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# A Comparison of English-Chinese Subtitle Translation in the Film *MULAN* (2020)

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***Abstract***— *With the increasing openness of international cultural exchange, film has gained significant attention as a key medium for cross-cultural communication. High-quality subtitle translation is essential to help target audiences better understand foreign films. This thesis first introduces the fundamental aspects of subtitle translation, including its definition, classification, features, and constraints. It then presents Skopos theory, outlining its main principles and criteria, and discusses its applicability to subtitle translation. Using the film Mulan(2020) as a case study, the study analyzes the translation of stylistically marked language elements—such as culture-specific terms, allusions, idioms, and humor—from the perspective of Skopos theory. The findings reveal that, due to spatiotemporal limitations, subtitles do not always fully convey the original meaning, though such losses may be compensated by other filmic elements like visuals, sound, and actors' expressions. The study also finds that while the Skopos-oriented approach prioritizes the translation purpose, the strategies employed do not always optimally transfer the original content.*

***Keywords***— ***Film Translation, Skopos Theory, Subtitle Translation, Translation Strategies, Mulan***

## I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of globalization, international cultural exchange has become increasingly open. More and more foreign movies and TV shows are attracting people's attention. These movies make people's life colorful and provide an opportunity to learn about foreign cultures. Today, film as an important cultural exchange media is getting more and more attention from researchers. To let more people understand these foreign movies, we have to pay more attention to the application of subtitle translation. The study of film subtitles not only improves the quality of the translation but also helps the audiences to understand the meaning of movies. By analyzing subtitle translation in this thesis, cultural exchange and knowledge of culture-specific differences will be shown.

Although the number of Chinese who can speak and understand English is increasing, there are still many people who cannot understand foreign languages very well. Thus, subtitle translation is an effective way to solve this problem. Subtitle translation offers more people the opportunity to understand foreign movies and know about foreign cultures. It seems that subtitle translation is an indispensable part of movies.

According to Yucheng et al. (2019: 13 ), "subtitle is a kind of text, which is added to the video, and it explains the meaning of movies under the need of videos". It usually appears at the bottom of the screen to help audiences better understand the movie and TV program. As Shaochang ( 2001: 61 ) says, "thinking about its importance in our daily life, we should attach more importance to subtitle and do more research on this area".

This article applies Skopos Theory to the case study of subtitle translation of *Mulan* (2020), an American action film with Chinese elements as the theme. The film, set in ancient China, tells the story of a woman who takes her father's place in the army. There is a lot of scenery,

costumes, and culture-specific food in this movie, which are all Chinese elements. The article applies Skopos theory of Vermeer (2001) to the case study of subtitle translation.

This article will briefly introduce the content of subtitle translation and Skopos theory. Cases of different kinds of application of Skopos theory in subtitle translation will be analysed. Domesticating method, foreignizing method, and omission method applied to various elements of style will be discussed. In particular, humour, idiom, and allusion translation will be in the focus.

To achieve this aim, we have set the following goals:

1) to present the Skopos theory and subtitle translation;

2) to distinguish between different types of translation strategies when translating subtitles;

3) to compare the original subtitles with the translated subtitles to determine the translation strategies in subtitle translation;

4) to evaluate the overall retention degree of the translation of the source language into the target language in the film subtitles.

The material in the analysis part is taken from the original (Chinese) subtitles of the film *Mulan* (2020) and the original (Chinese and English) subtitles of the film *Mulan* (2020). Translation software called "youdao" was used to extract Chinese subtitles from the Chinese version of the film. After the extraction is complete, the subtitles are compared with the original English version to determine their accuracy.

These examples were identified and collected according to the classification method proposed by Lin et al (2018) and analyzed according to the types of translation strategies proposed by Vermeer (2001) and Zhang (2016). 122 cases of domestication strategy, 23 cases of foreignization strategy, 13 cases of omission strategy, 4 cases of humorous translation strategy, 21 cases of idioms and allusions translation strategy, and 17 cases of concentration strategy in the subtitles of the movie were identified. The collected cases include language use at the word, phrase, and sentence levels. Comparative and case analysis methods are applied. That is to say, this is a comparative analysis of subtitles in films and their translations.

The article is divided into 5 parts. The introductory and theoretical sections are based on the views of the following authors: Cheng (2007), and Li (2001), as well as on Sheng (2019), Cai (2000), Subtitle translation strategies of Li (2001). The fourth part of this paper introduces the research methods and data, and analyzes the specific cases of subtitle translation, and gives examples. In the last chapter, conclusions and suggestions for further research are presented.

## II. MAIN ASPECTS OF SUBTITLE TRANSLATION

This part briefly presents the definition and classification of subtitle translation and the features of subtitle translation. The theoretical background is based on the ideas of Henrik (1993), Shuttleworth (1997), Cowie (2004), Cai (2000), and other authors.

### 2.1 Definition and classification of subtitles

"In western countries, especially in Europe, the study of subtitle translation started early, and it has become a mature theoretical system" (Henrik 1993: 266). According to Shuttleworth et al (1997), the history of studying subtitle translation could backdate from the end of the 1950s to the early 1960s. In the recent two decades, European scholars have been leading the study of subtitle translation mainly focusing on the subtitle practical level, psychological level, and descriptive study level: "The study of subtitle in western countries is deepened and focused" (Shuttleworth et al. 1997: 62 ).

However, in China, subtitle translation research started later than that in western countries. Cai (2000) claims that it began in 1949. The research level of film translation theory in China is relatively low. Over the past decade, a large number of foreign films and television works have been introduced to China, and then subtitle translation research has been rapidly developing. In the 1980s, Nida's translation theory came into China and his three principles of translation brought a great influence. Especially important are the notions of "the five features of film language: auditory, visual, instantaneous, popular and annotationless" ( Cai 2000: 57 ).

The theory and strategy of film translation still need further study. First of all, "subtitle is a kind of text, which is added to the videos, and it explains the meaning of movies under the need of videos" (Qian 2001: 62 ). They usually appear at the bottom of the screen to help the audience better understand the whole movie and TV program.

Many scholars have different opinions on subtitle translation. For example, Henrik maintains that subtitle is a kind of multimedia translation that can be written, attached, and synchronous (Henrik 1993: 264). Henrik defines subtitle translation as a special type of language transfer: a written, condensed translation of a predominantly oral original (Henrik 1993: 261-270 ). Routledge regards that subtitle as the interpretation of

language symbols with other languages (Routledge 2004:24 ).

According to Qian (2001: 60), "subtitle translation can be defined as the process of providing synchronized captions for film and television dialogue". It uses another language to express the film. Also, Qian (2001: 65-67) points out that "subtitling is the process of providing synchronized text for a television and movie dialogue, and it is a kind of term, the main method of language conversion". Dialogue subtitles for the film and television work generally appear at the bottom of the screen, and drama subtitles may display on both sides of the stage, or above (Vermeer 2001:43). The purpose of subtitles is to help people who cannot hear or who cannot understand the film very well.

