



**Cultural Adaptation in Game Localization: A Case study of
Black Myth: Wukong Based on Rewriting Theory**

游戏本地化中的文化适应——基于改写理论的《黑神话：悟空》
个案研究

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应用翻译学文学士（荣誉）学位课程

BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONOURS)

IN

APPLIED TRANSLATION STUDIES

毕业论文

Final Year Project

Cultural Adaptation in Game Localization: A Case study of *Black Myth: Wukong* Based on Rewriting Theory

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FINAL YEAR PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

BACHELOR OF ARTS IN APPLIED TRANSLATION STUDIES (HONOURS)

BEIJING NORMAL
– HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

April, 2025

Abstract

The given research adapts the rewriting theory of Andre Lefevere for the analysis of cultural adaptation in the English localization of the popular Chinese game *Black Myth: Wukong*. The theory deals with the translation and adaptation of the cultural elements into Western cultural values and ideologies. The current study has taken into consideration, for entertainment value and cultural relevance, names of characters and objects, cultural symbols, and mythological figures.

Keywords: *Rewriting theory, Cultural adaptation, Game localization, Black Myth: Wukong, Chinese mythology, Translation strategies*

BEIJING NORMAL -HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

April 2025

We hereby recommend that the Final Year Project by Ms. WANG Zi, Zoey entitled “Cultural Adaptation in Game Localization: A Case study of *Black Myth: Wukong* Based on Rewriting Theory” be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts (Honors) in Translation in Applied Translation Studies.

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Continuous Assessment: _____

Product Grade: _____

Overall Grade: _____

Acknowledgments

The Final Year Project was my own original work and was carried out by myself under the supervision of Dr. CHEN Zhuojia. Here I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dr. CHEN Zhuojia, whose patient help and encouragement have been essential to the accomplishment of this project.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Dr. SONG Ge, who gave me invaluable guidance and advice for my final year project. He helped me build my confidence when I was writing it. In addition, I am grateful to my mother, all of my friends, especially Asteria, who is my roommate and one of my best friends. Without you, I cannot finish this project with enjoyment. Thank all you guys for always supporting me and giving me power.

Last but not least, I would like to express my thankfulness to one person the most. I would not mention her name, but she is my soulmate and the most essential person in my heart. Although she is not by my side, she gave me the most important support, company and encouragement, both physically and mentally. When I was down, she helped me cheer up and told me that I can do it, and I am the best. Thank you so much for always giving me unconditional support and love.



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Date: April, 2025

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1. Introduction

Black Myth: Wukong (BM) is a Chinese action role-play game. Players play as “The Destined One” in the third person perspective, with the weapon Jin Gu Bang. Players also can learn the traditional Chinese magic and use spells. The background story of the game is based on *Journey to the West*, one of the four great classical novels of Chinese literature. Players need to retrace their journey to the West in search of the truth. The game scenes are shot in many places in China, especially in Shanxi, where there are 27 locations, and the details of ancient buildings are highly restored.

BM contains rich Chinese culture. First of all, the game is based on the myths and legends of *Journey to the West*, with many classic characters and stories. For example, character names and object names of the game retain the original style, reflecting the unique beauty of Chinese culture. Secondly, cultural symbols and mythological figures in this game are also of great concern. The protagonist Wukong’s unyielding, righteous and kind character reflects the traditional Chinese philosophy, and the game shows rich elements of Taoist culture and Buddhist culture. At the same time, the game scene makes a large number of references to ancient Chinese buildings, showing the charm of Chinese architectural art.

Meanwhile, *BM* is highly meticulous in terms of localization. For different target markets, game companies need to make appropriate localization adjustments to game content, including language translation, cultural adaptation, etc. (Liang *et al.*, 2024). To help foreign players better understand the game content and cultural background, the game’s official offers multi-language support, including twelve languages and two voice support (simplified Chinese and English). The official also provides detailed

explanations and annotations for the cultural elements within the game. Such a considerate design has significantly reduced cultural barriers, enabling more foreign players to deeply experience and understand Chinese culture (Liang *et al.*, 2024).

