Translating Western musicals in Chinese: texts, networks, consumers

Stella Lanxing Sorby

Hong Kong Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.hkbu.edu.hk/etd_oa

Recommended Citation
https://repository.hkbu.edu.hk/etd_oa/113
Abstract

When translating musicals from one culture to another, a translator’s role is to convert the text for its stage representation in a different context. However, during the process from this translated text to it finally being performed on stage, changes are inevitable. Issues surrounding the nature of such changes, the reasons for which they are made, and their resulting effects, have hitherto been little researched. The present study seeks to explore such issues through an examination of the ways in which the development of the translated text is shaped by interactions between the various stakeholders including professional translators, fans and production team members, i.e. the director and actors, as well as the audience themselves. Employing some of the major concepts of Actor Network Theory as the principal theoretical framework, together with a case study approach combining textual analysis and empirical studies, this project focuses on Putonghua translations of Western musicals in the Chinese mainland. More specifically, through investigating three of the most recent and professionally translated and performed Western musicals: I love you, you’re perfect, now change (USA), Spin (Finland) and Mamma Mia! (UK), it intends to show how differing stakeholder perspectives on issues of performability and reception are negotiated to produce a commercially successful translation product.
I consider myself a very lucky person, as I have had the privilege to meet and to work with people who are not only intellectually inspiring, but also generous in their help and support during my journey of study.

I owe my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Dr Robert Neather. It was he who has made it possible for me to complete this innovative and challenging project. His open mindedness for new ideas, his attention to detail, his generous help and support, his patience and encouragement, his kindness and consideration, make it a great pleasure and enjoyment to work with him, just like a good friend.

I would like to thank my co-supervisor Dr Ester Leung for her help and encouragement for my study. I often felt uplifted by her appreciation of the strength of my project, as it was often she who reminded me to be positive when I felt low.

I would also like to thank the late Professor Martha Cheung, Professor Tan Zaixi, Professor Jane Lai, Dr Jessica Yeung, Dr Yau Wai Ping, Dr Wayne Liang and Ms Carina Lok at the translation program of the Hong Kong Baptist University for their help and input to my research. Also, my special thanks go to the Hong Kong Research Grants Committee for their generous fellowship, which has enabled me to embark on my research here.

I am eternally grateful to Dr Paul Rastall, my mentor and my previous supervisor, for his inspiration and guidance, for his trust and confidence in me, for his never failing and invaluable help and support throughout my completion of this study. My gratitude goes as well to Dr Carol O’Sullivan, also my previous supervisor, for all her kind help and encouragement.

I value the inspirational discussions on various occasions with Professor Theo Hermans, Professor Kirsten Malmkjaer, Professor Stuart Christie, Professor Douglas Robinson, Professor Mona Baker, Professor Edwin Gentzler, Professor Rupert Chan, Professor Sherry Simon, and Professor John Milton, which have proved to be very useful for my preparation of this thesis.

This study greatly benefited from the industry insiders I have interviewed, and their generous time and effort in sharing their views and experiences with me, such as Nick Yu, Xue Fan, Joel Bishoff, Phil Qiu, Georg Malvius, Richard Fei, Hu Xiaoqing, Li Suyou, Jiang Qinghua, to name just a few.

I have enjoyed my study experience at the Hong Kong Baptist University and the various friends and their company, including Fan Yiting, Blake, Henry, Christine and Marija.

Finally, I must thank my family, my grandmother, my parents, my husband and my brother, for taking all the worries off me and providing me with every help they can. This dissertation would not have been possible without their love and care.
Table of Contents

Declaration i
Abstract ii
Acknowledgements iii
Table of Contents iv

Chapter 1. Introduction 1
1.1 Research topic 1
1.1.1 Translating musicals: different approaches required 1
1.1.2 The research objectives 2
1.2 The emergence and development of the translation of Western musicals on the Chinese mainland 4
1.2.1 A novel form from the West 4
1.2.2 Testing the waters in translation 6
1.2.3 ‘For market, for audience’ 6
1.3 The Genre of Musicals: a Consumer-oriented Popular Art Entertainment 8
1.3.1 A form of multi-semiotic popular arts entertainment for a wider audience 8
1.3.2 The commercially driven consumer orientation 10
1.3.3 The musical libretto: demands on the translator 11
1.4 Scholarly research on theatrical performance and libretto 13
1.4.1 Text and Performance: a collaborative translation practice 14
1.4.2 Singability 19
1.5 Structure of the dissertation 23

Chapter 2. The Theoretical Framework and Methodology 25
2.1 A brief introduction to ANT 25
2.1.1 Both human and non-human ‘actors’ and ‘actants’ have agency 25
2.1.2 The ‘non-human actant’ 26
2.1.3 The connections: everyone and everything exists in relation with others 28
2.1.4 The dynamism: mediators and their interactions make things happen 29
2.1.5 The concept of ‘translation’ 31
2.2 The applications of ANT to translation studies 33
2.3 Applying ANT to my case studies for the translation of musicals 34
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Employing ANT in this thesis</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.2 The starting node in the network</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.3 The nature of the network</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.4 Contextualizing the ‘non-human actants’</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Research design and data collection</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Case studies guided by the ANT approach</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 The selection of the three cases</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 A proposed model for musical translations</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 Data collection</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4.1 Textual data</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4.2 Other empirical data</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4.3 Ethical issues</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 3. Text Matters: language, style and drama**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Language and context</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1 Faithfulness and naturalness</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2 Intertextuality</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3 Cultural adaptation</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Consumer-oriented stylistic representation</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1 ‘Code-switching/code-mixing’</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1.1 Fashion and novelty</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1.2 Symbolic Capital</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2 Humour/Comical effect</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Dramatic cohesion and coherence</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Storyline</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Characterization</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Chapter 4. Singability, Performance, and Translation Decisions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Singability</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1 Syllable count</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.1 Syllable count vs meaning</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.2 Padding words</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.1.3 Adding/subtracting syllables 121
4.1.2 Syntax 123
4.1.2.1 Syntax and musical rests 123
4.1.2.2 Syntax and musical phrases 125
4.1.2.3 Syntax and musical stress 125
4.1.3 Rhyme, rhythm and tones 128
4.1.3.1 Rhyme 130
4.1.3.2 Tones 134
4.1.3.3 Rhythm 142
4.2 Performance-related issues 144
4.2.1 Coherence between libretti and choreography 145
4.2.2 Coherence between lyrics and set design 147

Conclusion

Chapter 5. Interacting with the Stakeholders: case studies and audience surveys 151
5.1 Case studies of the Chinese translation of three Western musicals 154
5.1.1 ILY: negotiations between the translator, the director and the cast 155
5.1.1.1 The influence of ‘Habitus’ 155
5.1.1.2 The cast and the translation forum 160
5.1.2 Spin: negotiations between the translator and the cast 165
5.1.2.1 Negotiating textual priorities 165
5.1.2.2 The stages of persuasion 170
5.1.2.3 Negotiating differences of expertise: the role of consumer orientation 174
5.1.2.4 Stakeholders’ creative adjustments 177
5.1.3 MM: the audience’s involvements 182
5.1.3.1 Encouraging the audience’s active participation 183
5.1.3.2 Reacting to the audience’s feedback 187
5.2 Audience survey 190
5.2.1 Overview 191
5.2.2 The design 192
5.2.3 The respondents 194
5.2.4 The findings 194
5.2.4.1 The demand for surtitles 194
5.2.4.2 The importance of storylines 197
5.2.4.3 The language difficulties when listening 198
5.2.4.4 The pursuit for ‘Original sauce and flavour’ 200
5.2.4.5 Stylistic features 202
5.2.4.6 The Chinese elements 205
Conclusion 206

Chapter 6. Conclusion 209
6.1 The main views and summary 209
6.1.1 The main views 209
6.1.2 Summary of the findings 210
6.2 Originality and contribution 213
6.2.1 An under-researched topic 213
6.2.2 Collaborative translations and their varieties in practice 214
6.2.3 A new approach employing ANT and its modifications 215
6.2.4 The diagram for the analysis of musicals’ translation 217
6.3 Limitations 218
6.3.1 Follow the ‘actant’ 218
6.3.2 The ‘non-human actant’ 219
6.3.3 The audience survey 220
6.4 Future research suggestions 221
6.5 Implications 221
6.6 Concluding remarks 222

Bibliography 224

List of Diagram, Charts, and Tables
Diagram. The interactions between the translator and the other stakeholders/consumers in the translation of musicals, from the perspective of ANT 43
Chart 1. Survey 1: The preferred forms of performances 195
Chart 2. Survey 2: The preferred forms of performances 195
Chart 3. Survey 3: The preferred forms of performances 196
Table 1. The respondents’ top two rankings in order of importance for the main aspects of musicals 197
Chart 4. Survey 1 and 2: Ease of comprehension
Chart 5. Survey 1: Causes of the difficulties
Table 2 The respondents’ top two rankings, in order of importance, for the stylistic features of the libretto
Chart 6. Three surveys: Compatibility of the Chinese elements

Appendices
Appendix I. Interview questions
Appendix II. Online survey questionnaires
Appendix III. Table of responses from all three online surveys
Appendix IV. Quotes from interviews in Chinese
Appendix V. The pilot audience survey

Curriculum Vitae
Chapter 1. Introduction

There is a challenge involved, and it is offered to the universities: are we in universities able to use our methods of analysis — historical, musical, literary, philosophical — and still get this form of popular entertainment right? (McMillin, 2006: xi)

1.1 Research topic

1.1.1. Researching the translation of musicals: the need for a multi-faceted approach

As one of the most successful forms of popular art entertainment, musicals are closely involved with translation, since translation is essential for meeting the needs of a global audience. The multi-semiotic genre features that musicals embrace require handling from a dynamic perspective, for which the traditional practices of translation, involving a lone translator converting between different languages, are no longer adequate. The translators have to adapt themselves in order to fit into this new working mode. Their experience in searching for the appropriate translation strategies in order to satisfy the target audience warrants more attention from researchers and numerous questions arise, such as: what are the factors that influence the process where the translated text develops towards a staged product in musical theatre? How do translators take into account non-linguistic factors, such as singability? Who are the stakeholders\(^1\) that translators need to negotiate with, and respond to, in order to make an effective musical product for the audience? This study intends to explore these issues, which have been “rather neglected within translation studies” (Susa m-Sarajeva, 2008:187), and offer some insights from the current practice in translation of musical theatre.

Currently, little direct research has been carried out in the field of musicals translation. Even in the West, where musicals are well established and developed, Susam-Sarajeva finds that “[t]he topic of translation and music has remained on the periphery of translation studies” (ibid.: 190) and is “generally limited […] to overt and canonized

\(^1\) Stakeholder: here refers to those with any vested interest in the translation of musicals as a consumer-oriented product, such as the translator, the producer, the director, the music director, the performers, the design team members including the choreographer, etc., as well as the audience.
translation practices, such as those undertaken for the opera” (ibid.: 189). Furthermore, in terms of specific language varieties, there has been very little research on musical translations into Chinese compared with Western languages such as English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Scandinavian and Russian. Even within China, only fragments of research have been carried out regarding such translations.

For research which has ventured into the field of translation and music, Susam-Sarajeva observes: “[w]ork on the topic has traditionally focused on advocating practical strategies, on loss and compensation and on general translation criticism” (ibid. 190). As a result, “[t]he main question has been ‘how’ the translation should be done, not ‘why’ it has been done in a certain way” (ibid.). Clearly, a research approach based on comparison between ST and TT cannot fully explain the textual development of the translation, especially when multi-semiotic elements and multiple stakeholders are involved in the translation process. Therefore, as Susam-Sarajeva concludes, “translation scholars will certainly need new frameworks and tools beyond a text-based approach in order to be able to explain how music and translation work together” (ibid., original emphasis).

1.1.2 Research objectives
This study starts with some initial queries concerning the multiple factors that influence the process by which the translated text develops towards a staged product in musical theatre. In particular, in addition to the linguistic factors, how do translators take into account other factors, such as singability? Who are the stakeholders that translators need to respond to, and negotiate with, in order to make an effective musical product for the target audience? The study seeks to understand the following issues in the translation of musicals from English to Putonghua:

- how the problems encountered at the interface between the textual and linguistic features and the theatrical semiotic elements are dealt with;
- how a translator works in a complex working environment;
- how the differing stakeholders’ inputs affect the development of the target text.

These queries led to formulation of the following research questions:

i) Which changes are made, and at what stages, during the development of the textual translation?
ii) How and why are certain translation solutions arrived at?

iii) What are the implications, particularly with regard to differing stakeholders, of translating musicals as consumer-oriented products?

iv) How might these issues be more effectively theorized?

To answer these research questions, three recent Chinese translations of Western musicals performed on the Chinese mainland have been selected as the case studies for investigation. They are: *I love you, you’re perfect, now change* (USA) (2006, 2007, 2009); *Spin* (Finland) (2010) and *Mamma Mia!* (UK) (2011-2014). This study attempts to provide insights into how translation is shaped by the attempts of different stakeholders such as the producers, directors, music directors, choreographers and performers, to collaborate and negotiate issues of language, performability and reception. These stakeholders, it argues, operate within a fundamentally consumer² context, in which translators have to act with and in response to other factors such as the musical framework for lyrics, the choreography, stage performability, as well as the audience feedback, for the re-enactment of the original text to meet the target audience’s expectations and attain resonance with them.

Employing some of the major concepts of Actor Network Theory (hereafter ANT) as the principal theoretical framework and methodological approach, this thesis aims to identify the key roles involved and strategies used in translating Western musicals for the Chinese context. Informed by ANT’s central concept that all ‘actants’, both human and non human, and their dynamic interactions make things happen (see detailed discussions in Chapter 2), the study takes an interdisciplinary approach. It involves translation, literature, music, theatre and cultural studies, with multiple stakeholders including the translators, the various musical production team members, and the audience. To explore how the translator negotiates under the influence of other factors in a dynamic network environment, data has been gathered through field studies including interviews with various stakeholders, obtaining the translated texts, as well as online audience surveys.

² In this thesis, the term ‘consumer’ is employed in a relatively broad sense. It refers to those who use or benefit from the translation text, but not intended to suggest that only the paying customer is involved or that the paying customer can directly influence the translation, although consumer evaluation and feedback are clearly important. From this viewpoint, any stakeholders who make use of the translation text may also be considered as consumers of the translator, as noted above, since the translator has to have their needs in mind when attempting to accommodate their demands.
The specific linguistic and textual problems which the translator faces, and how they are negotiated through collaborations and interactions, as well as feedback will help further our understanding of how the notion of collaborative translation operates in the context of specific musicals. It is hoped that the findings of the thesis may serve as reference points for future research on musicals and their changing trends through different eras, and that they would also have implications for wider cross-cultural issues of popular art entertainment in a global context.

Following this brief introduction of the research topic for the thesis, this chapter will now proceed with a discussion of the background of this research, the genre of musicals, and the existing research literature, before highlighting the contribution of the thesis, and finally providing an outline of the chapters.

1.2 The emergence and development of the translation of Western musicals on the Chinese mainland

1.2.1 A novel form from the West

The Western Musical is a novel genre for the Chinese audience. It was not until 1987 that some Chinese audience members experienced their first encounter with Western musicals when the Chinese Opera House performed the Chinese translated versions of *The Music Man* and *The Fantasticks* in Beijing. They were the fruits of the cultural exchange between The Chinese Dramatists Association and The Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, and were not aimed at commercial gain (Yang Haopeng, 2012). Since then, a few other attempts have followed. In 1988, for instance, the students at the Shanghai Theatre Academy performed *My Fair Lady* in Chinese (Xu Rongying, 2011-12-14). However, according to Shen Chengzhou, one of the translators for *The Music Man*, these performances did not receive much attention. This was owing to two factors: on the one hand, the insiders were lacking full knowledge of musicals; on the other hand, the audience was not ready to receive and enjoy musicals (Shen Chengzhou, 2012: 52-57). Ten years later, thanks to the popularity of the film version of *The Sound of Music*, Cheng Fangyuan, a well-known pop singer, together with her then husband, invested their own money on a musical production of *The Sound of Music* in Chinese, which was very well received by the audience and was extended from 10 performances to 14 (Huang Yiding, 1998: 46-47).
In 2002, following the gradual cultivation of an audience for musicals, and thanks to prolonged and extensive promotions, a British cast performed *Les Misérables* in Shanghai, with the help of surtitles projected on both sides of the stage, for a total of 21 performances. Since then, Western musical producers have shown increasing interest in entering the Chinese entertainment market and their products have enjoyed widespread media attention and been enthusiastically welcomed. The Chinese audience has been able to see at first hand some of the most celebrated shows such as *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Lion King*, and *The Sound of Music*. Their success has been reflected in their record box-office receipts from cities such as Shanghai and Beijing (Zhao Zhuang 2007), where enjoying musicals has become one of the most fashionable forms of entertainment among white-collar office workers. The Chinese musical fans’ communities have also started to develop and grow.

In response to such demand, the Musicals Department of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and the Musicals Programme of the Shanghai Theatre Academy were established in 2002 and 2003 respectively (Wu Bin, Lin Huan, 2008; Zhang Yu, 2003). Fans of musicals have since started exchanging views and sources through setting-up websites and blogs. Some university students have even attempted to themselves fund unprofitable performances of some of their favourite Western musicals (Wu Peng, 2005).

However, despite these obvious successes, considerable difficulties caused by language and cultural barriers have also been reported. In 2004, when *Chicago* was performed in Beijing, there were media reports describing the audience as “unused to it”, a problem which resulted in a disappointing reception. One report even concluded that “China does not have the tradition of watching musicals” (Jin Chun, 2004). Jin Fuzai, professor of the Musicals Programme in the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, was sympathetic to the Chinese audience for the language difficulties:

> There were no surtitles when I watched musicals abroad, and there was no language problem. In China, however, watching surtitles distracts very much from following the performances. Language is a major problem for the audiences’ enjoyment, and it is impractical to have such detailed information in the programme. (Jin fuzai, quoted in Zhang Xia, 2008)
Although operas are often sung in their original language, musicals are nearly always performed in the native languages of other countries. Acknowledging such a huge potential audience, Western producers were alerted and began to realize that making the Chinese translated version of these musicals was the key to winning a sustainable audience in China.

1.2.2 Testing the water in translation
To test the water, a few small-scale musicals have been translated and performed in Chinese by local casts, such as the following: the off-Broadway musical *I love you, you’re perfect, now change* (hereafter ILY) (2006, 2007, 2009), the Finish musical *Spin* (2010), the German rock musical *Linie 1* (2008, 2010), and the self-funded *Rent* (2010), before the major production of *Mamma Mia!* (hereafter MM) (2011-2014). They are the start of a new phenomenon, where recent Western musicals are translated into Putonghua and professionally produced and performed on the Chinese mainland for commercial purposes.

MM was the first major Western musical translated into Putonghua on a large commercial scale. From its première in Shanghai on 8th July 2011, to 19th January 2014, it has been performed for three seasons totalling 400 performances around more than 20 cities on the Chinese mainland (Yang Beibei, 2014). Soon after MM, there followed another global hit – *Cats* – in Chinese. This phenomenon provides valuable opportunities to explore the musical libretti translations during their making, together with their reception.

This thesis takes three of the above mentioned English language musicals, i.e., ILY, *Spin*, and MM as case studies to explore the translation issues involved in this new phenomenon.

1.2.3 ‘For market, for audience’
MM’s success also indicates a significant change from the once ideologically driven practice towards the contemporary ‘consumer orientation’ (Hervey & Higgins, 1992: 174, see also further below) which is emerging in the Chinese theatrical field. In the past, the purpose of arts was to serve politics. Thus, as Chen Jie observes:
In modern China, the performing arts did not really become commercial until the early 1990s when a fledgling market economy began to take shape. Prior to that, performing artists, and even their managers, were reluctant to talk about making money from their theatrical productions. (Chen Jie, 2006)

Speaking in a TV interview, Tian Yuan, the producer of the Chinese version of MM, observed: “It is as if art cannot stand alongside money; and as if when money is involved, it cannot be art” (cited in Sa Beining, 2011). Some professional theatrical companies used to consider that winning awards was more important, and they were not so concerned at their productions merely lasting for as few as two or three performances. This recalls the situation in the French literary field which Bourdieu describes as follows:

The principal opposition, between pure production, destined for a market restricted to producers, and large-scale production, oriented towards the satisfaction of the demands of a wide audience, reproduces the founding rupture with the economic order, which is at the root of the field of restricted production. (1996: 121)

Commencing with the making of the Chinese translation of MM, this mindset has now started shifting towards the purpose and the effect on the reception in order to achieve a balance between aesthetic enjoyment and financial gain. Tian’s bold claim “for market, for audience, and not a political task” (Fang Fang, 2011) reflects the situation where arts and entertainment activities are beginning to follow the current change in China from the controlled economy towards the more market driven economy. Producers have realized that an artistically successful work should be able to attract sustainable audiences, and that audience satisfaction will help them achieve commercial success. Relationships are starting to be reconstructed between the production and the reception, art and business, and source text-oriented translation equivalence and the effects of the target text. This changing attitude has put more emphasis on another stakeholder – the audience – for the translator to consider during the translation process.

To summarise, as a novel and successful form of popular art entertainment, Western musicals have helped to change how the audience are perceived by Chinese producers – as consumers rather than as the masses to be educated. Such shifting perceptions have inevitably influenced the strategies that translators employ, and provide a valuable opportunity for research into the shifting role of the translator in an increasingly consumer-driven production network.
1.3 The Genre of Musicals: a consumer-oriented popular Art entertainment

Before reviewing the existing research literature, it is necessary to first define in more
detail the genre features of the musical and its libretto. The genre features of musicals in
this section are identified through their communicative purposes and their receiving
audience.

1.3.1 A form of multi-semiotic popular arts entertainment for a wider audience

Although closely related to opera, the musical is distinctly different in many ways.
McMillin points out: “The musical is not a stepchild of opera, opera manqué, opera that
does not make the grade but gets sidetracked into popular entertainment. The musical is
a dramatic genre of its own” (2006: x).

More specifically, White defines musicals as follows:

The musical, by definition, is an ambitious form of entertainment, since it relies
upon a combination of disciplines – music, drama, and in many cases dance too. Casts are often larger than in the ‘straight’ play, costumes more elaborate, changes more frequent, and musical accompaniment a necessity (1999: 1).

Similarly, Broadway musicals conductor Lehman Engel also regards the musical as a
performing art which “seeks to integrate drama, music, and dance” (Engel, 1967: 76, cited in McMillin, 2006: 5). The libretto of a musical, then, is only one of many
semiotic genre features which must work together to achieve the overall communicative
purposes.

The purpose of all these endeavours is to cater for the diverse audience of the musical
theatre. Among the many types of theatrical performance, although musicals are likened
to operas in aspects such as the run-through song numbers, in other respects they are
more akin to pantomimes, which retain their contemporary appeal in order to engage a
wider audience. In fact, the traditional Chinese operas, such as Beijing Opera, are the
Chinese equivalent of the musical genre in terms of their performances integrating
singing, dancing and acting (Sorby, 2010: 186). Like musicals, the traditional opera is
socially inclusive, although new tastes are always emerging.