In addition, as Li (2001) states, according to the showing stages, subtitles can be divided into three types: opening credits, ending subtitles, and main subtitles. Opening credits appear at the beginning of titles which include the name of the film, director team and the main performers. Ending subtitles appear at the end of a film, including billing, producer, sponsor, and other production information (Li 2001: 38-40). From the linguistic perspective, Yao (2014: 147) distinguishes the main subtitles into two types: intra-lingual subtitles and inter-lingual subtitles. The intra-lingual subtitles are defined as displaying the sound language, which is the language of the same country, but the sound language may appear in the form of dialect (Yao 2014: 147). That is, through the subtitles, Shanghai Province Dialect and Cantonese display show the standard Chinese characters. Maybe people in other provinces can not understand these dialects, but they can read Chinese characters. "The intra-lingual subtitles do not change language, they directly change sounds into words" (Yao 2014: 148 ). According to Zhang (2009: 87), the inter-lingual subtitles are defined as sounds and subtitles language devote to different languages, which means that people translate English into Chinese or translate Chinese into English. In this way, people of two countries can understand each other well.

### 2.2 Features and constraints of subtitle translation

Subtitle translation is unique and the language of film is different from other written language. The subtitle translation usually appears at the bottom of the screen with the original sound. Subtitle translation always provides a large amount of information about the content of the film to the audience by the form of text.

In China, Qian ( 2001: 64) "put forward five features of subtitle translation. They are listening, comprehensiveness, instantaneous, popularity and no note". In general, according to Zhang (2016), the subtitle translation has the following characteristics:

(1) Comprehensiveness: subtitles are not isolated and appear with sounds and pictures or other visuals, thus the audience can listen and watch the movie at the same time (Zhang 2016: 107). The movies cannot accurately express information if there are only subtitles, but no sounds and pictures. At the same time, the audience would not understand the movies if only sounds and pictures appear, but without subtitles. "In movies, sounds and pictures are important, and the subtitle is only a factor that plays a supporting role" (Zhang 2016: 107). The feature of comprehensiveness can provide subtitle translation with some convenience, which means subtitle translation can be omitted when the film's information can be expressed well by sounds and pictures (Yao 2014:147).

(2) Instantaneousness: Subtitles are seen very briefly, so the audience has to be quick in reading them (Zhang 2016:107). The readers can not go back to the read subtitles once again as it would be with other genres of the written text. In order not to affect the audience's appreciation of the following plots, the immediacy makes the audience do not have much time to think about the content of subtitles.

(3) Popularity: as the audience might have different levels of cultural knowledge, subtitle translation should include popular rather than culturally loaded language and the translator needs to use the most concise text to convey the meaning of the original text to target audience with different language background (Zhang 2016: 107). Because of the limits of time and space, only the popular language can let the audience understand the information of the film in a short time.

(4) Synchronism: Subtitles should be synchronized with the picture and sound. During the conversion of spoken and written language, subtitle translation can increase or decrease appropriately to keep with original text completely (Zhang 2016:107).

(5) No note: "If target readers have questions when they watch movies, the translator needs to add some notes to these questions" (Zhang 2016:107). However, according to Zhang (2016:107) "subtitles are limited by time and space, and in order to achieve the synchronism, the translator cannot add these notes to subtitle translations".

What's more, Henrik (1993: 261-274 ) considers that "subtitle translation is restricted by formal constraints and media-defined constraints, and subtitles as a special kind of text also have two constraints: formal constraints and textual constraints". Formal constraint means that space and time limit of the subtitle translation is caused by the screen size and the audience's reading speed, so formal constraints can be further divided into space and time constraints.

In addition to its own characteristics, textual constraints come from subtitle translation to the film language, which means that subtitle language should be close to colloquial language in film and television works. Henrik (1993: 261-274) states that there are only two lines and thirty-five words in subtitles. Shuttleworth et al. (2004: 58) further put forward "some textual constraints of subtitle translation: picture, dialogue, music, spoken language, and phonetics".

Finally, Vermeer's (2001: 68) ideas can be used to summarize the overall discussion. According to the author, subtitle translation is influenced by context. This context means subtitle translation is influenced by various subjective factors including the purpose of language users, jobs, hobbies, status, mood, and state. Subtitle translation is restricted by objective factors such as environment, time, place, and others factors (Vermeer 2001: 68). Therefore, the translator should fully consider these factors in order to fully express the information transmitted through the film. Further on, we will present one of the perspectives in Translation Studies that might be useful in considering subtitle translation.

## III. AN OVERVIEW OF THE SKOPOS THEORY

This part will make a brief introduction to Skopos theory, including the main content, development, three principles, and two main methods of Skopos theory. The author also explains the possibility and necessity of the application of Skopos theory in subtitle translation.

### 3.1 Development of the Skopos theory

Skopos theory was developed by German translation theorist Hans Vermeer. The word "Skopos" is from Greek, which means "aim" or "purpose". Skopos theory focuses on the selection of various objectives in the process of translation. "Skopos theory can make up for the deficiency of traditional translation theories" (Vermeer 2001: 87).

Most scholars consider that translation is a kind of purposeful activity. "Skopos theory focuseson translation as an activity with a purpose or aim" (Vermeer 2001: 92). From the target-oriented perspective, Skopos theory is a study of the deconstructive translation and it focuses on the target text's function and practicability. Skopos theory thinks that translation is a purposeful communicative activity between humans. In Vermeer's Skopos theory, it has been stated that "people cannot solve all the problems in the translation only by linguistics, and the reader is one of the most important factors determining the purpose of the translation" (Vermeer 2001: 29). They have their own cultural backgrounds. Each translation is directed to a certain audience, so Skopos theory is a course that is produced for a certain purpose or some target audience with the context of the target language.

Skopos theory, introduced into translation theory in the 1980s by Hans Vermeer was further developed by Nord, one of its most important second-generation scholars in the 1990s (Zhang 2009:43). Vermeer (2001: 127) stated that "translating means to produce a text in a target setting for a target purpose and target addressees in target circumstances". There are four phases in the development of Skopos theory.

The first phase proposed by Katharina Reiss is "the functional category of translation criticism"(in Xu 2011: 52-53). She developed the translation criticism model which is based on the relationship between the source text and target text. In her opinion, the ideal translation would be one "in which the aim in the target language is equivalence regarded as the conceptual content, linguistic form and communicative function of a source language" (in Xu 2011:52-53). However, she found in some situation equivalence is impossible because of the translation brief which we will talk about it next. Reiss also explains an exception from the equivalence. She stated that comprehensive-communicative translation is an ideal way of translation, which means the content of the concept, language forms, and communicative functions equivalent to the original text and functional characteristics of translation should be given priority in practice (Xu 2011: 52-53).

In the second phase, the theory is put forward by Vermeer who has stated that "translation is a behavior and it is based on the original purpose and the results" (2001: 43). In this stage, Vermeer 2001:65) also agrees that "translation must follow a set of rules, and Skopos Rule is in the first place which means translation depends on the purpose of translation". The ultimate purpose of subtitle translation is to help people to understand the main content of the film rather than stimulating the audience's desire to watch. Besides, according to Wang (2017: 247), the translation must follow the "coherence rule" which means the translation must be internally coherent; and the"fidelity rule" which means the translation should be coherent with the original text.

