food: he manages to present the characters' emotions and feelings through their situated translanguaging practices in different contexts; he succeeds in restoring the translanguaging usage of classical and vernacular Chinese to reflect historical complexity; and he uses food as a linguistic metaphor to explore the fusion of cultures. The following examples illustrate Ge's language philosophy and his innovative employment of translanguaging as a literary device.

A. *Situated Translanguaging Practices of Characters in Different Contexts*

In *Food Is Heaven*, one notable linguistic phenomenon is the prevalence of paraphrased dialogues, where vernacular Chinese is predominantly used. The vernacular Chinese, embedded in the Mandarin narration, reveals the characters' cultural backgrounds and highlights an immersive experience. Consider the following two examples.

TABLE 1
EXAMPLE 1

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 216)	慧生瞧着话头不对，忙将灶上的汤圆端过来，摆在桌上，大声说，来来， <u>食啲暖笠笠嘅嘢！</u> 屋里的空气便真的暖起来。招呼了师娘，慧生给三个小的，都盛得满满的，笑盈盈地说， <u>后生仔，食多啲，团团圆圆。</u>
English translation for reference	Noticing that the conversation was getting depressing, Huisheng quickly picked up the sweet dumplings from the stove and placed them on the table, saying loudly, “Come on, <u>sik di nyun lap lap ge je (let’s have some warm and delicious food)!</u> ” The air inside the room really warmed up. After Mrs. Zhou joined them, Huisheng filled up the bowls of the three children until they were full and said with a smile, “ <u>hau saang zai, sik do di, tyun tyun jyun jyun. (Young ones, eat more and be happy together.)</u> ”

In Example 1, the protagonist, Huisheng, is hosting Mrs. Zhou and her sons at home for the winter solstice. The entire narration is structured in Mandarin but incorporates several of Huisheng’s interventions in Cantonese. Born in Foshan, Huisheng grew up in Guangzhou and can speak authentic Cantonese. The person Huisheng is conversing with is Mrs. Zhou, the landlady, who is from Zhanjiang in western Guangdong and speaks the local language of Lianjiang. Although they both speak Cantonese, there is a difference in accent; hence, their conversations are typically conducted in Mandarin. In the dialogue, when the conversation unexpectedly shifts to the tragic death of Mrs. Zhou’s husband, Huisheng attempts to change the topic. He then offers the sweet dumplings to alleviate the somber atmosphere, and Mrs. Zhou’s language shifts to Cantonese. In this example, “食啲暖笠笠嘅嘢 (sik di nyun lap lap ge je; let’s have some warm and delicious food)” is a typical Cantonese expression conveying the sensation of warmth and comfort. Such warmth and comfort bring the characters back from memory to reality. Later, Huisheng continues in Cantonese “后生仔，食多啲，团团圆圆 (hau saang zai, sik do di, tyun tyun jyun jyun; Young ones, eat more and be happy together),” which contributes to dispelling the chilly dampness and creating a cozy haven in a cold world. Huisheng’s situated translanguaging succeeds in redirecting the conversation, reinstating the warmth, closeness, and protectiveness of homeland dialects, and effectively transmitting the involved characters’ emotions and feelings.

TABLE 2
EXAMPLE 2

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 424)	司马一拍他肩膀，你知道我是哪的人。白山黑水，老东北那疙瘩来的。我爱吃什么， <u>“棒打獐子瓢舀鱼，野鸡落到饭锅里”</u> ，啥好东西不是一锅烩。大碗喝酒，大块儿吃肉。来香港这么多年，吃啥都觉得淡了吧唧的，荤菜没个荤味儿。可到你这，不道咋的， <u>味儿老厚了。</u> 你这个红烧肉啊，带劲！咋说？叫个“人间至味”。你这个肉，不道咋整的， <u>好吃得敞亮。</u>
English translation for reference	Sima slapped his (Wu Ju) shoulder and said, “You know where I’m from. I’m from the Northeast. Changbai Mountain and Heilongjiang River are located there. What do I love to eat? Stews, because in a single pot you may find all sorts of rare and wild delicacies.” Anything delicious can be cooked in one pot. I like to drink in big bowls and eat meat in big chunks. After living in Hong Kong for so many years, I <u>find everything tasteless</u> , with no meaty flavor in the dishes. But when I come to your place, <u>the taste is so rich</u> that I can’t believe it’s just Shanghai cuisine. Your braised pork is amazing! How should I describe it? It’s like “the ultimate flavor of this world.” I’ve tried Dongpo pork in Hangzhou, but compared to this, I’m not interested. I don’t know how you made this meat so delicious that <u>it brightens up my eyes.</u>

