# Adaptation of *Gulliver's Travels* for Children in Taiwan:

## A Perspective of the Polysystem Theory

史宗玲/ Chung-ling Shih

國立高雄第一科技大學應用英語系副教授

Department of English, National Kaohsiung First University of Science and Technology

【摘要】

　　本文從埃文－佐哈爾的多元系統理論觀點，探討兒童文學《格列佛遊記》之語言及劇情編譯策略，與台灣兒童文學及其翻譯地位之相關性。作者比較 1978 年大中書局及 1990 年光復書局出版的兩種編譯本，試圖以多元理論觀去解釋 70 年代台灣兒童文學及其翻譯地位較低，故編譯者擁有較多自由去改寫文字及道德相關之內容。但 90 年代兒童文學及其翻譯地位已逐漸提昇，故編譯者尊重原文，較少改寫文字及內容。此差異性可證實兒童文學之編譯策略與其在多元文學系統中的地位有密切關係。

【Abstract】

　　This study investigates the relevance of adapting an English foreign novel, *Gulliver's Travels*, into Chinese for children to the fluctuating and evolving position of children's literature and its translation in Taiwan through a comparison between two adapted versions, from the perspective of Even-Zhoar's polysystem theory. The result indicates that the earlier version in 70's enjoys a greater liberty of adaptation, using fewer difficult words, fewer four-character Chinese phrases, plainer discourse presentations and the explicit morality-oriented content to achieve the purposes of moral education and easy comprehension when children's literature and its translation in 70's still occupied a secondary position. However, their shift to the central status in 90's has rendered the adapted text less didacticism-oriented and more phrase-based with increased difficulty in semantic comprehension. This study fully suggests the dynamic correlation of adaptation strategies to the perceived social status of literature and translation for children in Taiwan's entire literary polysystem.

【Keywords】

　　*Gulliver's Travels*, adaptation, the polysystem theory, the status of children's literature and its translation in Taiwan

## 1. Introduction

Unlike other researches of literature translation for children from the perspectives of translation criticism and evaluation, this article examines the variation of literature adaptation for children from the perspective of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory. To be specific, this article will investigate the relevance of adaptation to the shifting position of children's literature in Taiwan's literary polysystem by comparing certain adaptation strategies of two adapted versions of *Gulliver's Travels*[1] as a case study. The result of this investigation wishes to prove that the behavior of adaptation is not performed alone, but is closely related to the status or norms of the target literary system. The strategies of adaptation will vary as the norms and constraints that are imposed on the target literary system change within the entire literary polysystem.

In recent years, an increased volume of literature has been found to explore the subject of literature translation for children. Davies (2003) studied the translations of culture-specific references in Harry Potter's books (2003). Puurtinen (1998) discussed the interactive relations between syntax, readability and ideology in children's literature, and Zohar Shavit (1986) raised the poetics of children's literature in her book. In Taiwan, Lee Wan-chi (2002) discussed the strategies of adaptation such as addition, modification, transformation, using Oscar Wilde's two collections of stories, The Happy Prince and Other Tales and The House of Pomegranates as analytical samples, in his thesis The translation poetics and children's literature theories implicit in the Chinese translations of Oscar Wilde's fairy tales. Peng I-ju (2000) used K. Reiss's translation theory to discuss the problems of the Germany-to-Chinese translation of Uwe Timm's Rennschwein Rudi

---

[1] *Gulliver's Travels* (1726, amended 1735), a novel written by Jonathan Swift, is viewed as both a satire on human nature and "a parody of travel literature with its cataloguing of exotic sights and unusual experiences" (Lawrence, et. al. 1985, p. 352). Its supernatural, bizarre sights are one reason for great popularity with children readers. Swift includes complex visions beyond the lines and "raises troubling doubts in the mind of the reader," thereby performing "one of the major functions of great literature, to make the audience reflect" (Lawrence, et. al. 1985, p. 359). The entire book consists of four parts: A Voyage to Lilliput, A Voyage to Brobdingnag, A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbdubdrib, Luggnagg and Japan, and A Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms. The two adapted versions in this study simply consist of the first two parts and they have converted the original genre of political satire into a fancy or adventure story that is fit and interesting for children's reading.

Ruessel in her thesis A case study of the Chinese juvenile literature translation of Uwe Timm's Rennschwein Rudi Ruessel with Katharina Reiss's translation criticism. In addition, Lee Su-ging (1998) dealt with certain problems that a translator likely encounters in the process of translating juvenile literature using the translation of The Hobbit (written by J.R.R. Tolkien) as a case study. The potential problems were discussed in the areas of translation market, the translator's competence, copyright, editors, marketing policies, etc. Finally, in her thesis on A primitive study of juvenile literature translation, Ma Yu-chen (1996, p. 29) explored certain translation errors in Erich Kastner's works with K. Reiss's theoretical viewpoints.[2]

Scanty literature addressed the relevance of adaptation strategies to the target systemic constraints. In her thesis Metamorphosis of Sherlock Holmes: on Taiwan Dong-Fang publisher's translation of Sherlock Holmes stories into children's literature, Feng Chiung-yi (2005) discussed how Sherlock Holmes's detective literature was adapted for children with certain strategies of transformation. Feng pointed out that the transformation of characters, syntactic structures, and the indecent, immoral content, made the translation meet what society regarded as educationally good for children. In her paper entitled "Chinese Translation of Hans Christian Anderson's Stories" presented at the Conference on Artistic Performance and Impact of Hans Christian Anderson's Stories, Lu Yi-hsin (2002) conducted a chronological study of Chinese translation of Ham Christian Anderson's stories over the past ten years. She addressed the relevance of the translator's strategies to the shifting status of children's literature in the literary polysystem in different epochs. To continue this line of research, this article attempts to explore the relevance of the variation of adaptation in both adapted versions of Gulliver's Travels to the evolving position of children's literature in Taiwan's literary polysystem.

