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Nida的“读者等同反应论”及其在文化翻译中的局限性

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Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" and Its Limitations in Cultural Translation

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内容摘要

尤金·奈达博士是西方语言学翻译理论学派的代表人物之一，经过五十多年的翻译实践与理论研究，取得了丰硕的成果。自八十年代初奈达的理论介绍入中国以来，到现在已经成为当代西方理论中被介绍得最早、最多、影响最大的理论。“他的功绩在于：（1）把信息论与符号学引进了翻译理论，提出了“动态对等”，后为“功能对等”的翻译原则；（2）把现代语言学的最新研究成果应用到翻译理论中来；（3）在翻译史上第一次把社会效应，即“读者等同反应论”原则纳入翻译标准之中。尤其是他的“动态对等”翻译理论和“读者等同反应论”翻译标准，一举打破中国传统译论中静态分析翻译标准的局面，提出了开放式的翻译理论，为我们建立新的翻译理论模式找到了正确的方向。奈达译论的核心就是著名的“功能对等”论。这一理论以《圣经》翻译为中心，创造性地将接受理论的原理引入翻译研究，将译文读者和原文读者在阅读过程中的反应是否对等作为衡量翻译的最高标准。但是，翻译并不是单纯的语言活动，从本质上讲它更是一种文化活动。从文化的角度来考察奈达的“读者等同反应论”翻译原则是否能作为衡量语际翻译的最高标准，这是一个值得研究的课题。

本论文从奈达的“读者等同反应论”翻译原则所形成的文化背景及其理论本质的基础上分析语言、文化与翻译三者之间的关系及在翻译实践过程中这一理论与文化冲突的表现形式；指出奈达的“读者等同反应论”是《圣经》的翻译理论，而不是文化翻译的普通理论，在文化翻译方面存在着一定的局限性；并找出在英汉翻译实践中相应的可操作性处理办法，更好地促进中外文化交流。

论文由六个章节组成。

第一章为论文的梗概，对奈达和他的翻译理论以及文化翻译做一简要介绍和分析，指出论文的写作意义和目的，勾略了论文各个章节的写作框架。

论文的第二章对奈达及其“读者等同反应论”进行详细的分析。“读者等同反应论”所形成的理论基础是奈达把现代语言学应用到翻译实践中去；其产生的主要文化渊源是西方的社会文化和宗教文化，尤其是《圣经》宗教文化对

奈达的巨大影响，在其翻译理论及实践中留下了深深的烙印。

他的“读者等同反应论”的基本点就是将译文读者和原文读者在阅读过程中的反应是否对等作为衡量翻译的最高标准。这实质上是纯语言层面的翻译活动，是奈达《圣经》翻译的指导原则，因为《圣经》是通过传道士对基督徒传达上帝的旨意的，翻译过程中可以重内容，不重形式；而文化的翻译不仅重内容，更重要的是文本的文化内涵。所以，只重内容，而忽略形式的“归化”式翻译策略只能使译文读者对文化存在的差异产生文化冲突，从而导致文化交流障碍。

翻译的目的就是交流。第三章通过对语言、文化和翻译三者之间的关系分析，指出语言是文化的一部分，是文化的载体，文化和语言的血肉关系决定了翻译活动不仅是语言符号在表层的转换过程，而且是不同文化在深层的转换和传播的跨文化过程；从历史上看我国历次翻译的结果无疑都是文化的传播，是文化的融合。尤其是印度佛经翻译文化的引入致使佛教成为中国人所一直信仰的一种主要宗教。所以，翻译实质上是文化的翻译，是文化的相互交流。

在上述三个不同的视角对奈达的“读者等同反应论”进行仔细分析的基础上，论文的第四章指出文化差异的客观事实存在产生读者等同反应的各种潜在的冲突形式，即：(1) 历史文化差异所产生的反应冲突；(2) 民族文化思维与民族心理差异所产生的反应冲突；(3) 民族地域文化差异所产生的反应冲突；(4) 宗教文化差异所产生的反应冲突；(5) 政治文化差异所产生的反应冲突。此外，即使在文化的异质同构现象中也会产生“读者等同反应”的冲突，主要表现在：（1）读者脑中产生不同的记忆图式反应；（2）产生误导性的文化错位反应。这些原文读者和译文读者对于不同文化所表现出来的冲突更能说明奈达所追求的“读者等同反应论”的“归化”式翻译作为文化翻译策略有其实质上的局限性。

翻译的主要目的是文化交流。而译者作为文化传播的中介采取何种策略来处理译本读者对文化反应的冲突是问题的关键所在。在第五章中，论文提出正确处理“读者等同反应论”与翻译中文化冲突的策略和方法，指出在文化翻译方面的“归化”和“异化”策略之间，从语言吸收同化的功能和文化融合的趋势看，“异化”不仅是必要的，而且是必然的，是文化翻译的主流。然而，过

“度”异化的语言往往不利于文化的交流，同样会成为文化交流的障碍。因此，我们要把握归化和异化“度”的问题，在一定的语言环境下，既要考虑语言意义上的传达，又要考虑到读者的接受能力，尽可能理想地实现原文和译文读者之间的跨文化交际。

第六章是论文的总结部分。

关键词：“读者等同反应论”；文化翻译；局限性；翻译策略；异化；归化

Abstract

Dr. Eugene A. Nida is one of the famous representatives of the western translation theory school of linguistics, and over the fifty years of his study in his translation theory and practice, he has achieved great success in this field. Nida's translation theories, first introduced into China in the 1980's, have been the earlier and much more introduced among the modern western theories and have exerted the greatest influence in the circles of Chinese translation studies. His principal contributions include: (1) he has introduced information theory and semiotics into translation theories and created the translation principle of "dynamic equivalence" and later "functional equivalence"; (2) he has applied the latest achievements in the modern linguistics into his translation theories and (3) he is the first in the translation history of the world to consider "Reader's Equivalent Responses" as the highest translation standard. Especially, his principles of "dynamic equivalence" and "Reader's Equivalent Responses" have completely changed the situation of the static analysis of the Chinese traditional translation theories and helped the Chinese translators to find a new way to establish an open-style translation theory. The core of Nida's translation theories is his "functional equivalence", which evolved from his practice in the translation of *The Bible*. While introducing the reception theory into his research, he regards, as the highest translation standard to achieve, whether "the readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate it essentially in the same manner as the original readers did" (Nida, 1999:118). However, translation is not only an activity between languages. It is essentially an activity between cultures. From the viewpoint of the culture, it is a worthy question for discussion whether Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" can be considered as the highest translation standard.

On the basis of the analysis of the cultural backgrounds and the theoretical essence of "Reader's Equivalent Responses", this thesis then makes a tentative endeavor to dissect the relationships among language, culture and translation. Due to the actual existence of conflicts between the different cultures and the reader's responses, we show that Nida's theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" has its limitations: as an obvious theory for the translation of *The Bible*, it can not be used

4

as a general theory for the translation of different literary cultures. This thesis further proposes some strategies for the cultural translation practice in order to better promote the international cultural communications.

The thesis consists of six chapters.

Chapter One gives a brief introduction to Dr. Eugene A. Nida and his translation theories as well as a general analysis of his "Reader's Equivalent Responses", aiming at a presentation of the significance and the objective of the author's present study and an outline of each of its chapters.

In the Second Chapter, the thesis strives to achieve a careful analysis of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses". It points out that the theoretical foundation of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" lies in his application of the modern linguistics in his translation practice. The main cultural source of his theories stems from the western social cultures and religious cultures, among which the Biblical culture has the deepest influence on Nida, his translation practice and theories.

The theoretical essence of his "Reader's Equivalent Responses" is that a translated text can be considered to have met the highest translation standard only when the responses or manners in understanding by the translated text readers are the same as the ones by the source text readers. The translation of such a nature is a pure language activity and it is his principle for directing the translation of *The Bible* because this translation stresses only the contents of the language, not the form. Nevertheless, cultural translation not only emphasizes the translation of the contents, but more important, the form and the cultural connotation of the text. If we only emphasize the translation of the content in the strategy of domestication, the reader's responses to the translated text may give rise to conflicts in understanding different cultures and finally produce certain obstacles in the cross-cultural communication.

Chapter Three makes a clear point that translation is for communication. In accordance with the analysis of the relationships between language, culture and translation, it is obvious that language, as part of a culture, is a carrier of the culture and this close relationship proves that translation is not only a superficial conversion of the language signs, but also a deep cultural transference and dissemination. A survey of the history of the four-stage translation in China reveals

that each stage facilitated the dissemination, transplantation and fusion of the western cultures into the Chinese cultures. Especially, the cultural introduction of Indian Buddhism has resulted in the fact that some Chinese people still believe Buddhism and it has always been the principal religion in China. In essence, translation is the translation of cultures for cross-cultural communication.

The actual existence of the different cultures will lead to a variety of conflicting responses by the readers of the translated text. Based on the perspectives above, Chapter Four is aimed at the analysis of the conflicts from different cultural aspects: 1) the conflicting responses because of different historical cultures; 2) the conflicting responses because of different national psychologies and mentalities; 3) the conflicting responses because of different geographical cultures; 4) the conflicting responses because of different religious cultures; 5) the conflicting responses because of political cultures. In addition, there are even conflicting responses in the cultural isomorphs because of different memory schemata and of different ways of misunderstanding and cultural misplacement. These conflicting responses are the patent evidence to show the limitations of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses", a strategy of domestication in the translation of different cultures.

The main purpose of translation is communication. As an intermediary or a communicator or a disseminator of different cultures, in case of conflicting responses, a translator needs to pay much attention as to what translation strategies are to be adopted to resolve the cultural conflicts experienced by the target language readers. In Chapter Five, the thesis tentatively proposes the strategies of domestication and foreignization and points out that the latter, as a major tendency in the translation of culture, is not only essential but also necessary from the point of view of cultural absorption as well as that of the cultural fusion in the modern society. However, the appropriate use of foreignization should be taken into consideration in certain language environments because the excessive use of foreignization may likewise cause certain communicative barriers. Finally, the ability of the readers to accept the translated text should be stressed. Only in this way can the best possible cross-cultural communications be realized between the source text and the translated text readers.

5

Chapter Six is a conclusion of this thesis.