Overseas, *BM* received high attention and widespread acclaim. The game not only inspires overseas players' enthusiasm for Chinese culture but also breaks the monopoly of triple-A games in Europe and the United States and improves the international competitiveness of Chinese games. Therefore, analyzing how cultural elements can be adapted to conform to overseas players' cultural and ideological preferences is of great importance.

1.1 Research Objects

In the context of game localization, the translation of character names and object names is a task that goes beyond simple lexical substitution. It demands a profound understanding of the characters' personalities in the game's cultural narrative. Similarly, for cultural symbols and mythological figures, the translation should not only convey the literal meaning but also reveal the significance and how they are related to *BM*'s story line or cultural background.

1.1.1 Character Names and Object Names

Games localization is not just about translating games from one language to another. In game localization, it is important to understand the specific culture, customs, and traditions of the target users before localizing the game system from the original version to the localized version (Pyae, 2018). Character and object names in *BM* are

selected as research objects because they are at the core of carrying the cultural narrative of the game and may also reshape the cultural meaning across different languages during localization.

1.1.2 Cultural Symbols and Mythological Figures

Culture and politics also need to be taken into consideration during game localization. This includes the character's appearance, game mechanism, and objects used inside the game (Dong and Mangiron, 2018). Many elements of *BM* are rich in the connotation of excellent traditional Chinese culture. If there is not enough flexibility for localization according to the target market, it may probably lose the idea of the game. Therefore, when translating, translators must learn to strike a balance between preserving their own culture and being flexible in localization (Mao, 2024). The research will discuss how the cultural icons and storytelling of mythologies can be formed within the storyline of the video game and its presentation in section 5.2.

1.2 Aim and Scope of the Study

BM has a strong traditional Chinese cultural background. When targeting Western audiences, this presents a significant localization challenge. The present study is an attempt to investigate how these cultural elements in the game can be adapted to fit the cultural and ideological preferences of Western players yet still retain its original entertainment and cultural value. The research is guided by the rewriting theory and takes the English version of *BM* as a case study in which cultural elements are explored

with the purpose of translating these elements into fitting the Western cultural values and belief systems.

The major purpose of a game is to entertain, which attaches high importance to the emotional engagement of users; hence, its translation strategy must fit the entertainment needs and cultural traditions of the target culture. It is necessary to make in-depth adaptations of cultural elements so that users can better assimilate and integrate into the game on a cultural level (O'Hagan, 2015). To achieve this aim, a profound adaptation of cultural elements is required to enable Western players to integrate into the game. In particular, it includes a detailed exploration of the naming of characters and objects, cultural symbols, and mythological references. It therefore seeks to explore which translation and adaptation methodologies have served to provide communication with western audiences in a way that also preserves original cultural elements of the game.

Therefore, this study will study how translation strategies give entertainment value to cultural symbols in games and arouse cultural resonance among players in different cultural backgrounds.

According to the theory, there are indications of the dominating ideology playing major role in translation as well. One of the core ideas of rewriting theory is that translation behavior is ideologically influenced. Translation is another rewriting that is driven by the ideology and poetics of those who hold a certain power in a culture or who wish to do so through rewriting (Lefevere, 2017). Ideological influences have affected the English localization process of *BM* because of the potential biases introduced by the translator's and the target audiences' cultural background, the

socio-political environment, and market demands. Localization at the same time is to keep the cultural elements of the original game and align with Western culture and politics.

2. Literature Review

With the rapid development of the game industry, research into game localization has been on the increase over the past two decades. Existing studies have primarily focused on technical challenges (Dong and Mangiron, 2018), linguistic adjustments (Teo, 2017), and general cultural adaptation strategies (Pyae, 2018).

However, a notable research gap remains regarding the insufficient examination of how certain Chinese cultural and mythological symbols are adjusted for Western viewers (Dong and Mangiron, 2018). While studies like Liang et al. (2024) and Mao (2024) have touched on the cultural value of *BM*, they have not thoroughly investigated the translation methods used to address ideological differences between Chinese and Western contexts, such as adapting symbolic meanings or balancing cultural priorities.

