A Study of the English Translation of Culture-loaded Words in Chinese Film Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child from the Perspective of Skopos Theory

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Abstract: Culture-loaded words used in film dialogues often cause problems for translators and this is quite true in culture-based Chinese films including animation stories. What difficulties are translators confronted with and how to solve them? This thesis attempts to find answers to these research questions through a case study C-E subtitle translation of culture-loaded words in the film Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child from the perspective of Skopos Theory. This thesis concludes that different translation strategies may be adopted in pursuit of faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance when dealing with different types of cultural terms in dialogues. However, it is highly suggested that some basic principles for film translation should not be neglected for good acceptance by target audience in terms of high quality control. These are mainly expressed in the aspects of colloquialization, personalization, entertainmentization, rhythmization.

1. Introduction

With the continuous improvement of China's comprehensive national strength, China is in its urgent need to promote positive external cultural communication and enhance its international status in terms of culture. As an important media of cultural communication, film is always considered as an important bridge between different languages and cultures. In recent years, with the development of the domestic film industry, more and more Chinese films have been introduced to foreign countries and rendered into different languages. *Nezha*, released in 2019, is a milestone of China's animation film history. Its final box office was 5 billion yuan, which made it the best-selling film of that year. As animation film adapted from Chinese myths, a large number of Chinese traditional cultural elements are integrated into this film, which is highlighted by the use of numerous culture-loaded words. This adds to the difficulty of subtitle translation since the translator not only has the responsibility to make the audience to enjoy the movie, but also need to convey the hidden charm of Chinese culture to his audience. In view of this, it is of great significance to further study the translation of culture-loaded words in *Nezha*.

Although there are many scholars studied *Nezha's* translation of culture-loaded words, most of them just discussed isolated words translation or strategies choosing. They tend to neglect the role

culture-loaded words play in a specific scene and always artificially disconnect culture-loaded words with film features. This thesis focuses on the translation of culture-loaded words under the guidance of skopos theory, mainly discusses the existing difficulties that the translator may encounter, which brought both by different cultural backgrounds and features of films, and tries to put forward some constructive suggestion to it in order to polish the official translation version.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies on Culture-loaded Words

Culture-loaded words are the words, phrases and idioms featuring at a specific culture. Those words express the accumulativeness and uniqueness of the activities in the long historical process of a specific nation[1]. The definition of the exact scope of culture-loaded words has been a controversial topic in academic circle and scholars from different countries.

Nida thinks the solution of translation problems roots in the solution of equivalence in ecology, material culture,social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture. Accordingly, Culture-loaded words can be classified into five categories, namely Culture-loaded words of ecology, material, society, religion and language[2].

In western countries, Spanish translator Javier Ftanco Ixela first combine the concept of culture-loaded words in 1996. In his book *Culture-Specific Items in Translation*, he put forward that culture-loaded words not only depend on themselves, but also on the acceptability of translation readers.

Comparing the contrast of the source language and target language, Mona baker (2000) defined culture-loaded words as the kind of words exist in source language which may not have the corresponding ones in the target language. It can be either specific, or abstract, probably related to religious belief, social customs, or diet culture.

As for the classification of culture-loaded words, scholars have different opinions and classification standards. Academic researchers who take different types of texts as research objects also have certain differences in the classification methods of culture-loaded words. Among them, the most influential and widely used method is to refer to Nida's classification of cultural factors. In his *Exploration of Translation Science* (2004), Nida divides the cultural factors in language into five categories: ecological, material, social, religious and language. [2].

A total of 1411 articles(1998-2021) about culture-loaded words can be found in the database of Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), of which 607 are dissertations and 804 are journal papers. Among all these articles, 613 of them are focusing on the study of its translation strategies, followed by literature translation,which amount to 250, and theoretical combination with other subjects, such as aesthetic and tourism, with a total number of 45.

The themes of these articles mainly contains 4 topics:
1) Translation strategies of culture-loaded words.
2) Culture-loaded words in literature translation.
3) Theoretical combination of culture-loaded words with other subjects.
4) External-publicity oriented translation of cultural-loaded terms.

It's not difficult to draw the conclusion that previous studies and research on culture-loaded words in China are focusing on the translation methodology, literature translation, tourism, aesthetic and external publicity. The translation of culture-loaded words in film subtitle translation gets fewer attention compared with the subjects mentioned above.