Key Words: "Reader's Equivalent Responses"; translation of culture; limitations; strategies of translation; foreignization; domestication

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements i
Abstract in Chinese ii
Abstract in English v

1. Introduction 1
2. Nida and Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" 4
2.1 Nida's translation theories 5
2.1.1 Nida's contribution 5
2.1.2 Importance of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" 8
2.2 Principles of translation adjustment 9
2.3 The main cultural sources of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" 10
2.4 Nida's theoretical influence in China 11
2.5 Theoretical essence and application field 13
2.5.1 Essence of his theory 13
2.5.2 Application field of his theory 14
2.5.3 Nida's own attitude towards this theory 15
3. The Relationship Between Language, Culture and Translation 16
3.1 Language and culture 16
3.2 Culture and translation 17
3. 3 Purpose of translation 19
4. "Reader's Equivalent Responses" and Its Limitations 21
4.1 Conflicting responses from different cultures 23
4.1.1 Historical cultures 23
4.1.2 National mentalities and psychologies 25
4.1.3 Geographic cultures 26
4.1.4 Religious cultures 28
4.1.5 Political cultures 29

4.2 Conflicting responses from cultural isomorphs 30
4.2.1 Memory schemata responses 31
4.2.2 Misplacement 32
5. The Strategies of Handling the Conflicts 35
5.1 A research on domestication and foreignization 35
5.1.1 Domestication and foreignization 35
5.1.2 Foreignization in the cultural communications 37
5.1.2.1 Necessity of foreignization 37
5.1.2.2 Inevitability of foreignization 40
5.2 Strategies for cultural translation 42
5.2.1 Appropriate extent of domestication and foreignization 43
5.2.2 More attention to the language history, the social backgrounds and the cultural connotation 43
5.2.3 Extrication of the psychological control from the native culture .. 45
5.2.4 Extrication of the deception from the surface meaning of the source language 45
5.3 Consideration of reader's acceptability 46
5.3.1 Appropriate use of native expressions in the target language 47
5.3.2 Proper use of colloquial expressions in the target language 48
5.3.3 More attention to the combination of the foreign taste and the Chinese taste 49
6. Conclusion 50
Bibliography 52

1. Introduction

Eugene A. Nida, a famous American translation theorist and translator, whose important position in the study of translation theory was established in the 1960's, has devoted his utmost to the research of translation and translation theories and influenced the whole western translation theory field. His translation theory began to be introduced into China in the 1980's and quickly accepted by many Chinese translators and translation theorists. The core of his translation theory is his functional equivalence. Later, in the book *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964), Nita established his concept of "dynamic equivalence" and defined it in terms of the "closest natural equivalence". And in several of his books and articles the concept of functional adequacy in translation has been also described as "dynamic equivalence". Later, according to Nida's explanation "... the term 'dynamic' has been misunderstood by some persons as referring only to something that has impact. Accordingly, many individuals have been led to think that if a translation has a considerable impact then it must be a correct example of dynamic equivalence. Because of this misunderstanding and in order to emphasize the concept of function, it has seemed much more satisfactory to use the expression of 'functional equivalence' in describing the degree of adequacy of a translation."(Nida, 1998:324)

On the basis of his "functional equivalence" and the translation of the book *The Bible*, Nida ingeniously introduces the reception theory into the study of translation and considers the highest standard of translation to be the one that gets the same responses from the readers of the source language as of the target language. This is approximately the theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses". However, as the study of culture won the significance in the 1980's, the study of cultural translation was woven into the field of translation. The famous representatives in this field are Holmes, Lefevere, Toury and Venuti with their development of Target Language School in the translation studies. They emphasize the reciprocal influence between culture and translation. This school clearly points out that translation is not only activities between languages, but also activities between different cultures.

Based on this theory and from the angle of culture, we can likewise revaluate Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" in cultural translation, which has been tremendously influencing the translation circles in China for over twenty years.

It is well known that different nations have different cultures and between the different cultures there exist certain relationships and distinctions. The relationships are the communities, which offer feasibility for translation between different cultures. The distinctions are the different characteristics, which are apt to produce some obstacles to translation. As an important communication between different cultures, translation is not only a procedure of converting the different languages, but also a procedure of transplanting and sharing the different cultures. "Translation essentially is translating cultures." said Wang Zuoliang. (王佐良, 2001:106)

The readers with different cultures respond differently to their own cultures and to the translated cultures because of the differences existing in the historical cultures, religious cultures, social cultures, geographical cultures and political cultures and so on. For example, the responses of the westerners to the word "dragon" are different from these of Chinese people. In the minds of the westerners, they consider that a dragon is a devil breathing out fire and having big fingers and white wings. Yet in the minds of Chinese, we regard dragon as a symbol of luck and fortune. When we say we are descendents of "dragon", we are proud of the dragon and regard it as the spirit of the nation. Are the westerners' responses to the word "dragon" equivalent to the ones coming from Chinese people?

This thesis is written in an approach of analysis and comparison and endeavors to make a tentative analysis on the theory of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" from three perspectives. And in terms of the analysis, the paper also analyzes the relationships between language, culture and translation and points out the various limitations and conflicts when this theory is employed to guide the cultural translation. The ambition is to propose some appropriate strategies to handle the conflicts in the cultural translation so as to achieve better exchanges and communications between the different cultures.

This thesis is composed of six chapters. Chapter One presents the outline to this dissertation and points out approaches to the study and the significance of the research. Chapter Two introduces Dr. Eugene A. Nida and makes a thorough

analysis of his translation theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" in view of its theoretical basis, its cultural background and its theoretical essence, and meanwhile states the influence of his theory on the circle of Chinese translation. Chapter Three documents the purpose of translation and the relationships between language, culture and translation. Chapter Four points out the limitations of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" and addresses the conflicts in the cultural translation from two perspectives: (1) the conflicting responses coming from different cultures; (2) the conflicting responses from the cultural isomorphs. Chapter Five is the discussion of the strategies and methods to handle these conflicts and Chapter Six is a summary of this thesis.

2. Nida and Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses"

Eugene A. Nida was born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, the United States of America in November of 1914 and was migrated into the state of California at the age of five. As a child, he started to believe in Christianity and made up his mind to be a minister in a church. When he was in the junior middle school, he was much interested in the study of language and began to study Latin. After entering the University of California at Los Angeles, he majored in foreign languages, including Greek, Latin, German and French. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1936 and then kept on his further studying at the University of Southern California. In 1939, he was awarded the Master of Arts degree for his research on the patristics and the New Testament in Greek. In the same year, Nida enrolled into the University of Michigan to work on his doctorate in descriptive linguistics. In 1943, under the academic guidance of the distinguished professors, Charles C. Fries and Leonard Bloomfield, he graduated and obtained his Ph. D. degree in linguistics. As a scholar versed in religious studies and linguistics, he was engaged as a full-time language expert in the American Anthropological Association in 1946. From then on, Nida endeavored to study translation theories on the basis of his translation of *The Bible* and achieved a huge success in the field of translation in the western countries.

Dr. Nida became a member of the American Bible Society in 1943 and was the Executive Secretary of its Translation Department. His work included field surveys, research, training programs and checking newly translated manuscripts of *The Bible.* He has authored or co-authored more than 40 books and 250 articles on translation and linguistics, cultural anthropology and sociolinguistics. Dr. Nida has now retired from administrative responsibilities but remains to be a consultant to the American Bible Society and the United Bible Society. He is still continuing his research on translation while lecturing extensively in Europe and Asia.

The most important aspect of Nida's translation theory is his concept of dynamic equivalence. He defines this concept as the "quality of a translation in which the message of the original text has been so transported into the receptor language that the response of the receptor is essentially like that of the original

receptor. Frequently, the form of the original text is changed; but as long as the change follows the rules of back transformation in the receptor language, the message is preserved and the translation is faithful." (Nida & Taber, 1982:200) Furthermore, in his dynamic equivalence, the theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" is considered as a maximal, ideal standard of translation because Nida thinks that the readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did. Meanwhile Nida stresses that 'The readers of a translated text should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciate it." (Nida, 1999: 118)

Though culture has long been one of the major concerns for Nida in his translation theory and practice, while stressing the "Reader's Equivalent Responses", Nida seems to have over-emphasized the difficulty in the TL reader's acceptability so that there is a lack of due attention to the importance in the transference of the uniqueness of the cultural elements in the SL text into the TL text. Without regard to this important aspect in the work of translation, readers of the translated text may not be able to fully comprehend and appreciate the uniqueness that exists in the source text. In order to get a deeper understanding of his theory, it is necessary to make a clear explanation about Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses", this chapter will discuss and analyze this theory in five aspects: 1) Nida's translation theories; 2) the theoretical principle; 3) the main cultural sources; 4) the influence of his theory in China and 5) its theoretical essence and the application of his theory.

2.1 Nida's translation theories

2.1.1 Nida's contribution

Nida has composed his translation theory with input from three development periods: descriptive linguistics, communicative theory and sociolinguistics.

In the first period from 1943 to 1959, he engaged himself in the study of the structural essence of languages and the basic translating problems by trying to

describe morphology, lexis, syntax and some practical problems in language translation in order to have the translators be familiar with the relationship between foreign language and translation. To guide the translation of *The Bible* and recapitulate what he had studied, he had several of his major books published: *A Synopsis of English Syntax* (a dissertation for his Ph. D. degree, 1943), *An Outline of Descriptive Syntax* (1946), *Bible Translating: an Analysis of Principles and Procedures* (1947), *Learning a Foreign Language* (1950), *God's Word in Man's Language* (1952) and *Customs and Cultures* (1954). Influenced deeply by the American structuralist Bloomfield, he went to many countries to collect language specimens and analyzed them. He stated that the differences between different languages should not be the obstacles for people to communicate through description because the common features exist in different languages.

In the second period from 1959 to 1969, he wrote many more books and papers to revaluate the translation of *The Bible* and further stated his translation theory. His books and papers in this period include "Principles of Translation as Exemplified by Bible Translating" (1959), *A Synopsis of English Syntax* (1960), "Some Problems of Semantic Structure and Translational Equivalence" (1961), "Bible Translating and the Science of Linguistics" (1963), "Cultural Differences and the Communication of Christian Values"(1963), "Linguistics And Semantic Structure" (1964), *Toward a Science of Translating* (with Charles Taber, 1964) and *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969). In the book *Toward a Science of Translating,* Nida points out that translating is a science, which is explained as treating "the problems of translating primarily in terms of a scientific orientation to linguistic structures, semantic analysis, and information theory." (1982: Preface) And in the book *The Theory and Practice of Translation,* Nida stated that "translating is communication", by which he meant that "it is useless for any target text to lose its communicative function and that all the translation should be accepted by readers." (1982: 51) In this period, his most important translation viewpoint is dynamic equivalent translation, also called "flexible equivalent translation". Nida emphasized, "Flexible equivalent translation is not equivalent with 'free translation'" because dynamic equivalent translation means translation in "the closest natural equivalence" to "represent the message of the source language"

(1982:5)

Beginning from the 1950's, Nida started to apply the theory of dynamic equivalence to the translation of *The Bible*. For example, the book *Today's English Version*, published in the 1970's, was translated in the light of this theory. After the publication of this book, the version was given a high praise by the Christian readers. From the fifties to eighties, almost all the translation projects organized by the United Bible Society were done under the guidance of dynamic equivalence（谭载喜，XIX），a fact that has proved its practical value in the field of *The Bible* translations.

