

An Analysis of the Translation Strategy in the Film I AM THE DESTINY from the Lens of Translation Purpose

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Abstract: Due to the acceleration of globalisation, the economies of countries around the world are developing rapidly, economic and cultural exchanges between different countries have become more and more frequently. Nowadays, The film and television industry is an important bridge that promotes cultural exchanges between countries. As soon as the movie *I am the Destiny* was released, it received wide attention at home and abroad. As a medium to spread traditional Chinese culture, it is also essential to pay attention to the English subtitles of the film. Through good subtitle translation, overseas audiences can be more interested in the film and understand Chinese traditional culture, enhance self-confidence in Chinese culture, promote traditional Chinese culture. This article analyses the English subtitles of *I am the Destiny* to understand how to use the translation strategy in the translation of films.

Keywords: Chinese culture, translation strategy, translation purpose, subtitle translation

1. Introduction

In recent years, with the rapid development of economy and mature technology, People are gradually falling in love with animated films, and the proportion of animated films in the film market is also gradually increasing. Different from other translations, subtitle translation should not only consider the language characteristics of the language text and the theme of the work, but also consider how to overcome cultural differences to convey information to the audience [1]. In the beginning there was not a lot of attention and discussion about the movie *I am the Destiny*, people were more focused on other films that were released at the same time. Because this film is about the traditional ancient Chinese mythological story of Ne Zha, one would assume that the film is like its predecessor. But this film is old wine in a new bottle, and new meanings have been given to this traditional story to make this film come alive. In this film, Ne Zha fought against his unfair fate, which is exactly what the young people in the society should have the spirit of indomitable quality, and something more admirable is that it gives people the courage to fight against the injustice of fate. This is also made by the director after overcoming the difficulties such as various financial and technical difficulties when making the film. The technology and picture production of this film are also much smoother than the special effects of the previous animated films, the beauty of the picture is also greatly improved, and there are many details in every part of the picture. The film not only enriches the characters in the story content, but also show a new image. The characters changed from their usual image and became particularly attractive. As a result, the film get dual support both at home and abroad.

The film tells the story of the birth of a Chaos Pearl bead between heaven and earth, the master split it into a demon pill and a spirit ball. Ne Zha was supposed to be the spirit pill but became a demon pill because of Shen Gongbao's tricks and Taiyi Zhenren's negligence, and the magic pill will be destroyed by the heaven-made curse three years later. Ne Zha, who has become a demon pill, is hated by the people of Chentang Pass, but he meets his friend Aobing in a fight. Two years later, at Ne Zha's birthday banquet, Shen Gongbao tells Ne Zha his true identity, and Ne Zha is furious. Taiyi and Ao Bing, who has arrived, control him with the Qiankun Circle. Ne Zha runs into the forest and sees what his father has done for him through Taiyi Zhengren's horse. On the other hand, after Li Jing discovers Ao Bing's identity as a dragon, Ao Bing tries to bury the entire Chentang Pass with water. Ne Zha arrives in time to defuse the crisis in the nick of time. However, he chooses to take the curse alone as the three years are up and the heaven-made curse is coming. Ao Bing cherishes his friend and is willing to share the burden with Ne Zha. In the end, the two of them keep their souls and win the respect of the people.

In order to better expand the influence overseas, spread the excellent traditional Chinese culture, let foreigners see the growth of Chinese animated films, appropriate English subtitles are particularly important. Subtitles can allow the audience to obtain information while enjoying the audio-visual feast, and deepen the understanding of the film picture. The creators can also use appropriate subtitles for cultural export and cultural communication. The film is adapted from traditional Chinese fairy tales, so there are plenty of ancient Chinese fairy words such as slave rune. When translating these words, it is necessary that people should not only convey accurate information to the audience but also properly preserve traditional Chinese culture, which greatly increases the difficulty of translators. This paper will study the purpose of translation and the strategies used by the film in subtitle translation based on maintaining the characteristics of subtitle translation.

2. Subtitle Translation, Translation Purpose and Translation Strategies

Film subtitles can be divided into two kinds: one is intralanguage subtitles, and the other is interlanguage subtitles. Title translation focuses on the latter, which transforms the original dialogue of the actors into a target language superimposed on the bottom of the screen [2]. Subtitle translation has three characteristics: one is complementarity. Generally in the film empty mirror of the film picture, followed by the character dialogue, enrich the character and make the story more complete. The second is the audience's visual endurance, so the general subtitle translation uses short sentence translation and short translation. In this way, it is easy for readers to read the subtitles and understand the meaning of the film in a short time. Moreover, appropriate movie subtitles will not cause visual fatigue of the audience. Third, the vernacular nature of the translation language. General subtitle translation is mostly the translation of character dialogue, so the translation language needs to be easy to understand, concise, coherent and fluent, and more colloquial. In addition, the translation also needs to fit the speaking habits of the movie characters to give the audience a good audio-visual experience. Subtitle translation should also start from the role, into the perspective of the role, experience the role mood, so as to be loyal to the content presented by the film [3].