2.2 Previous studies on *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*

Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child (Nezha), released on July 26, 2019, successfully exceeded the box office of *wandering earth,* the best-selling film in Chinese film history within two months, became the highest-grossing film with total ticket sales of 5.035 billion yuan according to Maoyan Professional Box Office Ranking. In August 2019, *Nezha* began to hit cinemas in North America and Australia. It has gained $438,000 box office in Australia, which is the fifth highest ticket-sailing movie of that week and created the best record of Chinese-language film in the last 10 years, according to Box Office Mojo.

Nezha, as a major character in Chinese traditional myths, was a "popular hero" figure not only with a mythological cult but also increasingly widespread in popular entertainment since he was first created in the novel The Investiture of the Gods. *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child*, as a new film re-creating Nezha's story from an unprecedented angle, has been viewed as a new study object featuring the new spirit of time by foreign scholars.

Thomas William Whyke examined the idea that *n*arratively and aesthetically mediating between the past and the present, Nezha embodies a "national style" which is on one hand hybrid in its internationality, but also culturally delimited in terms of which cultural heritages are held up as emblematic of the nation[3].

Joaquin Lopez Mugica, on the basis of Whyke's theory, explored the displacement of Nezha's archetypal image from Chinese animated film (1979-2021). He argued that Nezha's displacement and return in Chinese animation expresses the need and call for a traditional heroic image in a particular era.[4].

As can been seen from the context above, previous studies of *Nezha* mainly focus on the characteristic and spirit of Nezha, with a tendency to combine it with China's cultural soft power and spirit of the time.

Compared with scholars in western countries, Chinese scholars created a wider research scope of *Nezha*. A total of 352 articles about *Nezha* can be found in CNKI, and 34 of them are about translation.

Zhang Yanfang (2020) advocated that full consideration should be given to the purpose of subtitle translation in order to improve the quality of translation, so as to achieve the best viewing and the best cultural communication effect.

Under the guidance of Meio-Translatology, Li Mengjie (2020) criticized the subtitle translation of the film for its ignorance the differences between Chinese and Western culture. She concluded that only when we re-establish translators' identities, enhance their dominant position in subtitle translation and cooperate with foreign experts can we make a breakthrough on the march of Chinese film translation.

The overview of the previous study suggests that Chinese scholars generally put the stress on the criticism of former translation versions and the evaluation of its external publicity capacity. This thesis will further explore the specific improving methods and practice them under the guidance of skopos theory.

2.3 Previous Studies on Strategies for Translation of culture-loaded words

Due to cultural differences between countries and regions, the meaning and connotation behind words are also different. Therefore, in the process of subtitle translation, translators should look for appropriate translation strategies to overcome barriers between language and culture. In many cases, translators usually adopt alienation and domestication to bridge the gap between two culture. Alienation aims to preserve the cultural characteristics of the SL in translation, as result of it, the final translation version will always full of exoticism. In that way audience can have similar feeling

with the author, experience his/her social environment and cultural background. Domestication is to make the author adapt to readers' expression habits, make the translation conform to the readers' ideas and customs, and reduce the readers' strangeness to the translation[5].

Zheng (2015) concluded six translation strategies of culture-loaded words: transliteration, transliteration+annotation, literal translation, literal translation+ annotion, transliteration+literal translation, free translation. Considering the subtitle of film has its instantaneity, two strategies featured with annotation can't be put into this category. So in the end, there's ultimately four strategies mainly used in subtitle translation of culture-loaded words, namely transliteration, literal translation, transliteration+literal translation and free translation.

Lu and Qi (2021) studied the C-E translation strategies of culture-loaded words under the guidance of functional equivalence theory. They put forward that the translation strategies of culture-loaded words that are mainly used include literal translation, free translation, transliteration, transference, paraphrase, substitution, extension, omission, literal translation+annotation, transliteration+annotation and transference+annotation. These strategies above should be chosen according to the specific situation in order to convey the rich cultural colors in the source language and ensure that the translation of culture-loaded words conforms to the way audience think. Only in this way can we further promote the spread of Chinese culture.

In *Nezha,* four different translation strategies are mainly used. They're literal translation, transliteration, free translation and omission (Table 1):

Table 1: Frequency of usage of different translation strategies.