Most existing literature on game localization relies on general frameworks such as Skopos theory (Vermeer, 1996) or descriptive translation studies (O'Hagan, 2006). However, limited efforts have combined these frameworks with Lefevere's rewriting theory—that is to say, the way cultural elements are adjusted due to ideological or commercial pressures (Lefevere, 2017). This oversight restricts our understanding of how translators manage cultural authenticity against market demands, particularly for games based on classical Chinese stories.

Previous studies have generally not emphasized the ideological aspects of game localization, particularly about the Sino-Western cultural relations. Although Venuti's (1993) concept of domestication/foreignization has been applied to literary translation, its practical implications for game localization remain underdeveloped. This study addresses this by looking at how *BM*'s localization team handles cultural-political

tensions through naming conventions and symbolic adjustments, which reflects broader market strategies.

The research puts forward three primary points of contribution. Lefevre's rewriting theory unites with purpose-driven conceptual frameworks for analysis of cultural content modifications towards Western ideologies while maintaining original meaning retention. The isolation of theoretical application in present-day research produces an inadequate explanatory strength. This unified method investigates both functional targets with ideological changes simultaneously.

The second primary contribution results from conducting a thorough analysis of BM as an exemplar study. The research uses this analysis to highlight precise translation techniques the study defines for mythological figures and cultural symbols including deity renaming and historical reference reinterpretation. Through the study the paper examines the ideological purposes behind game localization decisions that enable cross-cultural communication. The study opposes the assumption that Western markets hold total dominance in international gaming industries (O'Hagan, 2015) by showing cultural situations exist in between Western and Eastern influences.

The study utilizes practical examples together with theoretical research to fill significant gaps in academic discussions that exist today. Through functional examples the research details effective techniques for heritage communication which involve localized methods of adaptation that show cultural adjustments for international viewers.

3. Theoretical Framework

The research adopts Andre Lefevere's rewriting theory as well as Hans Vermeer's Skopos theory as its theoretical basis to examine cultural adaptation within *BM's* English localization. The unified method offers a holistic examination of cultural element transformations which occur under ideological demands and market forces and functional requirements.

3.1 Rewriting Theory

Translation functions as rewriting according to Lefevere (2017). The translation process depends heavily on ideological factors and poetic aspects in addition to power relationships between translators and receivers. Ideology refers to the belief systems of the intended readership. The target culture determines translational conventions known as poetics and translators use their power to either break or reinforce controlling cultural narratives. Writing theory approaches translation differently because it treats the act of translation as cultural intervention which deforms the original content to fulfill target reader expectations.

Lefevere (1995) declares that every reinterpretation process unavoidably incorporates target cultural norms along with inherent values. Venuti (1993) shows how various adaptation methods develop through cultural preservation needs to maintain accuracy in his analysis of translation adaptation strategies.

3.2 Skopos Theory

Skopos theory complements Lefevere's framework in this study. Skopos theory posits that translation purpose dictates strategy (Vermeer, 1996). Skopos theory involves three principles. First is Skopos rule, which is a strategy aligning with localization goals, such as adding cultural annotations. Second rule is coherence rule. It means translations coherent within target contexts. The last rule is fidelity rule. It requires the translation maintaining source intent while adapting form. In game localization, these principles ensure translations remain both culturally accessible and immersive. For *BM*, this means adapting to Western cultural expectations while safeguarding the unique cultural significance of Chinese elements. In *BM*'s localization, decisions are guided by two primary objectives, preserving cultural essence and ensuring market compatibility. Cultural preservation may involve retaining Chinese terms to counter Western stereotypes. Market compatibility requires adapting to Western gaming conventions.

3.3 Ideological Dynamics in Translation

A critical extension of Lefevere's theory in this study is its application to Sino-Western geopolitical contexts. While Lefevere (2017) focuses on broad ideological influences, this research contextualizes ideology within contemporary Sino-Western relations, recognizing that translation choices are shaped by diplomatic situation and power dynamics.