The third phase is the theory of translation action that is proposed by Henrik in 1993. This theory is based on Action Theory, and Henrik further developed the theory of functional translation. It was designed to cover all forms of intercultural transfer. Henrik (1993: 261) considers that "translation is defined as a complex action designed to achieve a particular purpose". This theory takes translation as driven by "purpose, the interaction between people and

people in the translation result-oriented" (Henrik 1993: 270).

In the fourth phase, Nord (2001:120) defined the function plus loyalty principle. She proposed two interdependent deficiencies of the Skopos rule. First, it is impossible for the translation purpose to satisfy all readers because of the differences in expected value. The second is concerning the author and the translator. Considering these deficiencies, Nord puts forward the "Loyalty Principle" of Skopos theory: "the responsibility of translators affects their partners in translation interaction" (Nord 2001:142). Nord (2001：143) maintains that "during translation the internal and external factors needed to be considered in the analysis of the text". Nord (2001:185-186) has stated that "people have different views on a good translation due to their different cultural backgrounds. Some hope to see the faithful reproduction of the original form, while others like the translation style to reveal the key points of the original source". If the translator can not achieve the cultural requirements of the recipient of the target text faithful reproduction, Nord (2001: 185) has said that "the translator has a moral responsibility to the recipient, must explain to them what they have done and the reasons for doing so". That's one aspect of loyalty. Although there is the principle of fidelity in the translation criterion, the principle of fidelity is subordinate to the principle of purpose. If the communicative purpose of the target text required by the Law of Purpose is contrary to the intention of the author of the source text, we should consider that the other aspect of the Law of Loyalty is to require the translator to be loyal to the author of the source text. The translator should respect the author of the original text and coordinate the purpose of the translation with the author's intention. Therefore, the Law of Loyalty is concerned with the social relationship between the translator and other participants in the translation process. (Zhong et al. 1999:49)

From the phases presented above, traditional translation theories take the original text as the starting point and the target text as the endpoint, so the yardstick to measure the quality of the target text is usually the original text (Liu 2005:426).

To continue with, Skopos theory creatively puts forward a series of translation principles and methods, which liberates translators from the bondage of translating text source text into the target language, and forms a theoretical system of translation standards with objective rules as the leading role ( Liu 2005 351).

To sum up, Skopos theory turned their attention from the translation with the original equivalent to focus on the translator itself, pay attention to the translator in the different translation strategies to choose between the power of that translation is in human purpose, thus turning to the translation activities other related factors research, broaden the field of translation study, formed the diversity, the situation of translation studies from multiple perspectives. On the basis of translation theory and intercultural communication theory, Skopos theory explores a new way for translation research. Although it has some shortcomings, it has broadened the scope of translation studies and made important contributions to the development of translation studies.

### 3.2 Principles of the Skopos theory

Vermeer believes that translation studies cannot rely solely on linguistics for two main reasons: first, translation is not only or even not primarily a language process; Second, linguistics has not really raised questions about translation difficulties. (Vermeer 2001:29) Therefore, he put forward the "Skopos Theory" of translation on the basis of the action theory.

The central idea of Skopos Theory of Translation is that every action has a purpose. The translator chooses the most appropriate way to achieve the expected goal by referring to the actual environment. Since translation is also a kind of action, the translator will try to consider all possible relevant factors under the guidance of the translation purpose, so as to decide the most appropriate way of action. Based on this description of the actual situation, a normative basic rule can be drawn: "the purpose of translation determines the strategy for achieving the expected goal", that is to say, the translation should play the expected function for the intended audience (Vermeer 2001:12-15). According to Skopos Theory, the rules followed by all translations are the principle of Skopos, the principle of loyalty, and the principle of coherence. On the premise of abiding by these rules, translators will adopt domestication and foreignization strategies in most subtitle translations. Therefore, the following sections will detail these three principles and two main translation strategies.

#### 3.2.1 Skopos rule

As Sheng et al. (2019) claim, "the Skopos theory defines that Skopos rule is the first rule that all translation activities need to obey". "According to the readers' expectation, translation can use different methods in context and culture" (Sheng et al. 2019). The translators propose that the method is decided by the results, and the purpose of translation determines the whole translation process. However, there are many aims of translation activities, and according to Sheng et al. (2019), these aims are divided into three parts: □

(1) the communicative purpose of translation such while enlightening the reader; □

(2) using some special means to achieve the purpose of translation that means translators usually use the grammatical structure to explain the corresponded translation methods;

(3) basic purposes of translators such as making a living. "Skopos" means the communicative purpose of the translation. Therefore, the translator needs to find its purpose out in context. Then, they should decide what kind of translation methods can be used, such as using literal translation, literal translation, or using both of them.

### 3.2.2 Coherence rule

As stated by Wang (2017: 247), the coherence rule defines that translation must obey the intra-textual coherence and it must be read and accepted by readers, which means the translation must have a real meaning in a context that the audience could understand. Similarly, Vermeer (2001:273) states that "there is an 'inter-textual coherence' between the target language and source language". That discovers the relationship between the translated text and original text. In order to reproduce the original information, the translated text should be tied with the original text. The translator understands the article and the purpose of the target language, both of them make the inter-textual coherence of translation. The following constituents are important:

(1) The translator wants to express the original text of the original information;

(2) How to interpret the information depended on the translator;

(3) How the translator for the purpose of the language encodes information (Vermmer 2001:266)

Generally speaking, the target text must be translated in such a method, which is coherent for the target readers, by their different cultural background and knowledge.

### 3.2.3 Loyalty rule

This principle is put forward by Nord who found there are two constraints in the Skopos theory: first, it is impossible for the translation purpose to satisfy all readers because of the expected value differences. Second, this rule is concerning the author and the translator. Zhang (2016: 107) argues that thinking of these deficiencies, Nord proposed the loyalty rule to solve the problem of cultural differences and the relationship among the participants in translation. Zhang (2016: 107) states that "translators have the responsibility to explain everything in the original text to target text receiver". In other words, she thinks the loyalty rule asks translators to be loyal to the original author. The loyalty rule is mainly concerned with the relationship between the translator and the original author.

In general, the Skopos theory is constituted of three principles. The coherence and the loyalty rule must observe the Skopos rule because it is the first important principle, and during the translation, translators should take the Skopos rule and loyalty rule as a guide.