## 1.1. Research questions

The author will compare two adapted versions that consist of one version published by Da-Zhong Book Co. Ltd. in 1978 and adapted by Huang Nan (hereafter

---

[2] Ma proposed her own theory of translating juvenile literature based on the principles of moderate linguistic difficulty, explicit rendering of sophisticated implicit meanings, appropriate lexical choice, accurate sentence structure, clear and communicative presentation and the use of some rhetorical devices.

Huang's version), and the other version published by Kwang-Fu Book Co. Ltd. in 1990 and adapted by Chu Pei-lan (hereafter Chu's version). These two versions have a gap of twelve years. The author chose this novel as a case study because it was evaluated as "one of the most popular works of fictions published in England in the eighteenth century" and "one of the best satire ever written" (dangdang com., 2007). As "a satire on the universal human tendency to abuse political power and authority, to manipulate others and to deceive ourselves" (Victorian Web, 2000), *Gulliver's Travel*s has been regarded as the good material of moral teaching to children. Many publishers in Mainland China (e.g. Kai Ming Bookstore 1936; People's Literature Publishing House 2000; China Translation and Publishing Corporation 1996/2006) and Taiwan (e.g. Da-Zhong Book Co. Ltd. 1978; Kwang-Fu Book Co. Ltd.1990) have adapted this fiction to the taste and interests of children born and growing in different times. Repetitive adaptations to achieve different reading purposes attracted the author's attention, so that she would explore the variation in dominant linguistic features and moral contents of two adapted versions of *Gulliver's Travel*s from the perspective of the polyssystem theory, rather than identifying the variation as the result of different translators' styles.

The author does not want to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of translation strategies in the two adapted texts, and nor does she want to set exemplary norms for adapted literature for children. Rather, she will probe the close interaction between adaptation, the role of children's literature and the entire literary polysystem in Taiwan. Thus, she attempts to find answers to the following research questions.

1. How do adaptation strategies show differences between the two adapted versions of *Gulliver's Travel*s in terms of language adjustment?
2. How do adaptation strategies show differences between the two adapted versions of *Gulliver's Travel*s in terms of plot adjustment?
3. How does the status of children's literature evolve within Taiwan's literary polysystem?
4. How are adaptation strategies and norms related to the evolving status of children's literature explored from the perspective of the polysystem theory?

These questions are raised for the reader's consideration and remind the author to find answers. Question 1 examines whether or not the varying degree of adaptation

in language in both translated versions is related to their different functions of language in children’s literature. Question 2 checks whether or not the varying degree of adaptation in plot is attributed to their different functions of moral education in children’s literature. Question 3 enables us to understand how the status of children’s literature evolves against other literary systems in Taiwan. Question 4 inquires about whether the translator should adjust the strategies of adapting an English novel into Chinese for children in accordance with the target systemic constraints.

## 1.2. Research Structure

Since adaptation has been recognized as a common strategy used in the translation for children, the next section will provide a definition of adaptation and clarify its differences from translation in general. In addition, the author will discuss Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory (1978, 1979), and the evolving role of children’s literature in Taiwan in Sections 3 & 4. After that, the author will analyze and compare adaptation strategies in the two adapted versions of *Gulliver’s Travels* in Section 5. Section Six will present discussions and elicit significant insights. Finally, the author will summarize this study, describe its limitations and suggest some possibilities for future research.

## 2. Adaptation

Adaptation is traditionally referred to as any target language text “in which a particular free translation strategy has been adopted” (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997, p. 3). This term implies that “considerable changes have been made in order to make the text more suitable for a specific audience (e.g. children) or for the particular purpose behind the translation” (ibid). The Latin writers, Cicero and Horace (qtd. in Bastin, 2003, p. 5), agree that there is a division between adaptation and translation. However, some scholars discard this binary opposition because they believe “the concept of translation can be stretched to cover all types of transformation” (ibid., p. 8). Nord (1991) also “views adaptation as a relative quantity reflecting a translation’s [purpose]” and argues that “any one translation will characterized by the relative proportion (or percentage) of adaptation” (pp. 29-30; qtd. in

Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997, p. 4). In this research, adaptation is viewed as one transformative form of translation.

Adaptation falls into two types: "global adaptation" and "local adaptation" (Bastin, 2003, p.7). Global adaptation applies to the transformation of the text as a whole driven by the external factors, and local adaptation is limited to certain parts of a text arising from the original text itself. Bastin (2003) declares that global adaptation is adopted because of genre switching [3] and disruption of the communication process, and the translator resorts to local adaptation because of cross-code breakdown and situational inadequacy. The modification in content or linguistic presentation is required in the global adaptation. Differently, local adaptation simply modifies some lexical items and culture-specific references when lexical or cultural equivalents cannot be found in the target language and in the target culture.

This article adopts Bastin's concept of global, macro-level adaptation, and defines it as an act of re-creating the source text to fulfill specific purposes, e.g. moral teaching or easier comprehension, and to meet the needs and expectations of the specific audience like children. This global adaptation for children concurs with Shavit's claim that freedom of manipulation exists in the translation of literature for children, and the decision of what to be revised is based on two main criteria: "first, the norms of morality accepted and demanded by the children's system; second, the assumed level of the child's comprehension" (1986, p. 122). Shavit's statement implies that manipulation procedures are carried out to make the target language text educationally good for children and fit for the children's ability to read and comprehend (ibid., p. 113). However, we must notice that these two adaptation principles are presented in different forms and vary with the socio-cultural status of children's literature in the contemporary literary polysystem. A comparison of two adapted version of *Gulliver's Travels* in the areas of lexical, discourse presentation [4]

---

[3] Genre switching indicates "a change from one discourse type to another," e.g. "from adult to children's literature" while disruption of the communication process means the need to address a different type of readership, e.g. children readers (Bastin 2003, p. 7).

[4] Discourse generally refers to language use, i.e., how language is produced as the result of an act of communication (Richards, et. al. 1998, p.140). However, in this translation study, discourse presentation is reduced to the linguistic presentation of sentences or paragraphs in the translated text.