In order to win a wider audience, musicals are created with largely local and
contemporary themes incorporated along with more elaborated multi-semiotic features,
such as contemporary choreography and stage design, and enriched with comedy and humour. Kenrick points out: “As a commercial art form, musical theatre has reshaped itself continuously over the centuries to meet ongoing changes in popular taste” (2008: 15). This is because:

As in any commercial endeavour, the taste and attitude of the audience play a clear role in determining the development of the product; since suppliers must meet consumer demand, the demand helps to shape the supply. (ibid.)

He stresses that “it is not critics or awards that make a musical great”. Rather, “[g]reat musicals enjoy the lasting acceptance of the ticket-buying public, and that popularity can last long after an original production is history” (ibid. 16).

When discussing the importance of popular culture, During (2005: 193) emphasizes its entertaining features:

Since, in most of its forms, popular culture is committed to immediate pleasure, it wraps its seriousness in entertainment. However powerful and insightful it might be, its first requirement is – generally speaking – to be consumable now.

Thus, musicals are by no means merely that which was “once passed off as trivial entertainment” (McMillin, 2006: ix). Their growth in popularity with such strength as to surpass opera and many other theatrical forms, like plays and dance or ballet\(^3\), has demonstrated their aesthetic strength combined with clear consumer orientation.

Situated in a multi-dimensional society where traditional and contemporary artistic values co-exist, musicals combine both elite and popular aesthetic conventions to attract a wider audience.

YC, a well-known Chinese playwright, who translated ILY – one of the three musicals in my case studies – and was the producer of two of them, as well as the producer of a few Chinese musicals, describes his understanding of musicals in the following terms: “Musicals have their own conventions and modes of making, … for artists, they are

---

\(^3\) For example, during 1999, among the total UK theatre performances of 41,242 including dance, opera, musicals, and drama/played etc. musicals accounted for 10,630, which represented nearly 26%. In terms of the total ticket revenues, takings from musicals were 200,821,000 out of 373,161,000, which was approaching 54% (Performing Arts - Gov.UK. p. 11). https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/183554/2001Performing2001.pdf). Also, another source says: “Musicals are the most popular choice of show in the city, with 64% of visitors opting to see one, compared with the 24% who would choose a play, and only 1% who would choose to see an opera in London” (Matthew Hemley, Theatre tourism helps generate £2.8bn – Visit Britain. http://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2010/09/theatre-tourism-helps-generate-2-8bn-visit-britain/).
Qian Shijin, the art director of the Shanghai Grand Theatre, observes:

In the traditional opera, once the main characters start singing their arias, the storylines have to be brought to a halt, and the audience would feel sleepy even before they finish singing. But musicals are different. Almost every three minutes there is a turning point in the storylines. There are also many songs and dances interspersed alongside these storylines. Such fast movements are more suitable to contemporary people’s pace of life and artistic tastes. (Quoted in Li Kunsheng, 2013)

Perhaps this is why “musicals have become one of the hottest genres on the Chinese performing arts’ market” (Li Kunsheng, 2013).

1.3.2 The commercially driven consumer orientation

The issue of popular entertainment brings consumerism to the fore as it involves both a mass and a general audience paying to be entertained. Producers spare no effort to ensure that the audience’s expectations are satisfied, through which they may successfully fill the theatre so as to quickly recover their substantial expenditure. As an example of the role of consumer feedback, surtitles were introduced, as an exception to the conventional practice, in performances of *Cats* (in Shanghai, 2012) in response to preview audience comments (Xu Luming, 2012).

Consumers might even be involved in casting for musicals. In 2006, having difficulty in finding an actress for the leading lady in the revival of *The Sound of Music*, Lloyd Webber and his production team decided to draw on the power of public attention. They cast an audition in a reality TV show, named “How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria”, and invited the audience to vote for the candidate. That 8-week long selection process greatly evoked audience’s interest – not only was a star born in a new way, but also the 7 million people who had followed the process consequently helped generate advance ticket sales worth £10 million. It also brought in a much bigger, wider, and younger audience (Franklin, 2012).

Even after the opening, some producers, directors, and actors still make necessary adjustments based on the audience’s reactions and their feedback, unlike in other genres.
of stage performance whose usually shorter run of performances means that many of the ongoing adjustments would scarcely be viable. This shows how flexible a musical translator must be.

These features situate musicals clearly within what Hervey and Higgins categorize as “consumer-oriented texts”, for they are “produced in response to the specific demands of an audience. …the TT’s manner of formulation is heavily influenced, both strategically and in detail, by who and what they are intended for” (1992: 173). They explain further:

> Whether the consumer is meant to buy a product, or subscribe to a particular opinion, or actively behave in a certain way, consumer-oriented texts share common properties: they must capture attention and hold it, they must in some sense speak directly to their public, and they must convey their message with neatly calculated effect. (ibid. 174)

This calculated effect is reflected from selection through to production, and it has become an important factor for determining the various stakeholders’ interactions.

1.3.3 The musical libretto: demands on the translator

Owing to the musical’s genre features, in addition to assisting the audience’s understanding of what is going on, the main purpose of the musical libretto is entertainment, i.e., to enjoy the musical product. To be coherent with the particular genre feature of consumer orientation, as identified earlier, musical libretto plays a key role in engaging the audience in the drama, and encouraging their emotional involvement with both the story and the characters in order to achieve resonance with them.

As in other theatrical settings, the purposes of story-telling in musicals are achieved through a more artistic medium, i.e. they do not normally address or inform the audience directly, but use various generic and aesthetic devices, such as singing. Also, the musical libretto is distinctly prominent compared with opera libretto. Banfield notes:

> In opera, traditionally, the music commands an exclusive viewpoint of the drama, like the authorial film camera … In the musical, however, music – we might do better to call it song, so as to include the lyrics – has traditionally behaved much more self-consciously and presentationally; that is, as one mode of representation rather than its governing medium. (1993: 6f. cited in Franzon, 2005: 270)
Tommasini also shares this view: “Both genres seek to combine words and music in dynamic, felicitous and, to invoke that all-purpose term, artistic ways. But in opera, music is the driving force; in musical theater, words come first” (2011).

Although there appears to be a similar process of language conversion between musicals and other literary types, such as a book or even a play, the genre features of musicals determine that translating musicals is more complex than many other text types from the reception viewpoint. Reading books, by contrast, is more often a solitary activity in which readers immerse themselves individually during the reading, even though they may share their thoughts with others afterwards. They decide the time, location, pace and reading sequence, i.e., going back or moving on, just as they wish. Viewing a performance in the theatre, on the other hand, is always a collective activity – sharing a common space and time. This means that the audience’s reactions simultaneously infect one another throughout the theatre in what might be called a kind of ‘collective behavior’, which Robert E. Park, in a now classic study, defines as follows:

It is collective in so far as each individual acts under the influence of a mood or a state of mind in which each shares, and in accordance with conventions which all quite unconsciously accept, and which the presence of each enforces upon the others. (1921: 463)

For these purposes, instead of being on the scale of a one-to-one relationship with readers, the libretto translation for musicals must be easily accessible to the majority of the audience in the theatre.

Furthermore, practitioners and scholars have long recognized the commercial influence in the translation of the theatrical work. Back in the 1990s, Bassnett found that in wider theatrical setting, “[t]he link between theatre translation and crude economic concerns is a long established one” (1991: 101). She takes the case of the London theatre in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to prove “the importance of translation (frequently unacknowledged) as an important box office criterion” (ibid.). Again, when investigating how American musicals were received in Spain, concerning the selection, production, social, cultural and economic situations, Mateo has observed that musicals follow a “very commercial formula” (2008: 337) and that their “[c]ommercial
quality … is another important factor in the initial selection of source musicals and in the translation and production process” (ibid. 333).

Owing to these generic characteristics of musical libretto, the relationships between the linguistic devices and other factors such as social/cultural aspects, the theatrical practicality, and the consumer-oriented audience reception, all need to be taken into account and situated into the new context during the translating process. It is under the influence of these factors that the production of the text develops. Therefore, when replacing the original libretto (the source text) with a new one (the target text), the new text and its relationships with the other semiotic devices will need to be re-established, such as the cohesion and coherence of rhymes and rhythm, the compatibility between the new libretto and the existing music framework, as well as the stage performances and cultural references.

To ensure the compatibility of these aspects, collaboration and sharing of expertise are required from the production team members. During the negotiations with these team members’ inputs, as well as responding to the audience’s feedback, the translated text will inevitably incur changes towards its eventual performance on stage.

In the following section, I will review the existing research literature, grouped around various issues of importance to the translation of music, theatre and performance-related texts, as relevant to my chosen field, with detailed discussions on the translation specifics.

### 1.4 Scholarly research on theatrical performance and libretto

Currently, research into translation and music is, in Susam-Sarajevo’s words, “peripheral” (2008: 187). To date, the research on musical and opera libretti, as well as song lyrics, including Apter (1985), Gorlée (1997/2005), Sun (1999), Mateo (2001), Xue (2002), Low (2005), Kaindl (2005), Wang (2006), Snell-Hornby (2007), Clüver (2008) and Franzon (2008), has been mainly concerned with the relationships between the source and target texts, such as the textual meaning, vowels and consonants, rhyme and rhythm, as well as the musical framework. Comparisons and assessments of the above are mostly based on linguistic equivalence and (technical) functions, rather than
on their relationships with the various stakeholders involved and their consumer-oriented interactions towards the representation of a final product for the audience.

1.4.1 Text and Performance: a collaborative translation practice?
Performability is one of the key elements for translating theatrical scripts. Whilst a majority of the script translations, such as Shakespeare’s plays, can be described precisely as “from page to stage”, Snell-Hornby considers the notion of performability “a common bone of contention” (2007: 106). Based on her investigations with a stage producer and an actor in Zurich, Snell-Hornby suggests that performability contains various criteria including the following:

(1) Theatre dialogue is essentially an artificial language, written to be spoken, but never identical with ordinary spoken language.
(2) It is characterised by an interplay of multiple perspectives, resulting from the simultaneous interaction of different factors and their effect on the audience.
(3) Theatre language can be seen as potential action in rhythmical progression.
(4) For the actor his/her lines combine to form a kind of individual idiolect, a ‘mask of language’.
(5) For the spectator in the audience, language and the action on stage are perceived sensuously, as a more or less personal experience; he/she is not just a bystander, looking on curiously but uninvolved. (cf. Snell-Hornby, 1996, cited in 2007: 111-112)

Clearly, these multi-dimensional criteria cannot be addressed solely from the textual level or by the translators on their own. They require collaborative inputs from various production team members, such as the actor and the director. However, as Snell-Hornby finds, theatre translation was viewed as literary work before the 1980s. Therefore, “in translating the dramatic text the same scholarly criteria (such as equivalence or faithfulness) were applied as to other types of literary translation” (2007: 106).

Of those scholars who have sought to break away from such an approach, Bassnett is of particular importance, and warrants a more detailed discussion here. She recognizes that “all kinds of factors other than the linguistic are involved in the case of theatre texts” (1985: 87). Therefore, the problem faced by the translator is:

Whether a performance text is latent, or embedded, or positively existent in the written text, the translator carries the responsibility of transferring not only the linguistic but a series of other codes as well”. (1991: 89)
Understandably, these “other codes” may involve theatrical aspects that go beyond the translator’s own area of expertise.

To avoid having the translator “produce a hypothetical performance text or to second guess what actors might want to do to the translation once they start to work with it” (1998: 106), Bassnett initially opted to focus on the extent to which the translator can recognize and decode elements of performability in the source text, and then recode them in the target text. However, she later revised her views, believing that “the translator cannot hope to do everything alone” (1998: 106), and therefore that “searching for deep structures and trying to render the text ‘performable’ are not the responsibility of the translator” (ibid. 105). Based on this view, she suggests that translators “engage specifically with the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of the written text that are decodable and re-encodable”, and thus they “need not be concerned with how that written text is going to integrate into the other sign systems” as this “is a task for the director and the actors” (1998: 99-107).

However, at the same time Bassnett still hopes for the best: “Ideally, the translator will collaborate with the members of the team who put a play text into performance” (1998: 106). She later again stresses: “theatre is above all a collaborative process, and the final performance is the result of interactions between different sign systems and different individuals” (2000: l.c.2).

Bassnett’s problems in dealing with performability raise a crucial issue: the translator’s role in relation to areas of expertise other than languages. The categories of “performable” and “non performable” reflect the complex relationships between the translator and the other stakeholders, i.e., the production team members’ inputs to the process of textual translation in a theatrical context. She appreciates that “A translator cannot be actor, director, designer and audience all at the same time” (ibid. 98).

Indeed, most translators have little or no experience of the theatre and so find themselves in a different world. This opens up a new avenue for rethinking the role of the translator who is responsible for just one of the components in this multi-semiotic musical genre. This is exactly why there is a need for interactions between the translators and the other stakeholders, e.g., the theatre experts in the production team.
The ideal situation which Bassnett imagined can only be realized if the translator regards the other stakeholders as the users – or consumers – of his or her text. From this point of view, the translator needs to interact and negotiate with these other stakeholders and produce a performable text which is in response to the needs of these users, rather than focus only on the linguistic issues themselves. It is through such collaborations that expertise from both fields is able to combine in a mutually supplementary way that ensures the original work is represented to the target audience in a holistic way.

While Bassnett resolves to keep the translator within the linguistic domain, Pavis, as a theatre semiotician, injects a more diverse functional perspective into theatre translation. He suggests a stage-oriented semiotic approach which prioritizes the performability of the original text. In his 5-stage concretization model from source culture through textual concretization, dramaturgical concretization, and stage concretization to reach the target culture (1992: 139), “the translation is simultaneously a dramaturgical analysis, a *mise en scène*, and a message to the audience” (ibid. 142).

Defining text as “one of the elements of performance” (1989: 41), instead of suggesting that translators mind their own linguistic domain, Pavis in fact considers it as a welcome base for interactions with other semiotic elements. He asserts that “translation does not necessarily or completely determine the *mise en scène*; it leaves the field open for future directors” (1992: 145). In this way, the danger of subjective interpretation towards the *mise en scène* by the translator can also be avoided. In Sallenave’s words: “translating for the stage does not mean jumping the gun by predicting or proposing a *mise en scène*; it is rather to make the *mise en scène* possible” (1982: 20, cited in Pavis, 1992: 145).

Pavis opens up a new interactive dimension between text and performance. In so doing, he strongly advocates collaborations between translator and other production team members:

> We must consult the literary translator and the director and actor; we must incorporate their contribution and integrate the act of translation into the much broader translation (that is the *mise en scène*) of a dramatic text. (1989: 25)

However, the emphasis he places on the translator doing a series of dramaturgical readings, analyses and conversions seems very much source text- and dramaturge-oriented, with little consideration for responding to the audience’s feedback in order to
enhance their understanding and enjoyment. Therefore, for musicals which have a clear consumer orientation, Pavis’s approach needs yet another important party – the audience – in order to evaluate from the receivers’ end the effectiveness of the production-oriented mise en scène.

Johnston also recognizes that the actors’ efforts and contributions towards the communication of character and situation are key to effective translation since “[a]ctors . . . are constantly searching for the emotional truths of their character, forever exploring motivation, hidden agendas and emotional turning points” (2004:36, cited in Finburgh, 2011: 230). For him, translation is “an extension of stage-craft, another activity to be understood as an integral strand of that multi-layered process of making a play work on stage” (1996:7). Similarly, when discussing translations of the musical Cabaret in her MA thesis (2005), Shestakov highlights the importance of the collaborations between the theatre translator and the actor in the process of creating the target text. She believes that their erudition and their perception of the target audience often dictate changes performed in the theatre text.

Aaltonen takes this argument further:

Playwrights, translators, stage directors, dress and set designers, sound and light technicians, as well as actors, all contribute to the creation of theatre texts when they move into them and make them their own. (2000: 32)

This view is echoed by Eaton, an experienced theatre performer, director, as well as being a researcher, who asks the following pertinent questions concerning the roles of the translators and the other stakeholders with their involvements in theatre translations:

Might there not be indeed another useful stage in the development of the translated play text, akin to the process frequently used for the development of new plays, whereby actors, translator and directors can come together and workshop the emerging translation before it is tried out in front of an audience? Should translation for the stage always be considered as a collaborative, rather than a solitary, process? (2008: 54)

Clearly, as a practitioner-researcher, Eaton is well-placed to comment on present practice, and her statement suggests that, notwithstanding the assertions of Aaltonen and the like, truly collaborative practice in theatre translation is still an ideal yet to be realized in the industry as a whole. Likewise, in the scholarly community, little has been done to explore further the kinds of collaborative practice of which Aaltonen and others are
aware. Encouragingly, in a very recent theatre translation project, Marinetti and Rose find that “collaborative discussions between translators and actors resolve translation problems and also help ease the transition between page and stage” (2013: 177). They emphasise that these findings “allow translation scholars to argue for the visibility of theatre translators and for their involvement in the process of rehearsal and staging” (ibid.). Therefore, as the translators and coordinators of this project, the authors consider their roles as “cultural producers who use theatrical forms as ways of reaching out to our audience” (ibid. 173).

Outside the theatrical field, a number of translation scholars have already started investigating various forms of collaborative translation practice. Among them, Buzelin (2005), Jones (2009) and Abdallah (2012a, 2012b) have sought to employ Actor Network Theory to account for the interactions which occur during the translation process (more detailed discussions in Chapter 2).

Furthermore, collaborative translation practice itself has also commenced gaining popularity through internet-led community practice in various fields and in different ways. For example, the crowd-sourcing translation for Wikipedia, Twitter and Facebook; online fansubbing and digisubbing for films, TV programmes, videos and Karaoke etc., have all been benefiting from collaborative translations contributed by the general public, or specific peer groups, or web-users. These practices have attracted the attention of the translation scholars in investigating such new phenomena from various perspectives.

In his recent book *Translation in the Digital Age* (2013), Cronin discusses how collaborative translation practices have been developing alongside the advancement of the digital technology and the internet. He observes:

> Advances in peer-to-peer computing and the semantic Web further favour the transition from a notion of translation provision as available in parallel series to translation as part of a networked system, a potentially integrated nexus. In other words, rather than content being rolled out in a static, sequential manner (e.g. separate language information leaflets at tourist attractions), translated material is personalized, user-driven, and integrated into dynamic systems of ubiquitous delivery. The semantic Web points up the potential for forms of collaborative, community translation that are already a conspicuous feature of translation practice in late modernity (2013: 98-99).
Another article also finds that in the translation field, “formal and informal networks are playing an increasingly important role in the way the profession is practised” (McDonough, 2007). Her investigation into a number of online networks shows these networks are formed through people’s shared interests in translation and its related work, i.e., through their profession, practices, teaching or study of translation.

An in-depth discussion of community collaborative translation is found in Neather’s article “‘Non-Expert’ Translators in a Professional Community” (2012). Through examining the interactions between two communities, i.e., the museum experts and the translation professionals, and their different expertise and professionalism, he convincingly argues that “no one community has the full set of competences needed for fully effective museum translation” (2012: 245), and therefore, “much museum translation involves an anxious negotiation of differing expertise deficits” (ibid.). Clearly, there is a need for collaborations between these two communities in order to reduce what he calls the “expertise anxiety” (ibid. 266).

Working in this context, this study seeks to find out what kinds of collaborations are involved during the translation of musicals. Since the mode of each subject area is different, exploring the specific genre features of musicals will be of particular importance for understanding the process of musical libretto translation. The findings may shed light on establishing what Fortier has referred to as “the multiplicity of agency and collaboration in the making of theatrical significance” (2002: 143). This is because in some professional contexts, the translator is actually a practitioner who happens to know two languages, such as in media and tourism. However, this would be very rare in the context of the theatre (an exception might be Samuel Beckett). Therefore, musical libretto translation is very often a learning experience for translators. Ultimately, the research outcome may also contribute to other forms of intercultural translation on the collaborative translation front.

1.4.2 Singability

A second key area of importance amongst the research literature is the issue of singability: the extent to which lyrics can be translated to function effectively when sung and performed.
Whether in musicals, operas or songs, the lyrics are always a key factor for the expression of ideas, plots, emotions and the relationships between other characters in the story. The translation of lyrics inevitably reflects the social and cultural contexts. Therefore, singability does not merely affect the actors’ performances, it also plays a determining role in affecting the audience’s understanding and hence enjoyment of the performance. Reviewing the research on issues of singability in opera, musical and song translations will help further our understanding of the role of the textual translation and its relationship with other interrelated factors involved in musicals translation.

The concept of singability can be ambiguous, as Franzon finds:

> It can be defined in a restricted fashion, as ‘paying attention to vocalization’. It can also be defined more broadly, as a prosodic and poetic match, or even liberally, as a practical term to sum up everything that makes words and music function together in song. (2008: 397)

Generally, singability refers more often to the matching between the technical and stylistic aspects of lyrics translation, e.g., the use of vowels and consonants, rhymes and rhythms, and the original musical framework, for the ease of the actors to sing. In opera translation, “[p]rosodic coherence, the matching of syllables to notes, verbal stress to musical accent, etc., is a major challenge” (Frazon, 2005: 273). In musicals, however, whilst the above aspects are still considered, greater attention is given to the reception.

In order for the verbal text to match the main features of music, i.e., its melody, structure, and meaning, mood or action, Franzon suggests three layers of singability in translating songs, i.e., prosodic (including rhythm, stress, and intonation), poetic (including rhyme, parallelism, and location of keywords) and semantic reflexive match (including storyline, character, and mood). In one of the examples he illustrates that “the words fit the notes syllabically” as “the minimum requirement of singability” (ibid. 389-392).

Based on these three main areas, Franzon proposes in his discussions on the translation of the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady* into the Scandinavian languages:

> The lyricist-translator can, hypothetically, choose the lengths to which he will go to make the text coherent with the musical information, either semantically – being persuasive and affecting in presentation, structurally – being artful in declamation, or prosodically – being a stylized speaking voice. (ibid. 274)
When discussing the issue of singability in song translation, Low observes the numerous requirements which a song translator has to satisfy:

The devising of singable texts is a particular challenge to a translator: one is subject to huge, multiple constraints imposed by the pre-existing music which has many complex features – rhythms, note-values, phrasings and stresses – none of which one can simply ignore. … Besides, the ST (source text) is frequently rhymed, and rhyme is often desirable in this kind of song-translating – though not in others. Ideally, a clever illusion must be created: the TT (target text) must give the overall impression that the music has been devised to fit it, even though that music was actually composed to fit the ST. No wonder this task has at times been called impossible (2005: 185).

For this reason, Low (2005: 192-194) places singability as the first principle in his Pentathlon approach (singability, sense, naturalness, rhyme and rhythm) for the singable translations of songs. His focus is more on the phonetic aspects and he considers that a singable song is performable when, for example, the tones, the vowels, the pitches and the syllables, are all easy to sing.

Singability is particularly important for musicals since, instead of using surtitle translation as in opera, “sung translation is the norm in most target systems” (Mateo 2008: 320). Therefore, Engel considers that for lyrics, “the simpler, less complex ones are preferable” (1972: 107). Kaindl (1995) shares this view on the relationship between language and music: “translation will have to be understood, far beyond being a linguistic transposition of verbal signs, as a re-creation of a textual whole” (cited in Clüver, 2008: 403).

When investigating the issues involved in opera translation, Kaindl (1995) highlights its multi-faceted dimension:

A translation has to consider the connection of word and sound on the one hand and the scenic performance of this combination on the other, the text to be translated is thus characterized by its multimediality. (cited in Clüver, 2008: 401).