### 3.2.4 Domesticating method

According to Nord (2001:121), the domesticating method makes the original language localized and this method uses some expressions which are conformed to target language readers' habits. It is defined as: "in order to make target language culture accepted by audiences, translators need to use the appropriate expression" (Nord 2001: 121). Finally, the meaning of words can be found in the corresponding culture. The translator needs to translate the original language into the local language if the original author wants to make a directed communion with the target audience, which demands the translator should respect the characteristics of the target language. The language which conforms to the target language can be used in translation text. "The advantage of domesticating method is eliminated differences among foreign language and culture" (Nord 2001:142). 3.2.5 Foreignizing method According to Xu (2011: 52), Venuti's translation purpose is to improve the status of the translation and translators while communicating a cultural and linguistic differences of source-language text, as well as weakening the hegemonic status of the culture in English-speaking countries. To make these aims come true, Venuti further proposed foreignization: one is choosing a foreign text excluded by domestic literary then using a marginal discourse to translate it. There are four features of foreignizing method:

(1) The translations do not fully follow the standard of the target language.

(2) The translations can use some difficult text in due time.
(3) Some archaism of the original language can be intentionally reserved by translators

(4) Translators provide an unprecedented reading experience for target readers (Xu 2011:53)

The foreignizing method can be reflected by the expression of the original language, and it enriches the translation and lets people know about alien culture better through the translation. The foreignizing method keeps the character of the original language and culture, it can bring people to the area of alien culture and let them see the difference between languages and cultures.

## 3.3 The possibility of the application of the Skopos theory in subtitle translation

Skopos theory can be very helpful for translators. Translation strategies are determined by translation

purpose, so before using the Skopos theory, translators should judge the purpose of film translation and choose the right method applying to the subtitle translation.

There is a possibility and necessity of the application of Skopos theory in subtitle translation: the Skopos theory in translation is derived from behavioral theory and subtitle translation is also a kind of purposeful activity (Wang et al. 2018: 78-79). Different kinds of movies have different translation purposes. Movies can be divided into many types, like historical movies, romantic movies, documentaries, science fiction, disaster movies, mystery, and horror (Wang et al. 2018: 78-79). All kinds of movies have many differences in language, plot, and intention. For example, the purpose of historical movies is to inherit true history, and disaster movies expect people can protect the environment. These are the purposes of movies; the original author hopes the audience can get inspiration from movies. Usually, film and television works transmit information by various channels. In order to achieve different purposes of different movies, the Skopos theory provides a possibility for the application in subtitle translation.

As Wang et al., point out, "A good movie depends on a good subtitle translation and a good subtitle translation must concern the needs of an audience" (Wang et al. 2018: 78-79). The needs and expectations of the audience are an important part of subtitle translation purpose, and the application of Skopos theory in subtitle translation can make these purposes come true. Another important reason is the characteristics of subtitle translation. Because of the limits of time and space in subtitle translation, a translator needs to abridge some original information during the translation. It is impossible to completely eliminate the reading barriers of cultural difference, but people can do is to try their best to keep the closest effect as the original text (Wang et al. 2018: 78-79). Therefore, it is necessary to apply Skopos theory in subtitle translation. In a conclusion, the Skopos theory can be used in subtitle translation to achieve the closest effect as the source text or original text. The Skopos theory proposed by Vermeer had important affluence on the theory and study of translation. The Skopos theory puts the readers' requirement as a priority and it plays a vital role in cross-cultural communication (Yao 2014:147). According to the theory, translators should consider the receptors' purpose. Besides, the success of subtitle translation depends on whether the receptors, under the help of translation, have the ability to understand well and appreciate the movies. It shows that the application of Skopos theory in subtitle translation is possible and necessary. The purposes of subtitle translation conform to the basic criteria of Skopos theory.

## IV. A COMPARISON OF ENGLISH-CHINESE SUBTITLE TRANSLATION IN *MULAN* (2020)

This part takes the American action movie Mulan (2020) as an example to study the application of Skopos Theory in subtitle translation. The first part of this chapter will give a brief introduction to the film, revealing the characteristics of the film, which was originally shot in a Chinese environment but was made in English and then subtitled into Chinese. Next, specific examples of subtitles in films and their translations will be analyzed. Admittedly, some films are dubbed, and some films use subtitles only as a form of conveying meaning to their target audience. However, adapted or translated subtitles may not convey the meaning of the original text, so this is especially important when it comes to which subtitle translation strategy is used. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish between how a translator deals with such a challenging translation problem and its impact on the original text and its meaning. Therefore, this paper will focus on the analysis of subtitle translation in films.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the cases of subtitle translation strategies by comparing the source text (English) and target text (Chinese) and to distinguish their particularities and differences in subtitle translation strategies. Niki Caro's Mulan (2020) was chosen for analysis. Film selection is based on several criteria: considering several options and studying several film scripts to determine the one most suitable for study; Personal connection and interest in the film itself, as well as high praise from the audience. The film, directed by Niki Caro and written by Chris Bender, was released in 2020.

In order to find and compare the translation of subtitles better, we took screenshots of the cases used in this paper and all the relevant cases that did not appear in this paper (see Appendices). To ensure accuracy, a translation software called "youdao" to translate the original English film into Chinese, to distinguish whether the original film subtitles were accurate or not.

By comparing English subtitles with Chinese subtitles, we obtain practical examples of subtitle translation based on Skopos theory and divide them into several translation strategies. They are the translation method of domesticatio, the translation method of foreignizio, the translation method of omission, the method of humorous translatio, the translation method of idioms and allusions, and the translation method of concentration.

*Table 1. Subtitle translation strategies*

| Subtitle translation strategies | Number |
|---|---|
| the translation method of domestication | 122 |
| the translation method of foreignization | 23 |
| the translation method of omission | 13 |
| the method of humorous translation | 4 |
| the translation method of idioms and allusions | 21 |
| the translation method of concentration | 17 |
| Total translation strategies in Mulan(2020) | 200 |

As can be seen from the above table, we found a total of 200 cases of subtitle translation strategies. It should be pointed out that our classification of all the identified sentences is based on the method of subtitle translation strategies discussed by Vermmer (2001) and Li (2014). In view of the cases of subtitle translation in films, this paper puts forward six main translation strategies: domestication (122 cases), foreignization (23 cases), omission (13 cases), humor translation (4cases), idiom and allusion (21 cases ), and centralized translation (17 cases ). It is worth noting that in the analysis of subtitle cases, we find that context is particularly important in judging a particular case. In many cases (as can be seen in the appendix), individual examples of subtitle translation are not always seen as being comprehensible to the audience and, therefore, more context is needed to determine the meaning of subtitles in the film. In addition, these translation strategies are analyzed and studied based on Vermmer (2001) and Li (2014). At the same time, the following chapters will focus on the translation strategies in film subtitles.

### 4.1 Introduction of *Mulan*

*Mulan* (2020) is an American action film, which uses Chinese Kung Fu as the theme. In this movie, there are many things full of Chinese elements, like the makeup, buildings, costumes, and even the food. We can find out from the table below.

*Table 2 Chinese elements of life in Mulan (2020)*

| Cultural specific categories | Number |
|---|---|
| Clothing | 2 |
| Food | 3 |
| Makeup | 1 |
| Buildings | 3 |

The movie of Mulan (2020) contains a lot of Chinese cultural connotations. This movie shows people some Chinese cultures like Chinese philosophy and Chinese Kung Fu. As a consequence in order to let the Chinese audience understand Chinese culture in American eyes, during translation, the translator should be cautious and try their best to keep those sentences that contain Chinese connotation culture. On the other hand, as the film, an American production, inevitably it has the elements of American culture, not typical for the Chinese setting as, for example, American humor. To sum up, the translation of culture in movies is closely related to the translation strategies used.