In Example 2, we focus on a scene featuring Sima, a native of northeast China and a frequent diner at the “Eighteen Hang” restaurant in Wan Chai, Hong Kong. In his daily interactions, he typically converses with the restaurant owner in Mandarin, occasionally interspersing his speech with broken Cantonese as he adapts to local life. However, under the influence of alcohol, he loses control of his language, and his heavy native accent emerges. He begins with a Northeastern saying that depicts the local people’s hospitality and the abundance of food: “棒打獐子瓢舀鱼，野鸡落到饭锅里 (Pinyin: bàng dǎ zhāng zǐ piáo yǎo yú, yě jī luò dào fàn guō lǐ; English: In a single pot of stew, you may find all sorts of rare and wild delicacies).” With this unconscious shift in dialect, Sima compares the flavors of the Cantonese cuisine in Hong Kong (吃啥都觉得淡了吧唧的; Pinyin: chī shá dōu jué dé dàn le ba jī de; English: I find everything tasteless) with those of “Eighteen Hang” – dishes prepared in the Shanghai style (味儿老厚了; Pinyin: wèi ér lǎo hòu le; English: the taste is so rich). These northeastern expressions, laden with heavy accents, not only reflect the straightforward and humorous nature of the northeasterners but also enable readers to partake in the vivid sensory experience. Translanguaging, as a literary device, contributes to evoking Sima’s memory, past experiences, and subconscious yearning for his roots, thus depicting the multidimensional personality of the character.

It is worth noting that the phrase “好吃得敞亮 (Pinyin: hǎo chī dé chǎng liàng; English: so delicious that it brightens up my eyes)” is a rhetorical use of synesthesia. By associating and combining experiences from various senses, a unique sensory experience is crafted, rendering the language more vivid, imaginative, and effective in conveying emotions and messages. In this example, by combining the senses of taste (rich) and sight (brightened), a sensory experience is created where taste and sight become intertwined. In this sense, synesthesia is regarded as a creative application of translanguaging that transcends the limitations of monolingual expression and creates a “sense of connectedness” (Ebe & Chapman-Santiago, 2016, p. 66) among the author, the text, and the readership, enriching the reading experience and facilitating a deeper understanding of the story’s setting and characters’ identities.

B. Mixed Usage of Classical and Vernacular Chinese

Another linguistic feature of *Food Is Heaven* is its mixed usage of classical and vernacular Chinese. As the story extends from the late Qing Dynasty to the reform and opening up of China, with a span of nearly a century, both the old and new language systems of China undergo dynamic changes and interactions. To depict the historical characteristics of this era, the author innovatively employs the method of translanguaging to restore historical reality in his narrative. From this perspective, we have selected the following two examples for analysis.

TABLE 3
EXAMPLE 3

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 090)	广州四大酒家每年制作之菊花五蛇羹，系用巨资，聘请向霞公太史之厨师传授制法，久已驰名遐迹。自分设楠园、大三源、闻园各酒家来港，每年于秋末冬初，三蛇已肥之际，必依法烹制应市，近已出世，曾尝试者，莫不交口称赞，并运到大帮南雄新鲜北菇，香味异常浓厚，每日又有竹丝鸡烩山瑞，均为应时补品，好者幸勿失之交臂，是幸。
English translation for reference	The four famous restaurants in Guangzhou produce Chrysanthemum and Five-Snake Soup every year, which is made with investments and by hiring chefs from the Taishi Family. It has been famous for a long time. Since Nan Yuan, Da San Yuan, and Wen Yuan restaurants came to Hong Kong, they have followed the traditional recipe to cook and sell the soup during late autumn and early winter when the snakes are fat. <u>It has gained great popularity and praise from those who have tried it. In addition, the fresh mushroom is transported from Nanxiong to Dabang, where they are used to make a soup with an exceptionally rich and delicious flavor.</u> There is also a <u>daily nutritional supplement</u> of bamboo and chicken soup with mountain delicacies. The diners who have tasted these delicacies <u>are fortunate.</u>

Example 3 presents an advertisement from the 1929 Hong Kong newspaper *Wah Sing Daily*. The linguistic features of the advertisement illustrate a transition from classical Chinese to vernacular Chinese, highlighting the linguistic milieu and cultural atmosphere of Hong Kong society during that period. In this example, the syntactical structure bears clear marks of classical Chinese influence, which stimulates a sense of the past. For instance, the two characters “是幸” (Pinyin: shì xìng; English: are fortunate)” together constitute a typical subject-predictive structure of classical Chinese. However, the lexical expressions lean more towards vernacular Chinese, featuring easily comprehensible phrases such as “交口称赞” (Pinyin: jiāo kǒu chēng zàn; English: It has gained tremendous popularity and praise from those who have tried it)” and “应时补品” (Pinyin: yìng shí bǔ pǐn; English: a daily nutritional supplement).” The text also employs more colloquial expressions, such as “并运到大帮南雄新鲜北菇，香味异常浓厚” (Pinyin: bìng yùn dào dà bāng nán xióng xīn xiān běi gū, xiāng wèi yì cháng nóng hòu; English: the fresh mushroom is transported from Nanxiong to Dabang, where they are used to make a soup with a vibrant and delicious flavor).” Notably, the integration of classical and vernacular Chinese in the text does not occur randomly, but rather as a deliberate strategy employed by the author to restore the unique linguistic phenomenon of the historical era. This literary device of translanguaging enables the readership to travel back and immerse themselves in the cultural and social milieu of the era.