In the third period from the 1970's to the 1980's, Nida kept on his study in the communication approach to translation, but gave more attention to the research on semantics. His point is that interlingual communication mainly concerns semantics and if the problem of semantics is resolved, the problem of interlingual communication (translation) will be certainly resolved (*The Sociolinguistics of Interlingual Communication*, 1996). In the 1970's, he wrote the following books to reflect his research on semantics: *Componential Analysis of Meaning*: *An Introduction to Semantic Structures* and *Exploring Semantic Structures* (both in 1975). Later, he gradually adopted Sociolinguistics to handle some problems in translation, and in the book *Translating Means Communication: A Sociolinguistic Theory of Translating,* he stated that language is a phenomenon of signs and the explanation of any language can not depart from its social environment (1977). In the 1980's, he wrote a number of books to further his research on the relationship of signs, society, language and translation, which include *Meaning Across Cultures* (1981), *Translating Meaning* (1982), *Sign, Sense and Translation* (1983), *Style and Discourse* (co-authored with J. P. Louw, A. H. Synman and J. V. W. Cronje, 1983) and his representative work of this period, *From One Language to Another* (with Jan de Waard, 1986).

Nida's theoretical contribution to translation lies in the fact that he helps to "create a new style of treating different cultures in different languages to promote the exchange and communication in the world." (谭载喜，1982:102) Nida adheres that "anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message." (1982: 4) The reason why Nida has

such theoretical idea first depends on his pious belief in Christ and his long-term study on the translation of *The Bible*. He has the belief that God's message is the universal truth and can be translated into all the languages and understood by all the "citizens of the Heaven". Second, he is also a linguist. He has made a thorough study in the semantic structures and signs as well as translation equivalence. He thinks that through a proper adjustment of semantic structures of the SL and the TL, the translation equivalence can be achieved. He said, "It is essential that functional equivalence be stated primarily in terms of a comparison of the way in which the original receptor understood and appreciated the text and the way in which receptors of the translated text understand and appreciate the translated text." (1999: 116) In fact, the "comparison" he mentions is the process of checking whether the "reader's responses" are equivalent.

2.1.2 Importance of "Reader's Equivalent Responses"

In several of Nida's books, he stresses the concept of "reader's responses". He considers that the target of translation is serving the readers or the language receptors and that it is a translation standard whether the responses of the translated text readers are in accordance with the responses of the source text readers. Accordingly, after he guided and organized the translation of the book *The Bible*, the translated text was well received by the Christian world and appreciated by its readers. As readers are the first to be considered in his translation, Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" plays an important role in his translation theory. Just as he says, "Translating means communicating, and this process depends on what is received by persons hearing or reading the translation. Judging the validity of a translation cannot stop with a comparison of corresponding lexical meaning, grammatical classes, and rhetorical devices. What is important is the extent to which receptors correctly understand and appreciate the translated text." (1993: 116)

As we know that language is an important tool for communication, we should make a discussion of the functions of language so that we can have a more satisfactory understanding of what is involved in interlingual communication. Nida in his book *Language, Culture and Translating* classifies the functions of language

into two basic types: psychological and sociological functions. He states that "The psychological functions may be described as the means by which people negotiate with reality, and the sociological functions can be said to be those ways by which people negotiate with other persons. The psychological functions may be regarded as essentially internal or subjective, and the sociological functions as external and interpersonal." (1999:8) In another book *From One Language to Another* (co-authored with J. Waard), Nida further divides the functions of language into nine kinds:

(1) expressive function
(2) cognitive function
(3) interpersonal function
(4) information function
(5) imperative function
(6) performative function
(7) emotive function
(8) aesthetic function
(9) mentalingual function

The above study and categorization of the functions of language show that Nida attaches great importance to language functions and his functional equivalence is the core of his theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses". Based upon this theory, in translating the SL text into the TL text, it is necessary to try to perceive and recognize the functions of the SL text so that equivalent responses can be achieved between different languages.

2.2 Principles of translation adjustment

According to Nida's theory of "dynamic equivalence" or "functional equivalence", the principle of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" has a great significance to the translated text, which mainly concerns the translatability in different cultures because it is the translation adjustment that can overcome the obstacles of the differences of the different cultures. This proper adjustment may be helpful in deciding what should be done in order to produce "the closest natural equivalence" and the "Reader's Equivalent Responses" in accordance with these

essential principles:

1) The greater the differences in the source and target cultures, the greater the need for adjustments.

2) The greater the differences between the source and target languages, the greater the need for adjustments. In general, however, the differences in culture give rise to more important adjustments than the differences in language. This means, for example, that two languages belonging to two distinct language families, but sharing essentially the same culture (e.g. Germen and Hungarian), will require fewer adjustments than in the case of two languages which are within the same language family but have quite distinct cultures (e.g. English and Hindi).

3) The more distinctive (whether idiosyncratic or elevated) the style of the source text, the greater the number of adjustments.

4) The greater the differences in social and educational levels of the source and target audiences, the greater the number of adjustments.

5) The more a translated text is dependent on an accompanying code, the greater the number and variety of adjustments.

The principles of adjustment and their practical implications are not matters of plus-minus categories for easy pigeonholing of examples of formal and semantic adjustments. In each case a translator is faced with a continuum and where on such a continuum the adjustment is justified depends upon a host of factors. Some translation theories attempt to set up formulas designed to specify precisely what should be done in different type of situations, genres, and different kinds of audiences and purposes for translating and communicating. "What is needed is not elaborate formulas or theories, but translators with unusual sensitivity to the sources of language, the importance of culture, and the art of translating." (Nida, 1999:89-90)

2.3 Main cultural sources of "Reader's Equivalent Responses"

Nida, a translation theorist and linguist and pious Christian, does his utmost to study the strategy of translation of *The Bible*. He, on the basis of the researches of the common cultures of sociolinguistics and anthropological linguistics, draws a conclusion that there do not exist any advantages or disadvantages among all

languages, but the same expressive effect, that is, existing isomorphs: "One concept or meaning expressed in A in one language can be found the equivalence expressed in B in another language." (Nida, 1993: 122) In his view, translation is translating meaning of the language. The "meaning" here is at the level of the "deep structure" stated by Chomsky and the strategies of translation should lay emphasis on the equivalence of the deep structure, that is, functional equivalence, not the equivalence of the surface structure or formal correspondence. This is Nida's strategy of domestication, which comes from the social culture and religious culture where he lives. A frequently-used example by Nida can well prove this point: "雨后春笋" should be translated into "to grow like mushrooms" because the deep structure of both the Chinese idiom and the English one are similar and such a translation has reached the goal of functional equivalence in the communication of the two different languages.

In the United States and many other western countries, the majority of people are Christians who believe in God and certainly Christianity controls the mentalities of the people. Nida is a pious Christian and the religious culture has deeply influenced him in his strategy of translation. He believes that God is universal in the Christian world and the languages under the Heaven are different in form but are the same in function. As languages are capable of expressing equivalent meanings, the meanings, in turn, can be converted internally or externally. In his translation of *The Bible,* he considered that the translation of *The Bible* is to deliver the spirit of God and the contents of the translation are of the utmost importance, but the form of the culture is subsidiary. From the viewpoint of the religious cultures of *The Bible,* his translation strategy is reasonable and acceptable because the objective and the function of the translation of *The Bible* is to spread the "meanings" of God in the communities with the same religious cultures.

2.4 Nida's theoretical influence in China

Dr. Eugene A. Nida has been the most influential translation theorist in the field of China's translation in the past two decades. Before the introduction of Nida's translation theories, the research on translation in China had mostly centered

on the discussion of practical experience. Since his translation theories were introduced into China at the beginning of the 1980's, his theories have brought a fresh blood into the circle of the Chinese translation and the Chinese translators have started to probe a much wider area in translation studies. Together with Nida's theory, many other translation theories of different schools from the West have also come into China and have arrested much attention from the translators in the researches so that a great development has been made in the translation study in China. From the 1980's up to now, many of Nida's books and papers have been published both in original version and in translation in China. He has been invited to China to give academic lectures in many colleges and universities. A lot of his viewpoints are frequently quoted by the scholars in translation studies as the principles to guide the translation research and practice. Many professors, translators and translation theorists, and even linguists have held discussions and studied his theories and strategies. Some of them praise him for his theories, but some criticize his viewpoints. Professor Chen Hongwei (陈宏薇) names this situation the "Nida Phenomenon" in one of her papers.

Chinese Translators Journal is a renowned publication for translation study in China. For twenty years, more than 40 papers were published in this bi-monthly journal discussing Nida's translation theories, ideas and viewpoints. According to the investigation and the data collected by Professor Chen Hongwei in her thesis "Toward Maturity the Nida Phenomenon and China's Translation Studies," published in *The Growth of Translatology* in 2002, just on the study of Nida's dynamic equivalence, there were quite a number of papers published in *Chinese Translators Journal* in the past 20 years. Some Chinese translation scholars and theorists gave positive evaluation of Nida's theories, but some voiced their negative views. Some of the positive comments are: Nida's functional equivalence when used in dictionary compilation is to strive to realize a gradual procedure from the microcosmic linguistic structure to the macrocosmic one and from the static structure to the dynamic structure (衡孝军、王成志，1995/6); Nida's reader's equivalence is a procedure of realizing conversion of the source text (张冲，1997/2). The negative views are: the translation theory of dynamic equivalence is just an ideal strategy, which may not ensure the TL reader's equivalent from the translated

text (杨忠、李清和, 1995/5); dynamic equivalence is just suitable for the translation of *The Bible*, but not appropriate to the translation of other writings, not even for the translation of academic articles (张南峰, 1995/4).Nita holds that as long as the source text can be converted in meaning, any translation strategy, approach and style can be adopted. Such a theory by Nida can not be swallowed and we can not consider it as a general theory (黄邦杰, 1996/3). However, Professor Chen Hongwei objectively evaluates Nida's theories, saying "The study of the 'Nida Phenomenon' shows that we absorb his theories, but do not fully accept them; we criticize his theories, but do not completely negate them, from which we can see the fact that the researches on the translation strategies in China are moving towards maturity." (陈宏薇, 2002)

2.5 Theoretical essence and application field

2.5.1 Essence of his theory

In his translation theories, Nida maintains that every language has its own approaches to express the same meanings and a translated text, which can arouse equivalent responses, should be quite possible. Namely, a translator should strive for "the closest natural equivalence" or "dynamic equivalence" in his work. In his book *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Nida explains that "the closest natural equivalence" in translation should be realized both in terms of meaning and style. Furthermore, in the book *From One Language to Another,* he defines that "the closest natural equivalence" should be "functional equivalence", a term that is much more convincing because the same or similar functions in different languages must exist though there are different linguistic systems in different languages. It is the functions in language that make translation feasible.