(language) and contextual presentation (plot) may lead to the relevant findings.

## 3. Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory

Since this study draws on Even-Zohar's polysystem theory to frame out theoretical arguments for the close interaction between adapted literature for children and Taiwan's literary polysystem, the author has to clearly define its implication, and introduce its basic concepts such as the mobile nature and the interactive relationship between translation strategies and the status of the target literary system in this section.

### 3.1. Definition

Even-Zohar's polysystem is defined as "a global term covering all of the literary systems, both major and minor, existing in a given culture" (qtd. in Gentzler, 2004, p. 115). The term polysystem denotes "a multiple system, a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent" (Even-Zohar, 1990, p, 11). This theory has increasingly spread and has been employed by scholars and students of literatures and cultures all over the world. Susan Bassnett observed that "the polysystem theory opened so many avenues to researches in translation studies" (1997, p. 11), and that "all kinds of questions could now be asked that had previously not seemed to be of significance" (1993, p. 142).

### 3.2. The mobile nature

Even-Zohar claims that the systems maintain a "permanent struggle between the various strata", suggesting the dynamic, evolving nature of the polyssytem (1990, p. 14). Any literary polysystem will "evolve as a result of the continuous tension between various literary models, genres and traditions" (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, p. 127). In the centrifugal vs. centripetal motion, one literary system is "driven from the center to the periphery while, conversely, [the other system] may push [its] way into the center and occupy it" (Even-Zohar, 1990, p.14). For example, the canonized literary forms, e.g. verse, poetry, realistic novels, accepted as the

well-established or institutionalized aesthetic, will try to maintain their dominant, influential roles (Shuttleworth & Cowie, 1997, p. 127). In contrast, the non-canonized literary forms, e.g. works for children, popular fictions and translated literature, will attempt to vie for the central position from the marginal place (ibid.). Due to this unsteady, and tense competition, Even-Zohar declares that "the relationship between translated works and the literary polysystem can not be categorized as either primary or secondary, but as variable, depending upon the specific circumstance operating within the literary system" (qtd. in Gentzler, 2004, p. 116). The polyssystem theory, as claimed by Hatim (2001), holds that "literary systems tend to be in a state of flux, constantly changing status and fluctuating between a peripheral and a central position in their interaction with one another" (p. 67). These arguments fully explain the dynamic interaction of various literary models or subsystems in the target polysystem and so is the relation of the adapted literature for children to other dominant literary genres within the entire literary polysystem.

The status of literature translation varies across different cultures and countries. Even-Zohar observes that in the polysystem of larger, older cultures such as Anglo-American or French, due to the "length and self-sufficiency of their traditions," translated literature tends to be classified as a secondary system compared to other conservative and established literary models (qtd. in Gentzler, 2004, p. 116). However, the weak literature in Israel "cannot produce all the kinds of writings [that] a stronger, larger system can", so it depends on "translation to introduce precedent-setting texts" (ibid., p. 117). Israel's translated literary texts "serve not only as a medium through which new ideas can be imported, but also as the form of writing most frequently imitated by 'creative' writers in the native language" (ibid.). Hebrew, therefore, heavily relied on "foreign langue translations to fill serious gaps in literary thought and practice" (Hatim, 2001, p. 68). The above two examples explain that the hierarchical relations between canonized and non-canonized literary models can never be fixed and likely vary as time and space change.

## 3.3. Relationship between translation strategies and the status of the target literary system

Another point crucial to Even-Zohar's polysystem theory is "the relationship between certain norms or strategies adopted in the translated text and other language and literary systems" (qtd. in Gentzler, 2004, p. 117). Even-Zohar declares that if translation is a secondary activity within a given polysystem, the translator will "attempt to find the ready-made models for translation" and "conform to pre-established aesthetic norms in the target culture at the expense of the text's 'original' form" (ibid., p. 118). In contrast, if translation plays a primary role, the translator will "closely reproduce the original text's forms" and render textual relations "adequate to the source language" (ibid.). For example, contemporary Bible translation or theatre adaptation uses approaches to the replacement of source texture with existing equivalents in the target literature because they function as secondary systems (ibid.). Differently, Anglos-American translations by Rossetti, Longfellow and FitzGerald tend to use the approaches "that emphasize faithfulness to the original form and textual relations" because they function as primary in the target literary polysystem (ibid). This interactive relevance of translation strategies to the status of translated literature helps us to examine how different adaptation strategies used in the two adapted versions could be related to the changed status of children's literature translation in different times in Taiwan.

As Hatim (2001) put it, "the language of translation [could] be explored in terms of how responsive a translated text [was] to existing norms and models within the target system" (p. 69). In his assessment on the polysystem theory, Hatim (2001) maintained that "whether the translation was central or peripheral within the overall conceptual map, far outweighed considerations of correspondence and linguistic or aesthetic compatibility of source and target versions" (p. 71). This statement suggests that the status of translation is the main factor governing translation strategies. Thus, we believe that it is significant and important to investigate translation phenomenon in relation to the target system e.g. the status of children's literature translation in the entire literary polysystem although other factors of the translator's style, genre, the source text, and the publisher's policy could be considered (note: these elements will not be discussed in this article).

**4. The Evolving Status of Children's Literature[5] in Taiwan**

---

[5] Tina Puurtinen (1998) maintains that children's literature plays the manifold role "as an educational,

Since the status of children's literature, including translated children's literature,     likely affects adaptation strategies in two adapted versions of *Gulliver's Travels*, the author wants to discuss how the status of children's literature and its translation evolves against other literary systems in Taiwan. In the early period of time, children's literature and its translation in Taiwan were not considered as important because children were encouraged to concentrate on studies of textbooks for high grades at school and for passing the competitive joint-entrance examination. Parents could not afford or did not think it important to buy costly translated literature as their children's outside-class reading material. As claimed by Hong (1991), children's literature and translation or adaptation for children was not well-developed until 80's in Taiwan (qtd. in Huang, 2002).