If Sino-Western relations show a friendly trend, the cultural exchange will go very smoothly. The strategy of translation may tend to literal translation with more cultural features. The promotion of foreignizing translation does not mean ignoring the cultural and political purposes it is about constructing a translation method that could

resist or challenge the conventional orientation of the cultural features targeting the language. In this way, the unique language and culture of the original can stand out (Venuti, 1993). For example, for the character of Wukong, the translator can use the transliteration “Wukong” and explain his cultural background in detail in the game introduction or related text. This way of translation can not only maintain the original taste of Chinese culture but also promote the cultural exchange and mutual understanding between China and the United States.

When Sino-Western relations is tense, cultural transmission may face more obstacles. Translation strategies in such cases may be more permissive to paraphrasing or setting aside the source text to adapt more closely to the target culture, thus avoiding potential cultural conflicts and political risks. Translation is the forcible replacement of the cultural difference of the foreign text with a text that will be intelligible to the target-language reader (Venuti, 1993). For example, some culturally or religiously sensitive content will need to be handled more carefully by the localization team and may even need to remove or modify some content to suit the political needs of Western markets.

In controlling such complexity in game localization, this research framework will build a multi-factor analysis framework. The following framework incorporates not only the cultural and ideological aspects but also the preference of target players and market trends. For example, in translating cultural symbols or mythological figures, translators need to make sure that it is clear enough and friendly to the players.

In summary, this theoretical framework embeds the essential rules of rewriting theory with the practical aspects of other theories, like the Skopos theory. This thus lays

a solid foundation for analyzing the cultural adaptation in the English localization of *BM* and paves the way for subsequent research steps to delve more deeply into translation strategies and their cultural implications within this specific game localization context.

4. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research method to explore the cultural adaptation in the English localization of *BM*. This will allow an in-depth insight into the complex cultural and linguistic features embodied in the game.

4.1 Data Collection

4.1.1 Game Text Analysis

Data sources include official game materials, documentation related to localization, and online player communities. The English version was accessed through the game platform (version 1.2.3), providing access to character details, item explanations, and story dialogues. Supplementary materials from official websites and social media accounts (e.g., Steam, Weibo) were reviewed alongside in-game content. Online forums including Chinese gaming communities were studied to identify cultural aspects that attracted particular attention from global players.

To ensure accuracy, the Chinese source text was cross-referenced with the English version using screen captures and transcriptions. Discrepancies in translation were documented and categorized according to Lefevere's (2017) ideological dimension.

4.1.2 Cultural Element Identification

Cultural elements were identified through a two-step process, in-game analysis and contextual validation. Key cultural symbols like Loong, Kasaya and mythological figures, Wukong, Bullguard were first identified based on their frequency of appearance

and narrative significance. About the academic literature (Liang *et al.*, 2024; Mao, 2024) and media reports were used to verify the cultural and ideological importance of these elements. For example, the translation of 赤髯龙 as “The Red Loong” was corroborated by official statements emphasizing the need to differentiate Chinese dragon mythology from Western stereotypes.

4.2 Textual Analysis

The current research undertakes a detailed comparative textual analysis of the Chinese and English versions of the game. As Minako and O’Hagan (2015) pointed out, the nature of the localization process in itself demands an in-depth analysis with regard to language use and cultural references specific to a game. The character names, object names, cultural symbols, and mythological figures will be targeted in this research. These research objects are rich in cultural implications and can reveal how translators manage the transfer of cultural meaning.

4.3 Case Studies

Case studies concerning naming of key characters and objects are carried out. Specific examples would prove to be very necessary for understanding the translation strategies (O’Hagan, 2006). By closely examining cases such as the translation of “悟空” to “Wukong” and “如意金箍棒” to “Jin Gu Bang”, the researchers can analyze the reasons behind the chosen translation methods and their impact on cultural communication. Through these case studies, the researcher can draw more detailed and specific conclusions about the cultural adaptation in the game localization process.

5. Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Analysis of Character Names and Object Names

In the context of game localization, character names and object names constitute fundamental elements that bear significant cultural implications. In the rewriting theory, the translation of these entities is a highly complex process, for the reason that translation is as an elaborate cultural adaptation procedure deeply intertwined with ideological and cultural considerations.