Categories	Strategies	Times of being used	Percentage
Ecological culture-loaded words	literal translation	1	20%
	free translation	1	20%
	transliteration	3	60%
	omission	/	/
Material culture-loaded words	literal translation	1	25%
	free translation	1	25%
	transliteration	1	25%
	omission	1	25%
Social culture-loaded words	literal translation	21	41.2%
	free translation	13	25.5%
	transliteration	8	15.6%
	omission	9	17.6%
Religious culture-loaded words	literal translation	6	27.3%
	free translation	11	50%
	transliteration	2	9.1%
	omission	3	13.6%
Linguistic culture-loaded words	literal translation	10	23.2%
	free translation	21	48.8%
	transliteration	/	/
	omission	12	27.9%

From the table above a conclusion can be drawn that although alienation is generally preferred according to the statistics, there still exists some special cases. For example, when translating religious culture-loaded words and linguistic culture-loaded words, domestication is more frequently used, which separately take up 63.6% and 76.7% of translation strategy using frequency.

Although the subtitle translation of *Nezha* adopts flexible translation strategies, the final version is still not satisfying. Western audience commented online that the subtitle of this film is hard to

understand, which made them hardly spare their empathy for the whole story line [6]. Reflecting on this criticism, the author will sort out the difficulties that hinder translation practice in *Nezha* and try to put forward their corresponding solving methods and translation principles, and ultimately to improve the present translation version and to provide some suggestions for later studies.

3. Theoretical Framework & Methodology

3.1 Definition of Skopos Theory

Skopos theory was first put forward by Germany translator Hans Vermeer in the 1970s and now is one of the most influential translation theories in the world. In his book *Skopos and Commission in Translational Action*, Vermeer turned his back on the former mainstream concept that translators should focus on source text. Instead, he put forward that the essence of translation is not language conversion and the purpose of translation should be the most important element in translation.

The development of skopos theory can be roughly divided into three stages, each stage is marked by the different viewpoints of different representatives.

Initially, Katharina Reiss introduced functional categories into translation criticism. She proposed that language function, discourse type and translation strategy are not isolated element, the functional relationship between the original text and the target text is the basis of translation criticism, and the function of the target text should be given priority[7].

Then Hans Vermeer, Reiss's student, formally put forward the skopos theory, emphasizing that translation practice should be guided by the purpose of translation. He also claimed that the "skopos rule" should be the supreme rule of translation, and the translation strategies and methods adopted by translators depend on the purpose of translation[8].

Kristina Nord finally summarized different opinions improved skopos theory. He sorted out various theories of Germany functionalist theories and put forward her own functional model: functionality plus loyalty, in order to refine Vermeer's model. The word functionality, according to Nord, can be explained as: "'function' is used with two different meanings: (1) function = purpose, skopos; (2) function (in the mathematical sense) = logical interdependence of values. What is meant in each case will become clear from the co(n)text" [9]. In other words, Nord's functionality rule is a supplement and further demonstration of Vermeer's skopos rule. She also supports that functionality rule should be given its priority when it comes to the hierarchy of basic rules of the skopos theory.

3.2 Three Basic Rules of Skopos Theory

Hans Vermeer supposes that all human's action are guided and decided by their original purposes, so is translation. That is, the determining factor of translator's choice of translation strategies should be the expected goal of translation (skopos), in other words, the function of target texts instead of that of originals targets that used to be the highlight part in conventional translation theories featuring fidelity or equivalence. Based on this concept he put forward skopos rule and divided the purposes of translation into three types:

(1) Translator's basic purpose (such as making a living);

(2) The communicative purpose of the translation (e.g. enlightening the reader);

(3) The purpose to be achieved by using a special translation meaning (such as translate literally according to the structure of the source texts in order to explain the special points of the grammatical structure of source language).

The second rule is coherence rule. It requires that "the information generated by the translator must be able to be interpreted in a context-line correlation manner for the target recipient" [10]. The readability and acceptability of the target language are required according to coherence rule, as they

may enable the recipient to absorb translated texts under the background of target language culture and the communicative context in which the target language is used.

The last rule is fidelity rule. It points out that there should be interlingual coherence between the source text and the target text[9]. This is somehow similar to the so-called "faithfulness" to the original text in other translation theories, but the degree of fidelity in skopos theory depends on the purpose of the translation and the translator's understanding of the original text.

These three rules constitute the basic rules of skopos theory, but coherence rule and fidelity rule must be subordinate to skopos rule, which is the primary rule in the system of skopos theory. Nord defined the priority of these three rules as:

The theory of a text as an information offer explains that a change of skopos does not violate the fidelity rule but takes precedence over it. The aim is not to pass on a skopos but to offer information about a text-as-action under different circumstances[7].