Hong (1991) also claimed that Children's literature as a secondary literary genre in Taiwan moved to the primary position after the mid of 80's because the reading population of children's books increased with enhanced per capita income and widespread libraries set in schools and city centers. Since children's literature gradually emerged as a young discipline in 80's and 90's, writers found it hard and challenging to create all forms and genres as other established literary genres for adults have done. As a result certain writers would seek inspiration and the source for creation from translation or adaptation of foreign literature for children. The adapted texts for children were found to become increasingly important because they could meet the urgently-required demands for expanding the horizon of children's literature knowledge. This point concurs with Even-Zohar's (1978) argument that translation can perform a primary function when literature seems to be weak and inadequate "vis-à-vis world literature" in a given society at a particular period of time (p. 24).

Nowadays, Taiwan's children's literature is facing a turning point as the globalized age requires children and young people to enhance their cross-cultural awareness. The adapted texts for children may serve as a medium through which new ideas, foreign cultural values and customs are introduced to children. Children can

---

social and ideological instrument" (retrieved online in 2006). This implication is that children's literature is not only "a tool for developing children's reading skills", but also "an important conveyor of world knowledge, ideas, values, and accepted behavior" (ibid.).

acquire culture-specific information of foreign countries from the literature translated or adapted from many foreign languages. Thus, translated or adapted texts for children increase their importance as they help children readers establish a global view and increase their multicultural knowledge. The status of children's literature translation was enhanced due to the rise in the status of children's literature in Taiwan.

In addition, since the birth rate in Taiwan has highly reduced in recent years and each parent pays more attention to their only child's education and the development of international vision in Taiwan, children's literature and translated/adapted literature for children gain increasing attention. Taiwan's Ministry of Education (MOE) approved of establishing the first graduate institute of children's literature at Taitung University in 1996. Some conferences on children's literature were held to attract people interested in it. MOE also recommended a series of good-quality literature for children and posted the reading list on the website of Government Information Office in Taiwan.[6] These signs indicate that children's literature and its translation gradually move to the central position in Taiwan's literary polysystem.

## 5. Adaptation Strategies in Two Versions

Following the discussions of the evolving status of children's literature translation in Taiwan and the interactive relationship between adaptation and the status of the target literary system, the author will investigate how adaptation strategies show differences between two adapted Chinese versions of *Gulliver's Travels*. The search criteria include lexical items, phrasal density, discourse presentations in the area of language, and modified moral context in the area of plot. The author reports on some findings with supplementary examples as follows.

### 5.1. Lexical presentations

The lexical items or verbal phrases used in Huang's version tend to be

---

[6] The list reveals that educationists or scholars demand the strict criteria for the selection of appropriate translated/adapted literature for children. The criteria for the textual appropriateness involve aesthetic beauty, communicative fluency and certain contribution to the rise in children's linguistic level (the Government Information Office website in Taiwan). The translated/adapted literature that cannot introduce new, creative elements is not highly recommended (ibid.). This point obviously gives us a clue to the increasing importance of translated/adapted literature for children.

plainer and more colloquial than Chu's version. Some examples of differences extracted from these two adapted versions with their corresponding English linguistic segments are tabulated in Table 1 for a comparison.

**Table1:**

***A comparison of lexical presentations between two adapted Chinese versions***

| The English Text | Huang's Version | Chu's Version |
|---|---|---|
| rock | 大岩石 [big stone] | 岩礁 [rock] |
| food | 東西 [something] | 飲料和食物 [drink and food] |
| perform | 作有趣的動作[do funny things] | 表演 [act] |
| plague | 傳染病 [infectious disease] | 瘟疫 [plague] |
| depart form our Dominions | 離開此國 [leave this country] | 擅自離境 [leave their dominions without permission] |
| walk or lie down in a Medadow | 躺臥在路上 [lie down on the road] | 隨意坐臥 [sit and lie at will] |

By comparison, *傳染病* [infectious disease], *離開此國* [leave this country], and *作有趣的動作* [do funny things] in Huang's version are less formal and more colloquial than *瘟疫* [plague], *擅自離境* [leave their dominions without permission], and *表演* [act] in Chu's Version.

5.2. Chinese four-character phrasal density

The author checks and compares the proportion of four-character Chinese phrases to understand the variation of the phrases in both versions. Chinese writers frequently use four-character phrases to describe something vividly and concisely. Chu's version presents the scene in which the soldiers in the Empire of Blefuscu are greatly scared at the sight of the giant Gulliver with four Chinese phrases in sequence, including *龐然大物* [a huge size object]、*驚慌四散* [flee to four corners with panic]、*擠成一堆* [squeeze into a group like a mound] and *東躲西藏* [hide in the eastern areas and the western areas]. Huang's version also uses two phrases *大驚失色* [greatly scared and look pale] and *爭先恐後* [run anxiously ahead of others] to describe the same scene although the number of phrases is fewer. Table 2 shows the

different percentages of phrasal density in the two adapted versions.

**Table 2:**

*A comparison of phrasal density between two adapted versions*

| Versions | Chapters | Total Wds. | Phrases No. | Density |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Da-Zhong | A Voyage to Liliput<br>A Voyage to Brobdingnag | 14826 | 44 | 0.3% |
| Kwang-Fu | A Voyage to Liliput<br>A Voyage to Brobdingnag | 18453 | 85 | 0.46% |

Table 2 reveals that Chu's version has a slightly higher phrasal density than Huang's version, henceforth rendering the text more difficult for children to read

.

### 5.3. Discourse presentations[3]

Adapted versions, to enhance children's easier understanding, tend to use shorter or plainer, easier-to-read discourse presentations, but two versions still show varying degrees of simplified discourse presentations. Table 3 lists some examples for support.