Table 1. Translation examples of character names and object names

	ST	TT
Character Names	悟空	Wukong
	唐三藏	Tang Sanzang
	猪八戒	Zhu Bajie
	沙和尚	Sha Heshan
	牛魔王	Bullguard
Object Names	如意金箍棒	Jin Gu Bang
	法宝	Magical Treasure
	九环锡杖	Nine-Ringed Tin Staff
	仙丹	Elixir/Potion of Immortality

The character “悟空” serves as a classical case. In the English version *BM*, “悟空” is translated as “Wukong” rather than “Monkey King”. This translation retains Chinese cultural elements. “Wukong” is the protagonist in the Chinese classical *Journey to the West*, whose name has gained international popularity and recognition as a masterpiece.

Therefore, the literal translation “Wukong” is more helpful for foreign players to quickly establish the cognitive and emotional connection with the character than simply translating it into “Monkey King”. The translation “Wukong” represents a retention of the Chinese pinyin. This approach is in strict accordance with the theoretical principle of maintaining a tangible connection to the source culture. When Western players initiate their engagement with the game and encounter the name “Wukong”, the distinctiveness of the pinyin immediately captures their attention. It functions as an alien yet alluring signifier, prompting them to explore its cultural roots. As Lefevere (2017) has underscored, the cultural background plays a core role in translation. Preserving the translation “Wukong” is not only a kind of respect for the character’s entrenched position within Chinese mythology but also provides Western players with a starting point to explore Chinese culture.

The translation of “唐三藏” as “Tang Sanzang” is also based on a similar principle. Using the pinyin is indicative of the attempt to stand in continuity with the history and cultural associations of Tang Dynasty. The name alone is almost an entrance to the historical and cultural features of ancient China. The particular historical context allows the users to be associated with a specific context and hence have a deeper understanding of a character on his journey into magic, in which he takes an indispensable part in that story. This translation demonstrates the sensitive awareness of the translator in regard to cultural preservation while also targeting cross-cultural intelligibility.

Other characters' name, such as Zhu Bajie (猪八戒) and Sha Heshan (沙和尚), are directly translated by using pinyin so as to preserve the characteristics and recognition of their cultural features.

The translation of “牛魔王” as “Bullguard” reflects ideological adaptation (Lefevere, 2017) and Skopos theory's coherence rule (Vermeer, 1996). The term “Bullguard” aligns with Western cultural perceptions of power and authority. “Bull” is a physical attribute and “guard” represents a kind of function. By combining “bull” and “guard”, the localization team aligns with Western perceptions of power while avoiding negative connotations of “ox”, emphasizing the character's protective role. As for the poetic norms, the compound noun “Bullguard” adheres to English naming conventions for mythical creatures like Dragonborn, Wolfguard, ensuring coherence with the game's fantasy genre. Vermeer (1996) points out that translation should achieve two main goals: cultural preservation and market suitability. The translation “Bullguard” keeps the symbolic meaning. It also makes the character's role clear to Western players by combining the image of bulls' strength and the concept of protection suggested by “guard”. This method not only respects the original cultural symbolism but also fits the naming habits of Western fantasy games. While deviating from literal translation (“牛” = “ox”), “Bullguard” preserves the character's core identity as a powerful, guardian-like figure, embodying the Fidelity rule.

This case demonstrates how Lefevere's ideological and poetic dimensions, combined with Skopos theory's dual goals of authenticity and accessibility, guide strategic rewriting in game localization. This choice reflects *BM*'s localization strategy to balance authenticity and accessibility. Official annotations clarify that “牛魔王”

represents a “majestic bull spirit protecting ancient temples,” aligning “Bullguard” with both cultural context and player expectations (Liang *et al.*, 2024). This approach reflects Venuti’s (1993) concept of strategic foreignization, where domestication of form coexists with cultural explanation to resist ideological dominance.

Speaking of names of objects, the translation of “如意金箍棒” as “Jin Gu Bang” keeps the legend of the prop and represents a stroke in maintaining cultural uniqueness. This is how the translators skillfully use language to keep the cultural distinctiveness of the object in line with the cultural adaptation principle of the rewriting theory.