### 4.2 Adaptation of the Skopos theory to subtitle interpreting

Before translating the subtitle, translators should deeply understand the content of the film, catch the theme of the movie, learn the characters of film personage's language; they also should know which message can be expressed by the subtitle and which do not be needed.

The Skopos theory applies to the subtitle translation, the first thing translator should do is to make sure the purpose of translation, the ultimate aim of subtitle translation is to let audiences eliminate the barriers between language and culture understand the film under the help of subtitle (Guo 2002: 23). Besides, according to Li (2001: 38-40), "translator also should know about the director's creating style and aims, the purpose of film distributor and film importer, at the meantime, they should know the target audience's cultural level even the expectation of audience". The second is that the translator decides translation strategies and methods according to the purpose of the original author, and these various translation strategies should be flexibly adapted in a perfect translation.

The main principle of translation activities is the principle of purpose, translation subtitles should be carried out in the context and culture of the target language, the use of translation methods should meet the expectations of the audience. So Huang et al. (2018: 155) point out that translators should take the main principle of perspective of Skopos theory as guidance: take the Skopos rule as the first rule, keep the purpose of translation in the translator's mind; obey the coherence rule, keep the translation text consistent with the original text; follow the loyalty rule, the translation must be loyal to the original information, a translator should not distort the information."According to the limit of time and space, the translator should use a simple and coherenttranslation transferring the original language and culture to audiences" (Yao 2014: 158). In that way, audiences can better appreciate foreign films then achieve the purpose of cross-cultural communication.

The Skopos theory requires the translator to consider every audience's cultural level. Different audiences have different cultural backgrounds and the translation must be acceptable for most of the normal audience. If the word

used in translation is uncommon, most of the common audience will have difficulties in understanding. In translation, the three principles of Skopos theory can be played a normative role. In a word, it is necessary to apply the Skopos theory in the subtitle translation of *Mulan* (2020).

Moreover, the main purpose of subtitle translation is to transmit effective messages to the target audiences under the limits of time and space. The translation process of Skopos theory is from top to bottom: first, the translator grasps the general situation of translation. The translator must consider the influence of various factors in translation, such as the preferences of the audiences, the purpose of the translated text. Then, the translator analyses these purposes of achieving translation activities. On this basis, the processing method of words and phrases determines the final translation strategy.

Chinese culture is different from American culture. The English subtitle in *Mulan* cannot completely describe the connotation of Chinese culture. Wang et al. (2018: 78-79) point out that "in order to achieve the communicative purpose of this movie and help Chinese audience understand it, a translator needs to use the domesticating and foreignizing method". The domesticating and foreignizing methods are two different kinds of theories. They are both in the unity of opposites with each other, and absolute domestication and foreignization do not exist.

According to the different needs of text, a translator needs to decide which kinds of original culture should be kept and how to keep it; which kinds of original culture have to make adjustments to adapt to the target culture (Wang 2017: 247). The following chapters from 4.3 to 4.8 will concretely summarize and analyze several subtitle translation strategies based on Skopos Theory. It also illustrates the problems in translation.

### 4.3 The translation method of domestication in *MuLan* (2020)

To begin with, it is necessary to enumerate the intuitive domestication data:

*Table 3 Data of domestication*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by domestication** | **122/200** | **61%** |

Use the domesticating method in translation. Take the target language culture as the basis, use acceptable expressions which target language culture can be accepted as much as possible. The representative figure of domestication translation, who once said, "language as a part of the culture and the corresponding culture of each language can be directly or indirectly reflected by any text, finally the meaning of texts only can be found in the corresponding culture" Vermeer (2001: 56). That means translators should respect the characteristics of the target language and use the language which can be accepted by the audience. Here are some examples：

(1) Original text：A young shoot, all green.

Translated text：小时候，她像麦苗儿一样青涩稚嫩。

Back translation from Chinese to English: When she was a child, she was as green as a wheat seedling.

The phrase appears in the introduction of the film to introduce Mulan. If we had not adopted the naturalization method, the phrase would have been translated as "嫩芽，全绿" The translation of this phrase into English means all green shoots. Without planning, the Chinese audience will not understand the meaning of this statement.

(2) Original text：Unaware of the blade.

Translated text：不知道镰刀的锋利。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Do not know the sharpness of the sickle.

This sentence also adopts the domestication translation method. The Chinese subtitle translates " blade " into "sickle". This naturalization method accords with the traditional thinking of the Chinese people. Because the Chinese subtitle above the sentence says, "小时候，她像麦苗儿一样青涩稚嫩." Back translation from Chinese to English is "When she was a child, she was as green as a wheat seedling." In China, people usually associate wheat seedling with the sickle.

(3) Original text: Her **chi**; Bori **Khan**.

Translated text: 她的元气；布利可汗。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Her **energy**; Bori **Khan**.

In this movie, the domesticating method can be reflected in some translation names and positions. For instance, "Chi" and "Khan" are appeared many times in this movie apart from the example above. These two English words are rooted in the Chinese pronunciation "qì" and "Kè hán". First of all, "Chi" plays a very important role in Chinese kung fu. In Chinese kung fu, the strength of all movements comes from the strength of the "Chi" in the body of the person who makes the movements. In addition, the Khan is the name given to the chief of the minority people in ancient China. In ancient times, the leader of an ethnic minority was the equivalent of an emperor in the eyes of the Han ethnic. So directly translates into as "气 (energy)"

and “可汗(emperor) ”are easy to understand by using the translation of domestication.

(4) Original text: That includes every guard...

Translated text: 把人从四方城门。。。

Back translation from Chinese to English: From the four gates...

This happened when the prime minister was ordered by a witch to let all the soldiers leave the gates of the palace guarding the palace. The translation strategy of domestication is used to defuse the cultural differences between the East and the West. Because in traditional Chinese architecture, there are only four gates to excavate out of every wall. They are the East Gate, the West Gate, the South Gate, and the North Gate. If according to translating "every guard" into "每个(every gate.)". It doesn't coincide with traditional Chinese architecture, and it doesn't make the Chinese audience understand why so many gates are cut into the walls that protect the imperial palace.

Through the above cases, we can analyze that domestication translation usually contains the following characteristics. First, the translator consciously adopts a natural and fluent style of the target language. Second, translators usually add explanatory words when translating the original language into the target language. Third, in the process of translating the subtitles from the original language into the target language, the regional and historical color of the original language is removed. Finally, through these cases, we can analyze that in the process of language conversion, we should adjust the ideas and features between the translation and the original. Due to cultural differences, sometimes the literal translation of the original text may make the audience of the target language confused and even misunderstood. At this time, it is necessary to borrow the same or similar meaning in Chinese, and have their own distinctive cultural expression to domesticate the original text (Cheng 2007:43)

To sum up, the domestication translation method is often used to deal with some English idioms, allusions, image words, and other expressions with strong cultural color. As a result, domestication can make the translated text concise and lively, which is easy for the readers to understand and accept.