According to Nida, "Reader's Equivalent Responses" should be the standard to evaluate or test whether a work of translation is good or bad. The "closest natural equivalence" should be achieved so that "a translation does not sound like a translation." (Nida & Taber, 1982:12) Nida defines minimally that "The readers of a translated text should be able to comprehend it to the point that they can conceive of

how the original readers of the text must have understood and appreciated it." And the maximal, ideal definition is that "The readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did." (Nina, 1999: 118)

2.5.2 Application field of his theory

Nida produces his theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" mainly in connection with the translation of *The Bible*. This theory is reasonable to some extent because if any translator does not take the reader's responses into consideration, the translation will lose its objective. For example, if we translate *The Four Books,* the ancient Chinese moral books, into the version in Old or Mid-seventeenth century English, neglecting the modern reader's responses, there will be few readers who can understand and appreciate them. Shakespeare's great works have brought happiness to the British people. But if the translation of them presents barriers or difficulties in the understanding for Chinese readers, can we call it a good translation? But concerned with the issues of understanding and communication, Nida bases his "Reader's Equivalent Responses" only on the translation of *The Bible* which can be understood and appreciated only by the Christians. When we translate literary works and if we only focus on the reader's immediate understanding, the language of the source text will become simplified and the translated works will lose a lot of its value. Wang Dongfeng said, "If we omit most of the metaphors which readers cannot understand in *The Bible,* much meaning will be lost inevitably." (王东风, 1997: 18) One of the important characteristics of literature is that the author usually uses a number of figures of speech and unique expressions to describe what he has in mind. If we translate them directly and explain the author's ideas in easy language in order to make them easily understood, then the taste of the literary work will not be able to exist and the value of the cultural elements in the literature will be seriously damaged.

The reader's responses to the translation of *The Bible* are different from those to the translation of literature. Christians can have the same responses to God's words only through the missionary's or priest's explanations. However, the readers of the translation of literature surely have many different responses because there will be a

lot of "gaps" the readers must think about. In another word, the readers often have a large imaginative space. As we know, even the same reader has different responses to the same literary works with the growth of his age and experiences. It is obvious that readers of the target text can hardly obtain equivalent responses as the readers of the source text because they have different cultural backgrounds, different psychologies and different mentalities. Can it be possible to achieve equivalence in the reader's responses to the translated text as the responses to the source text? As Snell-Hornby (1988) declares that equivalence equals to illusion.

2.5.3 Nida's own attitude towards this theory

Being familiar with the fact that there exist cultural differences in different languages, Nida has given much of his attention to the study of the relationship between cultures and languages. Some of his books concerning this respect are *Linguistics and Ethnology in Translation Problems* published in 1945, *Language, Culture and Theology* in 1957, *From One Language to Another* in 1986, *Language, Culture and Translating* in 1993. These books show his great interest in sociolinguistics study in translation theory. Nevertheless, the aim of his studies is not to keep the origin of the source text as far as culture is concerned, but to eliminate the differences between the cultures, using the advantages of the languages so as to reach the goal of presenting Christ's teachings. (王东风，208)

Certainly, he considers it is necessary for his translation theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" to be applied in the translation of *The Bible*. He is also aware of the fact that many translators in the world accept and adopt his theory in the translating of literary works. But he never says in any of his books or articles that there is a difference between his theological translation and the general translation theory for the translation of literature.

3. Relationship between Language, Culture and Translation

3.1 Language and culture

In 1871 Sir Edward Burnett Tylor made a still widely quoted definition of culture, describing it as " that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, moral, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society." (Tylor, *Primitive Culture,* 1871) This definition formed the basis for the modern anthropological concept of culture. And after Tylor, modern anthropologists agree that culture has four natural features:

1) Culture comes from the social acquisition, not from the inheritance.

2) Culture belongs to a community, not to an individual.

3) Culture has its symbols and language is its most important symbolic system.

4) Culture is a united whole and all its aspects have close relationships.

Eugene A. Nida classifies the features in the culture of language in five kinds:

1) Ecology

2) Material Culture

3) Social Culture

4) Religious Culture

5) Linguistic Culture (Nida, 1999: 68)

From the above, we can clearly see that there exists a close relationship between language and culture. Culture comprises language and influences it. Language is a key component part of culture and a carrier of cultural maintenance, cultural communication and cultural reflection. (李文英，1988:4-6)

Different language features can reflect the differences of the cultures. For examples:

(1) "这时，家里的客人已经到齐了。来的女客人还真不少，有二婶、三婶、大姨妈、二姨妈、二姑妈、三姑妈，不知道大姑妈是何原因没有来！"

(茅盾：《林家铺子》)

The above different linguistic terms of the same female generation reflect the different social blood relations in a big family in China. But in English linguistic

culture, generally, only one word "aunt" is used and is equivalent to each of the following 婶, 姨妈 and 姑妈. The fact reflects a clearer distinction between relatives on the paternal and maternal sides in the Chinese tradition. For Chinese, there is often a looser relationship between a person and his/her relatives of the maternal sides while a much closer relationship between him/her and members on the paternal side.

(2) "The two gigantic negroes that now laid hold of Tom, with fiendish exultation in their faces, might have formed no unapt personification of power of darkness."

(H. B. Stowe: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*)

From the words "power of darkness", related to Tom's religious culture, the readers can recognize his belief in Christ because "power of the darkness" usually refers to the strength of devil in the religion of Christianity. Here, Uncle Tom was laid down by the two fiendish negroes, who were doing their best to get hold of Tom and whose strength was as powerful as the devil.

However, the Chinese sentence below reflects a different culture.

"他到了阎王殿走了一趟，又回来了！"

(吴敬梓：《儒林外史》)

The word "阎王殿" is a metaphor that links its cultural meaning to the religion of Buddhism. According to Buddhism, it is believed that men will go to register in the Palace of Hell, where Yama (阎王), the king who is in charge of men's life and death will decide whether it is time for them to die. While people brought up in the culture traditionally connected with Buddhism can recognize the meaning easily and people from other cultures may encounter barriers in understanding the expression.

The above examples clearly demonstrate that both language and culture are intrinsically tied together because language comes from culture and reflects the culture.

3.2 Culture and translation

Culture is the source of translation and translation is the tool of cultural

communication. Without culture, translation would be a well without water and, without translation culture might not be so colorful. The cultural prosperity of the world mainly depends on translation. When the famous scholar Ji Xianlin (季羡林) talks about the great importance of translation in China's culture, he points out that in the history of China, the prosperity of China's culture relies upon "two channels of water"(1993:3): one from India and the other from the west. Those two great channels of water are the two important parts of translations that have facilitated the long life of the Chinese culture.

One channel of water from India refers to the translation of Buddhist scripture. The translation of Buddhism in China began as early as the dynasties of Wei and Han and ended in the dynasties of Song and Yuan, a time span over 1,000 years. The translated texts with more than 15,000 volumes included the translations of philosophy, religion, literature, linguistic styles, music and dance, painting and sculpture, which have enormously enriched and developed the Chinese culture. Especially, in the Tang Dynasty, the capital Chang An became a cultural center of the world.

And the second channel of water refers to the translation of the western works on science and technology from the end of the Ming Dynasty to the beginning of the Qing Dynasty. Xu Guangqi (徐光启) was the first one who began to introduce the western scientific works into China. During the Opium War, Lin Zexu (林则徐) strived to establish translation bureaus and he selected scholars to translate the foreign newspapers. He collected western advanced science and technology in order to "use the foreigners' advantages to conquer them". During the late period of the Qing Dynasty, Yan Fu (严复) translated volumes of western books to introduce philosophy, politics, economics and law. His translation promoted the development of the Chinese ideology and the academic studies in various fields. Lin Shu (林纾) translated over 180 volumes of literary works, enabling Chinese people to understand the western society, and strengthened to some extent their confidence to struggle with feudalism and imperialism. During the May 4th Movement, Lu Xun (鲁迅), Qu Qiubai (瞿秋白), Guo Moruo (郭沫若) and Mao Dun (茅盾) built up a higher wave of translating the western literature, which once again greatly encouraged Chinese people to oppose feudalism and imperialism. Since the

establishment of New China in 1949, the translation has taken on a new look, and especially, since the opening up and reforming of the country in the 1980's, translation of literatures on belles-letters, ideology, theories, economy, science and technology, information and many other fields has been developed rapidly.

In conclusion, the aforementioned facts prove that translation promotes the prosperity of cultures, that translation is indispensable to the cultural exchange in different languages and that language is an important carrier of communications between different cultures.

3.3 Purpose of translation

As this thesis is concerned with Nida's translation theory, "Reader's Equivalent Responses", and in particular, with proposing a discussion of the new strategies for translation of cultural elements, it is inevitable to concern with the purpose of translation. First, we need a clear definition of translation. Once we really know it very well, we will understand what we should do when translating. Roger T. Bell, a British linguist and translation theorist, declares, "Translation is the expression in one language (or target language) of what has been expressed in another, source language, preserving semantic and stylistic equivalences."(1993) Halliday states, "Translation is the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language." And Eugene A. Nida averred, "Effective translation is also obviously an art, in somewhat the same sense that great literature is always a matter of language art."(Nida, 1984:10)

The activity of translating is a communicative process. Certainly, the purpose of translation is aimed at communication, which includes communication of information and of culture. The purpose of each great translation in China's history is communication. Because of translation a variety of foreign information and culture has been introduced into China and information about China and its culture has likewise been introduced into foreign countries. Without translation, the information about science and society in other countries might not have been familiar to our cultures and us. In our society, we would not have seen such terms as "可口可乐", "咖啡"and"鳄鱼的眼泪". "Culture is not only the value created by human beings, but also has its own national, geographical and time

characteristics. Therefore, culture needs communication, which has a close relationship with language because language is the most important carrier of cultures. Accordingly, the source of translation relies on the culture and communication, and translation is the product of the communications of the different cultures." (王克非，1997：2)

4. "Reader's Equivalent Responses" and Its Limitations in Cultural Translation

In Chapter 2, we have analyzed the essence of Nida's "Reader's Equivalent Responses" from different angles and it is obvious that this theory of Nida's is not intended for translating in general, but mainly for the translation of *The Bible*. In case of translation of other literatures, the existence of different cultures causes different responses with different readers.

Studies of sociolinguistics and anthropological culture show that language is an activity of culture, and that certain existence of the differences between cultures is absolute. The big problem of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" lies in "covering the differences in different cultures" (王东风，2000：318) and actually the crux is "the presupposition of one-to-one equivalent relationship between the different cultures". (Snell-Hornby, 1988:16-22) Nida is well aware of the complications for translators caused by the existence of different cultures, but in translating *The Bible* he submits to the theory of one-to-one equivalent responses in the common cultures.

The study of culture presents clear information that the differences between cultures are absolute and natural and that the existence of common elements is relative and accidental. If we consider that all the languages have identical cultural elements, and that they can be translated into equivalent elements, which call for only equivalent responses, how can we explain the existence of the "gaps" of the cultures? For example, in China, when someone marries, the relatives will "凑份子"; when the bride enters her bridal chamber, she is expected to wear "红盖头" and eat "枣子花生". According to Nida's theory of the functional equivalence by the strategy of domestication, we should translate "红盖头" into "wedding gown" and "枣子花生" into (drinking) "champagne". When the native speakers read such a translation, they will have the reactions that the Chinese have the same wedding customs as they have. But in fact, are the wedding customs in China and in the western countries equivalent? Likewise, if we translate "wedding gown" into "红盖头" and "champagne" into "枣子花生", how can the Chinese readers have the same

responses as English speakers?