**Table 3:**

*A comparison of the simplified discourse presentations between two adapted versions*

| The English Text | Huang's Version | Chu's Version |
|---|---|---|
| …putting my Finger frequently on my Mouth, to signify that I wanted Food. | 喂喂，拿一些東西來…。<br>[Hei, bring me something….] | 能不能給我一些飲料和食物　[Can you give me some drink and food?] |
| …the Stench of so large a Carcase might produce a Plague in the Metropolis…. | 殺死他後，他的死屍難處理的，如置之不理，很快會發臭的，使全國發生傳染病。<br>[After we kill him, his dead body is hard to deal with; it will soon stinks and causes | 可是，那麼龐大的屍體，一旦腐爛了，臭氣將瀰漫全國，可能會引起瘟疫。<br>[But once when such a large dead body is decayed or rotten, the |

| | an infectious disease.] | sinking smell will spread through the entire country and causes a plague.] |
|---|---|---|
| It now began to be known and talked of in the Neighbourhood, that my Master had found a strange Animal in the Fields. | 這事很快傳至全村裏，每天都有人要來參觀. [This thing spread to the whole village immediately and brought visitors to stare at Gulliver with great wonder everyday.] | 我被這家主人發現的消息，很快就傳遍了村子，村裡的人們絡繹不絕地跑來看我。 [This news that I was found by the head of this household spread to the entire village very soon and people in the village visited me incessantly.] |
| …to deliver in every Morning six <u>Beeves</u>, forty Sheep, and other Victuals for my Sustenance; together with a proportionable Quantity of Bread, and Wine, and other Liquors. | …每天殺六頭牛和四十頭羊以及麵包和葡萄酒給他吃…. [Feed him with six beeves, forty sheep, bred and wine.] | …所有的村莊每天必須交出六頭牛、四十隻羊，做為我的食物。 [All village men to provide me with six beeves and forty sheep as my daily food.] |
| …I was ready, with the Hazard of my Life, to defend his Person and State against all Invaders. | 可以，我試試看 [OK, I may try it.] | 把布國的事交給我好了，我一定會擊敗敵人的艦隊 [Let me tackle the matter of the Blefuscu Empire; I will defeat your enemies' fleets]. |

The above examples, to be cited among many, are used to show that the

discourse presentations in Huang's version are less formal, but plainer and shorter than Chu's version. For example, Da-Zhong uses *很快會發臭的* **[it will soon stinks]**, *每天都有人要來參觀* **[people visit him everyday,** and *我試試看* **[I may try it]**, whereas Kwang-Fu uses *臭氣將瀰漫全國* **[the sinking smell will spread through the entire country]**, *村裡的人們絡繹不絕地跑來看我* **[people in the village visited me incessantly]**, and *我一定會擊敗敵人的艦隊* **[I will defeat your enemies' fleets]**.

Some other examples show that the discourse presentations in Huang's version are more colloquial and more amusing. For example, the Chinese sentence, *主人大賺其錢，鈔票麥克麥克地響* **[The master earned much money and his money sounded Maike-Maike]**, uses the onomatopoeia "Maike" to refer to the sound made by coins bumping into each other in the master's pocket, rendering the presentation more colloquial and adding entertainment to children. In addition, Huang's version contains the colloquial discourse presentations such as *哎喲，這一來只有死路一條了* **[Granted this, I can only find my way to death]**, and *哎，太可憐，放手吧* **[Too poor a man, let him go!]**. These examples of colloquial presentations are not found in Chu's version.

### 5.4. The plot—Promotion of certain moral behaviors

In addition to the differences in certain linguistic features, the author will detect how the two versions revise the plot of the original English novel into the highlighted descriptions of certain brave and benevolent acts.

### 5.4.1. A stress on the benevolent behavior

Some moral messages implicit in the original text tend to be explicitly presented in the adapted versions. The earlier published Huang's version undergoes more modifications in the plot than Chu's version to honor the moral values of kindness and benevolence. Table 4 shows two examples for support.

**Table 4:**

***A comparison of contextual modifications to laud benevolence between two versions***

| The English Text | Huang's Version | Chu's Version |
|---|---|---|
| And as for the | 格列佛想要擊斃如此小人，一百 | None |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Inhabitants, I had Reason to believe I might be a Match for the greatest Armies they could bring against me, if they were all of the same Size with him that I saw.** | 或一千人，都是沒問題的。雖然如此，<u>但對方是小人，同樣是人類，格列佛不忍心這樣做的</u>。<br>**[It is no problem at all for Gulliver to defeat one hundred or one thousand small-sized men. Despite this, <u>the small-sized men are human beings, so that Gulliver did not want to hurt them</u>.]** | |
| **And I plainly protested, that <u>I would never be an Instrument of bringing a free and brave People into Slavery</u>".** | 「陛下，雖然是您的命令，<u>但我已無意再幹這種殘酷事情了</u>，布萊弗史基國民和本國人民一樣過著自由生活的，<u>現在要我再去陷害他們，實在於心不忍</u>。」格列佛斷然拒國王的要求。<br>**[Gulliver declined the king's request, saying: "Your Majesty, this is your command, <u>but I do not want to do this cruel thing.</u> People in the Empire of Blefuscu live a free life as your people do; <u>I feel my heart ache</u> when you want me to bring harm to them."]** | 「不行，<u>我不能為了滿足國王的私人野心而做這件事</u>。」我坦白地加以拒絕。<br>**[I declined and said: "No way, <u>I cannot do this thing</u> to satisfy the king's personal ambition."]** |

The first example shows that Huang's version adds the description that Gulliver does not want to hurt the small-sized people although he is a competent match for them, but this description does not exist in the original English text, and Chu's version also does not add this description. Furthermore, the elaborate explanation to highlight Gulliver's kindness when he refuses the king's unreasonable request in Huang's version is simply replaced with one sentence in Chu's version. Another significant instance is that Chu's version highlights the

scene that the little girl bravely talks back to his father accusing him of inhumanely showing Gulliver at the fair on the Market Day to make money, but this scene is absent in the original text and Huang's version.