TABLE 4
EXAMPLE 4

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 069)	下面几行，印纸页被蠹虫蛀了，只字片语，无法成文。跳过若干行去，才看到这么一句话：“ <u>然熔金煮玉，以富贵之名，得至清之意。弦断听音者，几希。</u> ” 这道叫作“熔金煮玉”的菜上来时，陈赫明正对着面前的“傍林鲜”，发着呆。在似是而非的珍宴之后，他几乎失去了最初的兴味与好奇。 <u>曲径通幽，清斋冷第后，窗亦垂幔，到最后也不过是满室珠翠旖旎情形。</u>
English translation for reference	The following lines were eaten away by bookworms, and only fragments of words remained, making it impossible to read. Skipping several lines, I finally came across this sentence: “ <u>Although the dish name sounds extravagant – ‘boiling gold and jade together’ – in reality, its true essence lies not in opulence, but in the pursuit of ultimate purity and clarity. Those who grasp its essence are as scarce as those who can perceive the sound from a broken string.</u> ” As the dish called “Melting Gold and Boiling Jade” was served, Chen Hemin was staring blankly at the “Banglin Fresh” dish in front of him. After the seemingly exotic feast, he had lost much of his initial interest and curiosity. Despite the <u>winding paths and secluded gardens</u> , even <u>the cold and quiet chambers</u> , and <u>the windows covered with curtains</u> , the final result was no more than a room filled with glittering jewels and pearls.

In Example 4, the author continues to use the method of translanguaging to enrich his narrative. In addition to portraying the impossible love between the nun Yue Fu and the young general Chen Hemin, the example focuses on a dish prepared by Yue Fu for her lover. The dish refers to a porridge made of finesse rice, water, and bamboo shoots which is symbolically named “熔金煮玉” (Pinyin: róng jīn zhǔ yù; English: melting gold and boiling jade).” Its deeper meaning is derived from the poetic verses in which it is embedded: “然熔金煮玉，以富贵之名，得至清之意。弦断听音者，几希” (Pinyin: rán róng jīn zhǔ yù, yǐ fù guì zhī míng, dé zhì qīng zhī yì, xián duàn tīng yīn zhě, jǐ xī; English: Although the dish name sounds extravagant – ‘boiling gold and jade together’ – in reality, its true essence lies not in opulence, but in the pursuit of ultimate purity and clarity. Those who grasp its essence are as scarce as those who can perceive the sound from a broken string).” As such, the poetic expression “熔金煮玉” is imbued with a sense of solemnity, loyalty, and commitment against all odds. After the poetic verses in classical Chinese, the author reverts to

vernacular Chinese when describing the young general's mental activities. Nevertheless, classical aesthetics can be observed frequently throughout the narrative through the use of several four-character expressions, such as “曲径通幽 (Pinyin: qū jìng tōng yōu; English: winding paths and secluded gardens),” “清斋冷第 (Pinyin: qīng zhāi lěng dì; English: the cold and quiet chambers),” and “窗亦垂幔 (Pinyin: chuāng yì chuí màn; English: the windows covered with curtains).” The embedded usage reflects the author's creative language philosophy, incorporating diverse linguistic elements as part of his unitary “language repertoire” (Li & García, 2022, p. 2) in translanguaging practice.

C. Translanguaging Practice Within the Theme of Food

In *Food Is Heaven*, the author also dedicates significant attention to describing the preparation and consumption of delectable food, emphasizing cuisine as a cultural element and fostering sensory satisfaction through language. By using culinary jargon from various regions, the author integrates linguistic and cultural elements into the narrative surrounding food, offering a new perspective on its expression and perception as a symbolic and metaphoric device/construct of social identity. With this in mind, we proceed to the analysis of two specific examples.

TABLE 5
EXAMPLE 5

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 483)	看露露，利利索索地给豆芽焯水，切洋葱、生姜、黄姜、南姜、大蒜成末，入锅上油，炒香。一边厢将叻沙叶、香茅煮水。油锅里头，放入峇拉煎炒化，再入咖喱粉、叻沙粉翻炒，下香茅水，直熬到锅里泛起红棕。一面搅拌，一面慢慢倒入椰浆、生奶。
English translation for reference	Watching Lulu, she blanched the bean sprouts, chopped the onions, ginger, turmeric, galangal, and garlic into small pieces, and stir-fried them with oil until fragrant. Meanwhile, she boiled the laksa leaves and citronella in water. In the oil pan, she added the belacan and stir-fried it until it dissolved, then added curry powder and laksa powder and stir-fried them. Next, she poured in the citronella water and simmered it until the mixture turned reddish-brown. While stirring, she slowly poured in the coconut milk and fresh milk.