Snell-Hornby describes this approach as “interdisciplinary (combining insights from theatre studies, literary studies and musicology) and holistic – whereby the opera text becomes a synthesis of the libretto, music and performance (both vocal and scenic)” (2007:113).
Singability has likewise always been one of the most difficult aspects for libretti translation practitioners in China. Sun Huishuang, a leading Chinese opera translator, has drawn attention to the fact that in addition to fulfilling Yan Fu’s three traditional translation principles of xin, da, ya⁴, singability adds even more difficulties. In his book on research into opera translation, he lists eight constraints when translating opera lyrics, explaining that the TT has to work not only within the constraints of the preset musical framework (including the numbers of musical notes, the stressed notes, the rhythm, the structure and style of the music), but also within the constraints of the ST’s syllable count, syntax, punctuation and breathing, as well as ensuring open vowels for the high notes (1999: 236-243).

Under the influence of such norms, the Chinese audience would expect similar effects from musical song translations. Singability is important also for enjoyment (Wang Keming, 2006: 610-611) as the Chinese public likes to sing the songs for pleasure, such as at Karaoke. Whether the song is singable or not can be an indication of whether the features of the songs, such as rhymes and choice of lexis, meet the cultural conventions and the audience’s expectations.

Finally, one cannot discuss singability in the Chinese context without mentioning tones as noted by Lan Fan (2008: 440). Since Chinese is a tonal language, in traditional theatre the tones are considered very important when integrating the lyrics with the music. In his book discussing the relationship between music and lyrics in the Chinese music tradition, Yu Huiyong points out:

> When the tones of the words and the music follow each other naturally in terms of high or low, up or down, strong or soft, long or short, continuation or pause, they make the song easy to understand, pleasing to hear and moving with empathy. (2008: 7)

Xue Fan, the veteran song translator who is also the leading translator for Cats, the most recently translated musical on the Chinese mainland, points out: “When words accidentally fall into unintended tones through the music’s notes, it could be confusing, or even misleading, resulting in adverse effects and even misunderstandings (2002: 146).

---

⁴ In 1898, in the introduction to his partial translation of Thomas H. Huxley’s Evolution and Ethics (Chinese title 天演论), Yan Fu (1854–1921) discusses three major difficulties with translation: fidelity, comprehensibility, and elegance (译事三难: 信达雅). This triad has since ‘formed the main conceptual grid for theorizations about translation’ in China (Luo Xinzhang, 1984:10, cited in Cheung 2002: 157).
All these views highlight two important factors concerning the role of the translated text and the role of the translator, in these fields. First, the text, be it for opera, musical or song, is closely related to the other semiotic elements, especially the musical framework, and hence it needs to be integrated with them. Theoretically this is justifiable, although the application may not be an easy task if it is assigned to the translator on his or her own. The translator cannot be expected to deal single-handedly with all these various other factors, owing to the wide variety of expertise required. This leads on to the second point – the need for collaborations involving interactions between the translator and the other stakeholders. Expert knowledge and an individual actor’s speciality are amongst the many factors which influence the realization of the textual performance and its singability. A network of interactions can help ensure the collaboration of all the parties involved.

Through investigating how, in such a working environment, the translator reacts and responds to the influences affecting the target text, and by analyzing the specific textual and linguistic problems which face the translator and how they are overcome, the role of the translator can be better understood.

1.5 Structure of the dissertation
This thesis is composed of six chapters.

In this first Chapter, the topic and the background of the thesis, together with the relevant research literature, have been introduced. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the proposed theoretical framework of ANT with its core ideas and the key terms such as ‘actant’, ‘translation’, ‘intermediary’ and ‘mediator’, and their application in translation studies. The rationale for employing ANT in this thesis is given, as well as the possible modifications required for the cases in this study. The proposed research method will also be discussed in this chapter, including the research questions, the selection of the cases, the research design and the data collection.

Chapters 3 and 4 are both devoted to textual analysis of the libretto scripts for the three musical case studies, although from different perspectives. Chapter 3 discusses the linguistic and textual conversions relating to sense, form, storylines, characterisation, and humorous/comical effects. The focus of Chapter 4 is on how the issues surrounding
singability and performance are negotiated. Chapter 5 focuses on the network negotiations among stakeholders and the effects in the development of the target text. Based on empirical evidence, this chapter follows the main concepts of Actor Network Theory to investigate the interactions between the translator and other stakeholders during the translation process.

Finally, Chapter 6 summarizes the major findings, and concludes with my reflections on the translation approach for this form of consumer-oriented popular art entertainment, informed by ANT’s conception of dynamic interactions with multiple stakeholder inputs. The assessment of the contributions and limitations of this study will indicate avenues for future research.
Chapter 2. The Theoretical Framework and methodology

Through using some of its major concepts, Actor Network Theory (ANT) will be principally employed in this thesis as the theoretical framework as well as the guideline for the methodological approaches. In the following, I shall first discuss key issues in ANT and review current applications of ANT to Translation Studies, before moving on to discuss its importance for my own thesis.

2.1 A brief introduction to ANT

ANT aims to provide an explanatory framework for the emergence of new states of affairs from initial problem situations, involving multiple stakeholders. It does so by establishing networks of ‘actants’, and identifying their modes and forces of interaction. It advocates that every ‘actant’ in the network has an agency, that they exist in relation with others, and that it is their interactions which produce particular outcomes. In the context of musicals translation, ANT is appropriate because of the cooperation involving various interrelated stakeholders and their differing expertise and interests.

2.1.1 Both human and non-human ‘actors’ and ‘actants’ have agency

Actor-network theory is a sociological theory started during the 1980s by Bruno Latour (1986, 1987), Michel Callon (1986), John Law (1992) and others. Developed for the field of science studies, ANT’s approach is distinct from other social and network theories in considering that human actor and non-human actant be treated equally within a network. Having done extensive research in science and technology, Latour and his fellow scholars observed that in laboratories every factor has a role to play. Based on this phenomenon, ANT defines the roles of the ‘actants’, their relations, and their interactions to form a network that is made up of heterogeneous elements including both human ‘actors’ and non-human ‘actants’ (such as laboratory equipment and “inscriptions”, i.e. texts).

In order to avoid being “limited to humans” by the English term ‘actor’, the term ‘actant’ “is sometimes used to include non-humans in the definition” (Latour, 1999: 303). In fact, in 1987, Latour already defined this term in his book Science in Action: “both people able to talk and things unable to talk have spokesmen. I propose to call whoever and whatever is represented actant” (1987: 83-84, original emphasis). As the words
“sometimes used” in the citation above from Latour’s later work (1999) demonstrate, this proposal has not found universal acceptance in ANT, and the terms ‘actant’ and ‘actor’ have continued to be used in a variety of ways. Latour and Callon themselves have used the terms interchangeably, referring to the human and non-human factors as both ‘actor’ and ‘actant’. In the present study, I will use ‘actant’ rather than ‘actor’, and distinguish ‘actants’ further by using ‘human actant’ and ‘non-human actant’. This is partly to ensure terminological consistency and partly for a practical reason, namely to avoid the possible confusions between ANT ‘actors’ and the actors on stage with which this thesis is concerned. When not discussing in ANT’s terminology, I will refer to them by the common term of ‘stakeholder’.

Gershon gives a clear description of how ANT perceives the heterogeneous medium involved in the interactions between ‘actants’, elaborating on the issue of human/non-human agency:

First, everyone and everything contributes to how interactions take place – in this sense, microbes are participants, or actants, as much as people. Latour coined the term *actant* to describe anything that has agency (and for Latour, everything does). ANT scholars are unwilling to attribute agency only to humans. Rather, every node in the network, or web of relationships, shapes the ways in which interactions in the network will occur, be the node a microbe, a sheep, a test tube or a biologist. (2010: 164, original emphasis)

Therefore, the human and non-human ‘actants’ are both assigned agencies in the network and there are no presupposed relations between them. Latour stresses:

ANT is not, I repeat is not, the establishment of some absurd ‘symmetry between humans and non-humans’. To be symmetric, for us, simply means not to impose a priori some spurious *asymmetry* among human intentional action and a material world of causal relations (2005: 76. original emphases).

In this way, ANT intends to avoid the notion that “we humans alone imposed some symbolic dimension and beyond which there existed, perhaps, the transcendence of the crossed-out God” (Latour, 1993: 128). Therefore, in ANT, the questions to ask about any agent are simply the following: “Does it make a difference in the course of some other agent’s action or not? Is there some trial that allows someone to detect this difference?” (ibid. 71).

2.1.2 The ‘non-human actant’
The agency of non-human actants, referred to above, has been perhaps the most radical notion of ANT, with the related issue of whether non-human entities have intentionality being particularly open to debate, attracting widespread attention as well as criticism. For example, Callon considered the scallops as one of the actants in his research about domestication of the scallops at St Brieuc Bay (1986). However, a fellow scholar of his, Law, admits that the former’s work on the scallops is “notorious because it analyzes people and scallops in the same terms” (2009: 144). This view clearly indicates a fundamental principle of ANT. Whilst it brings to the fore the non-human elements equally with the human-elements, a closer reading of the literature would suggest that, for analysis, ANT does not in fact assume the same kind of agency between the human and the non-human. The ‘wishes’ of the non-human actants may be expressed through the human actants who act as their representatives, such as the scientists in Callon’s case (1986: 196-223). Latour describes the agency of the non-human actant as follows:

‘[M]oved by your own interest’, ‘taken over by social imitation’, ‘victims of social structure’, ‘carried over by routine’ ‘called by God’, ‘overcome by destiny’, ‘made by your own will’, ‘held up my[sic] norms’, and ‘explained by capitalism’ … They are simply different ways to make actors do things. (2005: 55)

Based upon such perceptions of the network of heterogeneous interactions, all these agencies referred to by Latour suggest some of the ways by which non-human elements exert their influences on human actants. However, all these “different ways to make actors do things” would seem to exist at a relatively abstract level only, and therefore appear difficult to clearly define in practice. Furthermore, while the role of entity in a network is determined by whether it can “[make] a difference” (ibid. 71), i.e. the extent to which an agency brings about change, the difference made by the non-human actant does not presuppose intentionality. In other words, intentionality and similar properties are not attributed to non-humans. Latour stresses:

The name of the game is not to extend subjectivity to things, to treat humans like objects, to take machines for social actors, but to avoid using the subject-object distinction at all in order to talk about the folding of humans and nonhumans. What the new picture seeks to capture are the moves by which any given collective extends its social fabric to other entities. (1999: 193-194. original emphases)

This way of perceiving the non-human factors has certain similarities to Mencius’s (372-289 BC) statement: 

_tianshi buru dili, dili buru renhe_ (天时不如地利, 地利不如人
and), which James Legge renders as follows: “Opportunities of time vouchsafed by Heaven are not equal to advantages of situation afforded by the Earth, and advantages of situation afforded by the Earth are not equal to the union arising from the accord of Men” (see Mengzi, Gongsunchou xia 孟子•公孙丑下, Legge 1895/1970: 208, original emphases). Mencius was also discussing the factors which affect the victory of a military campaign. Tianshi refers to the timing and the weather conditions, dili refers to the geographic conditions; renhe refers to the unity and agreement among people. Mencius asserts that the human is the most important factor but, nevertheless, he also recognizes that the non-human factors of natural conditions also play their crucial roles in winning the battle.

Clearly, these non-human actants inevitably influence people’s decisions for their strategies and can therefore be considered as having agency, as ANT assumes. Although ANT is not the only theory which recognizes the role of non-human actants, such as ‘background’ and ‘geography’, etc., it does make contributions in going further by bringing them into an integrated network where the agency of the non-human actants is given equal attention to the human actants. This symmetric perception of the human/non-human elements highlights the dynamic nature of the network, and hence avoids one-way human subjectivity. It is an illuminating approach, although it may be difficult to follow methodologically in practical research. From this respect, Mencius’s order of importance, which positions human unity at the top of the hierarchy, reflects the power relations between the interacting elements within a network. I will discuss this issue in more detail later with another of ANT’s important concepts – ‘translation’.

2.1.3 The connections: everyone and everything exists in relation to others
By taking into account the multiple factors, especially by including the non-human factors in the network, ANT avoids a solely human-oriented perspective of focusing on influences from human actants, e.g., their own education, experience, power and position in the operating environment. Instead, it considers the outcome as a result of the human actant and his or her relations with the other factors encountered, including the non-human actants. For Latour and Cussins, the focus is on their interactions:

The distinction between humans and non-humans, embodied or disembodied skills, impersonation or “machination”, are less interesting than the complete

Crawford describes ANT’s perception as “counter to heroic accounts” (2005: 1). This echoes a Chinese idiom: *shishi zao yingxiong* (时势造英雄 – Time and situation produce a hero). The emphasis here is clearly given to the surrounding factors more than the inner quality of the hero, as each one’s identity and existence is closely related to his surrounding factors. This is because, in Callon’s words, “[a]n entity in an actor-world (i.e. a simplified entity) only exists in context, that is in juxtaposition with other entities to which it is linked”, and it “gives each entity its significance and defines its limitations” (Callon, 1986: 30).

As a part of the entities, we as human beings perceive the other entities, e.g., Nature, through our own thinking processes. These processes, owing to various factors such as education and experience, may distort the other entities in our constructions of them. The perceptions of the symmetry of human/non-human factors enable ANT to bring these entities together into the network. In this way, the other entities can be viewed as having active roles, rather than static existence, affecting human thinking processes. Going back to Mencius’s quote, although the weather is there for everyone, and therefore it is up to the individual general to make his decision, different weather to the same general may result in a different decision. His view is not opposed to that of ANT, since we all exist in a complex environment where factors in the environment have to be ‘constructed’. In more situations, when we construct in order to understand the factors and processes of their interactions, we may go back to the necessary subject-object distinction, as found by Mencius. Therefore, weather could make differences, i.e., influence the general’s decision and hence the outcomes. In this way, ANT offers a way to rely less on the human mind’s distortion, through our own mediation, of the reality.

**2.1.4 The dynamism: mediators and their interactions make things happen**

ANT’s most significant contribution is its conception of the dynamic relationship between actants in the network and how outcomes are shaped by their interactions. It offers a perspective for viewing a process in the making, e.g., for understanding the role of the stakeholders, and solutions to translation problems for musicals, rather than regarding these as predetermined. The responses of these stakeholders are not just
concerned with linguistic conversion, but are based on their reflection, creativity, and experience brought to the network, which are closely linked to their backgrounds and motivations.

The word ‘network’ in ANT’s terminology is not the same as the commonly referred to idea of a technical network, such as the internet or the social network for establishing contacts. Instead of just being a member of a circle, actants form the network by interacting with one another in a whole variety of ways that include negotiating, accommodating, persuading, compromising and rejecting. Latour points out:

   Being connected, being interconnected, or being heterogeneous is not enough. It all depends on the sort of action that is flowing from one to the other, hence the words ‘net’ and ‘work’. Really, we should say ‘worknet’ instead of ‘network’. It’s the work, and the movement, and the flow, and the changes that should be stressed. (2005: 143)

To enable the interactions, ANT emphasizes the agency of the actants in terms of whether they can make changes, which implies power relations in the network. In describing the (two possible) roles that an actant may play in the network, Latour (ibid. 39) distinguishes between what he refers to as “intermediaries” and “mediators”. An intermediary makes no changes and merely “transports meaning or force without transformation” in which, as with a photocopier, the outcome is merely a replica of the original. Therefore, “defining its inputs is enough to define its outputs”. On the other hand, a mediator can “transform, translate, distort and modify the meaning, or the elements they are supposed to carry”, and hence “their input is never a good predictor of their output”.

In order to stress that agency brings about difference, Latour (ibid.) defines the roles of the actants that can make difference in a network as “mediators”. He considers:

   A good ANT account is a narrative or a description or a proposition where all the actors do something and don’t just sit there. Instead of simply transporting effects without transforming them, each of the points in the text may become a bifurcation, an event, or the origin of a new translation. As soon as actors are treated not as intermediaries but as mediators, they render the movement of the social visible to the reader. Thus, through many textual inventions, the social may become again a circulating entity that is no longer composed of the stale assemblage of what passed earlier as being part of society. (ibid. 128)
Hence, through reacting to particular situations and interacting with other actants, mediators ensure the dynamism of the network and motivate change within it. This way of empowering agency to the ‘actant’ as mediators offers a new approach to analyze the dynamic network environment. It thus enables us “to better understand its mechanisms and social underpinnings, to avoid adopting visions that are too idealized or deterministic” (Buzelin, 2007: 136). In the context of musicals translation, this is a useful notion because of the dynamism of the translation process involving differing stakeholders’ inputs derived from their experience, expertise, as well as their perceived reception.

2.1.5 The concept of ‘translation’

Another ANT concept of key importance is translation\(^5\) (hereafter ‘translation’). This is a different term from the one we currently use in this thesis for language conversions in the discipline of translation studies. ‘Translation’ is a term of use in ANT describing how actants in a given network negotiate with others in order to transform one another. Callon and Latour define ‘translation’ as follows:

> By translation we understand all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence, thanks to which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force: ‘Our interests are the same’, ‘do what I want’, ‘you cannot succeed without going through me’. (1981: 279, original emphasis)

This series of interactions effectively constitutes “the transformation of an object during the course of an innovative process” (Latour 1989: 172–194, cited in Buzelin, 2007: 136). In his case of scallops at St. Brieuc Bay, Callon (1986: 6-15) gives a detailed description of the four stages of ‘translation’ as follows:

- **Problematization**: describes a system of alliances, or associations, between entities, thereby defining the identity and what they ‘want’;
- **Interessement**: the group of actions by which an entity attempts to impose and stabilize the identity of the other actors it defines through its problematization;
- **Enrolment**: designates the device by which a set of interrelated roles is defined and attributed to ‘actors’ who accept them;
- **Mobilization**: to render entities mobile which were not so beforehand

---

\(^5\) Translation, as one of the key terminologies used in ANT, may cause confusion with translation referring to the translingual practice in translation studies, which is the research topic of this thesis. In order to differentiate these two terms, the one in ANT will be used in single quotation marks as ‘translation’. Otherwise, translation will mean the conversion of languages.
More simply, what these stages mean are that the process starts from the focal ‘actant’ identifying the problems to be solved. At this first stage, the focal actant raises an issue, and then defines his or her position, together with those of the other actants, in order to establish the network. Then at the second stage, the focal actant triggers the interests of the other actants and persuades them to join in his or her proposed action. At the third stage, the focal actant sets up the roles for the other actants to accept and to join the network. The final stage sees the focal actant enable the conditions for interactions of all the actants involved.

Clearly, this process is about changing and power-structuring: changing either oneself or the others in order to reach the intended goal. Law’s definition of ‘translation’ puts it in a more explicit manner, by invoking the more familiar notion of interlingual translation upon which the ANT usage of the term builds:

To translate is to make two words equivalent. But since no two words are equivalent, translation also implies betrayal: traduction, trahison. So translation is both about making equivalent, and about shifting. It is about moving terms around, about linking and changing them. (2009: 144-145. original emphases)

Whilst describing the stages of ‘translation’, Callon introduces the term ‘obligatory passage point’ (OPP) to assume common grounds of understanding and interest which “involve a whole series of actors by establishing their identities and the links between them” (1986: 7). Illustrated in Callon’s own case, the OPP is the understanding of whether the “pecten maximus [the scallop] attaches itself”, as shown below (ibid. 20):
If the scallops want to survive (no matter what mechanisms explain this impulse), if their scientific colleagues hope to advance knowledge on this subject (whatever their motivations may be), if the fishermen hope to preserve their long term economic interests (whatever their reasons) then they must: 1) know the answer to the question: how do scallops anchor?, and 2) recognize that their alliance around this question can benefit each of them. (ibid. 7-8)

Unfortunately, the ‘translation’ did not manage to form alliances for a common OPP through which each actant could “attain what they want”. For instance, the scallops were “threatened by all sorts of predators always ready to exterminate them”; the fishermen were “greedy for short term profits”; the scientific colleagues were hampered by a “lack of preliminary and indispensable observations of scallops in situ”. Clearly, the OPP is a very important feature in a network for insuring that the actants interact for a common purpose. However, it appears problematic to account for non-human actants, e.g., the scallops in this case, alongside the human actants for going through the OPP. Callon considers the researchers as the representatives of the scallops:

A few larvae are considered to be the official representatives of an anonymous mass of scallops which silently and elusively lurk on the ocean floor. The three researchers negotiate the interesement of the scallops through a handful of larvae which represent all the uncountable others that evade captivity.

Clearly, the scallops did not evolve to survive attacks by fishermen with advanced technology. Those that survived would occupy an environmental niche which avoids the fishermen. This may be why some of the major criticism which ANT receives is that while its “position is philosophically radical and justified, its practical effect on the use of empirical material is prosaic, reactionary and dangerously confusing” (Callon and Latour, 1992: 345).

2.2 The applications of ANT to translation studies

Having reviewed some of the key concepts in ANT of relevance to this study, I shall now consider the application of ANT in the translation studies field. Wolf and Fukari observe that “theoretical and methodological approaches coming from the discipline of sociology […] in the last few years have been progressively adopted by translation studies scholars for the discussions on translation and interpreting as a social practice” (2007:18). Amongst the sociologists whom Wolf and Fukari mention – Pierre Bourdieu, Bernard Lahire, Bruno Latour and Niklas Luhmann – it is Bourdieu’s work which has been more extensively explored in Translation Studies, whilst ANT remains a relatively new methodology.
Of the few existing studies that seek to incorporate ANT, most are focused upon sociological or ethnographic orientation. Among them, Buzelin’s work is of particular importance. Buzelin proposes that Latour’s Actor-Network Theory could complement Bourdieusian analyses in translation studies from the “authors’ position in society, as well as […] their own trajectory in their field” (2005: 194), “allowing us to move further in the development of a more agent- and process-oriented type of research” (ibid. 193). She also applies ANT to her own research project on investigating how translations commissioned by commercial publishers are produced. She focuses specifically on various factors which influence the decisions made by three independent publishing houses from Montreal, in their selection of the text and language for the translation, as well as their commercial motives (2007). Her research seems to be more of an ethnographic investigation rather than dealing with the actual translations. Her work concerns itself mainly with network interactions rather than with the textual products themselves.

Jones (2009) and Abdallah (2010, 2012a, 2012b) have also applied ANT in different contexts with the emphasis on interactions and agency. In the Chinese-language context, Kung (2009) adapts ANT and Bourdieu’s concepts of capital to investigate the agency of translator-led and subvention networks and their effects on the translations of contemporary Taiwanese novels in the United States, but also includes some discussion of how stakeholders effect on ST-TT decisions.

While all the above researchers have applied ANT to print publications, in musical translation the actants involved have different relations than in the case of texts from other fields. These actant – the production team members, including the performers – are not only the first readers, like the readers of books, but, more importantly, they are also the direct users of the translated texts: they act as a medium for representing the translated text through the stage performance to the audience. Since these texts are the foundation for the production stakeholders’ stage creation, understanding them as well as the ease in using them will directly affect the audience’s reception.

2.3 Applying ANT to my case studies for the translation of musicals
2.3.1 Employing ANT in this thesis
Owing to the particular multi-semiotic nature of this form of commercially geared popular art entertainment, translating musicals requires a multi-perspectival approach. Hence, it necessarily involves a variety of stakeholders and their interactions. For this reason, some major concepts from Actor Network Theory will be employed as the principal theoretical framework to guide this study in exploring the roles of these stakeholders in the network and the ways in which they interact with each other.