In the 1970s, the German scholar Hans J. Vermeer put forward Skopos theory, the founding theory of the functional translation school. He believes that translation is a purposeful activity and a form of communication with function, therefore, the translator needs to retain or delete certain contents of the original text for specific purposes [4]. There are three principles that need to be followed in the translation process, namely, the principle of purpose, the principle of coherence, and the principle of fidelity. Among the three, the principle of purpose is in the first position, and the principle of coherence and loyalty is in the subordinate position [5]. The principle of purpose means that the purpose of translation determines the translation process and the translation method used by the translator. In film subtitles, translation has a specific function, which needs to be combined with the

film picture to convey information, and the characteristics of film subtitles should be fully considered. The coherence principle refers to the need for readability and acceptability in translation, which in the context of subtitle-based translation is reflected in the need for easy to understand translation and smooth and coherent translation sentences. Translation should also follow the principle of loyalty, the translator should consider the initiator of the translation activity, the authors, translators, and other people involved opinion and demand [6]. The fidelity principle means that there should be interlingual coherence between the original text and the target text. However, faithfulness to the original text depends on the purpose of translation. As a consequence, the faithful principle of subtitle translation service is embodied in not only retaining part of the culture, but also using the audience's consistent language habits.

Translation strategy is a collection of principles and solutions adopted in translation activities to achieve a specific translation purpose. It is a kind of problem-solving solution at the macro level. Translation theory and translation practice are linked by translation strategies. The implementation of translation methods is also based on the choice of translation strategies.

The translation methods of naturalisation and alienation were proposed by Lawrence Venuti, a famous American translation theorist, in 1995 in *The Translator's Invisibility*. Naturalisation is to localise the source language, take the target language or the readers of the translation as the destination, and adopt the expressions that the target language readers are accustomed to in order to convey the content of the original text. Naturalised translation helps readers understand the translation better and enhances the readability and appreciation of the translation. Alienation is "the translator does not disturb the author as much as possible, so that the readers can get closer to the author". In the translation process, it is to accommodate the linguistic characteristics of foreign cultures, absorb foreign expressions, and require the translator to move closer to the author. It is conducive to retaining the national characteristics and linguistic style features of the translated text. Therefore, in subtitle translation, should not only the audience's language habits be adapted, but also to a certain extent, the source language environment should be preserved. Although in the process of translation, some cultural connotation information will be lost due to the failure of translation, but translators should still try to make different translations strategies and methods to make translation results that meet the requirements of translation purposes and can fully convey the meaning of the source language [7].

2.1. Culturally Loaded Words

Culturally loaded words refer to the words in the language system that best reflect the cultural information carried by the language and the social life of human beings, and they are also words with national cultural colour, which are deeply marked by the region and era of a certain linguistic society, and represent things and concepts peculiar to a certain culture phrases. Since there are a lot of culturally loaded words in the film, they are unique names that represent ancient Chinese myths. Therefore, the translation of these culturally loaded words from a teleological point of view needs to preserve the characteristics of Chinese culture while accurately conveying information to overseas audiences from a functionalist point of view.

The film title of this film is *I am the Destiny*, the translation of the film title is the translation of using the main idea of the film instead of the original text. Although there is no straightforward view of the name of the main character, the title of the theme of the film is to tell the story of the main character does not yield to fate. Accordingly, this title is more appealing than the original title to want to know about the film.

At the beginning of the film, the three Chinese mythological colour of the Chaos Pearl, the spirit pearl and the demon pill are directly translated in "the form of Chaos Pear", the spirit pearl and the demon pill, so as to use similar words in English to understand them for overseas audiences who have not been exposed to such cultures. However, it is critical to distinguish between the translation of

pearl and pill. In English, pearl has positive linguistic overtones, whereas pill has negative overtones that are annoying, so the translation here is more likely to allow viewers to distinguish between the two in their own language.

In the translation of the heaven-made curse, the method of Free translation is used to express that the punishment is given by heaven. There are different perceptions of heaven between the East and the West. In Eastern culture, heaven refers to the heavenly court of the immortals and contains the religious colour of Taoism, and is often referred to as heaven in common speech, which is also authoritative in Eastern culture. In the West, heaven refers to God, heaven, etc. It also has religious colour. Therefore, it is the most appropriate place to choose the word heaven here. Most of the time, there are huge differences between China and the UK, so they are different. Therefore, people should pay attention to change the order of the words when translating [8].

Disguising spell, fire-tipped spear Chaotic Silk are also difficult to translate. “Disguising spell”, the translation method adopted here is free translation, while the other two words are literal translation, which preserves the cultural source language environment to some extent. As the cultural intention of ancient Chinese traditional mythology is preserved here, the two are also powerful instruments, so they need to be retained in translation to enrich the characters.

The three words of “ice over rivers and create frost and snow”, reached the seventh heaven of the Ice Jade in the movie describe Aobing’s magic. But these three words are very typical four-character words stacked with nouns in Chinese, which is a special translation way in Chinese without verbs. Therefore, the method chosen here is an extended translation, using “ice over rivers and create frost and snow. reached the seventh heaven of the Ice Jade” to vividly expand these three words. This not only covers the intention in the original words, but also makes the audience understand the information conveyed in the movie picture by combining it with the movie picture.