In Example 5, Lulu, a Singaporean girl, presents her culinary talents at the Shanghainese restaurant in Hong Kong. Lulu's localized Southeast Asian cuisine leads to a magnificent fusion of flavors. Her preparation of “峇拉煎” (Pinyin: bā lā jiān; English: belacan) involves a variety of culinary techniques, such as “焯水 (Pinyin: chāo shuǐ; English: blanching),” “煮水 (Pinyin: zhǔ shuǐ; English: boiling),” “翻炒 (Pinyin: fān chǎo; English: stir-frying),” and “熬 (Pinyin: áo; English: simmering).” It is seasoned with ingredients such as “叻沙叶 (Pinyin: lè shā yè; English: laksa leaves),” “香茅 (Pinyin: xiāng máo; English: citronella),” and “椰浆 (Pinyin: yē jiāng; English: coconut milk),” incorporating the distinctive culinary essence of South Asian cuisine.

The sequence of actions depicted creates a cooking scene, evoking the reader's sensory perception of food and eliciting their emotional resonance with food culture. The tongue, serving as a metaphorical vehicle for sensory exploration, embodies the dynamic and interactive cultural fusion in food, echoing the theme of *Food Is Heaven*. Through the device of translanguaging, the author enriches his narrative by incorporating sensory resources such as taste, smell, and visual imagery, thus creating a literary abundance.

TABLE 6
EXAMPLE 6

Original (<i>Food Is Heaven</i> , p. 510)	最后一道呢，是生蚝。粤厨做的是“花胶金蚝焖花菇”，这是功夫菜，算一个十分堂皇的收束。料丰味浓，是一场盛宴的高潮。可五举，却反其道而行之。他将活生蚝，用本帮醉虾醉蟹的办法。用那陈年的花雕醉了，只是撒上少许蒜蓉，便端上了桌。这倒难住了评委。一浓一淡，一丰一简。可一试之下，他们却都将票投给了五举。
English translation for reference	The final dish was raw oysters. The Cantonese chef made “Braised Golden Oysters with Dried Scallop and Mushroom,” a grand and sophisticated dish that was the highlight of the feast. However, Wu Ju took a different approach. He used the method of drunken shrimp and crab from his hometown to prepare the live oysters. He soaked them in aged Shaoxing wine and served them with a touch of garlic. This stumped the judges. The two dishes were vastly different in flavor and complexity. But after trying them, all the judges unanimously voted for Wu Ju.

Taken from the plot of a chef's competition held in Hong Kong, Example 6 showcases a culinary event where restaurants compete to present the finest Chinese cuisine. Wu Ju, an expert in Chinese fusion cuisine, surprises the audience with a dish called “Drunken Oysters,” which incorporates Cantonese cuisine into Shanghai dishes. In this example, instead of being conventionally steamed with chopped garlic in the Cantonese manner, oysters, a type of seafood, are innovatively marinated in yellow wine – “Huadiao” – to become “drunken” and then garnished with garlic powder. Although marinating shrimp and crabs in yellow wine is a customary practice in Shanghai cuisine, Wu Ju combines two culinary languages to creatively transform the dish into a new cultural expression. The narrative transcends the taste itself and evokes a sense of appreciation and enjoyment. Through the lens of translanguaging, the author highlights the transformative power of transcending culinary boundaries, showcasing its dynamic vitality and beyond.

IV. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper examines the use of translanguaging as a literary device in the novel *Food Is Heaven* by Ge Liang. We analyze six examples of translanguaging practices to demonstrate how the author solidifies his innovative language philosophy through the lens of translanguaging. Focusing on the theme of food, the author manages linguistic and semiotic interactions within the text, facilitating the reconciliation of classical and vernacular Chinese and the representation of diverse gastronomic cultures: The characters' emotions and feelings are revealed through their situated translanguaging practices in different contexts; the historical linguistic complexity is restored through translanguaging usage of classical and vernacular Chinese; and the integration of cultures is metaphorically achieved through food fusion. In addition, by transcending the limitations of a monolingual narrative, the author cultivates a multilingual, multisemiotic, and multisensory world, enriching the aesthetic experiences of the readership and offering new possibilities for transformative meaning-making. In doing so, the author highlights the dynamic and fluid nature of communication, emphasizing the importance of creative and critical modes of literary expression. Ultimately, this translanguaging perspective offers a powerful tool for writers to explore and celebrate the rich diversity of the human experience, fostering a more vibrant and inclusive literary landscape.

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