The translation of “法宝” uses domestication to improve reader understanding. The Chinese word “法宝” refers to “dharma treasure” but really translates as Magical Treasure through modern game terminology for Western players to easily understand its gameplay. The translation choice demonstrates Skopos theory’s functional orientation because it prioritizes accurate meaning within the new context.

The translation of “九环锡杖” as “Nine-Ringed Tin Staff” uses direct translation alongside cultural background explanations. The Buddhist artistic meaning remains preserved through a literal translation of the phrase “九环”. The translators changed “锡杖” to “Tin Staff” to make it harmonize with European religious terms. The developers chose this approach to maintain the cultural meaning along with clarity to players who do not understand Buddhist symbols according to Vermeer’s (1996) fidelity rule.

The game term “仙丹” appears as “Elixir/Potion of Immortality” within the translated version. In Chinese the term 仙丹 translates into “immortality elixir” through its direct translation as “仙丹”. The localization team combines terms with functional explanations to fulfill two requirements by maintaining cultural authenticity

along with clear gameplay context definitions. The approach complements BM's plan of adding context-based notes to promote understanding across cultures (Liang et al., 2024).

The adaptation approach toward names of characters and items shows satisfactory implementation of cultural adaptation principles. The adaptation process maintains cultural elements in place while supplying Western-friendly packaging to achieve complete understanding by players. Such methods help develop methods for cultural symbol exchange across countries through gaming without distorting their authentic meanings.

5.2 Analysis of Cultural Symbols and Mythological Figures

The traditional cultural values of China are deeply rooted within mythological symbols and cultural representations used in *BM*. The careful and systematic treatment stands essential for all translation and adaptation work in *BM*.

The translation process of cultural symbols alongside mythological figures in *BM* creates essential points where ideological factors meet poetic practices with power relationships according to Lefevere's (2017) theory of rewriting. This section provides real-life examples which show how theoretical frameworks affect functional choices in transferring content across regional boundaries.

Skopos Theory serves as a crucial element of this particular framework. Vermeer (1996) explains through Skopos theory all translations consist of purpose-driven actions that direct which methods and techniques will be employed. The decision about cultural representation in video games between literal preservation and players' access depends

on translators' evaluation of uniqueness recognition and cultural exchange versus user experience and player understanding. The decision-making process in game localization revolves around managing various priorities according to symbol position in the gaming world.

5.2.1 Cultural Symbols

The religious concepts 佛教 (Buddhism), 道教 (Taoism), and 轮回 (Reincarnation) contain heavy ideological along with religious meaning. The translation of Buddhist symbolism highlights Lefevere's (1995) view that rewriting follows target culture poetic standards.

Table 2. Translation examples of cultural symbols

ST	TT
佛教	Buddhism
道教	Taoism
经文	Sutras/Scriptures
袈裟	Kasaya
禅定	Meditation/Zen
香火	Incense
轮回	Reincarnation

For example, “袈裟” is translated as “Kasaya”. The term “Kasaya” is retained from Pali, the liturgical language of Theravada Buddhism. This choice aligns with established terminology in Western religious studies. It avoids direct translation like “Buddhist robe”, which might confuse players unfamiliar with monastic attire.

Maintaining this term preserves the original religious context and ensures consistency with existing English-language Buddhist texts, thus achieving ideological neutrality in translation.

For “禅定”, the translation “Meditation/Zen” combines two approaches. “Meditation” provides a direct functional translation, while “Zen” introduces a familiar cultural reference. This dual translation acknowledges the cultural specificity of Buddhist practice while adapting to Western audiences’ familiarity with “Zen” as a broader philosophical concept.

5.2.2 Mythological Figures

Mythological figures pose particular difficulties. Foreign athletes struggle to interpret the cultural meanings associated with these mythical characters. The employment of creative translation methods helps challenge dominant cultural power by Lefevere (2017).