Using the distinction between "surface meaning" and "deep meaning" of the languages and viewing from the communicative function of the two languages, it is true that the "surface meanings" of "红盖头" and "wedding gown" both are the bride's marriage dresses and the "champagne" and "枣子花生" are used to mark the celebrations. But from the view of cultural colors, "红盖头", "枣子花生", "wedding gown" and "champagne" have totally different cultural colors between the Chinese marriage customs and those of the west. According to the Chinese custom, the bride wears "红盖头" on her wedding day, partly so that the guests cannot see her beautiful face, partly to cover up her shyness. Eating "枣子花生" has the connotation that the bride is expected to have a son as early as possible and a daughter afterwards (早子—花生). How can the foreigners be aware of the deep cultural elements if such expressions are merely translated into expressions natural to the TL readers, according to the theory of the functional equivalence? From the perspective of cognitive psychology, most of the Chinese readers have a long-term memory of these expressions and their connotations and when they read these cultural terms, which can activate the Chinese reader's cultural prototype, which makes them feel activated and familiar to the cultural colors and the cultural elements embodied in such expressions. In this situation, Chinese readers can retrieve the original prototype directly because they live in this cultural atmosphere, but the translated text readers have no direct contact with the cultural terms and their cognition of the culture has to be rebuilt up. So when we study the connotation of the language in literary translation either from the perspective of the procedure to obtain it or of the obtained result, we should pay much attention to the different cultural colors and different psychologies because the connotation hiding in the language can cause both the Chinese and the foreign readers to have different responses to the cultural terms.

In Chapter Three, the analysis of the purpose of translation concludes that communications between different cultures ought to bring understanding and appreciation. How can we really communicate? In order to make it possible to ensure a faithful and effective communication through translation, we should first of all become fully conscious of the conflicts of reader's responses between the

different cultures.

4.1 Conflicting responses from different cultures

The actual existence of different cultures certainly produces different responses from the different readers both in the source text and in the translated text. To fully recognize these conflicting responses, we will examine them from the following aspects:

4.1.1 Historical cultures

The special development and social conditions of each nation in the world determine its special historical culture. The different histories of China and Britain lay the groundwork for cultural differences.

A very important element among historical differences is literary allusions. They are treasures in each nation's historical culture because they are rich in national language expressions and distinct cultural connotations. In the process of translation, if a translator has a good understanding of the intention of each nation's allusions, he will be better able to handle these allusions and effect better translations of them. Otherwise, the readers of the translated text will have conflicting responses with the intention of the original text. For example:

"Rome was not built in a day."

This English proverb shows a historical culture, which presents the magnificence and the prosperity of the Rome Empire from the third century to the sixth century in ancient times. When English people see the proverb, they can not only have the analogical meaning that doing anything is not easy, but also can connect the proverb with its historical culture in mind. In Chinese historical culture, there is a similar proverb"冰冻三尺，非一日之寒". It also has the metaphorical meaning that doing anything needs a long-time hard work. According to Nida's "functional equivalence", we can equate the English proverb "Rome was not built in a day" with the Chinese proverb"冰冻三尺，非一日之寒" for the reader's understanding. Of course, in view of the reader's easier understanding, this translation of domestication is reasonable and acceptable because these two

proverbs have the similar meanings in metaphor. However, this English proverb is different from the Chinese one in their formation and development in the history. The English proverb presents a rich and strong country as well as a great power of Rome Empire, which was built through a long time of over three hundred years by hard battles and cruel expansion in Europe, but the Chinese proverb comes from the people's experience of the natural phenomenon, which shows the different meaning in the cultural connotation from the English one. When the Chinese readers read the proverb"冰冻三尺，非一日之寒" for the translation of "Rome was not built in a day", they certainly have the responses different from what the English readers do because the historical connotation is completely lost. What they get is only the analogical meaning.

Another example is the proverb "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king", which is usually translated into the similar Chinese proverb "蜀中无大将，廖化充先锋". When the Chinese readers read the translation, they will have the following responses,

1) The translation is natural.
2) The translator is versed in Chinese history and knows the book *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms* well.
3) Is there a history of the three kingdoms in the western country?

If we translate "In the country of the blind, the one-eyed man is king" into "盲人国中，独眼称王", the Chinese readers may not be very familiar with this expression, but with their common cognitive ability they will appreciate the surface meaning as well as the metaphorical coloring of the expression in no time.

Both in the Chinese historical culture and in the British one, there is a great abundance of such allusions without compatible cultural elements. Vivid instances are: "三个臭皮匠，胜过诸葛亮"，"八仙过海，各显神通"，"叶公好龙"，etc. in Chinese and in English, "Juda's kiss", "a pound of flesh", "Pandora's box", etc.

It is clear that the translation between different cultures under the theory of "functional equivalence" sometimes can hardly produce equivalent responses among readers.

4.1.2 National mentalities and psychologies

The differences in national history, society, politics, economy, region and natural conditions produce different patterns of mentalities and psychologies, that is, different thinking modes, thinking characteristics, thinking styles and different psychological states, all of which exert great influence on languages. Therefore, in a nation the language structure and use have a very close relationship with the psychological activities. When a translation is to be produced, the analysis and the understanding of the author's own psychological activity should not be neglected; otherwise, the TL reader's responses will be in conflict with those of the SL readers.

It is well known that the westerners have a different thinking pattern from Chinese people. The Westerners are often regarded as more outgoing, aggressive and straightforward in character than the Chinese. And the differences in national psychological characteristics tend to produce reader's different responses. Here are two examples,

(1) 范进迎了出去，只见张乡绅下了轿进来，头戴纱帽，身穿葵花圆领……

(吴敬梓:《儒林外史》)

"Fan Chin went out to welcome the visitor, who was one of the local gentry, and Mr. Chang alighted from the chair and came in. He was wearing an official's gauze cap, sunflower-colored gown..."

(朱生豪 译)

In this example the term "纱帽" is translated into "an official's gauze cap". But when the Chinese readers read the expression "纱帽" and "葵花圆领", they will associate them with official position. This official uniform he wears certainly sets a distance from the ordinary people around because it is definitely a symbol of distinction between the civilians and the government officials that existed in the society at that time. On the contrary, a foreign reader cannot have the same kind of psychological response.

(2) Love me, love my dog.

爱屋及乌。

In this example, both the English and the Chinese expressions are well

received almost by all in the surface meaning and in the deep meaning. But if we analyze the author's psychology in the source language, we will find that the message conveyed in English is "If you love me, you should also love my dog because I love it." And we also know that the dog is an animal that enjoys almost the same affection as a human being in the western families. However, when Chinese readers read the translation "爱屋及乌", they will interpret this expression in this way: "If you love me, you should even love what I abominate." because crows are the birds that most people detest.

4.1.3 Geographic cultures

"Geographic culture refers to the culture created by the people in different situations, different regions and different geographic environments. Because of it people use different expressions in different languages about the same matter or the same phenomenon." (彭仁中，《文化与翻译》，1998: 87)

Many nations agree on the same matter or the same phenomenon in reference to its meaning. Nevertheless geography might add some connotation or meaning to a particular expression. For example, China lies in the east of Asia, and in the west of China are high mountains and in the east are big oceans. Such geographical conditions make the climate in this country cold in winter or cool in autumn when the west wind blows and hot in summer or warm in spring when the east wind blows. Hence the proverb that the west wind brings coldness and the east wind brings warmness in China comes true.

There are many literary works that employ expressions connected with geographical situations.

In his poem, Ma Zhiyuan (马致远), a poet in the Yuan Dynasty, wrote:

古道西风瘦马。
夕阳西下，断肠人在天涯。
The ancient poor road, the cold west wind
and lonely thin horse,
At sunset, the sweetheart is far
Away from long distance. （刘英凯译）

And Lan Maoyou (蓝茂有) in the Ming Dynasty wrote:

东风破早梅，向暖一枝开，
冰雪无人见，春从天上来。
East wind awakens the early plums,
Only one branch to the sun blossoms;
Not any snow and ice can be seen,
Spring has come from Heaven.

On the other hand, Great Britain lies in the north of Europe, and to the west of Britain is the Atlantic Ocean and to the east is the European Continent. The wind from the Atlantic is warm and the one from the continent is cold.

In the poem *Ode to the West Wind*, Shelly wrote

O, Wind, if winter comes,
Can spring be far behind?
啊，西风，
冬天来了，春天还会远吗？

In the poem, the word "wind" refers to the west wind, a warm feeling for the British people in the meaning of the special geographical culture. In fact, in the poem Shelly, the writer, compares the "Wind" to the strength of the revolutionary. When the Chinese readers come across the translation, they may at least have one conflicting response: How and why does the west wind, a cold one, bring the spring?

In the novel *Oliver Twist* by Dickens, he recorded:

> How many days have I seen him standing bluenosed in the snow and east wind.
> 许多冬日我都看见他，鼻子冻得发紫，站在飞雪和东风之中。
> (钱歌川 译)

Commonly, when the Chinese readers confront this kind of translation, they may have such different responses from what the British readers do because the term "东风" in Chinese mind suggests warmness. They may ask why Oliver is cold in such a warm wind and why east wind can blow in winter.

Henry Hart, a professor in the University of California, translates "闲愁万种，

无语怨东风”（《西厢记》）into

"I am saddened by a myriad petty woes,
And, though I speak not
I am angry
At the breeze from the east"

Obviously, the connotative meanings of Ma Zhiyuan's "西风" and Shelly's "West Wind" are different. And meanwhile Lan Maoyou's "东风" and Dicken's "east wind" have different cultural meanings, too. However, even in the same language, the same expression may possess different connotations when used in different context. For example, in the line"无语怨东风" in the above poem, the east wind (东风) is the symbol of spring used in the poem to symbolize the desire for love and mating.

Therefore, when people read the text translated either in Chinese or in English, they will make different responses because of the different feelings linked to the different geographic cultural terms. Although these conflicting responses produce difficulty in translation, the different cultural elements are still of great value to the world cultures because the conflicting responses are after all temporary and can be eliminated, but the cultural elements are permanent and will exist in the culture and make the culture charming forever.

4.1.4 Religious cultures

The different religious cultures reflect different national beliefs and cognitions, which produce taboos and different kinds of worships. For example, Chinese people are influenced deeply by three religions, namely Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, and still many worship the Heaven and Pan Gu, creator of the universe in Chinese mythology. Since ancient times up till present, a great number of palaces, temples and pagodas have been constructed and maintained in this land so that the people can entrust Heaven with their spirits and worship mentally its representations. However, in the west, the large majority of people believe in Christianity and they worship God. They think that all, including the human beings, is created by God. Let's take the translation of the sentence below for example,

谋事在人，成事在天。

（曹雪芹，《红楼梦》）

Man proposes, God disposes.

(Tr. David Hawkes)

According to the "Reader's Equivalent Response", Hawkes' translation seems very suitable as far as the language structure and the receptor's understanding are concerned. But the word "天" means Heaven in the Chinese minds, the term "God" exists in Christianity. When the readers read the translated text, they might believe that the old woman, Granny Liu (刘姥姥) in the novel *A Dream of Red Mansions* is a Christian.