### 5.4.2. A stress on the brave behavior

The ethic of bravery is also highlighted in the adapted version, especially in Huang's version. Table 5 provides three examples to illustrate this point.

**Table 5:**

*A comparison of contextual modifications to honor bravery between two versions*

| The English Text | Huang's Version | Chu's Version |
|---|---|---|
| …two Rats crept up the Curtains, and ran smelling backwards and forwards on the Bed. One of them came up almost to my Face, whereupon I rose in a Fright, and drew out my Hanger to defend my self. These horrible Animals had the Boldness to attack me on both Sides, and one of them held his Fore-feet at my Collar; but I had the good Fortune to rip up his Belly before he could do me any Mischief. He fell down at my Feet, and the other, seeing the Fate of his Comrade, made his Escape, but not without one good Wound on the Back, which I gave him as he fled, and | 兩隻老鼠同時衝擊過來。「嗯,<u>怎麼樣也不能輸給老鼠!</u>」<u>格列佛鼓出全力,和巨人的老鼠做殊死戰了</u>,他揮劍刺死其中的一頭。另一頭老鼠想要逃,格列佛追過去了,立刻刺到牠的肩部,老鼠流血逃了。<br><br>[Two rats attacked me at the same time. "<u>Well, whatever I will do, I cannot lose the combat with the rats</u>" <u>Gulliver fought with the rats with full guts</u> and stabbed one of them to death. Gulliver chased after the other rat and stabbed its back and the hurt rat escaped bleeding]. | 這兩隻老鼠左右夾攻我,驚慌中,我急忙拔出腰間的短劍,往其中一隻的腹部一刀刺進去。另外那隻嚇了一跳,慌忙逃走。我雖然有驚無險,<u>但仍心有餘悸,四肢軟弱無力,抖個不停。</u><br><br>[Two rats attacked me on both sides, and I drew out my hanger with fright and stabbed the belly of one rat. The other rat escaped in a hurry and <u>I was scared, leaving my body weak and trembling</u>.] |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| made the Blood run trickling from him. After this Exploit, I walked gently to and fro on the Bed, <u>to recover my Breath and Loss of Spirits</u>. | | |
| My Remedy was to cut them in Pieces with my Knife as they flew in the Air, <u>wherein my Dexterity was much admired</u>. | 被視為膽小的格列佛拿出小刀，對準飛來的一隻蒼蠅，把它切成兩塊了。「<u>偉大，偉大！</u>」<u>國王和皇后讚賞不已</u>。<br>[Gulliver, identified as a coward, drew out his hanger and cut the attacking fly into two pieces. "<u>How great you are! How great you are!</u>" <u>enormously admired by the king and the queen</u>.] | None |
| But an honest Lad, one of my Nurse's Footmen, climbed up, and putting me into his Breeches Pocket, brought me down safe…. | 是時有一男僕爬上屋頂來了，他是一位<u>勇敢、沈靜的</u>青年人。男僕把格列佛放在他的衣袋裡，慢慢地走下樓梯。<br>[At this moment, a footman climbed up the roof; <u>he is a brave and composed young man</u>. He put Gulliver into his pocket and slowly walked down the ladder.] | 這時已經爬上屋頂的人們，把我放在衣服口袋裡，平安送回宮內的家。我因為驚嚇過度，結果病了足足兩個禮拜才完全恢復。<br>[At this moment, the person climbing up the roof put me into his pocket and then escorted me to the court safely. I was so |

154

| | | scared that I was ill and did not get well until two weeks later.] |
| --- | --- | --- |

In the scene of battling with the rats, Gulliver is depicted as a brave fighter with the strong will to win in Huang's version, but the description in Chu's version does not impress us that Gulliver is a brave man. The second example shows the addition of the king and queen's compliments on Gulliver's bravery in Huang's version and this cannot be found in Chu's version. Finally, Huang's version adds the adjectives with positive connotations like "brave" and "composed" in the third example to highlight the moral values of saving people with courage and composure and these are absent in the original text and Chu's version.

## 6. Discussion and Implication

The findings above reveal that the degree of adaptation in language and plot varies in both versions. The implications for these findings will be explored from the perspective of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory in the areas of language educational function, moral teaching function, and relevance of adaptation for children to the status and norms of the target system.

### 6.1. Language educational function

In response to Research Question 1 (how the two versions show variation in language adaptation), the author reinforces some differences that have been discussed in Section Five. The earlier investigation shows that Chu's version has a slightly higher proportion of four-character Chinese phrases (0.46%) than Huang's version (0.3%). Learning Chinese phrases by reading children's literature is expected to enhance children's Chinese competence. In addition, compared to Huang's version, the Kwang–Fu version uses more literary, formal words to replace the plain and common language. For example, Chu's version uses such expressions as *國內大道* [our country's main high roads], *以免踩到人们或馬匹* [to prevent trampling upon humans or horses], and *毫無異議盡力協助立浦國擊退敵人* [absolutely

155

**agree to do my utmost to assist the Empire of Lilitput in defeating the enemies**], whereas their corresponding words in Huang's version are 寬大的馬路 **[wide and big roads]**, 勿踏死人、牛或馬匹 **[do not trample people, cows and horses to death**], and 幫助國王殲滅海那邊的布萊佛史基國的軍艦 **[help the king to destroy the fleets of the Empire of Blefusctu over the sea**]. The use of a higher proportion of literary or classical words renders Chu's version more compatible with the literary style of the original English text than Huang's version. Comparatively, Chu's version bears more resemblance to the lengthy, wordy linguistic style of the original English text than Huang's version. The linguistic differences between the two versions could partially result from the translator's personal style, but if they are explored from the polysystemic perspective, the differences may prove that variation in the language adaptation for children's literature is governed by the status of children's literature translation in different times in Taiwan.