Table 3. Translation examples of mythological figures

ST	TT
黑熊精	Black Bear Guai
赤髯龙	The Red Loong
幽魂	Wandering Wight
白衣秀士	Whiteclad Noble
黑风大王	Black Wind King
波里个浪	Baw-Li-Guhh-Lang

The translation of “黑熊精” uses both literal translation with transliteration by becoming “Black Bear Guai.” The Chinese mythological term “Guai” has been kept in place since “妖怪 (yaoguai)” refers to enigmatic beings with uncertain moral character. The localization team achieved translation goals when they merged the explanatory “Black Bear” approach with the transliteration “Guai” term. The hybrid translation method retains the mythological core of the story by incorporating a literal Chinese term “Guai” that maintains the original meanings but distinguishes it from the Western term “monsters” which has stronger negative connotations. According to Lefevere (2017) the translating process serves as an ideological challenge which enables Chinese mythology to demonstrate its unique identity.

Similarly, translating “龙” as “Loong” instead of “Dragon” addresses a significant cultural misperception. In Chinese culture, 龙 symbolizes power and auspiciousness, whereas "Dragon" in English typically denotes malevolent beasts. This choice asserts cultural authority and aligns with Venuti's (1993) concept of foreignization, resisting domestication to preserve cultural authenticity. “Loong” is a symbol of power and good fortune in Chinese culture, quite different from the often negative image associated with the Western dragon. The choice of “Loong”, following the purpose of Chinese voice and the criteria put forward by the theoretical framework, rectifies the misleading presentation of Chinese cultural signs in Western translations. Besides, the move reflects not only the translators' awareness of cultural difference but also the carrying out of the Skopos theory. By using “Loong”, translators try to increase the cultural authenticity of the game, which helps in cross-cultural understanding among players, not forgetting the general purpose of the game localization.

5.2.3 Hybrid Strategies

Some translations employ hybrid strategies that reconcile Lefevere's ideological and poetic dimensions.

The translation of “波里个浪” as “Baw-Li-Guhh-Lang” follows a sound-based adaptation approach. The naming technique maintains Western audience pronunciation together with Chinese phonemes when preserving the original sounds. The method enables users to replicate Chinese pronunciation without accessing pinyin systems to provide cultural retention possibilities during international interactions. The utilized translation strategies prove valuable in game localization because they adapt to specific requirements while following adaptive rewriting theory principles. An accessible game translation ensures the essential target market goal of offering better accessibility alongside market appeal. The translation approach maintains cultural values by choosing sound similarity above direct text meaning while meeting essential practical needs which Skopos theory's coherence rule supports.

The term “Whiteclad Noble” translates scholarly titles from Chinese tradition into Western feudal titles. The game's artistic language provides support for this naming standard which discreetly delivers cultural information. The approach adheres to Vermeer's (1996) fidelity rule by maintaining the character's social position while transforming the presentation.

In conclusion, the translation and adaptation of cultural symbols and mythological figures in *BM* is a highly complex task, which require the translators to have profound knowledge both in Chinese and Western cultures and apply the principles of the theoretical framework, especially the integration of rewriting theory and Skopos theory

in making judicious translation decisions. In doing so, it will be capable of effectively communicating the rich cultural symbols to the Western players and achieve the task of cross-cultural communication with success, hence making a great contribution to the field of game localization and cultural dissemination.

5.3 Key Translation Strategies Identified

Based on the case studies, three dominant strategies emerged, each aligned with the theoretical framework.

The first translation strategy is Phonetic Transliteration (e.g., “Wukong,” “Loong”). It is based on Lefevere’s poetic norms and Venuti’s foreignization. In this way, the translators introduce authentic Chinese terms while ensuring phonetic accessibility.

The second main strategy is Functional Domestication (e.g., “Bullguard,” “Magical Treasure”), which takes Skopos theory’s coherence rule as its theoretical basis. Therefore, the game can enhance player comprehension without sacrificing core cultural meaning.

The third dominant strategy is Hybrid Adaptation, for example, “Baw-Li-Guhh-Lang,” and “Whiteclad Noble”. This strategy theoretically bases on the interplay of Lefevere’s ideology/power and Skopos fidelity rule so that the translation balances cultural retention with contextual explanation under geopolitical pressures.