4.1.5 Political cultures

Political culture is an important part of the various cultures in a state. It influences people's behaviors and thoughts. When translated, many political cultures often produce different responses among readers. In order to make a clear explanation, the definition of politics should be made. From a narrow point of view, Raphael suggests in *Problems of Political Philosophy* that "the political is whatever concerns the state." According to Raphael, a state has two broad functions. Its primary function is positive: to keep order and maintain security. Putting it in other words, the positive function is mainly to protect the established rights and existing well-being and opportunities. In addition to this positive function, the state exercises negative functions: reforming the order of legal rights so that it will accord more closely with current moral ideas of justice. Then the sphere of politics is where the state performs its functions of maintaining order and security, and of abolishing and reforming whatever is not in conformity of the need of the people and the state. As a part of the sphere of politics, political culture has its own characteristics, i.e., legal characteristics and moral characteristics.

Because of the different political system of each state, the political culture brings the people under the influence of different political viewpoints and beliefs as well as different moral standards and judgments. For example,

全国人民代表大会

the National People's Congress (the NPC)

Chinese people understand the deep meaning of the NPC. This supreme legislation body of representatives of the whole people, selected by all the people, holds every year a meeting to approve the decisions of the Communist Party of China (the CPC) because China is a socialist country. But in the western countries, many of which practice capitalist systems, people have a different political culture in mind. When they read "the National People's Congress", their responses may not be equivalent with the ones given by the Chinese. They may associate it with the parliamentarism.

Another example is the political term "human rights" (人权). The westerners' reactions to this word are different from the Chinese people's. People in the west consider their individual rights as the center of everything and they stress the importance of the individual person, but in China, the people emphasis the prominence of the party, group or collectivism. When Chinese audiences see the film ***Love on the Yellow River*** (《黄河绝恋》) they may misunderstand the captain, James, who holds up his hands when the Japanese soldiers surrounds them while the Chinese soldier, Liu Zhanshan fights the enemy till the end of his life. Though James aims to pretend giving up to save the little girl from the hands of the Japanese soldiers, his action may be considered to be a shame because "holding up one's hands" is a sign of surrender. From the standpoint of westerners, they may consider that Liu Zhanshan is a brave soldier but his death is meaningless. From the viewpoint of Chinese audiences, they may think that James is a traitor and Liu Zhanshan's death is valuable. Indeed, different political cultures approach moral judgment in a different way and cause conflicting responses from readers.

4.2 Conflicting responses from cultural isomorphs

Proceeding from his functional equivalence, Nida points out that there exist isomorphs in two or more different languages. The term isomorphs is defined as: "Isomorphs are only an extension of the semiotic concept of iconicity, matters of likeness." by Hofstadter in his insightful book entitled *Goedel, Escher, Bach: An Eteral Golden Braid.* (1988) Nita describes the concept of functional isomorphs as

"on the basis of the means for accomplishing essentially the same results with different systems." (Nida, 1999:121) In expanding the concept of isomorphs, Nida further points out, in "1, 2, 3; I, II, III; α, β, γ; 一, 二, 三, the first three numerical signs are in four different systems: Arabic, Roman, Greek, and the last in Chinese. Similarly, series such as 2-4-8 and 16-32-64 may be said to be isomorphic since each successive number is the double of the preceding one. In fact, all mathematical formulas are isomorphic representations of what they refer to, and all scientific models are likewise isomorphic, even though they may be the result of considerable reductionism." (Nida, 1999:119) About language translation, he concludes, in the same book, "We may define functional isomorphs on the basis of the means for accomplishing essentially the same result within different systems. This means that for English idiom *to hit the ceiling* Spanish may employ *tomar el cielo en las manos*, literally, '*to take the sky in the hands.*' Similarly, for the English expression *to grow like mushrooms*, it is appreciated in Chinese to talk about '*growing like bamboo shoots.*' " (Nida, 1999:121) Again, an analysis is necessary to see whether isomorphs in cultural translation can indeed cause the "Reader's Equivalent Responses", and whether the readers of a translated text can be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did, as Nida expects.

4.2.1 Memory schemata responses

The source texts of natural sciences can supposedly be translated into a probably or absolutely equivalent target language because there ought not to be any cultural elements that are different from one language to the other. Because of the cultural elements in two different languages, even isomorphs have been found to cause the situation that the reader's responses to the source texts are not the same as the ones to the translated texts. The Chinese idiom "雨后春笋" can be equivalently translated into the English expression "mushrooms after a spring rain" in terms of isomorphs. Considering both surface meaning and deep meaning, the translation is excellent. Its semantic content is that "new matters make much progress". Nevertheless, when the Chinese readers read "雨后春笋", they not only have the semantic interpretation of the deep meaning, but also the memory schema that many

spring bamboo shoots are growing fast. And when the English or American people read "to grow like mushrooms / mushrooms after the rain", they only get the analogical meaning but fail to appreciate the unique cultural image reflected in the SL text. For their memory schema is mushroom, which is different from the bamboo shoots in the Chinese minds.

4.2.2 Misplacement

Functional equivalence is in pursuit of the responses in semantic content in the closest natural expression. However, in cultural translation, the responses of the readers of the source text sometimes are different from those of the readers of translated text because of misplacement. Still take "雨后春笋" as an example. According to the principle of functional equivalence, "雨后春笋" should be translated into "mushrooms after the rain / to grow like mushrooms" because bamboo shoots do not grow in Britain. But using "bamboo shoots" and "mushrooms" causes for the responses misplacement in memory schema. The following English idioms and their Chinese translation, which contain many cultural elements, are good examples to describe the misplacement, which causes different responses among the readers both of the source text and of the translated text.

(1) To drink like a fish
豪饮如牛

(2) To lock the stable door after the horse is stolen.
亡羊补牢

(3) Neither fish nor flesh.
非驴非马

(4) Cry wine and sell vinegar.
挂羊头卖狗肉

In (1) The misplacement responses are "fish" to "牛"; in (2) "stable door" to "牢"; "horse" to "羊" and "stolen" to "亡"; in (3) "fish" to "驴" and "flesh" to "马"; and in (4) "cry" to "挂", "wine" to "羊头" and "vinegar" to "狗肉".

Apart from their semantic understanding and appreciation, these different

expressions by their misplacement of cultural elements are sure to cause different responses among the readers because these heterogeneous expressions of the translated text contain different culture or social identity. Though these isomorphic expressions possess the same semantic values and communicative function in the context, because of the special cultural elements in different societies, the readers in different languages will acquire different special associative meanings.

However, some of the Chinese and English idioms can cause the readers to response equivalently in approximately all the language aspects such as meaning, semantic structure, connotation, figures of speech, stylistic and pragmatic function, association and even psychology. For example,

(1) Money makes the mare go.

有钱能使鬼推磨。

(2) to swim with the tide

随大流

(3) to fish in troubled waters

浑水摸鱼

(4) to add fuel to the flame

火上加油

(5) to make the hair stand on end

毛发倒竖

(6) to have a well-oiled tongue

油嘴滑舌

(7) Strike while the iron is hot.

趁热打铁

(8) Misfortunes never come singly.

祸不单行

In this chapter, the analysis of the various cultural conflicts that the readers meet when responding to the different cultural elements concludes that cultural translation concerns many factors related to culture, unlike the translation of materials of natural sciences. Nida's translation principle of "functional equivalence" has its own translation aims, so care should be taken when it is

employed to guide the translation for different cultures so as to avoid the cultural conflicts as much as possible .

5. Strategies of Handling the Conflicts

Language is not only a phenomenon of culture but also a carrier of culture. Different languages reflect differences in their national backgrounds, historical cultures, national psychological thoughts and customs, geographical cultures and religious beliefs. The main purpose of translation is communication. A translator plays a key role in deciding what strategies they need to adopt to handle the problems in translation so that they can successfully perform the task of translating not only the meaning but also the cultural message of a target text. At present, many Chinese translators are arguing about the paradox of the two translating strategies of foreignization and domestication. Foreignization stresses that a translation should strive to reproduce as much as possible the 'foreign elements', including 1) the foreign cultures, 2) the formal features of the foreign language, 3) the author's special writing techniques." (孙致礼，2002-1: 40) However, domestication opposes this standpoint and emphasizes the acceptability in the target language.

In the last two decades of the 20th century, due to the influence of the Western translation theories, Chinese translation circles began to reconsider the relationship between domestication and foreignization. As a result, more attention was paid to the strategies of foreignization used by theorists and translators. With the development of the international communications, the trend of foreignization is much foregrounded. But, excessive foreignized language will usually become the obstacle for communications and decrease the acceptability of the TL readers. Therefore, the appropriate use of foreignization in translation is important to the translators.

5.1 A research on domestication and foreignization

5.1.1 Domestication and foreignization

Domestication, which is target-language-culture-oriented (or TL culture-oriented), is a method of translation in which translators strive to substitute the

culture-specific images in the source language with corresponding images specific to the target language culture. The representative of the domestication school is Eugene A. Nida. During the past one hundred years or more under the prevailing influence of the philological and linguistic approaches to translation, the Chinese literary translation has mostly adopted the strategy of domestication. Particularly under the influence of the principle of Nida's "functional equivalence" since his translation theories were introduced into China in the 1980's, domestication has dominated the translation circles and has been widely used in translation practice. As it is target-language-culture-oriented, domestication stresses heavily the smoothness and fluency of the translated text and neglects the uniqueness and the peculiarity of the source language culture carried in the source text. The quality of a translation is evaluated by the standard of the target language, that is, by the application of the "Reader's Equivalent Responses" both of the source text and of the translated text, according to Nida's theory. Provided that the translation is close to the origin in meaning, what is preferred and pursued in translation is the TL text that reads smooth, sounds natural, meets the language rules of the target language and suits the target audience's taste.

Foreignization is a source-language-culture-oriented (or SL culture-oriented) translation method that requires translators to retain the culture-specific images in the translation so as to keep the "foreignness" of the source text. For example, "love me, love my dog." should not be translated into "爱屋及乌", but into "爱我也得爱我的狗"; "谋事在人，成事在天" is preferred to be translated into" Man proposes, Heaven disposes" by Yang Xianyi (杨宪益) not into " Man proposes, God disposes" (by David Hawkes). Foreignization helps transplant the source language culture into the target language culture. As the source language culture is not familiar to the target language readers, the retaining of the source language culture in translation may hinder the target language reader's proper understanding of the source text at their first encounter. Indeed, foreignization is often rejected by many translators as well as publishers because they are afraid that the target language readers may not be able to understand the foreignized translation. The translators and the publishers with such an attitude jeopardize the development of foreignization and block the cross-cultural communication in the world. If we

always adapt "love me, love my dog" into "爱屋及乌", the Chinese readers may never become aware that the English-speaking people use the imagery of a friendly relationship between man / woman and dog which is different from the Chinese (the poor relationship between man/ woman and crow) to express a similar concept. As domestication jeopardizes culture dissemination, when translating classics concerning culture, it is of vital importance that we adopt an appropriate foreignization so as to maintain the peculiar image of the source language culture and to transmit accurately the message of the source text to the target language readers.