In the earlier period, the status of children's literature translation was so low that the linguistic form of the source text was subject to great adaptation fro specific purposes. The language in children's literature translation was then viewed as the medium of transmitting information and moral messages, and the linguistic presentations were dramatically adapted into shorter, plainer and easier-to-understand ones for effective communication. The wordy, lengthy presentations were not encouraged because they would increase the information density and the children's semantic load, and therefore prohibited their grasp of moral lessons in the context. In contrast, after the mid 80's in Taiwan, the status of children's literature translation was slightly enhanced, so that the original linguistic form was not subject to dramatic adaptation. The language in children's literature turned into a tool for language education, and it was used to teach children new words and to boost their linguistic ability. Thus, the lexical and structural complexity in the adapted literature for children in 90's started reducing the degree of simplification and abridgement. This justifies that Chu's version holds a higher percentage of four-character Chinese phrases and literary, classical words than Huang's version. The use of different strategies in linguistic presentations between the two versions, explored within the framework of the polysystem theory, results from the changed status of children's literature translation.

### 6.2. Moral teaching function

In response to Research Question 2 (how the two versions show variation in plot adaptation), the author would discuss some points to stress the plot/content variation between the two adapted texts. In Huang's version, there is a passage depicting that Gulliver thinks that the small-sized men are decently dressed like human beings, so that they will treat him well if he explains to them the reason for his appearance in their kingdom. This description highlights the effective use of reasonable communication. In addition, Gulliver is depicted as a brave man fighting with the wasps and flies for his survival in the Empire of Brodingnag. Additionally, the scene in which Gulliver makes water to save fire in the palace and breaks the kingdom's rule, but is later forgiven by the king, is used to stress the value of forgiveness for innocent mistakes. Most significantly, since children in the earlier period of Taiwan tend to be protected and shut from the terrifying adults' world, the scene of gun shooting is totally removed in Huang's version.

In contrast, the scene of gun shooting was retained in Chu's version published in 90's. Furthermore, it provides a scene in which the mater's daughter (Gulliver's little nurse) argues against her father and accuses him of inhumane act by sending Gulliver to the fair for performance. This scene is deleted in Huang's version because the girl's accusation against her parent is forbidden in the traditional Chinese society.[7] The different degrees of adaptation in the content with respect to moral values could be argued as the result of the translator's style. However, the author attempts, in an alternative way, to explore the plot discrepancy from the perspective of the polyssystem theory as different demands for "what society regards as educationally good" for children in Taiwan in different times (Shavit, 1986, p. 113).

In Taiwan, the children's literature and its translation in 70's did not hold a dominant and influential role in the literary polysystem, but moral education with

---

[7] The girl's accusation tends to be regarded as an impolite act and is not encouraged because it counters the hierarchical relationship between parents and children in the traditional Chinese ethics. Good children in the traditional Chinese society are supposed to be submissive and listen to parent's words without any arguments.

ideological input for children was highly emphasized. Thus, the adapted literature for children, represented by Huang's version in this case study, was affected by the trend and showed a higher percentage of modification in the morality-oriented content. Nevertheless, due to the growing westernization trend in 90s' in Taiwan, the emergence of children's literature as the dominant role in the literary polysystem reduced the extent of adaptation, and the original messages implicit with western cultural values in the English text were preferably preserved in the adapted version. The open and modern society initiated the input of the western cultural values, so that some of Chinese traditional moral values were no longer stressed as before. The social trend produced some impacts and Chu's version witnessed less adaptation in the original message than Huang's version. The adaptation behavior between the two versions in the plot of the literature for children could be partially determined by the contemporary socio-cultural values that have close relevance to the status of the literature and its translation for children.

## 6.3. Relevance of adaptation to the status and norms of the target system

In response to Research Questions 3 and 4 (how adaptation strategies relate to the evolving status of children's literature in Taiwan), we may find answers from the above discussions. The linguistic phenomenon, examined within the framework of Even-Zohar's polysystem theory, demonstrates that the adapted literature for children tends to comply with the literary norms of the source language text when children's literature and its translation are moving into the central position in Taiwan. The more complicated linguistic presentations aim to achieve the goal of language education. In contrast, the highly manipulated Huang's version, influenced by the marginal position of children's literature and its translation in the earlier period of Taiwan, is seen dramatically deviating from the original classical literary style with the easier-to-be understand language to describe similar episodes for children. At this point, a conclusion we reach is that the status of children's literature and its translation in Taiwan's entire literary polysystem imposes certain constrains on linguistic modifications in the creation of an adapted target language text for children.

Besides, the variation of contextual adaptation, explored from the perspective of the polysystem theory, is relevant to the primary or secondary position of children's

literature and its translation in Taiwan. The earlier peripheral status of children's literature and its translation, along with the respect for conservative moral values in Taiwan, allow for the more liberal manipulation, henceforth excluding the disrespectful, terrible scenes, and highlighting certain scenes in celebration of the noble values of courage, kindness and forgiveness, as clearly shown in Huang's version. Nevertheless, as children's literature and its translation have grown important and caught increased attention in the recent times in Taiwan, the adapted version for children is no longer permitted great liberty to manipulate the text by adding many descriptions that highlight certain moral values. Thus, the scene, in which the queen and the king offer compliments on Gulliver's brave acts of fighting rats, and the description of the brave, composed young man who rescues Gulliver from an ape's attack, are not found in Chu's version, published in 90's. In sum, the evolving status of children's literature and its translation in Taiwan, along with the resulted socio-cultural and educational norms for children, could be crucial factors in determining the strategies of adapting the linguistic presentations and the moral context of the literature for children.

## 7. Conclusion

In sum, this study with a comparative investigation of the two versions of *Gulliver's Travels* can justify that adaptation strategies show differences in linguistic presentation and plot adjustment in connection with the evolving status of children's literature and its translation in Taiwan. Adaptation for children, which mainly serves the purposes of moral teaching and easier understanding, can be closely related to the perceived socio-cultural norms of children's literature and its translation, explored from the perspective of the polysystem theory. Huang's version is found to be adapted dramatically, using more common, colloquial words, fewer four-character Chinese phrases, shorter sentences, and the more distinctively morality-oriented content when children's literature and its translation in 70's still occupied a secondary position. However, their shift to the central status in 90's has rendered Chu's version less didacticism-oriented and more phrase-based with increased difficulty in semantic comprehension. These observations can meet Even-Zohar's polysystem theory that the relationship between translated or adapted

159

works and the literary polysystem is neither fixed nor eternalized, but as variable, and dynamic depending on certain specific socio-cultural circumstances that decide the status of the adapted literature within the entire literary polysystem.