3.3 Applicability of Skopos Theory in Translation of culture-loaded words

Chinese culture needs to be publicized in a wider range under the current situation of imbalance between cultural output and input[11]. As the carrier of traditional culture and folk customs, culture-loaded words are the crystallization of Chinese traditional and modern culture, and to translate culture-loaded words is to publicize Chinese culture. Just like *Nezha*, A large number of Chinese traditional cultural elements are integrated into Chinese films including animation stories, which is highlighted by the increasing use of culture-loaded words. To some extent, it added to the difficulty of film translation, and also made it harder for foreign audience to obtain information or to understand the plot when enjoying the film.

The first advantage of skopos theory over others is its applicability to non-literary translations. In the early 1970s, the object of translation research gradually shifted from linguistics to newly-emerging media, such as TV series and advertisements. Before the emergence of functional translation theory, "equivalence theory" is recognized as the mainstream theory in German translation circles[8]. However, in Reiss's translation practice, she found equivalence theory is not applicable in some specific areas, especially in the translation of non-literary works, such as advertising. She also pointed out the drawbacks and limitations of equivalence theory and realized that the function of translation is more important than the pursuit of equivalence. Compared with other theories, skopos theory can better solve the problems encountered in translation of non-literary texts. As a film containing traditional Chinese culture, *Nezha* has strict requirements on the translation quality of subtitle. In addition, the ultimate target of *Nezha* is to spread culture and entertain the public, rather than the excessive focus on the linguistic equivalence between SL and TL. This demand guides the choice translation strategies and the outline of translation of the subtitle. Therefore, skopos theory can better guide the subtitle translation of this film than other theories.

Secondly, the specific rules of skopos theory can also provide support for the translation of *Nezha*. As a special kind of commodity, film should follow market rules and attach importance to the needs and experience of foreign audiences[12]. This requirement perfectly catering to the core idea of skopos theory that the most important factor in translation is the purpose of the whole translation behavior, which may further facilitate cross-cultural communication through language conversion and show the artistry of source text so as to better serve or attract audience. Vermeer's view on the priority of the three basic rules of skopos theory is another point that makes skopos theory distinguished from other similar theories. He claimed that the supreme rule in translation should be "skopos rule". That is to say, to make audience to understand and to publicize Chinese culture to the utmost degree will guide the whole translation practice, which will definitely make subtitle translation more authentic compared to the present version.

Last but not least, from the perspective of text typology, scholars like Reiss and Vermeer put forward corresponding new classification methods and research strategies for newly-emerging media such as film. Audiomedial text including such as film and television advertising was later added to this classification by Reiss, which featured by its additional emphasis on the audio-visual effects. Reiss and Vermeer also regard the textual level, rather than the word or sentence level, as the place where communication takes place[8]. That makes skopos theory tend to evaluate the quality of translation from the level of sentence and entire text, instead of single words. Considering the features of culture-loaded words and films, this tendency enables translators to polish the present translation version without the micro-level restrictions of words and sentences and focus on the communication purpose of translation by taking segments or texts as research objects.

With the above three points, there has been found that if translators want to achieve best communication effect of films and confirm the acceptance of western audience, skopos theory has great potential of the application in translating culture-loaded words in films like *Nezha*, which inherently requires translators to pay attention to the role culture-loaded words play in film dialogues. In addition, if we want to study the peculiarities which distinguish culture-loaded words in subtitle translation from that in literary translation, we must follow the core concept and three basic rules of skopos theory.

Therefore, skopos theory has its unique advantages in film translation and can play a guiding role in the translation of culture-loaded words from a macro level.

4. Difficulties in and Principles for Translation of Culture-loaded words

Just as the author mentioned above, bountiful culture-loaded words in *Nezha* added great difficulty to its translation. This part will analyse the factors that make culture-loaded words hard to translate and try to put forward corresponding principles to solve them.

4.1 Difficulties in Translation of Culture-loaded Words

Though *Nezha* enjoyed its huge success in China, earning 5.07 billion yuan at the domestic box office, it still received lackluster feedback in western market, only winning 3.55 million US dollars of north America box office, which is in sharp contrast to its situation at home. The two main reasons of this unsatisfying data, according to Huan and Shao (2021), one is some of the subtitles are difficult for the audience to understand, the other is its awkward English dubbing of subtitles[6]. Despite some technical factors like the lack of professional voice actor, different culture backgrounds and the feature of film are the major factors that added great difficulty to film translation.