5.1.2 Foreignization in the cultural communications

Whether to domesticate or to foreignize the culture-specific items in translation has been a disputable issue for a long time. The foreignization school represented by Lawrence Venuti emphasizes that the source language culture must be retained in the translation. Their stance is listed as follows:

1) It is necessary for the target language readers to acquaint themselves with alien cultures, which very often is the real purpose of the reader's indulgence in translated works.

2) Translators should have confidence in the intelligence and imagination of the target language readers to understand and appreciate the peculiarities of alien cultures.

3) The transplantation of the source language culture into the target language culture will undoubtedly enrich the target language culture and increase different ways of expression in the target language.

4) Translation should help promote cultural exchange between target language and source language, which is a primary purpose of translation.

5) Translation that fails to transmit various phenomena of the source language culture may not be regarded as "faithful to the original works."

5.1.2.1 Necessity of foreignization

Translation is the rendering of message, here written message in particular

from one language into another. In nine cases out of ten, a translation is intended to serve as a substitute for the original so as to make it available to people who cannot read the language in which it is written or to constitute a medium for an exchange of ideas by those people who do not know each other's tongue. Because of this purpose of translation, translators at home or abroad pay special attention to the "faithfulness" of the target text and regard it as an utmost important element among translation criteria.

As early as the Tang Dynasty the learned monk Xuan Zhuang (玄奘) designed his criteria for translations. He emphasized accuracy and general acceptance. In the Qing Dynasty, Yan Fu (严复) established his famous three-character standard in translation: "faithfulness", "expressiveness" and "elegance". After the May 4th Movement, Lu Xun (鲁迅) proposed "faithfulness" and "smoothness" as the criteria for translations. In the last decade of the 18th century, British translator and translation theorist, Alexander Fraser Tytler laid down three fundamentals by which a translation should be made or judged. They are:

1) A translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original works.
2) The style and manner of the translated work should be of the same character as that of the original.
3) A translation should have all the ease of the original composition.

From the aforementioned principles, it is clear that Tytler also regarded "faithfulness" as the most important element of translation criteria. His first two rules stress the faithfulness of ideas and style while the third stresses the smoothness of expression as in the SL text.

Obviously, Nida's translation criteria, using the "Reader's Equivalent Responses" as the maximal standard, belong to the strategy of domestication translation. His goal for the reader's responses is functional equivalence with the source language culture, not the transmission of it.

Culture-specific words and expressions are usually heavily loaded with cultural elements and information. As domestication often substitutes the original image with one from the target cultural, domesticated translation may easily distort the intention of the source text writer. To be faithful to the source text in image,

spirit, etc. it would be better for us to adopt an appropriate foreignization as much as possible so that translation can develop and enrich the target culture and match the reader's needs.

On the one hand, the equality in cross-cultural communication is necessary. Many factors contributed to cultural exchanges. Generally, they are military conquests, political and economic influences, immigration, development of science and technology, etc. All contributing factors may result in the spreading of one language or culture into another language or culture. The cultures in the big and powerful countries (especially in military, political and economic aspects) tend to have a stronger influence over cultures of the weak and small countries. In the past two centuries, Britain, though rather small in territory, has been a "big" country because of its armed forces, political influence and economy. Backed up by its new navigation technology and advanced weapons, it stretched its influence to almost every corner of the world and became "an empire where the sun never sets". Besides its rapid and immense military and commercial expansion, its language and culture also expanded and spread into foreign countries. After the Opium War in the mid-nineteenth century, China, under the reign of the Qing Dynasty, fell prey to the Western powers headed by Britain. As a semi-colonial country, China was strongly influenced by the English language and culture. As a result, a large amount of English words and expressions have found their way into the Chinese language and culture and have greatly influenced the Chinese society.

On the other hand, the Chinese culture had a much smaller chance to influence the English culture. Very few words and expressions of the Chinese origin were brought back to Britain by British soldiers and merchants into the English language. Even now, the English language and culture are still influencing the Chinese language and culture more strongly than the Chinese language and culture are influencing them. This is not equal cultural communication. China has been a large country with an impressive language and culture during its long history of over five thousand years, and the Chinese translators have the task and responsibility to spread and bring the Chinese language and culture into other foreign languages and cultures in order to enable foreigners to understand and appreciate the Chinese brilliant cultures. To do so, we hold that, while more efforts should be made in

introducing Chinese literary treasures by the way of translation, foreignization should be encouraged as much as possible in translation.

Moreover, foreignization is also possible because of the great absorbing function of languages. Translation as a main channel plays a key role in grafting one culture into another. Without translation, the cultural prosperity would be weak and the communications would be dead. (俞大维，1970) Without doubt, all languages and cultures have their own unique beauty, value and characteristics , if added with the "new blood" coming from foreign languages, they will become more brilliant and have a greater vitality.

5.1.2.2 Inevitability of foreignization

With the development of globalization, a country and its culture tend to be more and more fused with the world. This cultural fusion is becoming inevitable and will bring about a healthier cultural evolution and will in turn promote a country's cultural assimilation.

Translation, as an activity of contact between two different languages, will surely influence the fusion of the cultures greatly. The positive influence may produce a bilingual situation and enrich the content of the two cultures so that the contacts from different cultures will become easier, and a relatively common culture can be built up in the related societies. For example, the word "weekend" was difficult for the Chinese to accept either in its concept or in its content before the mainland adopted the working-day system of five days, but today, this word is as familiar to the Chinese as to the westerners and becomes a common expression both in China and abroad. The negative influence mainly lies in the conflicts between cultures with different languages. Conflicts reflect the uniqueness of the different cultures. In fact, the more contacts a culture makes with another, the more conflicts appear.

As foreignization in translation focuses on the cultural differences and conveys the original culture by keeping the features and the uniqueness of the foreign cultures and specific language styles and characteristics, the readers of the translated text will be able to appreciate the difference of the unique beauty and exoticism reflected in the translated text. Thus, the "language gap" caused by the

"cultural gap" between the different countries will be bridged and both cultures will be benefited. For example, China has a rich, long history about food culture. It has produced many effective metaphors related to food in the culture. When Chinese people describe a crowded swimming pool, they will probably say, "简直像芝麻酱里煮饺子". For foreigners who have never eaten sesame paste and seen *Jiaozi*, they will have difficulty in appreciating the humor of this effective metaphor. In English, if there are a great number of people in a narrow place, they will say, "It is packed like sardines." With the increase of the economic contacts between China and other countries, more sardine cans are sold in the Chinese markets and the Chinese food is introduced everywhere in the western countries through various channels. At present, the metaphor "packed like sardines" has been accepted by more and more Chinese people. Generally, the cultural communication and fusion are developed in the process of continuous cultural conflicts and constant contacts.

The fusion of cultures needs a long period of the social development and however slow the speed is, the tendency towards the cultural fusion is an irreversible process. Open, permeable features of developing cultures facilitate better exchanges of various cultural elements between languages through translation. There would not be the prosperity of Chinese culture if the Chinese culture had not absorbed foreign cultures. As it is true, many foreign words, expressions and idioms are absorbed and fused in the Chinese language and culture and some have even become part of Chinese culture. For example, the proverb "时间就是金钱" (Time is money) has become a very familiar expression in the modern society."掉鳄鱼泪" (to shed crocodile tears) is used more often than the translation "猫哭老鼠". The idioms "to be armed to the teeth", "the cold war" and a great number of other foreignized idiomatic expressions have become a very important part in the Chinese culture.

Foreignization becomes a more common reality also because it can better preserve the beauty, aesthetic taste and stylistic coloring of the original culture. The following examples are given to this point.

(1) Man is a bubble.

人生就象肥皂泡。

This idiom comes from Greece and shows that man's life is very short in the

river of history. The translation 人生就象肥皂泡 really keeps the stylistic coloring of the original expression. If we translate the Greek idiom into the Chinese proverb "人生短暂，弹指一挥间", the translation may not reflect the aesthetic taste of the source language by the strategy of foreignization.

(2) All roads lead to Rome.

条条道路通罗马。

This idiom implies that when we do anything, we have many ways to do it. The Chinese translation certainly maintains the beauty of the original language. If we translate "All roads lead to Rome" into the Chinese proverb "做事不可一棵树上吊死", the translation will not convey the stylistic coloring of the SL though the deep meanings are almost similar to the metaphor.

This kind of translation by way of foreignization makes the Chinese readers feel interested and the readers will gradually accept these fresh expressions with the passage of time.

From the preceding analysis, we can see that the reader's acceptance of foreignization just depends on the time, whether slow or quick. Just as Mu Lei (穆雷) said, "Some seemingly stiff foreign words will have gradually become natural ones through the time." (1990, (4): 74-78) Therefore, we have enough reasons to believe that the strategy of foreignization in cultural translation is a necessary tendency and is becoming inevitable.

5.2 Strategies for cultural translation

Cultural translation must be considered against a language situation, that is, translators should make a careful study of the surface meaning and the deep meaning of the culture and language. Language reflects culture and carries a rich cultural connotation but is controlled by the culture. Language is used for communication, and so will reflect the meaning of the culture. Both the Chinese culture and the English culture share many common elements as well as many different features. Each of them has its own cultural uniqueness. Adopting proper strategies for translation is necessary because translation in this aspect presents the biggest difficulty and therefore calls for more careful consideration. In this section,

the strategies of translation of literary works will be discussed from four respects.

5.2.1 Appropriate extent of domestication and foreignization

The appropriate extent of domestication and foreignization implies that translators should find the best balance possible between these two methods for the presentation of the source culture. When to adopt domestication and when to use foreignization and when to practise the fusion of domestication and foreignization, all this relies on the translator's own abilities to perceive the differences of languages, cultures, histories, psychologies and emotions, etc. both in Chinese and in English. For example,

> There is a mixture of the tiger and the ape in the character of a Frenchman.
>
> (《中国翻译》, 1997, (3) : 78)

For this sentence, there are three different translations.

1) 法国人的性格混有老虎和猿的成分。

2) 法国人的性格像虎狼一样残暴又像狐狸一样狡猾。

3) 虎恶狐狡，兼而有之，这就是法国人的性格。

Version 1) is a typical translation in the method of foreignization, which only presents the surface meaning, but neglects the deep meaning. Version 2) resorts to domestication, which reflects the deep meaning, but loses the special flavor of the original. Version 3) is a mixture of foreignization and domestication, which does not only maintain the features of the original culture, but also conveys the actual meanings of the original faithfully.

5.2.2 More attention to the language history, the social backgrounds and the cultural connotation

A comparison of the following translations will show the importance of the history embodied in the different languages, the meaning reflected in the different social backgrounds and the connotation of the different cultures.

> "她竟不像老祖宗的外孙女儿，竟是嫡亲的孙女似的。"
>
> (曹雪芹，《红楼梦》)

1) "She doesn't take after your side of the family, Grannie. She's more like a Jia."

(Tr. David Hawkes)

2) "She doesn't take after her father, son-in-law of our old Ancestress, but looks more like a Jia."