### 4.4 The translation method of foreignization in *Mulan* (2020)

The data collected showed that alienation was used in 23 out of the 200 cases. The use of a translation strategy mainly leads to the audience's understanding of the character:

*Table 4 Data of foreignization*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by foreignization** | **23/200** | **12%** |

Use foreignizing method. The translator expresses the original text as far as possible. They should create an environment to let audiences have direct communication with the author. Get as close as possible to the original language in translation, just like Shuttleworth et al. (2004: 231) said, “the foreignizing method is accepted so that the differences between language and culture in the foreign text then lead audiences into a foreign context”. To illustrate the use of foreignizing:

(5) Original text：I will squash it.

Translated text：我来捏死它。

Back translation from Chinese to English: I'm going to pinch it.

This happened when Mulan said that her sister had a spider on her head, and then Mulan told her sister that she could help her take the spider away. The word "squash" in this sentence, directly according to the American thinking of the word "捏死(crush)". The foreignized translation not only makes the language more lively and vivid but also reflects the thinking of the American people.

(6) Original text：I’m starving.

Translated text：我饿死了。

Back translation from Chinese to English: I'm starving.

This is Mulan on the way to see the matchmaker, her sister said a sentence. This sentence also adopts the foreignization translation method. This sentence reflects the differences between Chinese and American languages and cultures. Because there is no subject in a typical sentence in China. According to Chinese thinking, this sentence should be translated as "饿了(hungry) ".

(7) Original text: It is his son.

Translated text: 是他儿子。

Back translation from Chinese to English: It's his son.

This sentence happened when the emperor asked the minister who was disturbing the border, and the minister answered what the emperor had said. In this sentence, the "is" is translated out by the translator. Obviously, this sentence adopts the foreignizing translation method. Because the essential element is the predicate in sentences’ structure of English. If this sentence is translated by the domestication method, the strategy would have removed the "is" and translated it as "他儿子 (his son.)".

(8) Original text: What a killer!

Translated text: 你可真厉害。

Back translation from Chinese to English: You're really good.

This is what the other soldiers said to Mulan after she accidentally showed off her powerful Chi (energy) during another fight with Honghui. From the above example and the movie, we can seethat there are many slang words used in the American language. It is worth mentioning that American slang is characterized by hilariousness and humor. In addition, American slang can also relieve awkward situations. As in the example above, if the translator follows "Back translation from Chinese" to English (You're really good.), the sentence will lose the characteristics of American slang. However, the foreignized translation is not only in line with the characteristics of American slang, but also suitable for the language environment when speaking at that time.

After sorting out the above cases, it can be concluded that the foreignization translation method mainly has the following characteristics. First, the translator does not fully follow the target language and discourse norms. Second, when appropriate, the translator can choose a sentence that is not smooth and difficult to understand. Finally, it is worth mentioning that we can make a comparative analysis of the sentences that use domestication translation and the sentences that use foreignization translation. Sentences translated by foreignization are more attractive to the audience. Because the sentences translated by foreignization retain the characteristics of the original language, they are more fresh to the audience.

To sum up, after the analysis of these cases of foreignized subtitles, the foreignized translation method is intended to break through the conventions of the target language and retain the exotic flavor of the original text.

### 4.5 The translation method of omission in *Mulan* (2020)

In the analysis of cases with omission, we found that ellipsis techniques were used in 13 out of 200 cases. Also note that most of the examples include specific cultural domains (architecture, food, etc.). First of all, it is necessary to introduce the translation strategy of omission:

*Table 5 Data of omission*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by omission** | **13/200** | **7%** |

According to the limit of time and space, a translator should adjust subtitle translation. Firstly, a translator can use some succinct language. In the original text, there is some useless information that can be deleted which has unimportance and no influence on the film to audiences' understanding. Now there are some examples:

(8) Original text：It is because I'm trying to protect Mulan that I say this.

Translated text：我这样说，也是为了保护木兰。

Back translation from Chinese to English: I also say this to protect Mulan.

The sentence, if not omitted, would have been translated into Chinese as "这是因为，我这样说，我是为了尽力保护木兰". Although we can't understand the sentence, we can compare it with the Chinese in the subtitles of the original film above. The Chinese subtitles did not translate "It is because". If translated "It is because", it does not conform to the speaking habits of Chinese people. Chinese people do not usually add "这是因为...(It is because)" before giving reasons. In other words, the Chinese will drop the word "because" and goes right after the word "because." Also, this sentence is much longer than an omitted subtitle. Such lengthy subtitles not only make the audience watch too much in time but also take up large screen space.

(9) Original text：I ask you, what man will want to marry a girl who flits around rooftops.

Translated text：我就问你,哪个男人敢娶她这样的姑娘。

Back translation from Chinese to English: I'll ask you what man would dare marry a girl like her.

When Mulan was a little girl, she went to the roof to catch chickens. At night when the two were resting in the bedroom, Mulan's mother said to her father. "Who flits around rooftops" was omitted in the translation of the subtitles. Because audiences already knew why her mother said that when they watched the previous clip. So Omitted In the original text, there is some useless information. Because this information is not important to the audience's understanding and will not have an impact on the film.

(10) Original text: She has trained an elite force of shadow warriors to assist Bori Khan.

Translated text: 她训练了一批精炼的暗影武士

Back translation from Chinese to English: She trained a group of refined shadow warriors.

This happened when the minister was reporting to the emperor the muscle of the Rouran army. "To assist Bori Khan" is omitted because the audience already knows that the army is loyal to Buri Khan (emperor of the minority). According to the earlier movie plot, the witch with Rouran soldiers attacks the border town. Therefore, if translate it word by word according to English subtitles, it will not

only take up space on the screen but also make the audience feel that the subtitles are verbose. As a result, the audience's feeling of the film is trouble.

(11) Original text: you were exiled.

Translated text: 流离失所。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Displaced.

This is what Buri Khan (the emperor of the minority people) said when he told the story of the witch and comforted her. The "you were" is omitted here. If the translator had not used omission strategy, the subtitle would have been translated into“你是流离失所的 （You are displaced.）”. Such the translation does not coincide with the Chinese way of speaking. Besides, “流离失所（Displaced）”is a four-character idiom in China, and it is not added words anymore in the front of the four-character idioms in the Chinese way of speaking. Therefore, it is very appropriate for the translator to adopt the strategy of omission in the translation of this sentence.

Through the above case study of subtitle translation using omission strategy, we can understand that under normal circumstances, due to the limited size of screen space and the speed of letter broadcasting, a strategy of omission is the best choice for translation. There is some theoretical support for this view. Yao ( 2014:147 ) has suggested that “the translator should take into account that the audience should not spend too much time to understand when reading the subtitles, try to use single-line translation, and avoid the continuous occurrence of two-line subtitles, which will cause the audience's eyes to be tired.”