5.4 Discussion

This study has provided substantial and sufficient evidence on the practical application of rewriting theory and Skopos theory in game localization through a detailed exploration of the translation of character names, object names, cultural symbols, and mythological figures. It has clearly revealed that the maintenance of the delicate balance between the preservation of cultural symbols and accommodation to the comprehension of the target audience is not only a feasible objective but also a necessary prerequisite for successful culture dissemination. This achievement has been particularly important in developing the theoretical understanding of the translation and adaptation of elements of culture, bringing new vision and practical examples. All of which can help to further refine and expand the existing theories of translation, thus forming a more solid foundation for further research in this respect.

Regarding the wider application of the insights gained, a remarkable potential is revealed in the case of game localization for other games that are full of cultural content, where strategies that have already been successfully applied in *BM* can be used as very useful reference and guideline. The way cultural elements are handled in this game can inspire game developers and translators to effectively present their products to international audiences while protecting their unique cultural identities. Guided by these principles and practices identified in this study, they can enhance the cultural appeal and global acceptance of their games, which in turn can facilitate cross-cultural interaction and understanding within the gaming community.

The film translator might adopt similar strategies in ensuring that the cultural context and symbolism are passed on to the international audience. Subtitles or dubbing

could be carefully crafted in a way that cultural explanations might be included where necessary without disturbing the viewing experience.

The current research on *BM* has enhanced not only our comprehension of the complex processes involved in game localization but also disclosed new perspectives for the use of this practice within the broad spectrum of activities in cultural translation and dissemination. Therefore, it enhances general importance and value for the research being carried out in view of promoting cross-cultural exchange and mutual understanding. This collection stands as testimony to the importance of interdisciplinary research in closing the gap between cultural studies and translation theory, while opening further avenues for exploration and innovation in the field of cultural adaptation. Further research may well continue from here and proceed with other cultural products and contexts, further refining the translation and adaptation strategies and expanding the scope of their application.

6. Conclusion

The study analyzes cultural adaptation elements in the English version of BM by showing how rewriting and Skopos theories drive translation choices. The analysis of Chinese authenticity maintains academic standards by identifying how cultural names and significant things challenge Western narrative standards during translation.

The main discovery shows how cultural fundamentals can harmonize with market comprehension. Analyzing cultural elements requires a new methodological approach which combines rewriting theory with Skopos theory to assess the changes produced by market and ideological forces. The data from case studies provides specific localization approaches which include transliteration and descriptive terms and sound adaptation that show practitioners practical ways to handle culture-specific content.

The beneficial analysis in this study deals with specific operational limitations. The detailed examination of texts in this investigation does not fully explore the impact of human elements which shape adaptation workflows when translators make decisions under cultural forces. Additional future research should incorporate interviews with localization teams to enhance knowledge of complex social interactions. The research would benefit from implementing additional qualitative analysis to expose concealed choices and procedures. Numerous real-world adaptation projects could benefit from implementing questionnaires for their players which would assess how references translate into practical gaming situations thus helping fill present research gaps.

Several research methodologies should be used in upcoming studies to resolve present gaps. Researchers should integrate observational studies which unite team interviews with discussion groups involving players to obtain direct experiences about

cultural reception. Academic researchers should extend their analysis to investigate cultural reception in Asian markets and African markets as a way to evaluate the global applicability of their framework. The analysis between cultural responses from Eastern and Western parts of the globe would likely provide useful insights. Research potential lies in monitoring user feedback development after game releases because this data shows how translation choices impact cultural connections during extended periods of time. These methods have the ability to boost the understanding of how video game localization influences user perception across various market conditions.

All in all, this study makes us see more clearly that game localization is more than just translating subtitles, and that theoretical models are like magnifying glasses that can sort out the mess between cultural genes, conceptual differences, and business considerations. While Mario is eating sushi in Tokyo and munching on pizza in Rome, the game industry is quietly building invisible bridges across cultures. Interestingly, we find that in the big chessboard of globalization, developers don't have to choose one or the other at all. Games that retain their original regional flavor and resonate with players around the world often find a delicate balance between Steam charts and player word-of-mouth. This may serve as a reminder to practitioners: the next time you design a character's costume or rewrite a plotline, you may want to flip through the theoretical handbook of Cultural Cognitive Psychology first.

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