The translator’s language conversions are inevitably influenced by the specific perspectives and inputs from various stakeholders including the director, the music director, the choreographer, and the performers, as well as the audience. This is because these stakeholders work from different semiotic perspectives other than just the linguistic one. In this sense, the roles they play are akin to those of representative agents for such features. For example, “singability” is associated with those who perform the songs, etc.

Therefore, how and why certain changes are made during the development of the textual translation cannot be fully explained purely from either the linguistic perspective or from the individual translator’s own perception. Rather, “the translation process involves a multiplicity of mediators” (Buzelin, 2005: 212). In this regard, ANT provides a powerful approach to help explain ‘how’ and ‘why’ the libretto translations for certain musicals develop as they do. Through its recognition of actants’ individual agencies and their relations with one another, especially their responses to working with the TT, which make things happen, it opens up a dynamic perspective for mapping the relations between the translators and the ‘network’ environment in which they operate. Thus, as Buzelin has argued, it “enables us to grasp both the complexity – and nonlinear character – of the translation process, and the hybridity of the translating agent” (ibid).

Nevertheless, it should be made clear here that this thesis is a translation study which employs ANT’s approach in order to go beyond one solely based on the translators’ perspective and their textual conversion. Therefore, it does not intend to follow ANT in a dogmatic way, and some modifications may be needed.

2.3.2 The starting node in the network
From ANT’s perspective, among the many actants in a network, any of them could be a starting point for research. However, in practice a temporal linear approach is the most useful one. Working within the network of musical translation, the translators are effectively connected to the other stakeholders through their mapping of the aspects involved in the libretto translation (such as the music framework and the choreography; as well as the production team members and the audience). They have to negotiate with these stakeholders who are either users or receivers of the translated texts, and the outcomes of such interactions are reflected in the revisions to these texts.

Therefore, for the purposes of a translation research, this thesis attempts, through following the translators and their translated texts, to investigate how the development of the textual translation is influenced by their interactions with other stakeholders. Therefore, in this network, a translator is extremely important as the actant without whom none of the other part would work. Even if the translator does not translate well, say, in a raw draft, it would still be possible to bring the production to stage, although it might not be a satisfactory one. But without a translator, assuming that the rest of the production team has no knowledge of the source text, there would not be a production. A TT provides a starting point for discussion and interaction.

However, this by no means makes the translator a heroic figure (which would run counter to the aims of ANT), but simply rather a point of contact for approaching the networks and a medium for the development of the final product. In other words, the translators are regarded as one of the nodes in the worknet through which various stakeholders’ interactions can be identified and traced in order to explain the process of a musical’s libretto translation. As Cressman finds, ANT usually sets its focus on ‘the network builders’:

ANT sets out to “follow the actors”; a confusing dictum if only because there are so many actors within any given network, including some who may emerge and disappear long before a recognizable network is finalized. As such, it is usually the case that ANT looks to the network builders as the primary actors to follow and through whose eyes they attempt to interpret the process of network construction. (2009: 2-3)

Of course the translator is not the hero. Without denying the skill of the translator, he or she is invisible. To the extent that ANT allows the analysis of how a product is achieved, all stakeholders are simply factors in an outcome. However, the translation process
involving intangible skills of all stakeholders is an intelligent act and the TT is the outcome of multiple inputs.

2.3.3 The nature of the network
To further the understanding of translation practice for this particular genre, the whole production team may be viewed as forming a network. Within this network, everyone and everything involved may be considered as actants. However, while ANT conceives the network as a structure which the actants are required to establish and stabilise, the network environment which we consider here for producing the translated musicals is itself fairly stable. This is because a kind of ‘OPP’ would have already established a commonly shared understanding of the aim for the musical production. The stakeholders (the actants) who join forces in the production would understand this ‘OPP’, i.e., what appeals to the audience. Based on such understanding, the stakeholders would work towards the ultimate goal – the audience’s interests – and hence create a successful musical production. They would also understand that their personal goals, whatever they may be -- artistic pursuit, financial gain, experience, etc., -- would only be realized through this overriding goal.

If we call this network environment of the musical production an already formed ‘umbrella network’, in which stakeholders collaborate to produce a musical for their audience, the specific interactions between the stakeholders for specific aspects could be considered as sub-networks. For instance, negotiations on specific aspects may take place between the translator and the cast members, but may not be relevant between the translator and the lighting designer. These types of interactions may be reflected in various respects during the process of translating musicals, and the development of the textual translation is certainly one of them. Such negotiations on the individual levels help the production team members reach a balanced consensus in order to achieve their common goal in the umbrella network.

This, then, is a different network. The producer is virtually running the umbrella network, imposing his or her power, and ensuring that the production holds together. Even though the interactions between the stakeholders (actants) inevitably involve power negotiations, for example, through expertise or the hierarchy, the umbrella network’s aims of consumer orientation acts as the overall binding force for maintaining
the balance and the stability of the umbrella network. Under this common goal, the stakeholders would understand that they need to find their way to negotiate with each other with the necessary prioritizations and compromises. As a result, the risk of the network breaking down, as shown in Callon’s case of the scallops (1986), and as warned by Law (2009), can be reduced, or even prevented.

The multiple ways in which a network functions in different musicals will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 5.

2.3.4 Contextualizing the ‘non-human actants’

In musicals’ translation the main non-human actants include the texts, singability, and the stage design. For example, if we consider the source text itself as a type of inscription, then it is part of the network since it is the carrier of the original author’s thoughts. From this perspective, the translator is at the same time interacting with the mind of the human actant (the author of the source text) via the source text (which would be the outcome from other networks constructed within the source text context). On the one hand, it is through his or her reading of the source text that the translator grasps the characters and structure of the story by the source text author. On the other hand, it is based on his or her understanding of the assumed intention of the source text author that the translator makes decisions for the necessary changes to be made in the translation. Therefore, each translator may have different interpretations of the source text.

ANT suggests that during the interactions of ‘translation’, the non-human actant needs to have a human actant as its representative (Callon, 1986). Here then, the source text can be considered as a non-human actant, since its agency may trigger changes in the way that the translator usually translates. Although the actants are mediators from ANT’s perspective, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the ways that the changes are made take more than the source text itself to materialize, depending upon who acts as its representative. As Reception Theory has demonstrated, readers also play their part in the interpretation of the meaning of the text which they read because, as Wolfgang Iser puts it: “[T]his meaning is neither a given external reality nor a copy of an intended reader’s own world, it is something that has to be ideated by the mind of the reader” (1978: 38).
Therefore, to return to ANT, the agency of the non-human actant is realized through the interactions between the human actant and the non-human actant. For example, in musical libretto translation, the agency of the source text is manifest in how the source text is received and reflected by the translators and the other stakeholders in the production team. Different stakeholders may have different perspectives and considerations on how best to represent the original meaning in the target culture. This means that the agency of a non-human actant needs to be contextualized in terms of who it is interacting with, as well as when and where the interactions take place. Different human actants may receive different kinds of agency from the same non-human actant in different situations, resulting in different outcomes.

Although theoretically it is possible to consider text as a non-human actant, in reality it is very difficult to find concrete evidence to offer a clear account of it. It is precisely for this reason that this thesis does not claim to be a full ANT study. I am more interested in human participants and their interactions in the network to produce the target translation text as the outcome. Hence, I will employ ANT’s four stages of ‘translation’ in Chapter 5 to explain how these interactions and the outcomes influence the development of the textual translations for musicals.

Whilst to theorize further about the agencies of the text as ‘actant’ would require more empirical evidence, one of the translators (QA6) in my case studies did make interesting reflections on the power of the source text during her negotiations with a cast member. She recalls:

When I am doing the translation, sometimes I feel that it is very weird. I actually get the feeling it is not me writing, it is a force. If I write something myself, I would have self doubts. Now I am trying to think why I dared to argue with him [a senior performer]. It was because this is not my work. I am only conveying the original work. I ask myself whether there is really such a force, or is it your own thoughts? It is really difficult to tell when I am doing it. … I feel that I am not writing something for [me], there is something and I am just a zaiti (carrier) for it. I don’t know if I should still stick with that” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10)

Such remarks suggest a connection with the source text which, through its encoding of the original author’s authority, seems to speak with an agency of its own. Given the

---

6 The interviewees are anonymous in order to protect their identity.
rarity of such comments however, the analysis of the source and target texts in this thesis will focus on particular translation choices in the light of various pressures, rather than exploring further any explicitly articulated evidence of their agency.

2.4 Research design

2.4.1 Case studies guided by the ANT approach

In order to answer the research questions outlined in Chapter 1, I have employed a case study method using ANT as the theoretical framework. A case study approach is consistent with ANT, and appropriate for my purposes. According to Van House, “Methodologically, ANT has two major approaches. One is to ‘follow the actor,’ via interviews and ethnographic research. The other is to examine inscriptions” (2001). This is because, “Inscriptions make action at a distance possible by stabilizing work in such a way that it can travel across space and time and be combined with other work” (ibid.).

Latour and Woolgar define inscriptions in their scientific field as follows:

An inscription device is any item of apparatus or particular configuration of such items which can transform a material substance into a figure or diagram which is directly usable by one of the members of the office space. (1986: 51)

If the translators and other stakeholders, such as the production teams and the audience, as well as the source and target texts of the translations, are considered as actants in a network, the source and target texts are equivalent to the inscriptions in ANT’s terms. They are used by the translators and the production teams respectively, and can therefore be considered together as a special type of actant – as a node in the network through which the translators and production team members, as well as the audience interact in different ways. For instance, the translator converts the ST to the TT, the production team members perform based on the TT, and the audience is assisted by the TT to follow the story and enjoy the show. For these reasons, texts play an important role in the network. My research design is intended to principally follow these two major approaches, by combining textual analysis and field studies.

Yin (2003: 1) defines case studies as “the preferred strategy when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context”. That is how
this research started, when the Chinese translation of Western musicals commenced to develop for the Chinese mainland market.

Focusing on three cases of such musicals, this thesis seeks to gain insights into the particular contexts concerning the aspects of the translator’s activity with the source text and the development of its translations. During this process, a variety of stakeholders’ involvements and interactions are identified. These stakeholders’ inputs will, to varying extents, affect the translators’ decision-making during the development of the musical libretti translations.

Since these musicals are the first to be tested on this market, the audience’s role, especially with MM, has been brought in and, as they have a part to play, a new method is needed. That is why this study does not rely on merely textual analysis. A case study method allows me to gain insight from examining the phenomenon through working with different types of data, such as the translation texts and the empirical data gathered through interviews and surveys. This method, together with its theoretical framework, will provide concrete evidence for answering the research questions.

2.4.2 The selection of the three cases

The three musicals, ILY, Spin and MM, are selected for their novelty and language combination rather than by specific type, year, or origin. These three musicals are translated and performed by professional arts companies or professionally formed companies. Among them, ILY and Spin were both co-produced by the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre (SDAC) and their American and Finish partners respectively. MM was co-produced by the Chinese United Asia Live Entertainment and the British company Little Star.

Although these three musicals share one thing in common – none of them are “sung-through” types and each has considerable amounts of stand-alone spoken dialogues – they each represent a particular type of musical:

- ILY contains a series of un-related stories, although connected to represent different stages of people’s lives. Therefore, the libretti are designed only for the characters in each of the story settings, and there is no reference concerning
what happened in the previous act(s) or stories towards the building up of these characters.

- *Spin* is a complete story in which the libretti are closely related to the characters and the development of the storylines. Therefore, they need to be cohesive and coherent for the whole context.
- *MM* is a jukebox musical and its story is created around the existing well-known ABBA songs. Catherine Johnson created the story based on 23 songs selected from over 100 ABBA songs. Although the story is logically created to accommodate these songs, there are still some details which need to be coherently translated and recontextualized for the target audience.

2.4.3 A proposed model for musical translations

Based on the investigation of these case studies, I propose a model which illustrates a possible translation process for musicals, in which the textual translation is developed under the influence of multiple stakeholders’ inputs – the interactions of the actants as described in ANT. This model is set out in the following chart.
Diagram: The interactions between the translator and the other stakeholders/consumers in the process of translating musicals, from the perspective of ANT

Following ANT’s key concepts that network interactions among all ‘actants’ and their agencies involved, whether human or non-human, make things happen, this model attempts to describe how a translated musical libretto develops under multiple
influences and inputs in a network environment. Instead of being confined to the text only, the translators’ role here is one of the nodes in the network, i.e., their operations are closely linked with the multiple actants at every stage, including the production team members, as well as the consumers. This model offers an approach incorporating textual analysis and stakeholder investigations in order to explain the changes made under the influences of the dynamic interactions among these actants during the development of the target text.

On one hand, the text transforms the story and characterization into words and lyrics. The results derived from textual analysis of the relationship between source and target languages provide concrete evidence of the changes made during the translation process. On the other hand, the data collected through interviews with various stakeholders involved and surveys from the audience (or potential audience) can help analyse the other factors which influence the development of the translation.

As shown in the chart, a musical translator’s first contact is the source text, which may be accompanied by a brief from the producer or the director. He or she then translates the source text into the target text. At this stage he/she works alone, but the work involves integrating multiple semiotic modalities including linguistic, theatrical as well as cultural aspects. For instance, in order to match the relationship between the original lyrics and the musical framework, the required syllable count may need a different syntactic structure, or a different lexical choice, for the translated lyrics. The performability and singability may require adjustments to be made to accommodate the syllable count and the tones. Some specific cultural references in the source text, such as a joke, may not be familiar enough for the target audience to understand its connotation and therefore it may need adaptation. These multiple aspects concerning the text and its agency, its meaning, as well as its singability, would necessitate the translators’ interactions with the other stakeholders at the next stage when the translated text is used by the director and the cast members. The next step on the chart shows the interactions between the target text and its users – other stakeholders.

When the translator completes the initial translation, shown in the chart as TT1, with their perceptions on the linguistic, singable and cultural aspects, and their reflections on the agency of the source text, it is then distributed to the production team for their
rehearsals. In one of my cases, the TT1 was published in advance in order to invite the general public’s comments and feedback. This shows that the producer was seeking to meet the audience’s expectations. At the same time, within the production team, the rehearsals also brought the other stakeholders, from the directors to the cast, into contact with TT1. It is at this stage that interactions and negotiations between the translator and the production team take place which show different priorities being negotiated with regard to how the agency of the source text is represented in the target text. As a result, TT1 is revised to reflect various stakeholders’ inputs from their theatrical perspectives including the director, the music director, the choreographer, and the cast members.

Moving down the chart, these interactions generate TT2, etc., which contains multi-perspectival inputs from the producer, the production team, and sometimes also the general public, before it reaches the audience in the theatre. Through the performers’ acting on stage, TT2 is presented in the theatre to the audience. It is at this stage that the spectators – the consumers – spontaneously react to TT2 and thus the production team can check its effects in real time. This process may go on after the musical’s previews, and even over the run of the public performances, in order to respond to the audience’s feedback. Whilst the main frame is maintained after repetition of the cycles, small improvements may still continue until an acceptable consensus is attained.

This chart shows that each connecting line between a stakeholder and the translator is a potential influence on the development of the final target text and, hence, one may hypothesise that translation changes may arise from the interactions at each connection.

2.4.4 Data collection
During my field studies, I have viewed all three musicals: ILY (July, 2009. Hangzhou); Spin (May, 2010. Shanghai) and MM (Sept. 2011. Beijing and January 2012. Shanghai). For the purposes of textual analysis, tracing the influences on the textual development from interactions between various stakeholders, as well as the understanding of the audience’s feedback and expectations, I have also obtained first hand data on these musicals as follows:

2.4.4.1 Textual data
The textual data consists of the source and target texts of the three musicals:
Textual data provides the basic evidence for the changes made from the source text to the target text. Having explained my research purposes, I was able to gather the data including the libretto translations from all three musicals.

Through comparing the translation gain and loss derived from the textual analysis of the relationship between source text and target text, the textual evidence is used as the basis for further exploration into the extratextual factors which have influenced the development of the textual translation. Therefore, it is crucial to have textual analysis as the base for an integrated model, combining the analytical and descriptive approaches, for comparing the textual factors with the stakeholders’ inputs, in order to understand the dynamic nature of musical libretto translations.

2.4.4.2 Other empirical data

Since this project explores factors in translation – process and product – which go beyond the ST-TT relationship, in particular consumer orientation and feedback from the users and receivers of a TT, it is necessary to incorporate evidence from other empirical studies. The interviews and surveys provide valuable evidence of stakeholder attitudes, experience, and interactions during the translation process. Although it would be ideal to gain access to the real time process in the making of these musicals through direct observation, it proved impractical owing to the rules governing the closed rehearsals.

i) Interviews

One part of the method is to show that some gaps between the ST and TT are not attributable to language issues, but are an outcome of interactions and negotiations from differing stakeholder perspectives. This information is obtained through interviews conducted with, in addition to the translators, various other stakeholders.

The recorded interviews with the translators and some of the production team members (including the Swedish director for Spin, the Chinese director for MM, the music
director for all three musicals, and the producers, as well as some of the actors) are approximately:

- **ILY**: 2 hrs 40 mins;
- **Spin**: 3 hrs 20 mins;
- **MM**: 16 hrs 10 mins;

The interviews were conducted and recorded through audio recordings, mainly at the venues where the musical performances took place. In some instances, when the interviewees were absent or as follow-ups, email correspondence and skype audio interviews were undertaken. The interview questions (see Appendix I) with the translators are divided into two aspects: their linguistic treatment between ST and TT; and their interactions and considerations for the interests of other stakeholders, as well as the audience. The interviews with the other stakeholders concern their perceptions of the lyrics translation, such as singability and reception. The interview questions are semi-structured in order to allow fresh perceptions to be accommodated during the interviews.

ii) Online audience surveys

Based on the findings of the pilot survey with the Chinese students at The University of Portsmouth in 2008 (see Appendix V), I have conducted three online surveys (see Appendix II) for gathering audience feedback about Chinese translations of Western musicals performed on the Chinese mainland. These surveys focus on consumer-oriented issues and serve as a means of evaluation of the translations as products for stage performances, cultural presuppositions and, in particular, the libretto translation and its effects on musical audiences. The links were posted through a number of websites including www.Chinamusical.net (a leading Musical fan site), some universities’ intranets, as well as macro-blogs. The number of responses and the periods over each survey are as follows:

- **Survey 1 (音乐剧翻译观众调查)**. 2009-8-22 to 2013-7-10, 290 responses;
- **Survey 2 (看音乐剧: 原文还是中文版?)**. 2010-5-5 to 2011-5-11, 64 responses;
- **Survey 3 (音乐剧《妈妈咪呀》中文版观众调查)**. 2011-12-4 to 2012-3-3, 21 responses.
As consumers of the musicals, the audiences constitute an important group of actants in the network. It is their interests and expectations that the translators and the production teams strive to meet. This is how musical translation truly brings in the audience as a stakeholder. Therefore, for finding out what the audience is saying, mechanisms for soliciting feedback such as these can be seen as sources of information which producers can receive and hence act accordingly.

However, although there are strong advantages in using online survey tools (such as low cost, less time consumption, and finding favour with the sizeable section of the audience familiar with the internet), the limitations are also obvious. In my audience surveys, the shortcomings mainly concern their self-selective nature, which means that I have no control over the surveys’ populations. Therefore, the findings are not intended to be transferable or generalisable as they can only give a limited picture. These findings are only intended to provide an overall background to supplement my textual analysis and qualitative data from interviews, rather than being used for detailed statistical measurements. Therefore, the surveys play a minor but supplementary role in assisting my case studies.

In order to maintain the consistency of the surveys for comparing their findings, the major questions in each survey are similar, and are applicable to all translated musicals. There are only one or two questions targeted at particular musicals regarding their specific contents, such as particular Chinese elements used for cultural adaptation.

Furthermore, to supplement the audience surveys, I have been regularly following the media coverage and the audience’s reviews through some of the musical fans’ communities including www.Chinamusical.net, and specifically dedicated websites for the audience to post their views after seeing performances, such as cando360.com, as well as personal blogs. These secondary data provide me with the audience’s voluntary and spontaneous feedback for the Chinese translation of Western musicals.

2.4.4.3 Ethical issues
Regarding the ethical issues, my research purposes were clearly explained both to the interviewees and to the survey respondents and, therefore, they were under no obligations to participate. Care was taken to ensure that no sensitive comments were
incorporated which could have potentially affected the interviewees. Also, all identifiers were replaced by pseudonyms where possible whenever referring to individual interviewees. The surveys invited the respondents on a voluntary basis with complete anonymity.

Conclusion

Through employing ANT as both the theoretical framework and a methodological approach to relate to the specific genre of musical libretto translation, this thesis goes beyond the comparative model of textual analysis between the source and target texts. It helps investigate and understand the role of stakeholders and their inputs for the development of the textual translation in the case of musicals as an evolving product. Although there are always stakeholder considerations, since the translator must consider the readership to a certain extent, the focus here is on the actual interactions of these stakeholders and their influences on the textual development.

However, it is by no means the case that ANT can fit these case studies completely. Modifications will be needed for certain situations, such as the agency of the non-human actants and the stability of the network, as discussed above. For instance, what is the binding force underlying the stability of the network among the interacting stakeholders and their perspectives during the translation of musicals?

In this respect, Chesterman suggests:

While this theory is not applicable in toto to Translation Studies, largely because its main focus (as part of science and technology studies) is so different, it does offer ideas that we could develop in the study of translation practices (2006: 22).

Combining textual analysis from translation studies with ANT’s approach for investigating the various stakeholders’ roles in the development of musical libretto translation, enables translation practice to be viewed “as a complex transaction taking place in a communicative, socio-cultural context” (Hermans 1996: 26). This method helps the research delve into the multi-layered interactions involved in musical libretto translation. The dynamic network environment in which the translators operate and the way they interact with and respond to different stakeholders and perspectives provide valuable insights for the understanding of the current phenomenon of the translation of
Western musicals for the Chinese mainland audience, and may have implications for a wider global market.

However, since this research focuses on translation studies, which differ from sociological studies, it limits itself from the sociological approaches by perceiving the agents and factors involved only where, and when, their actions are related to the translations. Also, using some of the main concepts of ANT, as the theoretical framework for the methodological approach, does not imply any commitment to either stand or fall by this theory. For example, I appreciate ANT’s intention of bringing to the forefront the issue of the agency of non-human actants and its influences on humans’ thinking and actions. However, to prove its symmetric agency with humans may require different methods such as those from psychology, which is beyond the scope of this research; and I am thus only able to accept its metaphorical implications at this stage.
Chapter 3. Text Matters: language, style and drama

Text is the first verbal factor a translator encounters in musicals translation, although verbal correspondence is far from the whole picture. It functions as an ‘inscription’ which exists and plays a significant part in the network, and which stakeholders react to and interact with. Rather than a merely linguistic relationship between the source and the target texts, many other factors including dramatic, stylistic as well as social and cultural aspects may also influence the development of the target text. During the process of the textual translation, a translator has to take into account and negotiate on these aspects and their relationships in order to achieve the best possible balance for the target reception. These factors may be prioritized or compromised depending on the translator’s evaluation of the functions of the translation. Therefore, the key questions are how and why the translated texts are manipulated to achieve their effectiveness.