Culture-loaded words from the source language usually can't find its corresponding words in the target language, which often becomes a major difficulty in subtitle translation[13]. It is a challenge for translators to overcome these cultural barriers and make the translated text adapt to the ecological environment of source language, so as to achieve a high degree of cultural adaptation.

Translation is a special kind of communication and integration of different languages and cultures[14]. Sometimes the absence of corresponding words in the target language will lead to "culture default", which is an inevitable problem in the translation process and will finally increase the difficulty of subtitle translation.

What's more, there are also great differences between English and Chinese in expression habits, sentence structure, logic and so on. If we literally translate some Chinese expressions character by character to English, or use English sentence structure to reorganize Chinese sentences, that often leads to the problems of improper expression and unclear semantics, such translation will directly affect the audience's understanding.

Last but not least, Film is a work of art, and the object of translation (mainly the dialogue between characters in the work) is the organic composition of a complete work of art. Therefore, translation is different from general commodities. Instead, it can be viewed as re-creation of art[15]. In other words, the process of translation must be an artistic re-creation process, and translators must equip themselves with aesthetic ability and use it in practice.

Yang and Ma concluded that satisfying, or standard subtitle translation should first meet the basic requirements of characteristics of dialogue in films and TV series, such as using oral language, personalizing different speaking manner of characters and consider the context of background and emotion of characters, etc., which will help translators to make characters to talk in an authentic way. Besides, standard subtitle translation can also be read in rhythm. These two scholars also pointed out the difficulty of translation lying in the feature of film and the defect of present situation:

However, these basic principles don't seem to be followed strictly. Some people claim that subbing should not be as careful as dubbing, but just express the general idea of the source text, because most of the subtitle viewers just want to listen to the original version and do not have high requirements on the quality of the subtitle itself... However, in terms of the construction of language and culture, this phenomenon is abnormal. Subtitle translation is an art and should have artistic beauty[15].

What *Nezha* need is a translation version that not only easy to understand, but also generate interactive appeal. This requirement become difficult due to the features of film.

4.2 Principles for Translation of Culture-loaded Words

In light of problems and difficulties concluded in the last part, we can put forward some principles we need to follow in translation of culture-loaded words in *Nezha*. Since difficulties oriented from two different angles, we need to put forward specific principles to separately solve problems brought by these two major difficulties.

4.2.1 Principles in Consideration of Different Cultural Backgrounds

According to Hans Vermeer, the determining factor of translator's choice of translation strategies should be the expected goal of translation. Since the translation of *Nezha* ultimately aims to publicize Chinese tradition culture and myths, the feeling and degree of acceptance of western audience should be given their priority. Given to that condition, alienation strategies like transliteration can be used to solve this kind of problem.

Difficulties also brought by different expressing habit and word structures. Chinese people prefer to use four-character idioms for its beautiful pronunciation and brief expression, while we can hardly find corresponding structure in English. However, if we turn to the E-C translation of *Harry Potter*'s spells, we would come to the conclusion that strategies like domestication would be a good choice. All spells which are based on Latin words and variants of English words are translated into four-character words or idioms in China[16]. So using Latin words and create some news words that sounds like a spell may make the names of martial arts movements more interesting.

In conclusion, in face of different cultural backgrounds, we need to follow these principles:

1. Choose translation strategies in light of expected goal of translation [7].

2. Use Latin words and word-formation to translate four-character culture-loaded words like curses, spells, martial arts movements and so on.

3. If there's a former public-recognized translation version, use that version instead of create a new one, especially when it comes to the name of people or some destinations.

4.2.2 Principles in Consideration of Film Features

Just like the author mentioned above, translating in a smooth and authentic way , personalizing different speaking manner of characters, making phrase rhythmic and conveying fun point of specific lines and phrases are the four major requirements brought by film features.

Translating in a smooth and authentic way is closely related to personalizing different speaking manner of characters. The whole translation process can be defined as "re-encoding". The translator needs to change his thinking mode, abandon his Chinese thinking mode, integrate himself with the characters, and then uses the English thinking mode to say what the characters want to say, then better effects will be achieved [17].

In addition, there are many tiny songs and limericks in *Nezha*. When we're translating this kind of expressions, we need to pay attention to its rhymes and beats to make sure it can perfectly be said or song in the same rhythm of the original text. Otherwise it will not only do harm to the meaning, but also the beauty of original text.