Since the author simply uses the first two chapters of the adapted versions for a comparison, the limited size of samples inevitably hinders the more reliable results of findings. To remedy this inadequacy, the author recommends that the future studies include other chapters and more novels in the form of parallel corpora to seek more genuine findings. However, despite this limitation, the findings of this study have shed some light on that we cannot study any literary work, including the adapted literature for children, in isolation, but analyze and explore it based on its relation to other literary models produced in different times within the entire literary polysystem. In other words, we cannot study the adapted literature for children "as an assemblage of elements existing in a vacuum but as an integral part of the literary polysystem" (Shavit, 1986, p. 112). The "dynamic relativism" and "historical or temporal factor" in literary adaptation research cannot be overlooked.

## 引用書目

Bastin, Georges L. (1998). Adaptation. In Mona Baker (Ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies* (pp. 5-8). London & New York: Routledge.

Bassnett, Susan (1993). *Comparative literature: A critical introduction.* Oxford & Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Bassnett, Susan (1997). Moving across cultures: Translation as intercultural transfer. In J. M. Santamaria, et.al. (Eds.), *Trasvase culturales: Literatura, cine, traducción 2* (pp. 7-20). Vitoria-Gasteiz: Universidad del Pais Vasco.

Chu, Pei-lan (1990) (Trans.).《格列佛遊記》[*Gulliver's Travels*]. Taipei, Taiwan: The Kwang-Fu Book Co. Ltd.

Dangdang Com. (2007). *Gulliver's Travels* (Norton British Literature Criticism). Retrieved Jan. 25, 2007 from http://product.dangdang.com/product.aspx?product_id=20024836

Davies, Eirlys E. (2003). A goblin or a dirty nose? The treatment of culture-Specific references in translations of the Harry Potter books, *The Translator*, *9* (1), 65-100.

Even-Zohar, Itamar (1990). Polysystem theory. *Poetics Today*, *11*(11), 9-26.

Even-Zohar, Itamar (1979). Polysystem theory. *Poetics Today 1*, 287-310.

Feng, Chiung-yi (2005). *Metamorphosis of Sherlock Holmes: On Taiwan Dong-Fang Publisher's translation of Sherlock Holmes stories into children's literature.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Taiwan's Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan.

Gentzler, E. (2004). *Contemporary translation theories*. Shangha: Foreign Language Education Press.

Hatim, Nasil (2001). *Teaching and researching translation*. Edinburgh, England: Pearson Education Ltd.

Huang, Nan (1978) (Trans.).《格列佛遊記》[*Gulliver's Travels*]. Kaohsiung, Taiwan: The Da-Zhong Book Co. Ltd.

Huang, Qiu-fang [黃秋芳](2002).〈拓展少年小說的台灣風情〉[Expanding reading for Taiwan's young adult fiction]. In Wen-bao Lin (Ed.) [林文寶編].《少兒文學天地寬──臺灣少年小說學術研討會論文集》[*Proceedings of the academic*

*conference on Taiwan's young adult fiction: Limitless creation of children's literature*] (pp. 187-209). Taipei, Taiwan: Chiu Ko Publishing Co. Ltd.

Hong, Wen-qiong (Ed.) [洪文瓊主編] (1991).《華文兒童文學小史》[The history of children's literature from 1945-1990 in Taiwan]. Taipei, Taiwan: Children's Literature Association, Taiwan [中華民國兒童文學學會].

Lawrence, Karen, Seifter, Betsy and Ratner, Lois (1985). *The McGraw-Hill Guide to English Literature*. New York & London: MaGraw-Hill Publishing Company.

Lee, Su-ging (1998). *Problems in the translation of juvenile literature in Taiwan: A case study of the translation of the Hobbit.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Taipei, Taiwan: Fu-Jen University.

Lee, Wan-chi (2002). *The translation poetics and children's literature theories implicit in the Chinese translations of Oscar Wilde's Fairy Tales.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Taipei, Taiwan: Fu-Jen University.

Lu, Yi-hsin (2002). Chinese translation of Hans Christian Anderson's Stories. Paper presented at the Conference on Artistic Performance and Impact of Hans Christian Anderson's Stories. Taitung, Taiwan: Taitung University.

Ma, Yu-chen (1996). *A primitive study of juvenile literature translation.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Taipei, Taiwan: Fu-Jen University.

Nord, Christiane (1991). *Text analysis in translation*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Peng, I-ju (2000). *A case study on the Chinese juvenile literature translation of Uwe Timm's Rennschwein Rudi Ruessel with Katharina Reiss's translation criticism.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Taipei, Taiwan: Fu-Jen University.

Puurtinen, Tina (1998). Syntax, readability and ideology in Children's literature. *Meta*, *43*(4). Retrieved Dec. 2, 2006 from http://www.erudit.org/revue/meta/1998/v43/n4/004515ar.html

Richards, J.C., Platt, J. & Platt, H. (1998). *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics* (the English-Chinese edition). Hong Kong: Addison Wesley Longman China Limited.

Shavit, Zohar (1986). *Poetics of children's literature*. Athens and London: The University of George Press.

Shuttleworth, M. & Cowie, M. (1997). *Dictionary of translation studies*. Manchester, UK.: St. Jerome Publishing.

Swift, Jonathan (1986). *Gulliver's Travels*. New York: Oxford University Press.

The Victorian Web (2000). Gulliver's Travels, An introduction. Retrieved Oct. 26, 2006 from http://www.citorianweb.org/previctorian/swift/gtintro.html