Informed by the seven standards of textuality (cohesion; coherence; intentionality; acceptability; informativity; situationality; and intertextuality) proposed by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), and Peter Low’s ‘Pentathlon principles’ (singability, sense, naturalness, rhyme, and rhythm) for song translation (2005), this chapter investigates the possible motivations behind the discrepancies and the changes in the target text. Through in-depth textual analysis, I will illustrate how meaning and its contextual functions are negotiated and their possible underlying reasons, as well as their effects on the target audience. The discussions will be focused on the text matters involving mainly three aspects: language and context, stylistic features, and dramatic cohesion and coherence. As a way to conceptualize these aspects in the present chapter I shall further link them to some of the seven standards mentioned above.

For translation studies, some standards of textuality, such as intentionality and acceptability, cohesion and coherence, are broad categories which could be applied at all levels, e.g., at the sentence level or at the discourse level. They are particularly useful to this chapter for analysing the narrative functions of the libretto alongside other theatrical semiotics. Again, undoubtedly, the dramatic cohesion and coherence (i.e., the storyline and characterization of the musicals) need to be carefully conveyed during the translation process. For the purposes of analysis, I will therefore refer to a number of these standards of textuality when discussing the particular aspects focused on in the
three following sections that I feel are best informed by these standards. Whilst there are overlaps in any text in terms of these standards, for the purposes of analysis, I will separate them as follows: I shall link language and context with intertextuality; stylistic features with intentionality and acceptability; and finally, dramatic elements with cohesion and coherence, correlations that will be discussed in each respective section below.

It is not my purpose to make prescriptive judgments on the translations’ relative merits. Rather, I am seeking to explain the rationale behind such choices. It should also be made clear that the central aim of this thesis is not to present a full textual analysis but to draw on textual issues to the extent that they are useful for understanding musicals translation and how it attains effective resonance with the target audience – the consumers – through the interactions of the stakeholders in the production network.

The samples for analysis are selected through comparisons of the source and target texts. These samples are then classified by identifying groups of discrepancies and changes and by correlating the differences with reasons based on the evidence from interviews with the translators and other stakeholders. As will be seen below, among the major shifts which occur in the target texts, there are two main underlying considerations: first, the audience’s comprehension and enjoyment; secondly, the relationship between text and theatrical semiotics. More specifically, some translators have to sacrifice faithfulness to the source text in order to achieve the essential sense and naturalness in the target text; some employ cultural adaptation strategies to deal with the unfamiliar background factors; some establish resonance with the target cultural context through manipulating stylistic features; and some make every effort to ensure the dramatic cohesion and coherence, such as storylines and characterization. All these decisions contribute to the success of the musical performance. Therefore, the chosen areas for analysis are the most striking textual aspects which are discussed by de Beaugrande and Dressler in the standards of textuality. Although singability will be discussed separately in the next chapter, the present discussion will also occasionally touch upon this issue when necessary.

3.1 Language and context
Situating the musical libretto into the target cultural context in order to assist the audience’s full enjoyment of the performance sometimes proves to be a delicate task for the translator. This is owing to the recognition of, and necessary negotiations between the meaning of the source text and the target reception. The language differences may result in a common expression for one language having no readily available equivalent in another language. In such situations, what choice does the translator have: to be ‘faithful’ to the source text, or to prioritize the naturalness in order to make sense?

Close reading of the translated libretto shows that, more often than not, certain textuality standards function in an interrelated way. For instance, cultural adaptation is related to situationality and intertextuality. Together, they help establish contacts with the target cultural context (cf. Venuti, 2009) and get new information across to the audience. This means that cultural adaptation, intertextuality and situationality are at the same time also linked to informativity, as un-adapted reference could be considered as new information. If the new information is unfamiliar to the target audience, it would affect the audience’s understanding and enjoyment of Western musical products, and these adaptations are most noticeable in their response and feedback. These interrelated elements play significant roles in the narrative function of the libretto, which is an important aspect of the Chinese theatrical tradition (detailed discussions in Chapter 4).

3.1.1 Faithfulness and naturalness
‘Faithfulness’ is a concept which most translation scholars would say is problematic, i.e., whether it privileges the linguistic features, or “the transformation of a communicative act by one community (or an individual from that community) into a meaningful communicative act for another community (or an individual in that community)” (Lewis, 2007: 36). However, translation practitioners on the Chinese mainland still consider xin (fidelity) as the primary principle in Yan Fu’s influential triad of translation practice: xin, da, ya (fidelity, comprehensibility, and elegance). Therefore, from the translation practitioners’ perspective, whether professional or not, faithfulness is still frequently referred to and followed as an essential translation norm and a standard reference point. The common practice whereby Western musical producers with no knowledge of the Target Language tend to use back translation as a criterion to test the quality of the target text may also have encouraged practitioners’ adherence to faithfulness in their translations. ‘Naturalness’, which is equivalent to da in Yan Fu’s triad, is another term
frequently referred to by the Chinese audience in their feedback. These two notions are almost in a dichotomic relationship: they complement each other, but also restrain each other from going to an extreme. The translators generally seek to achieve a balance between faithfulness and naturalness (cf. Low 2005). For the audience who do not necessarily know what the source text is, their instinctive feeling towards the translation is whether it is natural and comfortable to listen to. For these reasons, I have decided to use these terms in the textual analysis.

This section intends to explore how these notions, when interacted with other elements, are negotiated from different stakeholders’ perspectives in the network during the musical libretto translation. For instance, for the English co-producers, faithfulness is a criterion, based upon which they can assess whether the target text accurately conveys the original version (which may also concern copyright issues). However, for the Chinese producers, naturalness may sometimes have to take priority over faithfulness for effective reception of the translation version. To some extent, then, the perspectives of the English and the Chinese stakeholders embody a source- versus target-oriented dichotomy.

In song lyrics translation, text functions under various constraints such as the musical framework, the syllable count, and the rhyme and rhythm. Therefore, when Peter Low discusses ‘sense’ in his Pentathlon principles for song translation, as discussed in the Introduction, he considers that its acceptable accuracy, which is a form of faithfulness, can be wider than in translating other text types (2005: 194):

In the normal translating of informative texts, for example, semantic accuracy is paramount; but the constraints of song-translating necessarily mean some stretching or manipulation of sense. (ibid.)

Similarly, when translating musicals, the role of the faithfulness to the source text tends to become contentious owing to more semiotic elements being involved, such as the storylines, the characterizations, as well as the stage performability, than in some other types of lyrics translation, e.g., song translation. Herbert Kretzmer, the lyricist for the English-language musical adaptation of Les Misérables, presents the argument as follows:
Transforming a song or a musical is not like translating a text book or a novel, where absolute fidelity to the original is required. With a song you are reinventing an idea, a phantom, a fiction made up of words and images which have a particular resonance within a specific culture, to whose members you are appealing. Every culture has its own tribal assumptions, its own linguistic nuances. Lyric writing is not about stating the obvious. It seeks to set in motion a certain trail of wonder and imagination, to hint at something lurking beneath the surface. (cited in Vermette, 2007: 67)

While it is understandable that back-translation is a way for Western producers to ensure the accuracy of the source version, as well as protecting its copyright, it often results in making the translation uninteresting and even unnatural for the target audience. This is because of the language differences in terms of expression, syntax, grammar etc. One of these cases is the song ‘Thank you for the music’ in MM.

Example 1: Lines from ‘Thank you for the music’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 and BT</th>
<th>TT2 and BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for the music</td>
<td>谢谢你的音乐</td>
<td>歌声让我飞翔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The song I’m singing</td>
<td>我唱的歌曲</td>
<td>它给我翅膀</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for your music</td>
<td>Thank you for your music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The song I am singing</td>
<td>The song I am singing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>谢谢你的音乐</td>
<td>谢谢你的音乐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>我唱的歌曲</td>
<td>我唱的歌曲</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for your music</td>
<td>Thank you for your music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The song I am singing</td>
<td>The song I am singing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under pressure from the stipulated procedure for the back translation, the first translation (TT1) is faithful. Although it is not incorrect, the near literal conversion was rejected by the Chinese production team because “it is like a translation by Google” (JB, personal interview, 2012-9-25). The Chinese director was also critical of this translation’s unsuitable vowels which, she argued, impair its singability. The second version makes a major shift in terms of the meaning, but it uses metaphorization as a strategy to negotiate the tension between meaning and singability. Here, the metaphor, rather than “[being reduced] to sense” (Newmark, 1988: 191), is invented to describe the power of the song as if giving one a pair of wings to fly. In this way, the two lines are coherently linked and with a matching rhyme scheme. The Chinese musical director JB clearly prefers this translation for it “is not constrained by the original meaning, and it is alive” (Personal interview, 2012-9-25).

Example 2: Lines from ‘One of us’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 with BT</th>
<th>TT2 with BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One of us is lonely</td>
<td>两人之一孤寂</td>
<td>只有一份孤寂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of us is only</td>
<td>两人之一唯一</td>
<td>只有一声叹息</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In musical libretto translation, as perceived from the original work, the problem of inaccuracy is sometimes caused by different linguistic systems and the need to mesh with the other multi-semiotic aspects involved. In different languages, certain phrases may not share the same frequency of usage, nor the same metrical conventions for the structure of stanzas.

The song ‘*One of us*’ in MM has a stanza using the phrase ‘one of’. Although it is a very common expression in English, it is not a frequently used phrase in Putonghua, especially orally. An additional problem is posed by the “co-text” of the original line. Although it looks similar, the source text is not strictly a couplet, as the Chinese reader would expect, because its second line is linked to a third line by means of enjambement. Without it, the two lines mirror each other with a similar structure and almost the same wording, as well as the neatly rhyming endings of “lonely” and “only”, a cohesive effect emphasized still further by the repeating music phrases to which the lines are sung. In Chinese poetry or song lyrics, if two lines are so similarly structured, they would be considered couplets, hence the rhyming word ‘only’ in the second line would indicate an end-stopped line. It is thus not surprising that neither of the translation versions follow the enjambement in the source text. The forward pulling motion of the second line in the source text is disrupted by an approach that reveals the influences of the Chinese linguistic convention and rhetorical tradition, and their effects on the translators’ operations.

Nevertheless, the lack of enjambement in both texts is handled very differently in the two versions. The first faithfully follows the source text, with the consequence that the second line makes almost no sense. In addition, the more literal handling of ‘one of us’ occasions a switch to a far more written register that increases formality. The second version, by contrast, although not faithful on the semantic level, conveys the equivalent feelings of the characters in the source text in an idiomatic way for the target audience and, whilst the enjambement is not preserved, neither is it misinterpreted as in version 1.
The song title is also shifted from the faithful conversion of ‘one of two people’ to ‘between you and me’ (你我之间), which is briefer as a title.

**Example 3: Lines from ‘Take a chance on me’ (MM)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honey, I’m still free</td>
<td>Honey 我单身</td>
<td>Honey I am single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a chance on me</td>
<td>给我个机会</td>
<td>Give me a chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey, I’m still free</td>
<td>爱神的青睐</td>
<td>Favour from the goddess of love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a chance on me</td>
<td>别把她推开</td>
<td>Don’t cast her away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a chance on me</td>
<td>宝贝别等待</td>
<td>Baby, don’t wait</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Take a chance on me’ is another such case involving a commonly used English phrase which has no equivalent in Chinese. If translated literally, it would be something like: 到我这里来碰碰运气 (come and try your luck on me). As it is not a common expression which people would use in Chinese, it is usually translated as ‘give me a chance’. However, there are subtle differences between the source and target texts in terms of the subject and the object, i.e., who is the one to try and take the chance. The English phrase means more of ‘try me’, while the Chinese translation means more of ‘let me try’. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the phrase ‘Take a chance on me’ is translated into three different ways in this song. ‘Give me a chance’ is only used once, while the song title and the reprises are translated into ‘Baby, don’t wait’, with another alternative translation of ‘don’t cast her away’. The latter two translation versions both contain more of the sense of ‘try me’, and hence complement the ‘let me try’ version of ‘give me a chance’.

Through these shifts, i.e., from ‘Honey, I’m still free, Take a chance on me’ to ‘favour from the goddess of love, don’t cast her away’, and to ‘baby, don’t wait’, the target text is made more like a piece of advice from a third person. The slightly subservient tone in ‘give me a chance’, which does not exist in the source text, is thus reduced. In so doing, semantic considerations take precedence over rhetoric, as the emphasis made in the source text through rhetorical power of the direct repetitions is lost. However, this loss is complemented by the neat rhyming which furnishes the lines with a strong cohesion. It could also be argued that, whilst there are no verbatim repetitions, there are what Leech and Short (1981/2007: 197) have called “elegant variations”: repetitions of the
same idea through different wordings. These natural expressions help facilitate audience understanding.

In addition to the phrase itself, the Chinese translation is certainly not simply determined by meaning. The differences in the two languages result in differences on many levels including lexis, collocation, syntax and rhetoric. The translator of song lyrics also has to consider the rhyme and rhythm, the tones, as well as the syllable count, for singability. Whilst prioritizing the central meaning, in this song a balanced collocation between syllable count and syntactic structure on the one hand, and the cohesive rhyme and rhythm with the ending tones on the other (e.g., the five lines end with shen, hui, lai, kai, dai, with the emphasized tones on the second and the fifth lines, making it rhythmic and clear to follow), are still maintained for singability – another aspect of language difference which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

These cases illustrate that when translating musicals, if there is conflict between the criteria of faithfulness and naturalness, while balancing with the other aspects, it is the effective communication and the audience’s interest which take priority over the faithfulness to the source text. The translation for MM is freer than any traditional musical or song translation. Sometimes, the semantic meaning is substantially changed. Some of the unfaithful but more culturally relevant expressions make them more meaningful and hence create resonance with their audience. When describing his translation of The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, Edward FitzGerald wrote in his letter to Cowell in 1859:

I suppose very few People have ever taken such Pains in Translation as I have: though certainly not to be literal. But at all Cost, a Thing must live: with a transfusion of one’s own worse Life if one can’t retain the Original’s better. Better a live Sparrow than a stuffed Eagle. (1901: 8 – original emphases)

3.1.2 Intertextuality
Intertextuality plays an important role in musical libretto translation. It has been one of the strategies widely used by musical producers to engage the audience in different cultural contexts. The resonance in theatre is often achieved when the audience feels that they are not just outsiders, or observers, but share some insights through interconnections with the story and the characters. As one of the communicative tools, text is often used to create such connections.
Kristeva defines text as: “a trans-linguistic apparatus that redistributes the order of language by relating communicative speech, which aims to inform directly, to different kinds of anterior or synchronic utterances” (1980: 36). Any particular text has its own specific purpose within a particular time and situation, i.e. within the historical, social and cultural contexts. When the texts are redistributed, intertextuality refers to how “in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another” (ibid.) in order to establish links between two or more different settings, which were previously unrelated. However, the effects of intertextuality need more than just the author’s intention and the texts themselves to be realized. In ANT’s terms, various actants interact to make things happen. When de Beaugrande & Dressler introduce intertextuality as the seventh standard of textuality, they find that intertextuality “concerns the factors which make the utilization of one text dependent upon knowledge of one or more previously encountered texts” (1981: 10), and therefore, “the production and reception of a given text depend upon the participants’ knowledge of other texts” (ibid. 182). The participants, and their knowledge of the texts, are part of the network which enables intertextuality to function. In so doing, de Beaugrande & Dressler describe a process of ‘mediation’:

[T]he extent to which one feeds one’s current beliefs and goals into the model of the communicative situation: the greater the expanse of time, and of processing activities, between the use of the current text and the use of previously encountered texts, the greater the mediation. (ibid.)

Since the mediation process varies in terms of the person, the subject etc., Hatim and Mason use the term “intertextual space” to allow that “the intertextual link … activates knowledge and belief systems well beyond the text itself” (1990: 124, 129).

When translating performing arts, strategies of intertextuality that help the audience to better appreciate the content through shared knowledge have always been widely employed. Terrence McNally points out: “The triumph of successful operas and musicals is how they reinvent the familiar and make it fresh” (2002: 19). This is one of the reasons why Shakespeare was so popular with his contemporary audience, as well as with later generations. A great proportion of his works were intertextually related to some significant events, or current affairs, so that the audience already had some knowledge and interest which attracted them to come and see his plays. However, translations of imported musicals need to establish familiarity in the target cultural
context. In this way, the target audience would be able to relate the performance to their own experience, so that the resonance can be achieved. The following are two examples illustrating the employment of such strategies.

Example 1: A passage from ‘Epilogue’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man #1 -- endlessly crashing into each other, like two vengeful bumper cars, Romeo Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo, you played it for her you can play it for me, my man done did me wrong, chicks and ducks and geese better scurry, I got it bad and that ain't good, you make me feel like a natural woman, she was just 17 you know what I mean, love to love ya baby.</td>
<td>男 #1 那是两辆开足马力的车疯狂地撞在了一起——如果我多一张船票,你会不会跟我一起走——先结婚,后恋爱——眼前分明外来客,心底却是旧时友——如果上天能够给我一个再来一次的机会,我会对那个女孩子说三个字:我爱你。如果非要在这份爱上加上一个期限,我希望能是……一万年——对于世界而言,你是一个人;但是对于某个人,你是他的整个世界——世界上有那么多的城市,城市中有那么多的酒馆,而她却偏偏走进了我的——这么多年,牵着你的手,就像左手牵右手没感觉,但砍下去也会生疼。</td>
<td>Man #1 Those are two fully accelerating cars madly crashing into each other – if I have a spare ticket for the ship, would you like to come with me – marry first love afterwards – the person in front is obviously a guest from outside, but an old friend deep down in my heart – if Heaven gives me another opportunity to go all over again, I would say three words to that girl: I love you. If this love has to have a time limit, I hope it will be … 10 thousand years – to the world, you are one person; but to a certain person, you are his whole world – there are so many cities in the world, there are so many pubs in the cities, but she just walked into mine – for all these years, holding your hands just like my left hand is holding my right hand, feeling nothing, but if it is cut off, it would be extremely painful for me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the epilogue of ILY, two couples lead into the finale with a dialogue recounting the theme of this story. In the source text, this passage consists of several well-known quotations concerning love and relationships from Shakespeare’s play Romeo and Juliet (“Romeo Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo”), the Broadway musical Oklahoma, the Hollywood film Casablanca, the Beatles song I Saw Her Standing There, as well as some other famous American songs. These references cover a broad spectrum from the Shakespearean period till the 1970s, and with the language styles ranging from early modern to contemporary, from classic to colloquial and black Americans’ English. Without any warning, the audience is suddenly confronted with this melange of
quotations, so initially there is bound to be a loss of sense. However, when the audience decodes the intertextuality, i.e., what they are, where they are from, and why they are linked to this story, they would gain a sense of achievement from being able to share in this knowledge. Their enjoyment would therefore be enhanced, and thus the intended dramatic and humorous effects realized.

These numerous cultural elements require a thorough background knowledge of, and familiarity with, the English and the American arts and entertainment fields. Since not all of them are well known to the Chinese audience, and it is not possible to footnote their origins as in print media, an accurate translation would not be able to create the equivalent effects to those experienced by the source text audience. As Venuti (2009: 162) has argued, such elements must be “recontextualized” through forms of re-creation:

The recontextualizing process involves the creation of another intratextual context and another network of intertextual and interdiscursive relations, established by and within the translation, and the process continues in the emergence of another context of reception.

In the target text, this passage is replaced with a selection of quotations about love from various current Chinese films. Among them, *yanqian fenming wailaike, xindi que[shi]jiushiyou* (眼前分明外来客，心底却[是]旧时友 – the person in front is obviously a guest from outside, but an old friend deep down in my heart) originates from one of the best known Chinese classic novels *红楼梦* (*A Dream of Red Mansions* or *Dream of the Red Chamber*) by 曹雪芹 (Cao Xueqin, 1715-1763), which is also widely adapted in various forms of the performing arts including *Xiqu*, film and TV drama. It famously describes the chemistry at first sight between the two main characters when they meet. Michael Sag, both the senior manager at Broadway Asia Entertainment and the show’s co-producer, explains the rationale for adapting to these familiar Chinese quotations in the translated musical version:

We did this because the American quotes would have made no sense, wouldn’t have been funny at all. Now you hear the audience laughing out loud at those lines, they recognize them. If one brings material into China from overseas, they must change it, making it accessible to local audience. If audiences don’t understand anything that’s going on, even if the [show is] brilliant, they might not like it. But here you’ve got these little bits and pieces that sound very familiar to them. (Wang Jing, 2007)
Reflecting the discourse structures of the source text, these quotations are randomly pieced together. The Chinese audience instantly recognizes these popular quotations. A news story reported that when one of the quotes from the famous Hong Kong comedian Stephen Chow’s film *A Chinese Odyssey* was used, the theatre was immediately filled with laughter and applause (Chen Anna, 2007). These familiar references establish a link with the target audience and form a basis for resonance with them through a process that Venuti (2009: 167), following Philip Lewis, refers to as “abusive fidelity” – a deviation from the usual ways of translation in order to highlight the function of this passage.

Interestingly, amongst all these intertextually adapted Chinese quotations, one is in fact a translation of a famous quotation from the 1942 Hollywood classic *Casablanca*. The original quotation “Of all the gin joints, in all the towns, in all the world, she walks into mine” is translated into “世界上有那么多的城市，城市中有那么多的酒馆，而她偏偏走进了我的” (there are so many cities in the world, there are so many pubs in the cities, but she just walked into mine). The translator and the production team inserted this quotation, which does not exist in the source text, and is not a Chinese quotation, unlike the rest in this passage. It clearly shows that this love story has deeply impressed the Chinese audience, and hence this translated quotation has become as if a part of their own treasure, in organizational theorist Wenger’s term, the “ownership of [its] meaning” (1998: 200).

Wenger defines “ownership of meaning” as “the degree to which we can make use of, affect, control, modify, or in general assert as ours the meanings that we negotiate” (ibid). He further explains:

> Having a claim to owning the meaning of a piece of text, a knowing smile, a tool, or an idea, is being able to come up with a recognizably competent interpretation of it. Such interpretation need not – in order to constitute ownership of meaning – be that of the author of the text, the producer of the smile, the builder of the tool, or the spokesperson of the idea. (ibid. 201)

Even though this is not an idiomatic Chinese quote, like the others in the passage, the way it is treated clearly indicates a connection through which the target text can be shared and appreciated by the audience, as with the translator. The reasons for such “competent interpretation” may stem from the profound sense of fate and destiny in
Chinese culture. One of the commonly used words is yuan (缘), which refers to a kind of a pre-destined bond between two people that would bring them together, even if they had no previous connection. More often yuan refers to a love relationship and/or marriage, although it can also be used for a friendship. Many Chinese idioms and expressions referring to this sense are widely used in daily life e.g., 千里姻缘一线牵 (a destined match across a thousand miles is drawn by a thread). When Rick talks about his encounter with Ilsa when she walked into his bar, the strong sense of fate – they are destined to meet each other, amongst all people and all places – clearly resonates with this particular sense in Chinese culture, and is thus assimilated into the target culture’s intertextual networks with relative ease.

Example 2: A reference from ‘Cantata for a first date’ (ILY)
Intertextuality can always establish resonance with the audience effectively, provided that it is used wisely. In the song ‘Cantata for a first date’, some of the specifically American consumer-oriented references for their cultural context have been adapted in the translation in order to help the Chinese audience. For example, since Wonderbra had just gained prominence in America when ILY was created in 1996, it would be a fashionable reference shared by many female audience members. Although it was not until 2007 that the Chinese translation was performed, this name may still not be as widely known as in the West. The Chinese translation replaced it by a made-up phrase xiong feng tun fei (big bosom and wide hips – 胸丰臀肥). This phrase is a synonym of the title of the novel Feng Ru Fei Tun (Big Breasts and Wide Hips) by the winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize for literature, Mo Yan. Since it was published in 1996, which is merely a year before ILY was first performed in Shanghai, it was a hot topic at the time in the Chinese literary field, thanks to its bold title. As this title is unprecedentedly sex-explicit compared with other Chinese literay works, it became a sensation.