2.2. Culture Value to Proverbs

Proverb is a kind of fixed language deeply rooted in the society and culture that combines knowledge, fun and practicality, playing a unique role in the language. Proverbs are used many times in this films, and generally they have philosophical and linguistic features in Chinese, so it is challenging to translate proverbs in subtitle translation. There are such characteristics of short and concise, rich and colorful rhetoric, catchy sentences compact structure, symmetrical, full of rhythm, sound pleasant, full of harmonious rhyme beauty, this rhyme beauty enhances the artistic charm of proverbs. The idiom is a language unit created by the masses in the Chinese vocabulary and spread in the spoken language of the masses. It is a popular and widely popular stereotyped sentence, concise and vivid. Most of which is created by the working people to reflect the people’s life experience and aspirations.

For example, this sentence, “He’s an immortal. It’s wrong!” In the original text, the traditional classical Chinese sentence pattern and four-character words are used to say that the housekeeper is wrong to beat the immortal. The Chinese context here reflects the first respect to the gods, and the second is to use three words to strengthen the resistance to this behavior and the inappropriateness to do this behavior. Chinese expression habits use four-character words to strengthen the tone, which reflects the great importance of etiquette in Chinese culture. Translated to “He’s an immortal. It’s wrong!” it is more intuitive to say that this behavior is incorrect in a direct way used to overseas audiences. Considering the language characteristics of English, there are generally no more than 40 English characters in the English subtitles [9]. The use of short sentences also increases the intensity of the tone, making the audience more understand the context and the importance of etiquette in Chinese culture.

Another example is “With the power of sun and moon, of sea and sand, Qiankun Hoop, obey my command”. In this sentence, transliteration was applied to translate Qiankun Hoop. More straightforward like the audience to convey the culture, accept the source language context. In “obey

my command!”), free translation was adopted here. There is no such expression in western culture, so here they use the free translation method under the strategy of naturalization. “With the power of sun and moon Here, of sea and sand” uses the literal translation to express the spell. The whole sentence uses the strategy of alienation. Let the audience take the initiative to understand the source language order and characteristics.

In the translation, “Tongue of flame. Sands of time. Unleash heat from the holy shrine. Make it so!”, alienation was applied. In the end, the spell translation is different. This is the result of the naturalized translation based on the movie picture and the western own language habits.

“I love a party and parties love me. It’s baby time” this sentence is said after the master gave Taiyi the important responsibility. Here is the normalization of the way of translation. This sentence is too real excited happy temperament. The spirit is used in the original text, which is translated into English by using the word “party”. The translation here is closer to the western language environment and understanding, and having a party in the West means being exciting and relaxing. “It’s baby time” here represents this thing given to him by his master is of great significance and he will join the Kunlun Twelve golden master after completing the assignment. For Taiyi reality is a new beginning, so here also use the way of translation, to reflect the importance of things and his happiness.

“They couldn’t handle the truth”, the first of which appears when the Heavenly Father gives the identity of the Spirit Pearl. But here the choice is made to use a free translation, where the translation to fight is showing that Li Jing’s martial arts skills are superior, so in the translation the background is explained, explaining why his child was chosen. So here the translation is characterised by complementary combination of audio-visual. The second sentence is also translated using free translation. Because there is no similar expression in western culture, so a more colloquial and direct way is used to express that it will not reveal secrets.

3. Conclusions

Skopos theory defines translation as a purposeful behavior of information conversion, and the success of such information conversion depends on whether it achieves its intended translation purpose [10]. The purpose of the film is to accurately transfer the film information to the audience through subtitles

The subtitle translation of this film strictly follows the three characteristics of subtitle translation: simple and clear expression, many use of short sentences, a brief introduction to the background of the film at the beginning, and the rigor of subtitles translation everywhere. Subtitle translation also determines the purpose of translation and is a functional translation. The purpose is to match the picture of the film, for the better audiovisual experience of the audience, in order to convey the information expressed in the film. In translation, there are also many different translation techniques and methods to preserve Chinese culture and fit in the target culture. However, the excessive emphasis on the brevity of subtitle translation leads to the loss of the mood fluctuation of the source language in expressing emotion. There is an inevitable lack of translation on the rhythm of some poems inherent in Chinese culture. Because of different language characteristics, the effect of translation is also different. Therefore, when using the translation strategy, people should not blindly consider one of the purposes to take into account all, give full play to the translation skills such as naturalized and alienated transliteration literal translation, so that the translation retains the cultural connotation in a simple and easy way to understand situation. Film and television as a popular way to spread foreign culture, so adding appropriate subtitles to the film has become an important link in the development of film and television. Therefore, people should study the subtitle translation deeply to improve the subtitle effect [11]. The success of this domestic animation is a powerful example of China’s cultural export to the outside world. Through the broadcast of this film overseas, it shows the cultural heritage and connotation of Chinese culture and highlights cultural confidence.

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