

Introduction: Popular Reception of Multimodal Translation in the Digital Age

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This special issue explores the popular reception of multimodal translation in various forms in the context of global media change and technological advancement. Since the widespread adoption of Web 2.0 in the early 2000s, a broad range of digital media forms, particularly social media, have emerged and profoundly changed our lives. This drastic media change has ushered in the era of “convergence culture,” where old and new media collide, grassroots and corporate media intersect, and information flows across multiple platforms (Jenkins 2006). This convergent environment is characterized by the integration of technologies, industries, media content, and audience participation across platforms. As a result, our physical and intellectual lives are becoming increasingly media-dependent as our reading practice migrates “from page to screen” (Cronin 2013, 1). Our culture has “shift[ed] from the written, published, and paper world to the electronic, posted-online, and visual world” (Gentzler 2015, 81). This media-fostered culture is attended with new forms of literary knowledge generation and dissemination, among which multimodal translation is a revealing example.

In convergence culture, literary knowledge often takes the form of popular narratives disseminated through multimodal translation. Compared with conventional book knowledge, literary knowledge conveyed by multimodal translation is more engaging and suitable for all ages. As a result, more and more people acquire literary knowledge through consuming multimodal translations rather than through reading