All in all, principles of the translation of culture-loaded words in *Nezha* in consideration of film features can be concluded as:

1. Use "re-encoding" thought to translate in an authentic and understandable way [15].
2. Pay attention to rhymes and structure when translating tiny songs and limericks.
3. Try to convey funny points and liveliness of the source text to audience.

5. Strategies for Translation of Culture-loaded Words in Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child

In the former chapter, author has summarized previous translation strategies of culture-loaded words in *Nezha*, came to the conclusion that the official translation version mainly used four translation strategies: literal translation, transliteration, omission and free translation. Although semantically there is no problem with the translation, official translation version is not well accepted by westerners. The reason is that the translation somehow ignored the translation barriers caused by cultural differences and film features, and didn't pay enough attention to the feeling and feedback of foreign audiences.

In order to improve translation quality, the author will analyse the official C-E translation version released in 2019 and then used in North America and Australia theaters under the guidance of skopos theory and its three major rules. Translation of that version will be evaluated and polished so as to further solve the problems brought by different culture backgrounds and features of film on the basis of former translation versions and studies on this film.

Ma has put forward some translation skills in order to solve these problems:

Generally speaking, good subtitle translation should let people feel as natural as the way we talk in daily life. It should also stay consistent with the style of source text, and allow audience to enjoy its liveliness and interesting points. In order to achieve such a goal, it is necessary to adopt certain strategies: colloquialization, personalization, entertainmentization and rhythmization[17].

This part will analyze some typical dialogues containing culture-loaded words that can be further polished with these four strategies.

5.1 Colloquialization

Cooloquialization means the translator need to translate in an authentic way, that is to say, using the words we use in daily life and organize its structure in the way of daily communication. Some culture-loaded words may sounds beautiful in Chinese while it can make the whole sentence become wired if not translated with proper strategies. On the contrary, if they're translated in a life-like way,

it would be smooth in flow and comfortable to listen to. Table 2 is Lijing's lines that are polished with colloquialization:

Table 2: Setting vow (dialogue)

Character	Dialogue	Official translation	Author's translation
Lijing	li mou ren **jia men bu xin, de zi ru ci** dan hai zi wu gu, ta ye shi shou hai zhe	**My family is unfortunate. This I know.** But my son is also just a victim of this misfortune.	**My son is unfortunate to born as a demon.** He is just a victim of the Demon Pill.
	li mou ren shi nan jiu ci **tong xia sha shou**	And I'm not of the mind **to kill an innocent child.**	And I'm not of the mind **to kill an innocent child.**

The first phrase "jia men bu xin, de zi ru ci" can be translated literally into "My family is so unfortunate to bear this boy as my son." This version is unsatisfying not only because its lack of emotional color but also its incoherence. First, Lijing has never harbored hatred towards Nezha since his birth even Nezha is the incarnation of the Demon Pill. He views Nezha as a common child who also deserves to be loved. So it's impossible for him to blame Nezha for his birth or treat him as a freak or a sign of misfortune. So emotionally, Lijing, as Nezha's father, is more likely to feel sympathy for his child to born as a monster instead of feeling ashamed of him. Second, "my family" is not suitable to be used as the subject in this line. In traditional Chinese culture, it's common to blame the one whom is in a closer relationship with and to push him to reflect on himself if he's in a dispute with others. However, in face of the same issue, westerners tend to sort out the whole thing and figure out who is to blame at the first time, which seems to be more rational. That's why Lijing's expression "My family is unfortunate", a Chinese saying which intends to show self-dispraise or self-deprecation sounds a little wired in English. So the author changed Nezha into the subject of the whole line and reorganized the sentence structure, putting the emphasis on Nezha's unfortunate fate instead of the troubles he brings to his family.

5.2 Personalization

Table 3 is the climax of the whole film, which presents Nezha's quarrel with Aobing. In this example personalization is used to polish the official translation version:

Table 3: Friend quarrel (dialogue)

Character	Dialogue	Official translation	Author's translation
Aobing	bie zheng zha le ni sheng lai jiu shi mo wan zhe shi ming zhong zhu ding	Stop struggling. You were born the Demon Pill. Why not accept your destiny?	Stop struggling. You were born the Demon Pill. Why not accept your destiny?
Nezha	qv ni ge niao ming **wo ming you wo bu you tian** shi mo shi xian wo zi ji shuo le suan	'Cause it is not the boss of me. **I'm the master of my destiny.** I'll be the one who decides and I will not be a demon!	Screw your destiny **I will smash it instead of accept** I'm the one who decides and I will not be a demon!