In conclusion, through the case study of omission strategy, we can know that strategy of omission can solve the problem that subtitle translation is limited in space and time. But we should also follow the principle of omitting subtitles. After the analysis and induction of the case, we can know that the omission strategy generally follows these principles. First, leave out unnecessary words such as pronouns. Second, express complex sentences with simple meanings. Finally, use idioms appropriately. It should be noted that these analyses have a good reference value for other film subtitle translations. 4.6 The method of humorous translation in Mulan (2020) American humor in dialogues makes the film humorous and lively. In the film Mulan (2020) 4 instances of humor were identified. Further on, we will analyze the most illustrative examples of humorous translation:

*Table 6 Data of humorous translation*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by humor** | **4/200** | **2%** |

The film uses Chinese Kung Fu as the theme has a great market prospect in China, so in order to attract more Chinese audiences, the application of Skopos theory can help Chinese audiences better understand the American humor in this movie. We can use some examples to illustrate the humor of the subtitles:

(13) Original text：Need a hand, little man?

Translated text：起来吧,小锉子。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Get up, Dwarf.

This sentence happened when Mulan was bumped into by her peers, Honghui called her Shorty. A humorous translation of "little man" as "小锉子(Shorty)". It makes the movie more witty and interesting.

(14) Original text：I like kissing women with cherry red lips

Translated text：我喜欢樱桃小嘴的姑娘。

Back translation from Chinese to English: I like girls with a cherry mouth.

This sentence happened when Mulan was discussing with her fellow soldiers what kind of girls she liked. The translator translates it as " 樱桃小嘴(a cherry mouth)" which is both funny and pictorial.

(15) Original text: Ling is a romantic!

Translated text: 田岭真是多情！

Back translation from Chinese to English: Tianling is really affectionate!

For the subtitle, the soldiers said to warrior Tianling when he was telling about his fiancee. The word “多情(affectionate)” in the Chinese language is tinged with humor. This is usually used to make fun of the fact that the thought that someone is saying is only the thought that the person is saying, but the loved one doesn't think so. Moreover, to transfer into “多情(affectionate)”, it can also show that they have a very good relationship, as in the Chinese language, well-connected people can speak it. Finally, it also fits in with the scene of the movie fragment.

(16) Original text: Mulan, forget the chicken.

Translated text: 木兰！别追那只鸡了！

Back translation from Chinese to English: Mulan! Stop chasing that chicken!

This subtitle is at the beginning of the movie when Mulan was a little girl. The translator translated "forget" into “别追 (stop chasing) ” . In the Chinese language, "chase" generally symbolizes lively, smart, and agile, which has a funny color. In addition, the character “追(chase)” also

vividly shows the humorous scene of Mulan catching a chicken. It also reflects the character of Mulan. Thus, without a humorous translation, it would have been translated "木兰，忘了这只鸡。(Mulan, forget the chicken.)". Then it will lose the happy atmosphere when Mulan catches the chicken.

The data in Table 6 shows that there are a few humorous translation strategies in this movie. This data proves that humorous translation strategies are often not adopted by translators when language conversion of movies introduced from target language countries involves movies with a lot of traditional and strong cultures. Because according to Cai ( 2000: 56) has said that "humorous translation methods tend to make a lot of cultural loss". However, through the above specific cases, we can find out that humor translation still plays an important role in the movie. Namely, when the audience hears this subtitle which is translated by the strategy of humorous translation, it often attracts the audience's interest and causes the audience to laugh. Therefore, in the process of translating these subtitles, if there no humorous translation in movies rather than translating literally from English to Chinese. Consequently, through the examples listed above, we can analyze that adopting a humorous translation method is very important to achieve the expected level of translation.

All things considered, humorous language plays a very important role in people's daily life. Additionally, in intercultural communication, the translation of humorous language has been paid much attention by many scholars. Although humor translation is difficult to operate, its translatability is indisputable. In particular, the humorous language in subtitles can help ordinary audiences without language and cultural background to understand and appreciate English movies.

### 4.7 The method of idioms, allusions translation in *Mulan* (2020)

In *Mulan*, the translator uses a great deal of Chinese four-character idioms and Chinese allusions to show the characters of the film's dialog.

*Table 7 Data of idioms, allusions*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by idioms, allusions** | **21/200** | **11%** |

The Chinese four-character idioms and Chinese proverbs are essences of Chinese culture. They are unique forms of language structure in Chinese languages. On the side of content, they are concise and to the point; on the side of pronunciation, they are catchy and having lasting appeal; on the side of the form, they are orderly rows. There are some examples:

Example of idioms:

(17) Original text：Her chi is beyond imagining. Translated text：此人的元气深不可测。

Back translation from Chinese to English: The man's strength is unfathomable.

This sentence happened after the officer reported to the emperor that there was a witch in Rouran. If you do not use the four-character idiom translation method, it will be translated as "超出想 象 (unexpected)". But the translator translated it into a four-character idiom, which not only expresses the meaning of the context but also makes the language concise and comprehensive.

In addition to the use of idioms, translators also use allusions to translate. To illustrate this shift, see the following example:

(18) Original text：Four ounces can move, pounds. Translated text：四两拨千斤。

Back translation from Chinese to English: A little strength overcomes a great strength

This sentence takes place after Hua Mulan is discovered to be a woman by the soldiers, but she still musters up the courage to tell them how to deal with Rouran's tactics. The translator translated this sentence into a Chinese proverb. Because in the long history of China, as a form of culture, proverbs play a unique role in language expression. Proverbs generally concise, popular, rich in philosophy, so that even people who have not read many books, use this language, have reached a very skilled degree, from which we can see the wide adaptability and strong vitality of proverbs.

(19) Original text: Slaughtered!

Translated text: 惨遭杀戮

Back translation from Chinese to English: Massacre on a massive scale.

This subtitle adopts the translation strategy of idioms and allusions. And This word happened when the emperor asked the minister how the border people were because of the invasion of the Rouran army, the minister replied. If the translator does not use the translation of idiom, the subtitle will be translated as "屠杀（Killing）". According to the plot of the previous movie, the Rouran army burned, killed, looted, and plundered the border civilians. Obviously, the translation into "屠杀(Killing)" does not illustrate the huge damage that the Rouran army has caused to the border civilians. Therefore, the strategy of idioms and allusions translation is the most appropriate method for this subtitle.

(20) Original text: We're not afraid of dark magic.
Translated text: 邪魔巫术不足为惧。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Witchcraft is nothing to be feared.

Similarly, this sentence still adopts the translation strategy of idioms and allusions. This word was made after the minister told the emperor that Rouran had a powerful army. And emperor had a response. For "不足为惧(nothing to be feared)", in the Chinese language, means that it is not worth worrying or fearing for something. Usually with a contemptuous attitude towards the enemy. In addition, Chinese four-character idioms also have the function of emphasizing a certain tone. Therefore, "not afraid of"is translated into "不足为惧 (nothing to be feared)". The method translation is very consistent with the aspect and tone of the emperor shown in the movie.