(杨宪益 译)

We know that in ancient China and even at present, the grandchildren are divided into two parts by the blood relationship. The blood of the grandchildren of the inner family (the son's children) is thicker than those of the outside family (the daughter's children). This sentence is said by Wang Xifeng when Lin Daiyu came to stay with her maternal grandma and greet her for the first time. Pretending to get Grannie to love her, she really intended to flatter Grannie. Hawkes' translation does not show the connotation of the original culture that blood relationship of the inner family is much closer than that of the outside family. But Yang's translation conveys Wang Xifeng's mentalities exactly and faithfully. It shows the readers the feudal consciousness in traditional China reflected in the novel.

The different cultural backgrounds may enrich the expressions in the target language through foreignization. The dismissal of the original culture in the source language will make the readers misunderstand and feel lost in the target language. Let's see the example below.

"Unless you've an ace up your sleeve, we are dished."

Version 1) "除非你有锦囊妙计，否则我们是输定了。"

Version 2) "除非你手中藏有王牌，否则我们是输定了。"

Obviously, Version 1) is a domesticated translation and 2) is a foreignized translation. The term "have an ace up one's sleeve" is an idiom, which comes from the allusion that in ancient West the gambler often hides an ace in his sleeve in advance so as to win. But "锦囊妙计" has a totally different cultural and social background. "锦囊妙计" refers to a secret master plan concealed in a small pocket to be used in times of great danger and emergency. This phrase originated from the palace struggle or warfare in ancient China, and therefore contains a strong stylistic coloring of the Chinese features.

5.2.3 Extrication of the psychological control from the native culture

Different nations have different social habits and different moral principles. In order to present the unique flavor cultures, translators should be free from the psychological control of the sexual restraints and taboos. We can make a comparison of the two different translations for the following sentence.

"He made you a highway to my bed; But, I, a maid, die maiden-widowed."

(W. Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*)

Version 1) "他要借着你做牵引相思的桥梁，可是我却要做一个独守空阁的怨女而死去。"

(朱生豪 译)

Version 2) "他本要你做捷径，登上我的床；可怜我这处女，活守寡，到死是处女。"

(方平 译)

In the traditional Chinese culture, it is unimaginable that an unmarried maid should ask her sweetheart to her bed, which is an immoral and unacceptable action. The translation by Zhu Shenghao clearly considers such an act as a sexual depravity and taboo for the Chinese readers and does not reflect the revealing sexual psychological emotions of the westerners in the works of Shakespeare. Nevertheless, Fang Ping adopts the strategy of foreignization to present the original taste of the author and his works, and his translation appears more vivid and is in fact more faithful in form and style.

5.2.4 Extrication of the deception from the surface meaning of the SL

In Chinese and English languages, there are a lot of idioms, which are similar either in the forms or in the surface meanings. But sometimes, translators only translate their surface meaning, neglecting the deep meaning and its cultural connotation. For example,

The Chinese idiom "骨鲠在喉" is used to refer to the situation when a person has something in mind and needs to speak it out. However, some translator replaces

it with an English idiom, "have a bone in one's throat," which actually has an opposite meaning. Though the English idiom is similar to the idiom "骨鲠在喉" in the surface meaning and structure, its symbolic deep meaning is rather that someone wants to find an excuse not to say what he wants to.

A Chinese proverb "知子莫如父" is often translated into its equivalent English proverb " It is a wise father that knows his child." Similarly, both in form and surface meaning, the two proverbs are equivalent, but they are opposite in connotation. "知子莫如父" stresses that it is the father who knows his child best. "It is a wise father that knows his child" means that very fewer fathers know their children well or even the father cannot know his child well.

The English proverb "The closer the bone, the sweeter the meat." is usually turned into the Chinese proverb "越是贴骨的肉越香". In fact, this translation only expresses the surface meaning, making the readers of the target language associate with the meat. But the symbolic meaning of the English proverb should be that "slim people are more attractive than fat people." The following translation reflects the cultural connotation of this proverb.

> "A little skinny... for my taste, but like my ol' dady used to say: the closer the bone, the sweeter the meat."
>
> (T. Hardy : *Tess of the d' Urbervilles*)
>
> "就我的眼光来看……瘦了点，不过我老爹常说：愈不长肉愈俊俏。"
>
> (孙致礼 译)

The fore-going translations in the strategy of domestication or foreignization show that the translators need to pay much attention to the underlying meanings of the SL expressions and avoid omitting the deep meanings or the cultural connotations in the process of translation.

5.3 Consideration of reader's acceptability of understanding

We sing high praise for the translation strategy of foreignization and also believe that in the 21st century the tendency of cultural or literal translation will dominated by foreignization, which is the only path for the Chinese translators to go along. But, undoubtedly, foreignization also has its limitations sometimes. When

doing the translation, the translator cannot neglect the reader's acceptability so as to avoid the communication obstacles in cultural translation. The general strategies for handling such obstacles are suggested as follows.

5.3.1 Appropriate use of native expressions in the target language

Appropriate use of native expressions refers to the reasonable use of idiomatic expression and habitual saying in the target language. Although domestication sometimes may lose the unique expressions of the SL, for the sake of making the TL readers understand the translation more easily, a completely foreignized language sometimes may result in incomprehensive expressions in the TL so as to hinder the successful conveyance of the SL message. In order to suffice the reader's taste and make them understand the expressions well, the proper use of the strategy of domestication is also highly necessary. For example,

"The man is the black sheep of family."

If this sentence is translated into "那人是全家的黑羊" and when the Chinese readers read it, they will be completely at a loss, not knowing what it means. If it is adapted into the Chinese idiom "害群之马", a familiar expression of the native language, it will better suit the acceptability of the Chinese readers.

From the angle of rhetoric, some vehicles or references in the SL metaphorical expressions may not be familiar or habitual to the TL readers. To make them understood and appreciated by the readers of the target language, conversions of such expressions into habitual TL may be of great necessity. Therefore, "a lion in the way" can not be translated into "拦路狮" because the expression "拦路虎" is better accepted by the Chinese readers.

The simile "like a hen on a hot girdle" can not be changed into "像热窝上的母鸡", for the more accepted and comprehensible expression is "像热锅上的蚂蚁" to the Chinese readers. And the English proverb "The leopard cannot change his spots" had better be translated into the Chinese proverb "狗改不了吃屎".

5.3.2 Proper use of colloquial expressions in the TL

In Chinese, the readers easily accept many four-character phrases. If translators can properly use these accepted Chinese to show the beautiful expressions in the target language, unexpected rhetoric effects may result. For example,

Studies serve for delight, for ornament and, for ability

(Francis Bacon, *Of Studies*)

Version 1) 读书可以使人从中获得愉快的感觉，可以增添光彩及增长才干。

Version 2) 读书足以怡情，足以博采，足以长才。

(王佐良 译)

A comparison of the two different translations clearly shows that Version 2) achieves a better rhetoric effect and a smoother flow of the source language, and the language structure of Version 2) is also more faithful to the original structure: three-layer parallelism in the figures of speech.

Sometimes, using local dialect in the target language may also reach the purpose of a good translation. For example,

"O, no—I wouldn't have it for the world!" declared Tess. "And letting everybody know the reason—such a thing to be ashamedo! "

(T. Hardy, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles*)

"不能，俺豁着死了，也不能那么办！"苔丝骄傲地大声说。"这样的事情要是让别人知道了，还不得把人躁死么？"

(张若谷 译)

The cultural background for the sentence is that Tess' mother asks her to sell the coal in a town with a man who once danced with Tess and Tess, then a countryside girl with little education, thinks it is disgraceful and therefore refuses to do so. Being well aware of both the SL and the TL cultures, Mr. Zhang Ruogu (张若谷) translated the spoken expression "for the world" and the informal language "to be ashamedo" into the Chinese dialectal expressions "豁着死了" and "把人躁死", which are very close in style as well as in meaning to the expression used by Tess, a countryside maid, and meanwhile an active character of kindness,

honesty and shyness is shown to the readers.

5.3.3 More attention to the combination of the foreign taste and the Chinese taste

When we translate English into Chinese, we should give much attention not only to keeping the foreign taste of the original language, but also to the combination of the foreign taste and the Chinese taste. This concerns, in particular, the translation of the purposeful ungrammatical phrases and language structures or slangs. For example,

> "I kept it from her face after I heard on it," said Mr. Peggotty, "going on nigh a year. We was living then in a solitary place, but among the beautifulest trees..."
>
> (T. Hardy, *Tess of the d' Urbervilles*)

There are many grammatical errors in the original sentence said by Mr. Peggotty, which reflects that Peggotty was an uneducated countryside man and his social position was very low.

In view of Mr. Peggotty's background, translators should truthfully represent the foreign taste in accordance with the language surface structure and combine this taste with the Chinese taste as well as we can. It might be translated into

> "起那时俺听了那消息后，"培果提说："瞒着她快一年了。俺们那时呆的地方挺背，前后四面的树林子说不出的最漂亮，……"

If we translate the underlined parts into "我听到那消息后"，"我当时住在一个僻静的地方，周围有十分漂亮的树……", the sentences will sound more fluent and standard in grammar but will certainly lose the stylistic coloring intended by the original writer.

6. Conclusion

The deep influence of Nida's theory of "functional equivalence" on translators and translation theorists in China draws much of our attention to a series of issues, which are: whether there is the necessity to reflect the differences between the cultures, whether the readers of the source text have the equivalent responses as the readers do in the translated text, whether Nida's theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" is suitable for the translation of cultures, what the purpose of translation is and what Nida's theory is aimed at. Only when we make a careful consideration and a close analysis of Nida's theory, can we decide whether to accept it and what extent should we accept it.

We cannot negate the positive roles of Nida's "functional equivalence" and his "Reader's Equivalent Responses" in handling the differences of the different languages, but we also need to point out its negative side in handling the differences in different cultures and the conversion of the language structures. His translation theory of "Reader's Equivalent Responses" targets at the translation of *The Bible*, not at the translation of literature. The different targets of translation decide different translation strategies. However, Nida's translation purpose is different from the target of most of the Chinese translators in essence, so there must exist a distance between his "Reader's Equivalent Responses" and the translation theories which should be pursued by most of the Chinese translators.

The principles of Nida's "functional equivalence" and "Reader's Equivalent Responses" are mainly used to handle the differences of the languages. When stated as "the readers of a translated text should be able to understand and appreciate it in essentially the same manner as the original readers did", the theory is more of a position of domestication. It stresses the "Reader's Equivalent Responses", but ignores the presentation of the differences in different cultures. As a consequence, this may cause some distortion or even loss of information in verbal communication and cultural communication.

With the speedy development and great expansion of the international cultures, the penetration and fusion of the global cultures demand translators to pay much attention to the strategy of foreignization in cultural translation. While adopting this

strategy, we had better attach much importance to the differences of the historical cultures, the religious cultures, the geographic cultures and the native psychologies as well as the different features of thinking modes of both the SL and the TL culture holders. We also advocate that appropriate strategies should be taken and a good balance should be kept between the translation methods of domestication and foreignization so as to achieve a successful cross-cultural communication.

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