Nezha and Aobing are two main characters of Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child. Nezha, the incarnation of the Demon Pill, always do whatever he wants. It seems that nothing in the world can restrain him or make him surrender. While Aobing, the incarnation of Spirit Pearl, always follow the

instruction of his father, not willing to go against his seniority. This scene is in the climax of the whole film, where Aobing was told by his father that he was born to kill Nezha. He was in great grief since Nezha is his first and only friend. However, when Aobing tried to convince Nezha to accept his fate, give up the idea of fighting back and embrace his doomed death, Nezha vehemently contradicted his opinion and encouraged him to fight against their destiny.

Official translation version uses the famous poem Invictus by English poet William Ernest Henley. The last two lines of the poem are "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul," fully express the poet's unyielding spirit of fighting against illness and fate. However, Nezha is a rebellious child, it's impossible for him to speak in such a poetic way when his life is threatened. Not to mention the one who wants to kill him is his best friend. His words should be full of anger and rebellion not only because of the setting of this scene, but also Nezha's personality. So the author choose the word "smash" to show his scorn to the so called "destiny" and changed the expression of the first sentence, since the official translation version lacks unyielding power. What's more, making these adjustment can do some help to achieve the coherence rule. "Cause it's not the boss of me" and "I'm the master of my destiny" appears to discuss the same thing with repeated or similar words. Since the tone of Nezha rises gradually when he was speaking these three sentences and his anger break out progressively, the third sentence should be the climax of this scene. The author changed the length of each sentence and unified the subject, making the text to be more coherent.

5.3 Entertainmentization

Table 4 is the scene where Shengongbao and the Dragon King plot in Dragon Place. Shengongbao's line is amusing in Chinese for the misunderstanding caused by his stammer. Entertaining is used here to show the fun points to audience:

Table 4: Plots in Dragon Place (dialogue)

Character	Dialogue	Official translation	Author's translation
Dragon King	ni wu bi zhu ta tuo li zhe hai di lian yu ji shen tian jie	you must free him from this underwater purgatory and let him to join Heaven's Court.	you must free him from this underwater purgatory and let him to join Heaven's Court.
Shengongbao	**bu,bu cheng..**	**I can't...**	**No, no...**
Dragon King	**bu cheng?**	**You can't?**	**No way?**
Shengongbao	**bu cheng gong bian cheng ren**	**...can't be defeated.**	**...no problem.**

Nezha's official translation did a great job in translating Shengongbao's lines. Shengongbao is a stammer and his funny pausing in sentences always make audience laugh. Here the funny point of the source text is faithfully conveyed with the target language. Besides, this translation version also perfectly meet coherence rule and skopos rule, since the meaning of original text is totally conveyed and there's no stagnation in the whole dialogue.

Despite its wonderful translation, the author still wants to provide an alternative choices, that is, to replace "can't be defeated" with "no way". Though "I can't be defeated" somehow convey the meaning of "bu cheng gong, bian cheng ren", which means to die for a righteous cause if not succeeding. Shengongbao collaborated with the Dragon King to help Aobing to join Heaven's Court so as to realize the revitalization of the demons, including dragons. So Shengongbao's enemy should be the orthodox immortals represented by Taiyizhenren and Nezha. However, the antagonism between these two factions is not clearly stated in this dialogue, which makes the foreign audience confused about the object of Shengongbao's words. They may wonder " Why he speaks in that way?"

"Literally who wants to defeat him?" According to these questions, the author omitted the word "defeat" and changed its translation into a shorter version, which is easier to be understood.

5.4 Rhythmization

Table 5, as a ting song sung by Nezha. This scene is combined with rhythmic dubbing and dramatic movement of character. Rhythmization is used here to further reinforce the rhythm in this song:

Table 5: Rhythmic tiny songs

Source text	Official translation	Author's translation
ti tian xing dao shi shi ming **zhan yao chu mo wo zui shan chang**	**I was simply following the will of Heaven.** **Cause I was destined to be a great demon slayer!**	**Slaying demons is my mission** **Punish guilty under the will of Heaven**

Though the official translation version stick to coherence rule, faithfully conveyed the meaning of the source text, it's still not a good translation since it betrays the fidelity rule, failing to transfer the unique rhythm from source text to the target text. It lacks rhythm not only because its total character is too many to fit into the fragment when dubbing, but also lays in its lack of rhyme. Since in this scene Nezha sang it out in a dramatic way, the author rewrite it according to the rhythm of source text, and use "mission" and "heaven" to cater the rhyme in the source text.