Example 2: A reference from ‘Cantata for a first date’ (ILY)
Intertextuality can always establish resonance with the audience effectively, provided that it is used wisely. In the song ‘Cantata for a first date’, some of the specifically American consumer-oriented references for their cultural context have been adapted in the translation in order to help the Chinese audience. For example, since Wonderbra had just gained prominence in America when ILY was created in 1996, it would be a fashionable reference shared by many female audience members. Although it was not until 2007 that the Chinese translation was performed, this name may still not be as widely known as in the West. The Chinese translation replaced it by a made-up phrase xiong feng tun fei (big bosom and wide hips – 胸丰臀肥). This phrase is a synonym of the title of the novel Feng Ru Fei Tun (Big Breasts and Wide Hips) by the winner of the 2012 Nobel Prize for literature, Mo Yan. Since it was published in 1996, which is merely a year before ILY was first performed in Shanghai, it was a hot topic at the time in the Chinese literary field, thanks to its bold title. As this title is unprecedentedly sex-explicit compared with other Chinese literay works, it became a sensation.

---

7 Big Breasts and Wide Hips is a novel by Mo Yan, published in 1996. It is a family’s story about the struggles of the mother and her children - eight daughters and one son - during the 20th century. Its English translation by Howard Goldblatt was published in 2004.

8 Chinese book titles, even the pornographic ones, tend to be less sex-explicit. For example, the name of one of the best known Chinese Ming Dynasty (1368 – 1644) pornographic novel Jin Ping Mei is composed by part of each name for the three central female characters.
Therefore, linking to the title of Mo Yan’s book would not require much mediation by the majority of the target white collar audience. In this “intertextual space” where “a sign travels from one text (source) to another (destination)” (Hatim, 1990: 129), the audience is able to participate with their own understandings of the connotation of this phrase. During this process, they may gain satisfaction as insiders who are privileged to share its literary enrichment. From this perspective, intertextuality involves interactions between various actants – not only the texts, but also both the text producers and receivers. In so doing, the translation may need to be “decontextualized from the source field and dehistoricized, then re-contextualized and re-historicized in the target field” (Gouanvic, 2002: 100). Through establishing an “intertextual web” (Roux-Faucard, 2006: 98) in the target cultural context, the resultant translation is turned into “a living work” (ibid).

Example 3: Stanzas from ‘Touched by an angel’ (Spin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST and syllable count</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To be with you tonight
is like a fantasy
never seen the stars so
bright
smiling down on me
I ask myself am I
dreaming
I open my eyes
and I see an angel
what else can you be
when you’re so beautiful
so beautiful | 能和你在一起
不可思议像奇迹
点点星光含笑意
照亮我和你
疑我沉醉在梦里
但蓦然回首
你伫立在原地
天使般美丽
我好想靠近你再靠近你 | Able to be with you
Incredible like a miracle
Stars glittering and smiling
Shining on you and me
Doubt that I am indulging
in a dream
But suddenly looking back
You are standing there
As beautiful as an angel
I long to be close to you,
closer to you |

‘Touched by an angel’ is a song by the journalist Jackson expressing his feelings towards Chantal, a famous singer. The line in the source lyrics ‘I open my eyes and I see an angel’ could be translated literally as wo zheng kai shuang yan, kandao yige tianshi (我睁开双眼，看到一个天使). However, the target text borrows a phrase moran huishou (蓦然回首) from a well-known classical Chinese poem Qingyu’an - Yuanxi (《青玉案·元夕》) by Xin Qiji (辛弃疾, 1140-1207). The original line in this poem is zhongli xunta qianbaidu, moran huishou, naren quezai denghuo lanshanchu (众里寻他千百度，蓦然回首，那人却在灯火阑珊处 – I have been searching for her hundreds and thousands of times, then, suddenly looking back, she is standing right...
there under dimmed lights). This sense of pleasant surprise does, to a certain extent, strengthen Jackson’s feeling of a ‘dream-come-true’ – he cannot believe that he is just next to such an idol.

In order to cohere with this reference, the meaning and the narration of the source text are reconstructed in the target text with the remaining lines paraphrased and rewritten. Since this reference comes from the most famous part of the poem, with which most Chinese audience are familiar, it functions to create aesthetically pleasing effects through intertextuality, and thereby achieves resonance with the target audience. Perhaps this is the reason why the translator decided to make reference to this phrase, not once but twice, in this song.

Unlike readers, as discussed earlier, a theatre audience does not have much time to think, and therefore the intertextual reference has to make sense instantaneously in order to be effective. Although these intertextual links are established differently, i.e., Example 1 follows the style of the source text, whilst Examples 2 and 3 are created for and added to the target text, these three examples are similar in terms of ‘mediation’ and ‘intertextual space’, as referred to by de Beaugrande and Dressler, and Hatim respectively. The quotes in these examples are brought in and put together without any introduction or indication as to what they are, or where they are from (an intertextual usage that Fairclough [2003: 48] describes as not “attributed”), and the voice from the other text is excluded. The uninformed audience may thus require longer mediations and more intertextual space to find the clues. However, since these quotes belong to the same literary genre as the musical libretto, they belong to what Fiske has referred to as ‘horizontal intertextuality’, i.e., their relations “are those between primary texts that are more or less explicitly linked, usually along the axes of genre, character, or content” (1987: 108). These practices clearly show the translators’ intentions in creating the culturally relevant intertextual links in order to achieve resonance with the audience, through negotiating the source information and the target reception, based on their understanding of the audience’s common ground of knowledge and interests in sharing these references.

3.1.3 Cultural adaptation
Translating Western musicals into Chinese involves crossing broad historical and cultural boundaries. It requires effective translation strategies to provide ‘a great deal more freedom to create texts, to make meaning, to be active cultural agents’ and, more importantly, to provide ‘accommodation to the receiving audience’ (Tymoczko, 2009: 411–13).

The purpose of popular art entertainment is the enjoyment of their target audience. As one of such forms, musicals have their clear consumer orientation, and therefore the translators’ prime considerations are to ensure their artistic and commercial appeal to the audience. Hutcheon points out: “[t]he reception context determined the changes in setting and style… in the name of relevance, adapters seek the ‘right’ resetting or recontextualizing” (2006: 146 original emphasis).

During the process of translating musicals from one culture to another, the translatability of situations involving language and cultural specific references is crucial for the target audience to understand and thus fully appreciate the original work. Finding the right points of contact with them through adaptation helps transform a successful musical from one culture into another. Therefore, for the musical translators, there is no absolute dividing line between translation and adaptation, rather, there is a cline of natural interaction between them.

For these reasons, the translators tend not to consider themselves solely as translators. Kretzmer gives his advice on this matter with his self-positioning:

Do not follow the original text slavishly. Re-invent the lyric in your own words, remembering that there may be better ways of serving a master than trotting behind him on a leash. Working on Les Miserables I did not see myself as a translator, but as a co-writer… an equal among equals. (cited in Sheahen, 1998)

The Chinese translators for musicals seem to be operating with a similar mindset. YC signs himself as translator/adapter for his work on ILY and says that he has made many adaptations. Similarly, the translators for MM consider their work as yipei (‘译配’ – translating & matching), which means the translators’ lyrical recreation based on the gist translation of the source lyrics for ensuring the target lyrics fit in with the existing musical framework.
Example 1: ‘Whatever happened to baby’s parents?’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRANK You know, Fred, before I met Marie --</td>
<td>弗兰克 佛瑞德，我告诉你吧，在我遇到玛丽之前......</td>
<td>弗兰克, let me tell you, before I met Marie ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARIE I was half a person --</td>
<td>玛丽 ......我只是半个人......一个不完全的人，人字中的一撇......</td>
<td>玛丽 ...... I was only half a person ...... an incomplete person, a pie in the character ren ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANK And I was half a person --</td>
<td>弗兰克 ......我也只是半个人......一个不完全的人，人字中的一捺......</td>
<td>FRANK ...... I was only half a person ...... an incomplete person, a na in the character ren ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARIE But then we got married --</td>
<td>玛丽 ......但当我们结婚之后......</td>
<td>MARIE ...... but after we got married ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANK/MARIE And now we’re a whole.</td>
<td>弗兰克/玛丽 ......一撇加上一捺......我们就成了一个完整的人......</td>
<td>FRANK/MARIE ...... a pie plus a na ...... we have become a complete person ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANK But then we had Frank Jr., and I realized --</td>
<td>弗兰克 然后我们有了小弗兰克，我才意识到......</td>
<td>FRANK And then we had Frank Jr., and I realized ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARIE -- what? --</td>
<td>玛丽 什么？</td>
<td>MARIE What?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRANK -- I was actually only one-third of a person, and Marie was only one-third of a person, and Frank Jr. is one-third of a person, and now, we’re really a whole.</td>
<td>弗兰克 玛丽还是一撇，我还是一捺，可过去我们放在一起什么都不是，顶多也只是一个八字，这没什么意义。现在却不一样，小弗兰克让我们紧紧连在了一起。现在，我们三个加起来才是一个完整的不可分割的人！</td>
<td>FRANK Marie is still a pie, I am still a na, but when we were put together in the past, we were nothing, a character of ba at best, it doesn’t mean much. Now it is different, Frank Jr. has joined us closely together. Now, it is when we three are together that we are a complete and inseparable person!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the examples in ILY demonstrates the strategies employed for the cultural adaptation. During the scene about the young couple Frank and Marie, who have just entered parenthood, they explain passionately to their friend Fred about their journey through gradually understanding the meaning of ‘family’. They felt that before they
were married, each was only half a person. After their marriage, they became an entity. When their baby was born, each of them then became one-third of a person and together they really became a whole. In the target text, this process is explained by making use of the visual quality of Chinese characters. First, each of the two single persons is represented by the two single strokes pie and na respectively, to form the character ren (人 – people/person). However, these two strokes may not yet be joined together and thus they only form the character ba (八 – eight), which is similar to ren except for the joining. After their baby comes along, he acts as the connecting point for pie and na to join together and form the character of ren (人 – people/person). Through this clever adaptation, the storylines “constitute a cohesive and coherent text having some use or relevance for the receiver” (de Beaugrande & Dressler 1981: 7), which helps to achieve resonance with the target audience.

Example 2: Western references in ‘Our last summer’ (MM)

Again, in the song ‘Our last summer’ in MM, some references in the source text such as ‘crazy years’ and ‘flower power’ refer to Western pop cultural movements (including music) and the anti-violence peace movements of the 1960s and 1970s respectively, with which the Chinese audience may not be familiar. Clearly, there is no room to explain these references within the limited space of the lyrics translation. Furthermore, since these references function to signal the period of time when Donna and Harry were together, the priority here is not the accuracy of the references themselves. The target text replaces these references by ‘rock music beats’ and ‘indulgent songs’ as symbols of that time. The accuracy may be lost in terms of the faithfulness as a translation task, but it would be compensated by the easy flow of the song which helps enhance the audience’s comprehension.

Example 3: A Metaphoric adaptation for ‘Hey there, single gal/single guy’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>but we won’t make a fuss,</td>
<td>不是大惊小怪，</td>
<td>it is not that we are making a fuss,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>’cause you inspire us</td>
<td>我们不怪才怪,</td>
<td>it would be strange if we were not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like Marlo Thomas</td>
<td>就像萝卜青菜各有所爱</td>
<td>surprised, just like turnip and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Mary Tyler Moore</td>
<td></td>
<td>green vegetables – each person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>favours different dishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similar strategies are also used through a Chinese metaphor to replace the unfamiliar cultural reference. In this scene, the parents have prepared their wedding present for their son and his girlfriend, but are shocked to hear that they are splitting up because she would like to pursue her career. The parents, although disapproving, manage to compose themselves and accept the young couple’s decision with a song ‘Hey there, single gal/single guy’. There is a line which goes: “but we won’t make a fuss, ‘cause you inspire us like Marlo Thomas and Mary Tyler Moore”. The Chinese audience may not be familiar with these two well-known American actresses who, during the 1960s and 1970s were the symbols of successful career women. Therefore, in the target text, these references are replaced by an idiom: just like turnip and green vegetables - each person favours different dishes.

This shift also brings out the parents’ slightly ironic tone and makes it clear that they do not share this girl’s career-driven goal in life. It is more in line with the Chinese culture in which the parent-children relationship is not as independent as in the West. In other words, a Chinese parent in such a situation would more likely attempt to dissuade the young couple from splitting. For such attitudes, it is thus coherent to replace the unfamiliar reference in the source text by this Chinese idiom. Apart from the semantic changes, its rustic flavour also adds a comical sense to the situation, which is coherent with the overall style of this musical. Furthermore, together with the rest of the stanza, it creates a neat rhyming with the ending of ai for the song. Clearly, although the translation strategy here focuses on adapting the unfamiliar reference for the target audience, it would need to negotiate with other factors in order to make a coherent translation.

Example 4: From Lasagna to ‘Daoxiaomian’ (ILY)
Accessibility plays a very important role in musical translation for engaging the audience. When the audience is faced by unknown references, there is no way for them to get help in terms of both time and facility. Even if some may search online with their mobile phones, they would have to take the risk of missing out in the subsequent development of the storylines. Having been left in the dark and not being able to make sense of some references, some audience would be put off and then lose interest. Being able to share interest and knowledge is one of the basic grounds for resonance and enjoyment. Many of the references in ILY that achieve their resonance with the source
text audience are necessarily represented and adapted to the target cultural context, such as the unfamiliar proper names and the children’s toys.

One of the favourite examples that Bishoff, the American director, proudly quotes during our interview is the translation of “Lasagna”, a dish not commonly known in China. The Chinese  
\textit{Dao xiao mian} (刀削面) is used as a substitute: it fits the target text context very well, as it is a local (Shanxi) speciality noodle dish which conveys a similar sense of the “foreign” to that brought by in the source text. In terms of the performance,  
\textit{dao xiao mian} has the same syllable count as Lasagna and thus sounds equally rhythmic in the dialogue. Bishoff says: “That is just more accessible to a Chinese audience, whilst we are still preserving the ideas of Americans” (Personal interview, 2012-4-24).

\textit{Example 5: A Chinese metaphor for ‘And now the parents’ (ILY)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two short years! And they've been smart, they've taken their time to ensure that they truly love each other before they jump into anything as serious as -- oh, I dunno -- say, marriage!</td>
<td>只有两年么? 瞧瞧，他们真厉害，他们就知道感情的事情要慢慢来，就象纹火炖汤，不用着急，他们要花些时间来确认得到的真爱，然后再认真考虑......噢，就是......我不知道——比方说——结婚！</td>
<td>Only two years? They are really smart, they know exactly that a relationship should be developed slowly, just like slow-heated soup, no need to rush. They should take time to convince themselves of their true love, and then consider carefully … oh, I don’t know … say, marriage!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, a different strategy of cultural adaptation in the target text is employed. As on many occasions in ILY, additions based on a shared knowledge with the audience are inserted to contextualize the source text and strengthen its connections with the target audience. In this example, the parents are expecting their son and his girlfriend to get married, and the father comments on their two-year relationship. In the target text, in order to highlight the father’s understanding for the young couple’s thoughts, before carefully bringing out the topic of marriage, the Chinese metaphor of using a low heat to slowly cook soup is added. Such food-related metaphors, which are very common in Chinese, always carry a sense of fun and are well-received by the Chinese audience. In this case, the metaphor of slow-cooking soup conveys the meaning that something good is worth waiting for, even though in the context of this scene, a slightly sarcastic tone in
the father’s remarks can be detected, which implies that he may have thought that the young couple had already been careful enough and now it was time for them to get married. Using a cultural familiar reference, this metaphor helps bring the audience into the scene with fun and thus increase their enjoyment.

These cases illustrate that, when translating musicals, various strategies such as balancing between faithfulness and naturalness, and using cultural adaptation to provide references with which they are familiar, are employed to convey the sense of the original version in a way that the audience finds easier to follow and enjoy.

3.2 Consumer-oriented stylistic representation

Beyond issues of faithfulness, textual meaning and the cultural situations, as one of the most successful forms of popular art entertainment, a musical’s symbolic capital is flagged up by its novelty and prestige. Viewing from the perspective of consumer orientation, stylistic features are found particularly related to a number of the standards of textuality, e.g., intentionality and acceptability, as well as situationality. That is why the analysis of what Malmkjær calls ‘translational stylistics’ not only needs “to explain why, given the source text, the translation has been shaped in such a way that it comes to mean what it does” (2003: 39 original emphasis), but also needs to discuss “the style of the target text in its effects on the reader” (Boase-Beier, 2006: 5). Whilst there are all kinds of stylistic features, for the purposes of this study, the discussions will focus on two particular types, i.e., code-switching/code-mixing and humour, which are specifically geared towards improving audience reception. For instance, humour is one of the key selling points which are specifically there to press the right button in making a musical appeal to the target audience (more detailed discussions on audience feedback can be found in Chapter 5, 5.2.4.5 Stylistic features). Consumer orientation requires intentionality and acceptability. For the translator, it concerns how best to convey the original work. Conversely, the question is whether the translated musical is acceptable to the target audience. In that sense, intentionality and acceptability, as well as situationality, could be seen as a rationale for, amongst other things, stylistic features in the translation.
As discussed in the Literature Review, Peter Low observes that one of the difficulties for song translation is “the need to balance several major criteria which often conflict” (2005: 191). In his Pantathlon principles, he emphasizes:

The evaluation of such translations should be done not in terms of one or two criteria but as an aggregate of all five. … this notion of balancing five different criteria can assist translators both in their overall strategic thinking and also in their microlevel decisions – in the practical task of choosing which of several possible words or phrases is the best option overall. (ibid.)

This negotiation of possibly conflicting imperatives recalls my earlier discussion of ANT, which seeks to map the roles of the actants and their interactions with each other in a network environment. Here, the notion of the text as actant could be taken a stage further. For, it may be argued that the linguistic, stylistic, dramatic, and cultural factors embedded within the text are in some sense ‘sub-actants’ whose configuration and interaction must be negotiated through the human actant, in this case the translator. A translator therefore needs to seek the best balance, through prioritizing and/or compromising among these ‘sub-actants’, in order to achieve a successful reception.

During the negotiations, the dilemma between accuracy to the source text and functions of the target text is always present. This is because the culturally specific features in the source text and the effective reception in the target text could clash. In dealing with these situations, over two hundred years ago, as a translator and translation theorist himself, Schleiermacher identified the two-polar strategies:

Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader towards him; or he leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author towards him. (cited in Venuti 1995: 101)

Venuti (ibid.) also proposes his well-known binary notions of “foreignization” and “domestication”, although he has clearly voiced his support of the former for ethical reasons to resist Anglophone cultural domination. Robinson rightly questions “whether foreignizing translations are not inherently elitist” (1998: 108 – 113). In my cases, elitism seems to be the strategy purposefully employed, alongside “domestication”, in addressing a specific target audience group. This is because when the Western musicals were first imported to China over a decade ago, they were, and to some extent still are, regarded as an elite performing art and high culture. As YC observes: “The audience of
Western musicals are white collar workers who are young and with higher education, and who have both money and leisure time” (Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).

Thanks to the first large scale Chinese translation of MM, Western musicals are now starting to be marketed as popular art entertainment for mass audiences. Nevertheless, for the time being, novelty and ‘original sauce and flavour’ are still part of their attractions for the audience. In some cases, a form of extreme foreignization can be found. One of the choices in song translation suggested by Franzon is “leaving the song untranslated” for the purpose of “retaining the original lyrics enhances authenticity” (2008: 378).

In the cases of translating Western musicals into Putonghua, whilst cultural adaptations are widely employed by translators, leaving certain parts of the songs untranslated or, to borrow a term from sociolinguistics, ‘code-switching/code-mixing’, also seems to be a favoured strategy in some situations. These untranslated words or lines are mainly confined to key reprises rather than the whole song, and therefore do not affect the integrity of the lyrics and dialogues in which they are embedded. In fact, this strategy is relatively common in certain areas of popular culture such as pop songs, where occasional foreign words or a line are inserted. For example, English in a Putonghua text or Putonghua in a Cantonese text (such as a version of the well-known Cantonese song ‘今夜你会不会来’ by Leon Lai (1991), with the key reprise sung in Putonghua).

However, when the source text is preserved in the target text, the reasons are complex. In addition to the linguistic factors such as non-existence of suitable target text equivalents and issues of connotative meaning, the translators’ decisions seem to be also influenced by a variety of social and cultural factors. For example, by highlighting novelty, fashion, and symbolic capital of Western musicals, they are responding to the audience’s pursuit for the ‘Original sauce and flavour’, which is an issue that concerns how intentionality meets acceptability. In the following sections, negotiations between highlighting these stylistic features and their social, cultural and theatrical context will be discussed in more detail.

9 ‘Original sauce and flavor’ originated from cooking which, as the phrase implies, describes a dish which preserves its authentic ingredients and recipe. It has become a commonly used term to refer to a translation which has not been localized.
3.2.1 ‘Code-switching/code-mixing’

Code-switching or code-mixing refers, mainly in conversations, to “the alternating use of more than one language” (Auer, 1984:1). However, in this study, I have decided to borrow this term from sociolinguistics for analysing the approaches used by the translators for their libretto translation. The focus of the analysis is on the effects of this approach which represent a new contextualisation for different cultural settings.

Wardhaugh finds that during the process of code-switching/code-mixing, “the choice of code adds a distinct flavor to what is said about the topic. The choice encodes certain social values” (2006: 104). Nilep also notes that: “A useful definition of code switching for sociocultural linguistic analysis should recognize it as an alternation in the form of communication that signals a context in which the linguistic contribution can be understood” (Nilep, 2006: 17). The switching between the source text and the target text on both lexical and clausal level during the translation process are the results of the negotiations for the target users, i.e., the performers of the musicals, and more importantly, the reception.

3.2.1.1 Fashion and novelty

The original name of one of the musicals in this study, ‘I love you, you’re perfect, now change’, could easily have been literally rendered in Chinese. However, as the translator YC explains, apart from the issue of the title being overly long, translating it into Wo ai ni (我爱你) would not be as fashionable as I Love You (Personal interview, 2013-2-21). Therefore, a truncated version of the original title – the simple phrase “I love you” – is retained as the Chinese title. Through such ‘code-switching’, the musical’s foreign origin is highlighted, which at the time was a novel attraction for the Chinese audience.

According to YC, the musical’s off-Broadway background proved to be one of the major reasons for the success of its Chinese version (ibid.). A newspaper survey of 20 audience members for this musical conducted at the time found that 65% of the sample audience voted the Broadway brand as the most appealing aspect (Tian Lan, 2007). Maybe that’s why although the reprise in the finale song (see the example below) was initially translated into a combination of the source text ‘I love you’ with the target text ni wan mei, xian zai bian le (你完美, 现在变了), it was revised to non-translation, i.e., retaining the source text in full.
Example 1: ‘I love you’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>TT (sample CD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I love you, I love you, you’re perfect</td>
<td>I love you, you’re perfect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love you, you’re perfect, now change</td>
<td>I love you, 你完美, 现在变了</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the sense of fashion and novelty, this translation strategy may also be influenced by cultural norms. Traditionally Wo ai ni (I love you) is not as commonly used in Chinese culture as in the West. Whether between lovers or between parents and children, Chinese consider it a very intimate term that implies a deep commitment as, for example, in a marriage proposal between two lovers. Therefore, a foreign term may help to reduce the sense of intimacy\(^\text{10}\). Indeed, as one popular commentator suggests, “Wo ai ni is not an indigenous and idiomatic Chinese term” at all (Chi Yukai, 2008).