Ma (1997: 82) has said that "an idiom is a unique form of the phrase in Chinese, which has a distinct sense of semantic image". Therefore, we should use it in subtitle translation to improve the level of the works and the audience's aesthetic taste. Through the above case can strongly confirm this point of view. Throughout the movie, the use of Chinese idioms and allusions is only a few short Chinese characters. But these short few Chinese characters often contain a period of history or truth. Therefore, people familiar with idioms and allusions, when they hear idioms, those historical events and historical figures will appear vividly before their eyes; Those who are not familiar with history will understand the extended meaning of the idiom.

In short, due to the particularity of its form, film and television subtitles have the characteristics of popularity, service, limited time and space, etc., so the translation should follow the principles of conciseness and understandability. Chinese idioms and allusions are short and piquant, with distinct meanings and rich contents. When translating English film subtitles, the use of Chinese idioms and allusions can play a concise, understandable, and prominent role in literary brilliance.

### 4.8 The translation method of concentration in *Mulan* (2020)

The concentration method means translators can simplify some unimportant information and use some simple words to express the long dialogue, and stress the important information (Li 2014: 269 )

*Table 8 Data of concentration*

| Strategy | Instances | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| **Translation by concentration** | **17/200** | **9%** |

As can be seen from Table 4.8, many translation strategies adopt a centralized translation approach. However, in order to better understand the translator's choice of these translation strategies, it is necessary to analyze several examples.

(21) Original text: Assemble all Imperial guardsmen

Translated text: 立即传令。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Immediately command.

The subtitle was that the emperor heard that the Great Khan had infiltrated the imperial city, and he gave orders to the personnel concerned. If the translator translates word for word. It said, "召集所有皇家卫队,朕有些事情要让你们当中的相关人员去做。(Assembling all the Royal Guards, I have something for some of you concerned to do.)" If translated word by word, there is so much information that the audience can't grasp the main idea of the sentence. And the use of a centralized translation method, simple sentences can be understood by the audience, this will be more attractive.

(21) Original text: Proof that there is a place for people like us.

Translated text: 说明我们也是有立足之地的。

Back translation from Chinese to English: It means there is a place for us.

The subtitle of the story is that Mulan convinces the witch to return to the right path. The translator still adopts the method of centralized translation. The use of centralized translation can be similar to the above example. Not only can the sentences be concise and comprehensive, but it is easier for the audience to understand the characteristics of the characters. At the same time, it makes the film more attractive.

(22) Original text: Here's my decree.

Translated text: 传朕旨意。

Back translation from Chinese to English: Tell them what I want to.

For the subtitle, it was said when the emperor was about to recruit soldiers from the people. The translator adopts the strategy of concentrated translation. This translation is in line with the habit of the emperors of ancient China speaking when decreeing edicts. In ancient China, when an emperor issued an edict, The emperors would begin their command with these four words "传朕旨意 (Tell them what I want to)". If it will be translated into "这是我的法令。(That's my decree.)" according to the original subtitle "Here's my decree." to translate, it will make Chinese audiences feel very strange when watching movies with traditional Chinese culture, and they can not resonate with the movie.

(23) Original text: One man from every house.

Translated text: 每户一人。

Back translation from Chinese to English: One person per household.

This subtitle also adopts the strategy of concentrated translation. This sentence is happening at the conscription of the Imperial Army. The sentence would have been translated as "每个家庭需要有一个男人应征入伍。(Every family needed a man to be drafted into the army.)" without using the concentration strategy. This way of translation is very incorrect. First of all, according to the conscription system in ancient China, women were not allowed to join the army, so it is unnecessary to translate "男人 (man) " . Second, it is very proper for a unit of measure for the population of China to translate "every" into "每(per)". Finally, "One man from every house." is translated into " 每 户 一 人 (One person per household.) ". This is not only simple but also understandable to the Chinese audience.

Pass to concentration strategies in the collection and analysis of the case, we can see that kind of translation strategy, it is the translator in fully consider the cultural background of the target language audience, value idea, speech habits, and other factors from the perspective of the target language, on the basis of combined with the purpose of translation and the special case of the audience, from the original language provides multiple information for selective translation. However, it is important to note that the condensed translation strategy does not blindly reduce or delete the primitive information.

To sum up, we conclude that subtitle translation in this particular analysis often does not follow the original wording closely and applies different strategies to render the content in the most applicable way for the target audiences.

## V. CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to analyze and compare the cases of stylistically important elements and their translation strategies in the subtitles of the film *Mulan* (2020). To achieve the aim, first the Skopos theory of subtitle translation was discussed. The collected data was classified divided into six types: domestication strategy, foreignization strategy, omission strategy, humor translation strategy, idiom and allusion translation strategy, and concentration strategy. It was found that 73% of subtitle translations used domestication and foreignization strategies. However, it is worth mentioning that 61% of the domestication strategy is much higher than 12% of the foreignization strategy. Therefore, we can draw a conclusion that it is relatively safe and easy for people to accept domestication strategy in subtitle translation of other movies. This is because when a film is introduced from a certain country to other countries, the importing country will often adopt the domesticated way to conform to the thinking mode of people in its own country.

Moreover, it is worth noting that most culture-based subtitle translations generally use omission, idioms and allusions, and concentration translation methods. Using these methods is more in line with the Chinese way of language because Chinese people generally like to use a few words to form more complex sentences.

Humor translation is only 2%, so we can learn that humor translation strategies are rarely used in some cultural films with heavy cultural color, especially in traditional cultural films because using humor translation strategy to carry on the transformation, will make the cultural color disappear. Therefore, it can be concluded that the proper strategy combined with the translator's choice of words is the key to the successful transfer of subtitle translation. What is more, in the process of comparing the original subtitle and the translated subtitle, the translation strategy can be determined by analyzing the rules. For example, when translating long subtitles, the strategy of concentration can be adopted. When the subtitles are limited by time or space, the strategy of omitting or using idioms and allusions can be adopted. Admittedly, this method is also applicable to subtitle translation of other movies.

In addition, through the case analysis of Mulan (2020), we found that most of the translations adopt a subtitle translation strategy for conversion. Therefore, it can be shown that these strategies have the possibility and necessity of their application in subtitle translation. However, some translation problems were found after the study and analysis of the case. Before subtitle translation, the translator needs to have a deep understanding of the film, correctly understand the language phenomenon and logical relationship, and master certain background knowledge.

To continue with, through the analysis, in the process of subtitle translation, the style of the original text has also changed. It has been noted that the Chinese translation uses more formal words than the original. In addition, in some isolated cases where the translation strategy uses idioms and allusions, the translated text has no counterpart in the original (English) language.

The practical value of the analysis can be used as a practice for future translators, because they can identify the Skopos theology-based subtitle translation cases in film subtitles, identify the translation strategies used, and

whether they lead to the loss or transfer of the original meaning of the case. In addition, this study can be further studied by analyzing and comparing subtitle translation of advertisements, dubbing, documentaries, or other categories.

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