Just as the author mentioned in part 3, four-character idioms or words in Chinese can hardly find its corresponding structure in English. However, if we take a glimpse of the E-C translation of Harry Potter's spells, we may find some novel and idiomatic ways to translate this kind of words, especially the names of magic tricks. Table 6 are some names of magic tricks that can be more rhythmic if rhythmization is used:

Table 6: Names of magic tricks

Source text	Official translation	Author's translation
bing he fei quan	Ice over Rivers	Aguamenti
han shuang can xue	create frost and snow	Gelida
bing yu jiu tian	Ice Jade	Permanens Vico

Using Latin words to translate magical tricks can not only make these words to bear a sense of the mystery, but also make them rhythmic and sound more powerful than simply use the strategy of omission.

Among the three words in the table above, "bing he fei quan" literally describe a scene where frozen rivers are melting and spring starts to flows. So this image somehow reminds me of the spell "Aguamenti", which is officially translated into "qing shui ru quan" in Chinese. This spell first comes from the collaboration of roots aqua-, which means water and -menti, which means minds and thoughts. In addition, this spell has a close affinity to the English word "Augment", which means to enlarge or to intensify. Aguamenti, in the wizard world, also can be used to attack on others with water stream just as the way "bing he fei quan" do. So according to the skopos rule, this world can convey the meaning of source text perfectly and is possible to be used in this translation.

"han shuang can xue" literally means to create frost and snow with magic power, which is similar to a spell called "incendio", which is used to describe the magic used to create flame and conflagration in Harry Potter. Here "Incendio" is a variant of Latin word "incendium", which represents fire. So here the author chooses the Latin word "Gelida", which means frost and snow to replace the original translation version.

"bing yu jiu tian" is a magical trick Aobing used in the end of the film. He created a huge ice slab with it and tried to use the slab to smash Nezha's hometown, Chentang Pass. In the official translation version, "ice" means "bing" and "jade" means "yu". The translator omitted the word "jiu tian", which means the supreme heaven in Chinese culture. There's no denying that this method of translation has its merits, but it still lacks rhythm and power. It fails to capture the rhythm of the four-character word and ignores the power of the magical trick. In order to polish the official translation version, I borrowed professor Dumbledore's spell "Partis Temporus" in Harry Potter. This spell is in the highest rank of the fire spell, corresponding to the most powerful one of these three magical tricks of Aobing. The etymology of this spell is also Latin words, which can be translated literally as "temporary separation", but to make its translation more vivid, Chinese translations translated it as "huo shen kai dao", which means "Vulcan opening the way" in English. In view of it, the author changed the translation into "Permanens Vico", which in English means "permanently frozen".

6. Conclusion

This thesis presents a case study of C-E translation of the film *Nezha: Birth of the Demon Child* from the perspective of skopos theory.

Instead of simply analyzing the strategies used in official translation version of *Nezha* in the context of skopos theory, the author puts an emphasis on the difficulties translators may encounter in subtitle translation and put forward corresponding principles. According to the study in this thesis, the difficulties are mainly brought by two factors, namely different cultural backgrounds and features of films. These two main obstacles will hinder the acceptance by target audience and lower the quality of translation.

To put it specifically, in consider of different cultural backgrounds, translation strategies should be chosen in light of expected goal of translation; Latin words and word-formation can be used to translate four-characters words like spells; Use public-recognized translation of specific items to avoid redundant translation. While in consideration of film features, "re-encoding" thought is needed to form a good translation version; rhythm and structure of tiny songs and limericks should be as faithful to the source text as possible; entertaining effect of the source text should also be retained despite of the transition of different languages.

According to this thesis, four strategies can be used in polishing the translation of culture-loaded words in *Nezha* according to the rules above, namely colloquialization, personalization, entertainmentization and rhythmization. These strategies are not mutually exclusive, they can be used in translation of one word at the same time, which means translators should adhere to the specific rules of skopos theory in translation, give full play to their initiative as "client", and make comprehensive selection of translation strategies according to the purpose of the whole translation action.

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