From the perspective of syntax, Wo ai ni is an unusual name for a Chinese title, which normally uses a noun, a verb, a phrase or a proper name, or a historical event. It is not only a fully structured sentence with subject, verb and object, but also directly involves the addressee and the addressee. Although such titles do exist, e.g., We Will Rock You, they are not so personal and are usually more circumstantial, such as in a celebration. There is a film named I Love You Phillip Morris, which would not be confusing as it refers to a particular name. A very well known Chinese patriotic song also uses this term as a key part although it refers specifically for the love of the country: Wo ai ni, zhong guo (I love you, China). However, when using Wo ai ni alone, the way of referring to it orally (when writing it can be marked clearly, such as in italic font) might be different from other types of titles. For example, one can easily mention the titles themselves such as The Sound of Music, or The Lion King. However, for Wo ai ni, some form of explanation may need to be added, such as: ‘the musical Wo ai ni’, in order to avoid the title sounding like a statement to the receiving party. Although certain names could also cause confusions, such as Chicago – whether referring to the musical or the city – they do not involve any personal connotation like Wo ai ni would.

\(^{10}\) Over a decade ago, an internet survey found that amongst 93,000 internet users, 75% of Americans would say ‘I love you’ at least once a day, compared with only 15% of Chinese saying these words in their daily lives (美国人天天 “我爱你” 中国人羞于启齿. 中新网北京. 2000-11-23. Retrieved on 5 August, 2012 from: http://news.sina.com.cn/s/149075.html).
Example 2: The mixing translation versions of ‘Honey’ (MM)

A similar situation occurs in MM with the song ‘Honey Honey’. As the story goes, Donna is a single mother and her daughter Sophie has been brought up without knowing who her father is. Sophie has always wished to find this out and to have him at her wedding. In a desperate search, Sophie finds her mother’s diary in which Donna recounts her love and admiration for Sam. ‘Dancing Queen’ is the song number for Sophie and her two best friends to sing whilst they are reading Donna’s words in the diary, in which ‘Honey’ is the term Donna addresses Sam. However, this is a novel term as there is no equivalent form of such address in Chinese. There are people now trying to copy Western films etc. using terms such as baobei (treasure – 宝贝) as a term of endearment for their spouses (more often wives) and children. As a whole, however, these kinds of terms are considered too intimate to say in public, not to mention singing, unless referring to children. Perhaps that’s why in the song ‘Take a chance on me’, as discussed earlier, this term has undergone code-mixing in the Chinese translation: whilst in one instance the source language form ‘honey’ is retained, the term baobei is used four times.

Since ‘Honey Honey’ is the key reprise in almost every stanza of this song, it is very important to have a term which is comfortable for both the performers to sing and for the target audience to listen to. The underlying intimacy in a foreign language term would have a less strong impact than in a native language term. This may be the reason why people tend to prefer foreign language terms when they feel that something is uneasy, or even awkward, to say in their native versions. Although, for instance, there would be translation loss and the Chinese audience would probably not get the connection of ‘Honey’ at that time to American popular music and its sugary romanticism, the decision to retain this exotic term suggests that it would be more acceptable than translating it, which may result in an uncomfortable ‘goose pimples’ effect for some audience. As novelty graduates slowly via familiarity, this novel term may become socially fashionable and easier to use for some Chinese. A similar case also occurred in translating the word ‘touch’, as shown in the next example.

---

11 In 2007, an online survey conducted jointly by the China-based Internet technology company NetEase, and the Huakun Women Survey Center under the All-China Women’s Federation, show that amongst 40,752 respondents, 61.4% female netizens preferred to address their spouses lao gong (the Cantonese dialect for husband); and 44.3% preferred their spouses to address them lao po (the Cantonese dialect for wife), see: http://lady.163.com/special/00261MPK/shiritan07.html
Example 3: The zero-translation of ‘Touch’

Code-switching may also be due to what Rastall refers to as “the culturally determined nature of linguistic conventions” (2000: 87). In such situations, when there are no equivalent expressions available in the target culture, it would be more acceptable to be novel than to have awkward equivalence. The English word ‘touch’ is one such case. Translating the word ‘touch’ has always been a challenge for Chinese translators. When people use this word flexibly in everyday English, such as, ‘get in touch’, ‘a touching story’, ‘the finishing touch’, a variety of Chinese equivalents are required, such as lianxi (联系 – contact), ganren (感人 – moving), jiangong (加工 – process). In Chinese, ‘touch’ is rarely used as an invitation in the sense of bodily contact. An expression such as ‘touch me’ is almost certainly never heard under any circumstances, whether in public or in private contexts.

The cultural roots of such taboos are traceable to at least as early as Mencius (372-289 BC) who states, in Legge’s translation: “For males and females not to allow their hands to touch in giving and receiving is the general rule” (男女授受不亲， 礼也) (see Mengzi. Liloushang 孟子·离娄上. Legge 1895/1970: 307, original emphasis). Clearly, any bodily touch is discouraged, even when exchanging objects with the opposite sex. Although this ancient maxim is over two thousand years old, its influence still exists to a certain extent. Here, the linguistic conventions with their underlying heritage result in the linguistic equivalents becoming compromised in order to meet the target audience’s acceptability, which is similar to the case of I Love You for its novelty, as discussed earlier.

Whilst Western demonstrations of intimacy (such as hugging) are more frequent nowadays among Chinese, they still would not say words such as ‘touch me’. That’s why whenever faced with this phrase, the Chinese translators always attempt to circumvent it. For example, when translating ‘Memory’ from Cats, Grizabella’s ‘touch me’ was translated as 靠近我 (come close to me). Similarly, when ‘touch’ appears in ‘Honey Honey’ in MM, ‘touch me baby’ was translated to rang wo kao jin (让我靠近 – let me get close). In this way, the translation avoids an uncomfortable expression and, at the same time, is coherent in both meaning and rhyming with the next line ba wo bao jin (把我抱紧 – hold me tight) for ‘hold me baby’.
The word ‘touch’ also appears in *Spin* twice. In the song ‘Touched by an angel’, although ‘touch’ is translated faithfully into *chudong* (触动), it does not cause confusion as it was only used in the song title and therefore does not need to be sung. ‘Touch’ appears again in ‘From the first touch’, which is sung by Chantal in memory of her lover Jimmy who was murdered. This phrase is used for both the song’s title and the key reprises in the song. It was faithfully translated into *shouci xiangchu* (touch each other for the first time – 首次相触), but it was only used as the song’s title and not sung in the song itself. This may be because, although both the meaning and the syllable count are maintained for accuracy and singability, it is at the expense of the clarity of its meaning for the audience. First, *shouci* is too formal a register in this context, e.g., it would be appropriate in an announcement on successfully sending a man to the moon for the first time. Secondly, it becomes even more confused with the phrase *xiangchu* (相触), a homophone of the more commonly used *xiangchu* (相处) which means ‘getting along with someone’. Although when written, these two phrases are obviously different, when heard, the use of *xiangchu* would either mislead or confuse the audience.

As a result, ‘From the first touch’ is the only line of code-switching – zero-translation – in the target text throughout the entire musical. As the translator explains: “We were unable to find a Chinese equivalent for both matching the meaning and fitting in with the music. Also, the performer feels comfortable when singing it in the original language (QA, personal interview, 2010-5-9). After viewing the musical, a musical fan and translator made comments about this sentence and suggested the phrase *di yi ci xin dong* (第一次心动 – the first heart throb) (QD, personal interview, 2012-1-7), which would certainly be a much better phrase, except that there is one extra syllable.

*Example 4: Copying ‘Chiquitita’ (MM)*

In the case of ‘Chiquitita’, code-mixing is already an established stylistic feature in the source text. Through incorporating this Spanish word into the English lyrics, a unique ‘foreign’ flavour is created. However, it may not be possible to generate the similar sense of fashion in the translation for a Chinese audience as it does for an English audience. This is because, compared with English, there are far fewer Chinese who speak Spanish. Therefore, even if one can make a straight copy of it, if it is not recognized, the stylistic privilege would not be appreciated.
‘Chiquitita’ was initially translated into *xiao xiao nü hai* (小小女孩) which literally means “little little female child”. This translation is both accurate semantically and singable with the matching syllable count in the source text. However, in MM, this song is sung by Donna’s two best friends, when they are trying to cheer her up from the shock of seeing her three lovers suddenly turn up the day before her daughter’s wedding. It would be slightly illogical for the audience to see a 40 year-old being called ‘little girl’, even if it is in a metaphorical sense. Considering the overall effects, the stylistic feature in the source text is retained, as ‘Chiquitita’ not only sounds crisply rhythmic, but also helps dilute the contrast between the lyrics and the visual image by the Chinese translation.

Whilst code-switching/code-mixing is used by translators since they are bilingual speakers, for the majority of the target audience, it is more a form of borrowing, since they are more likely to be monolingual speakers. However, one of the questions in my audience survey indicates a preference towards code-switching/code-mixing. Among 20 respondents who answered the question on whether they like to have the English words kept in the Chinese libretto translation, 7 said yes; 7 said both ways were fine; 4 disliked; and 2 were not sure. For some audience, the implications of code-switching/code-mixing would be more connected with social cultural aspects (e.g., for their stylistic sense of fashion and novelty) than merely a linguistic matter.

In this respect, the target audience, their interests and their cultural tradition are also part of the network and therefore play their roles during the interactions. When de Beaugrande and Dressler discuss textuality, they use the term ‘acceptability’ to address the text receiver’s attitude and its influence on the linguistic activities:

> A language configuration must be **intended** to be a text and **accepted** as such in order to be utilized in communicative interaction. These attitudes involve some tolerance toward disturbances of cohesion or coherence, as long as the purposeful nature of the communication is upheld. (ibid. 1981: 113, original emphasis)

In this way, the texts may achieve from the receiver their “important contributions in order to make sense” (ibid. 8).

### 3.2.1.2 Symbolic Capital
If fashion and novelty can be selling points, Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital seems to play an even more important role in certain cases for preserving parts of the original lyrics. Bourdieu defines symbolic capital (amongst the four different types: Economic Capital, Cultural Capital, Social Capital, and symbolic capital) as “the acquisition of a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourability that are easily converted into political positions as a local or national notable” (1989: 291, original emphasis). It concerns more the way they are perceived by other people. Here, I will only discuss symbolic capital as it is the most relevant factor to this case study. In this regard, symbolic capital may endow the human-actants, e.g., the stakeholders, with power and authority. It may also insert power to the non-human actant, e.g., a text, or a musical, which plays a role in affecting the interactions among the human-actants’.

In the Putonghua translation of MM, almost a third (seven out of twenty-three) of the songs have elements, e.g., a word, a phrase, or a line, preserved with their original forms. ‘Dancing Queen’ and ‘Super Trouper’ are amongst these songs, together with those which originally contain foreign language terms such as ‘Voulez-vous’ and ‘S.O.S’. These linguistic deviations reflect the influence of symbolic capital which the ABBA songs command on the translation strategies employed.

Since winning the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest with the song ‘Waterloo’, ABBA songs have enjoyed international fame. The creation of the highly successful musical MM in both the West End and on Broadway, followed by its blockbuster film version, was all based on these songs. The success was also reflected on CDs and DVDs. With such a track record, the symbolic capital of MM is not only the selling point for the Chinese producers, but also the main attraction for the Chinese audience. The online surveys conducted in this study (detailed discussions are in Chapter 5) show that the vast majority of the respondents prefer the ‘original sauce and flavour’ when watching Western musicals. The following two examples will offer a glimpse of how symbolic capital affects the translation decision making.

*Example 1: Translating ‘Dancing queen’ (MM)*

Dancing Queen was the first song to have its Chinese translation released for the public’s feedback. From the outset, authenticity and symbolic capital seem to play
important roles in the translator’s approach. Chen Lerong, a well-known Taiwanese lyricist and one of the translators, said at the press conference that the cardinal principle for translating the ABBA songs is to ensure the consistency with the original MM. Therefore, keywords such as ‘Dancing Queen’ and ‘Money Money Money’ are preserved and sung in English in order to retain the ‘original sauce and flavor’ of these classic songs (Ying Ni, 2011). Chen also emphasizes: “I will not try to make a ‘face-lift’ to these songs as only the ‘original sauce and flavour’ will prevent damaging the spirit and the status of the original work. My work is to help more Chinese speaking audiences, and potential fans, to be closer to Mamma Mia!” (ibid.). As a result, in the Chinese translation, ‘dancing queen’ is retained in the source text form except for the deviation of “diggin’ the dancing queen”.

Another translation version of ‘Dancing queen’ by a blogger may illustrate an alternative translation strategy and its effects. After the producer released the Chinese lyrics of MM and invited feedback from the public, Fei Yuanhong, who has translated the surtitle versions of several Western musicals including Cats, posted on his blog his translation of ‘Dancing Queen’. This title, which is also the keyword, is translated into wu nü wang (舞女王) which not only conveys the source text literally but also has exactly the same syllable count so that it is singable. Perfect – except for one point. In Chinese, this three-character phrase can be read in two ways:

1) 舞 + 女 王 = dance + female king
2) 舞 女 + 王 = dance woman + king

The first case conveys the source text as ‘dancing queen’ accurately. However, if one reads it in the second way, it would give a different implication. In Putonghua, wu nü contains certain derogatory connotations, as it used to mean women who work as companions for ballroom dancers, often leading to sexual services. Therefore, wu nü is not used to refer to performing female dancers who are called wu dao yan yuan (舞蹈演员 – dance actor/actress) or if highly regarded, wu dao yi shu jia (舞蹈艺术家 – dance art experts). This is because ‘dance’ in Chinese can be a one-character word, wu, or a
two-character word, *wu dao*. Both words have exactly the same meaning but with different compound modes. For instance, *wu ju* means dance drama (*舞剧*); *wu dao she jì* means choreography (*舞蹈设计*), but they cannot be swapped to *wu dao ju* and *wu she jì*. For this same reason, although ‘queen’ can also be translated into *nǚ huáng* (which literally means female emperor), *wu nǚ huáng* would encounter the same derogatory connotations as *wu nǚ wáng* does. Again, in Chinese *huáng hòu* is another alternative for ‘queen’, but it means specifically the wife of the king or emperor and it is thus not appropriate in this context. To avoid the unintended connotation for *wu nǚ*, ‘dancing queen’ could be translated into *wu dao nǚ wáng* (*舞蹈女王*) or *wu dao nǚ huáng* (*舞蹈女皇*), but the singability would be difficult as they both contain four syllables instead of three. Perhaps for these reasons, except in the title, *wu nǚ wáng* does not appear even once during the song itself. The reprises of ‘dancing queen’ in the source text are represented through different ways in the target text as illustrated by the following example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diggin’ the dancing queen</td>
<td>a) 快来尽情摇摆</td>
<td>a) Quickly come and enjoy the swing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) 属于你主宰</td>
<td>b) Belongs in your dominion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are the dancing queen</td>
<td>这是你的舞台</td>
<td>This is your stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing queen</td>
<td>这青春</td>
<td>This youthfulness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, both the accuracy to the source text and the consistency in the target text itself are lost in the translation. This indicates that there may be other priorities for the overall balance of the target text. These choices of the replacements may be from the consideration for the ending rhyme of ‘ai’ which is the overall rhyme scheme for the target song lyrics. Otherwise, to be faithful to the source text means it should have *wu nǚ wáng* as the key word for the reprises and set the rhyme scheme with its ending rhyme of ‘ang’ throughout the entire song. Also, it is crucial for song translation to be singable, as we shall discuss in Chapter 4 which requires the matching syllable count with the source text in order to fit in with the existing musical framework. Perhaps, it is difficult to retain both aspects and therefore compromises had to be made. As a result, the strong impact created in the source text by the reprises of ‘dancing queen’ is lost in the translation.

82
This example illustrates that, from a contrastive perspective, symbolic capital plays an important role for the translator and for the production team in opting for strategies to preserve the original form of the source text in the target text. In some circumstances, these strategies also help achieve more balanced effects for the overall meaning and its linguistic and cultural connotations, as well as its singability.

Example 2: ‘High’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST (song name)</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Night is young and the music’s high ('Dancing Queen')</td>
<td>夜漫长音乐也正 high</td>
<td>Night is long and the music is high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night is young and the music’s high ('Dancing Queen')</td>
<td>美酒飘香音乐 HIGH~</td>
<td>Fragrant wine is wafting and music is high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you do your……thing ('Honey Honey')</td>
<td>当你让我 high……</td>
<td>When you make me high……</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There’s that look, In your eyes ('Does your mother know')</td>
<td>要放纵 要最 High</td>
<td>Want to be indulgent, want the most high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The influence of symbolic capital can also be found in the translation at a lexical level. As shown in the above example for MM, ‘high’ has not only been preserved in the target texts in its original English form by two different translators, it has also been added in the other two songs to the target text even though it does not exist in the source text\(^\text{12}\). These translation strategies may have two underlying reasons. First, for the audience, using the source form is regarded as one of the ways for preserving the ‘original sauce and flavour’, which is among the strongest attractions of these imports (it is the most repeated phrase by the respondents in the online surveys for musical audiences). Second, the symbolic capital which ‘high’ has acquired through its popularity on the Chinese mainland may also contribute to this outcome. In recent years, with more and more cultural exchanges between China and the West, it has become fashionable for many people to follow a code-switching style, i.e., mixing certain English words into their conversations. For instance, ‘high’ and ‘party’ are amongst the most frequently heard English words, including amongst those who do not speak English at all, and users of these foreign terms enjoy a superior status among their peers. Many popular English words such as ‘cool’, ‘fans’ and ‘show’ have already been

\(^{12}\) The Chinese equivalent of ‘high’ is gao, which can be used on its own to mean tall or high, etc. Gao also often combines with other characters to form phrases, such as gaoxing (高兴 – happy), gaoxin (高薪 – high salary) etc.
transliterated into 酷 (ku), 粉丝 (fensi) and 秀 (xiu) respectively. Some of these words have even been included in Chinese dictionaries (Pan Yanxi et al. 2012). The translation strategies employed so as to amplify the original forms reflect these ongoing trends.

These examples illustrate how symbolic capital influences the musical lyrics translation. During the translation process, symbolic capital not only comes with the source text, but it is also reflected through the consumers’ reactions. Hence, the translator not only conveys the source text, but also responds to the ongoing social and cultural occurrences as well as the consumers’ reactions to such symbolic capital. The acceptability of the target audience and the cultural context clearly influence the translators’ decision making for their choices of translation strategies. Underpinned by the consumer orientation (i.e., the audience’s interest and the cultural context), the translation strategies of code-switching/code-mixing in order to highlight the novelty and symbolic capital of the source text make three gains. First, from the point view of marketing, retaining certain parts of the original lyrics would attract those who are more exposed to Western culture and are fascinated by musicals’ world-wide impact. Secondly, it is easy to sing because the lyrics and the music are made to fit each other. Thirdly, it helps situate the target audience’s mind into the context of the imported musicals, so that the source language lyrics are coherent with the ‘original sauce and flavour’.

3.2.2 Humour/Comical effect
Engel points out: “I know of no workable musical that does not contain comedic elements” (1972: 140). As a form of popular arts entertainments, many musicals are either comedy in nature or contain, to various extents, comical features. For instance, there are even comical moments with the scene of the pub owners in the tragedy Les Misérables.

When translating musical comedy, Franzon finds that “many differences in choices of factual detail and context-related explication arise” (2005: 263), and therefore,

Some of the functional units available for the song translator to preserve or adapt are deictic reference, plot information, cultural reference, and musical and intermedial coherence. (ibid.)
As a musical comedy, ILY is known for its laughter-provoking stories about relationships during different stages of adult life. Humour and its comical effects are part of the major selling points. Various translation strategies are employed in adapting these comical moments in order to connect with the Chinese cultural context and to achieve equivalent effects with the target audience. Following are three examples illustrating such occurrences.

Example 1: Stanzas from ‘Always a bridesmaid, never a bride’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Catlin, I wore satin</td>
<td>为 Cat-lin, 穿上锦绸</td>
<td>For Cat-lin, wearing satin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which I looked really fat in</td>
<td>看上去，肥得流油</td>
<td>It looks so fat that the oil is oozing/flowing out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Then again, you should’ve seen her man</td>
<td>忘了吧，还是看看她男人</td>
<td>Forget it, just look at her man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ken</td>
<td>肥头大耳圆不溜湫</td>
<td>Large head big ear so round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All those calories he logged up</td>
<td>东倒西歪胖不拉叽</td>
<td>Wobbly so fat and flabby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Till his arteries clogged up</td>
<td>脑满肠肥轰不隆咚一猪头</td>
<td>Large head big tummy as a pig’s head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He died on the couch watching ESPN</td>
<td>光头大耳圆不溜湫</td>
<td>……</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>……</td>
<td>这回，穿上丝绒</td>
<td>This time, wearing velour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>once my gown was velourish</td>
<td>看上去，象只狗熊</td>
<td>It looks like a black bear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made me look kinda whoresish</td>
<td>……</td>
<td>……</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this song, the bridesmaid recounts to the audience about some of her friends’ weddings. She feels envious of these friends and frustrated at always being left as a bridesmaid herself. At the same time, she is also relieved at her lucky escape from some of her friends’ failed marriages. These mixed feelings add a satirical tone to her narration.

For instance, she describes a wedding at which she looks so fat in a satin dress, but the image of the groom is even less flattering: “All those calories he logged up, till his arteries clogged up, he died on the couch watching TV”. In the target text, both the form and the sense have undergone certain shifts in order to fit into the target context. In terms of the form, in the source text, the lexical choice of ‘calories’ with ‘arteries’ and ‘logged’ with ‘clogged’ creates a cohesion for the rhyme and rhythm. The humorous effects are achieved through the contrast of this fat man’s demise on the sofa while
watching a sports channel on television. In the target text, whilst maintaining a
cohesively parallel syntax, there manifests what Roman Jakobson (1959: 238) refers to
as “creative transposition” when discussing poetry translation. Each of these three lines
contains an idiom describing the obese figure, followed by an adjective phrase to
complement its shape, e.g., large head and big ear, so round; and wobbly, so fat. As they
are very colloquial and visual, the comical effects are immediate and light-hearted for
the Chinese audience.

The comical effects are further strengthened in the target text through making use of the
colloquial metaphors to convey the central meaning of the source text. When translating
how the bridesmaid looks fat, in one stanza, the target text inserts a commonly used
comical metaphor 肥得流油 (so fat that the oil is flowing out). In another stanza, a
metaphor 腰如水桶 (waist is as thick as a bucket) is used to convey the phrase ‘thick-
thighed’ in the source text. The insertions of these idiomatic and amusing metaphors
effectively convey the more visual and lighthearted comical effects, which help to
enhance the resonance with the reception.

Similarly, in the source text, a metaphor is used to describe the ‘velour-ish’ dress which
makes the bridesmaid look ‘whore-ish’. As it is unlikely a Chinese woman would use
the word ‘whore’ for themselves, even as a metaphor, it was replaced by gouxiang (狗
熊 – black bear) in the target text. It is culturally much more acceptable as people tend
to relate to bears as cuddly and charming. This not only creates a vivid image for the
bridesmaid’s fat figure, but also matches the ending rhyme of [ong] with strong (丝绒 –
velour).

In the last line, since the English idiom ‘couch potato’ and the name ESPN
(Entertainment Sports Programming Network) may not be familiar with the majority of
the Chinese audience, they were replaced cohesively and coherently with the previous
two lines in this stanza, by a Chinese idiom for describing someone who is very fat with
a large head like a pig and fat stomach, together with a made up comical onomatopoeia.
In such a way, the target text focuses on making lighthearted fun of the groom’s obese
figure, but avoids the sad part of death which is rarely used in Chinese culture for
comical purposes. Although the original metaphor and the clever contrast is not
accurately converted into the target text, the overall balance of the differing aspects for
the form and sense enable the intended humorous and comical effects to meet “the
context of communication with respect to intentionality and acceptability” (de

When asked about the considerations for the audience’s interest and enjoyment, based
on his experience as the deputy manager of the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre, YC
(also the translator for ILY) says: “Different work needs different positioning. The
Shanghai audience prefers light and fashionable theatre work” (Personal interview,
2009-6-3). These examples suggest that in order to attract the target audience, while
balancing the aspects of the form and the sense (including the syllable count, the
cohesion and coherence of the rhyme and rhythm, and the semantic meanings and their
pragmatic purposes), the culturally familiar humorous elements are given prominent
emphasis. Thus, the intended effects of the source text could be easily appreciated and
enjoyed by the target audiences (consumers).

Just as the above examples relate to musical lyrics, humorous effects are also widely
applied in the spoken script sections of musicals. Unsurprisingly, given the lack of
prosodic and other constraints of the kinds discussed so far in this chapter, such spoken
humour presents less difficulty for the translator, as well as a chance to further exploit
the comic potential of the situation. As Joel Bishoff, the American director for both the
original and the Chinese version of ILY, notes “when you are doing scripts, you are free
to have as many syllables as you like” (Personal interview, 2012-4-24). Thus, where
timing allows, humour and comical effects are freely sought in the script portions of the
musical and are sometimes even created for the target text. One instance of this, which
involves the amplification of humorous effects through an extension of the existing
source text scenario, is found in Example 1.

**Example 2: Dialogue from ‘Waiting’ (ILY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, it is very interesting the way</td>
<td>是的，很好玩，一大堆人，为了来跑去</td>
<td>Yes, it is very interesting, a pack of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>they -- you know -- run and up and</td>
<td>为了一只球在场上跑来跑去，你追我，我追</td>
<td>people, running to and fro on the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>down the field chasing each other.</td>
<td>你，一刻也不停……真的，很过瘾……（自言自</td>
<td>ground only after a ball, you chase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>言自语）</td>
<td>me, I chase you, never stopping … it is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>really fascinating … (She murmurs):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yes, that can be fascinating.

语)无聊，我真想买几十[个]球送给他们，一人一个，看你们还抢！

Boring. I wish to buy dozens of balls to give them, one each, and see whether you would still grab.

In another scene under the theme of ‘waiting’, a wife is patiently waiting for her husband to finish watching a football game. In order to create a resonance with the Chinese audience, Yao Ming, the Chinese NBA sensation, is introduced and it is therefore shifted to a basketball game in the target text. The wife is told that there are only 32 seconds left for the time-out, but it seems like forever – she has spent her entire weekend waiting for him. In the source text, her complaint is expressed indirectly with an ironic tone: “It is very interesting the way they – you know – run and up and down the field chasing each other”. In the target text, her words are extended: “It is very interesting, a pack of people, running to and fro on the ground just for a ball, you chase me, I chase you, never stopping … it is really fascinating …”. Then she murmurs: “Boring, I really want to buy dozens of balls to give them, one each, and see whether you would still be fighting over it”. Through making fun of and ridiculing the game, this addition implies that her patience is running thin. For those who are disinterested in the game, making the character’s mind and thoughts more explicit and funny undoubtedly contribute to more comical effects.

*Example 3: Dialogue form ‘The Lasagna Incident’ (ILY)*

Similar insertions can also be found in ‘The Lasagna Incident’. This starts with Diane taking the lead when winning at tennis over her play pal Chuck. In the source text, her words are quite brief, but additions occur in the target text:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I shouldn’t have shut you out, in both sets, and then jumped over the net waving my arms in victory.</td>
<td>两盘我都赢了，我不应该这样不留情面，赢了就赢了呗，我真不应该跳过网去欢呼胜利，太忘乎所以，太得意忘形了……</td>
<td>I’ve won both sets, I shouldn’t have been so inconsiderate, having already won, I really shouldn’t have jumped over the net and cheered my own victory, I was too much on cloud nine, I got too carried away…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, since this is a dialogue, there is no restriction on the syllable count and rhyming for the target text. Naturally, Diane is very pleased with winning the game over Chuck. On the surface, her words “shouldn’t”, in Austin’s terms (1975: 94) for speech act, performs a “locutionary act” which is meant to be apologetic. However, in this
particular circumstance, these words also function as an “illocutionary act” for Diane. Although both of these synonymous idioms *wang hu suo yi* and *de yi wang xing* (being on cloud nine, being carried away) sound self-critical, it may well have been intended otherwise. The way she repeatedly emphasizes her winning and victory at the game, shows that she cannot conceal her pride in her successful competitiveness. Furthermore, these words also function as a “perlocutionary act”. In so speaking, Diane seems to want to prompt some conversation with Chuck, who could give her some praise, such as: “Of course you should, as you really played so well!” Unfortunately, being rather shy in expressing himself, Chuck only repeats the same response three times to her apologies: “No, c’mon, it’s okay”. Eventually, he did satisfy her with a dry humour: “You’re right, that you shouldn’t have done, yeah”. In this way, the differences between their contrasting introvert and extrovert characters are comically introduced before the development of their relationship in ‘The Lasagna Incident’ which follows.

The above examples show that when translating musicals, humorous and comical references need to be instantaneously related to the cultural context in order to achieve their intended effects. These genre features clearly manifest a consumer-oriented translation approach, which “allows goals for particular translation assignments to be flexible” (Franzon, 2005: 293). To put it in Bourdieusian terms, musicals are very much at the *heteronymous* end of the spectrum, i.e. subject to consideration of other influences, unlike high art forms, which would be more *autonomous* – more “art for art’s sake” (1996: 75).

Rather than following a set of translation norms, the translators seem to react more flexibly to the functions of the text while accommodating the interests of the stakeholders involved, such as the producers, the performers and, more importantly, the audience. When asked how the different cultural references are handled in his translation of ILY, YC says:

*It depends on the specific context of the characters and the occurrence and development of the story. Whether or not you localize, you certainly need to consider the audience. Some of the discrepancies can be converted to what the audience can understand without losing the original effects.* (Personal interview, email 2009-6-3)
This practice shows that the translation strategies of ‘foreignisation’ and ‘domestication’, as well as approaches of code-switching/code-mixing, employed for these cases are multi-perspectival and negotiable. From ANT’s perspective of multiple interacting actants, the semantic translatability, the pragmatic transmission, the stylistic features and the target cultural context, can be viewed as among the factors to be negotiated in order to achieve a satisfactory reception.

3.3 Dramatic cohesion and coherence

When representing a musical from one culture to another, the dramatic cohesion and coherence is another crucial aspect for the audience’s enjoyment. However outstanding the music, the singing, dancing and acting, as well as the stage setting, etc., if the audience cannot follow the logic of the storylines and/or the development of the characterization, they could feel confused and frustrated. For example, an audience member who answered my survey 1, question 3 said that “the story would not be so attractive if one cannot understand the plot”. Perhaps that is why the respondents rank the storylines as the third in importance after music and singing in each of my surveys (for details see Chapter 5, 5.2.4.2 The importance of storylines).

3.3.1 Storyline

Although musical theatre originated from musical comedy in the 19th century, it has now gradually developed into a form of popular art entertainment with “a story that was well made, capable of serious dramatic goals, and liable to stimulate the audience with genuine emotions other than laughter” (Riis and Sears, 2008: 137). Larry Brown shares the same views:

> In 1943 Rodgers and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* established a successful pattern for the integration of music and lyrics in a musical, setting a phenomenal precedent. Previously lyricists and composers wrote songs, but now they became dramatists, using songs to develop character and advance the plot. (2007)

When the audience comes to see a musical, they expect to see a dramatic story rather than a singing and dancing show. They need to understand and follow the storylines in order to enjoy the play. Therefore, the coherence of the stories and the characterization of the characters are crucial for the translators.
MM is a jukebox musical in which the story is created around the world-renowned ABBA songs which originated in the 1970s. Catherine Johnson, the playwright for the musical, says “the story came completely out of the lyrics”. While selecting the 23 songs out of over 100 ABBA songs, she had to consider “who are the characters who would say these lyrics if it was dialogue and where do they fit into the story?” (Foster, 2008). Although her idea is that the character and the story have to be strong enough to make people believe them, she admits that sometimes the songs got in the way of what she would have wished. However, she could not ignore them and had to find a way to get around them (Fisher, 2008).

The following three examples show how the translated texts are adjusted to enable the target audience, from a different social and culture context, to follow the storyline, which is one of the most important aspects for their enjoyment.

*Example 1: Adjustments for ‘Name of the game’ (MM)*

‘Name of the game’ is one of these cases. This song originally describes a girl’s feelings towards a man a week after they first met. She tells him how his smile and voice mean a lot to her and wants to know whether he has the same feelings towards her. The word ‘game’ in the song’s title ‘Name of the Game’ indicates that the girl is not clear about the man’s attitudes towards their relationship. However, in MM, the narration is shifted as Sophie, the bride-to-be, sings to Bill, one of those whom she has invited to come for her wedding and who may be her father. In order to bring the song to the story, a couple of lines are added for Bill’s response, such as “I’ll talk to your mother tonight”, but Sophie’s part in the lyrics remains unchanged. Since many Western audiences are very familiar with ABBA songs they may be too busy humming the tunes along in their minds to notice these recontextualized details, or may even be willing to ignore them. In a different cultural setting, however, some of these changes may cause confusion since the majority of the Chinese audience may not be familiar with the ABBA songs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the game</th>
<th>玩儿什么游戏</th>
<th>What game are we playing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’ve seen you twice, in a short time</td>
<td>短短时间见了两面</td>
<td>In a short time we met twice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only a day since we started</td>
<td>不过昨天 开始计算</td>
<td>But start to count since yesterday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It seems to me, for every time</td>
<td>对我来说 一次一次</td>
<td>For me again and again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m getting more open-</td>
<td>我的心房 更加敞开</td>
<td>My heart is opening up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
hearted
…
So I wanna know
What’s the name of the
game?
Does it mean anything to
you?

more
…
Quickly tell me
What game are (you)
playing
Whether you also really care

‘Name of the game’ version 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the game</th>
<th>故事走向何方</th>
<th>Where is the story leading to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I’ve seen you twice, in a short time
Only a day since we started
It seems to me, for every time
I’m getting more open-hearted
…
So I wanna know
What’s the name of the game?
Does it mean anything to you? | 一天之前 我们相逢
两次会面 如此匆匆
那种熟悉 那份感动
你我是否心灵相通
…
请你告诉我
故事走向何方
你的角色又是怎样 | One day ago, we met,
Two meetings, so rushed,
That familiarity, that moving,
Do we share something in common, heart and soul?
…
Please tell me
Where is the story leading to
What is your role |

‘Name of the game’ version 2

These examples show the first stanza of this song and their two Chinese translations – version 1 and version 2. For the line “what’s the name of the game”, translation 1 is: ‘what game are (you) playing’. Together with the following line “Whether you also really care”, this target text is difficult to comprehend. Although one of the meanings of “the name of the game” is defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as: “the main purpose or most important aspect of a situation”, in this storyline, it was Sophie who plotted the whole thing and invited Bill and the other two men to her wedding. Therefore, why would Bill have any game to play? Version 2 adapts it into: ‘Where is the story leading to’. Using ‘story’ to replace ‘game’, the target text sounds as if Sophie starts feeling a bond with this possible father and consulting him on how her plot will develop and what would he do to help with it. Thus, the demanding tone and its implication of Bill not being straightforward are effectively reduced, which make the lyrics fit in more appropriately with the musical’s storyline. The word ‘story’ is also a pun to the storyline in which Sophie wishes to find out the truth of her ‘story’ – her
birth and the father whom she longs for, and who will be giving her away to her bridegroom at her wedding.

Again, in the second line of the first stanza, the word ‘started’ implies in the original song the point when the two parties have begun to develop feelings for each other, although they may not be to the same degree. However, in the musical, using such a word between a young girl and her possible father may well cause confusion. Therefore, both translations make efforts to avoid it. Version 1 does use the word ‘start’, but instead of a verb, it is used as an adverb to modify the verb ‘count’, and thereby shifts the focus from the start of a relationship to counting the time since they met. Version 2 employs much freer strategies for restructuring the lexis with additions and omissions and avoids any reference to ‘start’ completely. The gentle enquiries naturally develop into the shifts of the song’s refrain from ‘So I wanna know, What’s the name of the game?’ to maintaining its consulting tone with ‘please tell me, where is the story leading to’. Subsequently, other adjustments are also made to cohere with the shifts, e.g., from the challenging line ‘Does it mean anything to you?’ to a less demanding question: ‘what is your role’. The translators explained that they tried to accommodate the dual-aspect of this song and deliberately made the lyrics vague in order to fit it into the storyline of a father-daughter scenario whilst still being a standalone love song in its own right (Personal interview with CE and JF, 2011-9-21).

In the relationship between song and story in musicals, Oscar Hammerstein II firmly believed that “the song is the servant of the play” (Simon and Schuster, 1949, cited in Engel, 1972: 108). Since facilitating the story development is one of the most important functions of the song numbers, the storyline often takes priority over the accuracy of the lyrics. As we discussed earlier, the source text was contextualized for its Western audience by the original ABBA songs. For the target cultural context, on the other hand, shifts have to be made to situate the lyrics more coherently into the storylines in order to help the target audience fully understand the story, and hence enjoy the musical. These strategies can then effectively “render a text relevant to a current or recoverable situation of occurrence” through “situation management” “to guide the situation in a manner favourable to the text producer’s goals” (de Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981: 138).

*Example 2: Adjustments for Spin*
As a metaphorical word, ‘spin’ refers to the manipulative propaganda used in persuading public opinions. Named as such, this musical describes a story of power struggle through ‘spinning’ the machine of media publicity. Finding an exact match in the target text which can both fit into the existing musical framework and also fully represent the Western cultural references it contains proves to be a difficult task. The detailed discussions concerning the translation of this word for singability purposes will be covered in Chapter 4.

As a musical, Spin is unknown to the Chinese audience. First, it has no connection with any well-known literary work such as Pygmalion or Les Misérables. Secondly, it comes from neither the legendary Broadway in New York, nor the artistically sophisticated West End in London. Thirdly, it has no symbolic capital attached such as a Tony Award or an Academy Award. Therefore, this title would be the first encounter of its storyline – the determining factor for persuading its potential audience into the theatre. An eye-catching title could make a great difference for its publicity, like a marketing tool, which could attract people and hopefully bring them to the theatre.

These factors may have influenced the decision in translating this word. Spin was initially translated into Lunhui (轮回) which carries the meaning of cycle and therefore relates to the origin of the word spin. However, lunhui is more often used in a formal register, such as in Buddhism, to refer to reincarnation. This philosophical implication may make it a good title for, e.g., a book or a poem, exploring the meaning of human existence. But for a musical story, it would be better to have a more entertaining title. It was revised later to Feiwen feiwen (诽闻绯闻 – Scandal and Affair) which is a combination of two near homophone words – the first characters in each word are pronounced the same although with different tones, and the second characters in each word are identical.

This near homonym is cleverly done, which adds a touch of sophistication to its meaning. Although the accuracy of the word spin is lost in the translation, it gains on the function as the title for a musical comedy: with such an eye-catching phrase, the title becomes much more comprehensible and sensational, and hence would have a wider appeal to the audience. The translation strategies employed in this case suggest that the
representation of a word is not an act on its own, but involves balancing with other elements such as the marketing purpose, which might themselves be considered as ‘intangible’ actants.

Example 3: Adjustments for ‘Gimme gimme gimme’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gimme gimme gimme</td>
<td>给我给我给我</td>
<td>Give me give me give me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A man after midnight</td>
<td>只要一个光点</td>
<td>Only a spotlight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Won’t somebody help me</td>
<td>谁能牵我的手</td>
<td>Who can hold my hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chase the shadows away</td>
<td>带我穿过黑夜</td>
<td>Lead me through the dark night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another example for the conversion of the storylines in MM is the translation of the song ‘Gimme gimme gimme’. Again, the ABBA song originally describes a young woman who feels lonely as if left in the dark of night and who is longing for a romantic relationship. That’s why in the lyrics she is begging a man to rescue her from the shadows. However, in MM, this song is used for the scene in which Sophie is desperately trying to find out, among the three possible men she discovered from her mother’s old diary, who is her real father. In the source text, this song is inserted into a dancing party scene where Sophie talks to Sam, Harry and Bill separately and away from the crowds. Since most of the Western audiences are familiar with the ABBA songs, and they would also know that the scene is created for this song, it is unlikely there would be any misunderstanding caused by the lyrics. However, in the target text, as the translator explains in our interview:

The original meaning was cast away completely. So, if it were back-translated, it would not be approved. For a song, it is not a good translation. I translate it for drama. It is not appropriate, but there is no other way. (JF, personal interview, 2011-9-21)

Moreover, there is a cultural issue here. Although it was initially translated faithfully to “给我给我给我，一个男人今晚”, both translators believe: “a Chinese woman would not say these words” (Personal interview with JF and CE, 2011-9-21). Not to mention that this scene is about a young girl who feels lost over the uncertainty of her real father. By purposely omitting the reference ‘a man’, which is in the source text, the translation helps make the audience focus on the storylines of the musical, and avoids any confusion, and/or cultural misapprehension, which may be caused by a faithful translation of the original lyrics.
These examples illustrate that translating musicals involves much more than just the accuracy of the lyrics themselves, and that a back translation cannot be used as the only means for the quality assurance. Sometimes, it is necessary for the libretto translation to be adjusted in order to cohere with the storyline, which is one of the most important aspects for engaging the target audience.

3.3.2 Characterization
Characterization in musicals is usually achieved through songs, such as their narrations and internal monologues. It is important that the characters in musicals are “as recognizable and definable on being seen as on being heard or commented on by others” (Engel, 1972:13).

In ‘Money, Money, Money’ for MM, Donna sings to tell her two former best friends about her struggle through life in bringing up her daughter on her own. Unlike the original ABBA version which is a standalone pop song to which anybody could sing along, this song is now situated in the dramatic context and closely connected with the character and the story. It has been transformed from an observer’s perspective to a character who is describing her own experience with profound feeling.

In the context of ANT, this change of context would affect the song’s role and its relationships with other actors in the network. Thus, the text may influence the strategies and decisions made by the translators. When translating this song, the translators fully appreciate these changes and consider that this musical number should go beyond the faithful conversion of the source text in order to reflect the character’s circumstances. They believe that “translating musicals must not be the same as translating pop songs because there are characters involved” (Personal interview with CE and JF, 2011-9-21).

Example 1: Stanzas from ‘Money, money, money’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I work all night, I work all day</td>
<td>我从天亮干到天黑</td>
<td>I work from dawn to dusk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pay the bills I have to pay</td>
<td>我一年到头不够睡</td>
<td>I don’t have enough sleep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(COMPANY) Ain’t it sad?</td>
<td>真无奈</td>
<td>all year round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(DONNA) And still there</td>
<td></td>
<td>So helpless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I paid loans and bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Becoming a destitute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
never seems to be
A single penny left for me

(COMPANY) That’s too bad

(DONNA) In my dreams I have a plan
If I got me a wealthy man
I wouldn’t have to work at all
I’d fool around and have a ball
……

Money, money, money
Must be funny
In a rich man’s world

pauper again at the end of the month
Such failure

I dream there will be a multi millionaire (he) falls in love with me
I don’t have to stay up all night working
How happy when I have no worries
……

Money, money, money
Anybody would want it
However much, it would never be enough

In order to portray Donna’s down to earth attitudes over her desperation for money during the past 20 years, some very colloquial, even slang, expressions are purposefully chosen for the target lyrics, such as: 一年到头不够睡 (I don’t have enough sleep all year round) and 穷光蛋 (a destitute pauper). In the line “I’d fool around and have a ball”, the reference of ‘ball’ in the ST is replaced by 无忧无虑 (no worries) which may have been for the purposes of characterization as well as of syllable count. In the original song, the usage of “having a ball” to mean having a good time has a two-fold effect. First, its metaphorical use of ‘ball’ makes the ‘good time’ more visual; second, it rhymes perfectly with the ending word ‘all’ in the previous line “I wouldn’t have to work at all”. However, since there is no equivalent metaphor in Chinese to match the source text, the target text makes a slight shift into 多快乐 (how happy). The priority is given to the informal tenor of the source text, the consistency of rhyming between 乐 (le) and 作 (zuo)\(^{13}\) in the previous line 去工作 (go to work), as well as the syllable count for the singability, rather than pursuing the match of the metaphor.

Again, in this song, the shifts also occur in translating the refrain: ‘Money, money, money; Must be funny; In a rich man’s world’. ‘Funny’ may have been used partly for its rhyming property to match ‘money’. Since ‘funny’ is usually translated into 有趣 (interesting), 滑稽 (comical) or 奇怪 (strange) in Chinese, none of them can fully

\(^{13}\) In the Chinese rhyming system, [o], [uo] and [e] belong to the same posuo group of the zhe family. For a simplified reference, see: http://www.yyxx.sdu.edu.cn/chinese/new/content/2/03/yunzhe.htm
convey the ironic meaning ‘funny’ implied in this context. There is also the rhyming to be considered. In the end, this reprise is shifted to: ‘Money, money, money,谁都想要;再多都嫌少’ (everybody wants it, however much, it’s never enough). It is not only very colloquial with neat rhyming, but it also contains a clever pun with the key word ‘money’ for the ending line of the refrain: ‘It’s a rich man’s world’ is translated into: 世界朝‘钱’跑 (the world is chasing money) by replacing the character 前 (front) in the common phrase (running forward) to a homophone 钱 (money). However, it is a pity that the pun is difficult to pick up without surtitles.

Since there is not always an exact match between lyrics and characterization in the original English owing to the story being written around the songs, a kind of recontextualization is involved with the target text. During this process, the importation of the songs into a different context may lead to slippages. When recontextualized in the story format, this ambiguity is enhanced further, since neither reading seems to fully fit the character’s situation. Maybe the Chinese translators’ decision to go for something entirely different simply reflects the impossibility of solving this ambiguity and mismatch. In such situations, the interests of the target audience take precedence. Although there are various other aspects affecting the translators’ negotiations such as the rhymes and rhythm as well as syllable count and syntactic structures, the translated text prioritizes the characterization with the central theme of the song. Whilst loss of accuracy is encountered, the gain achieved is much more significant. This is one of the songs most frequently quoted in the media coverage. It is also the first song which the audiences applaud during the performances (Zhao Yan, 2011).

Characterization aims at the target audience groups, and often proves to be an effective strategy to gain resonance with them.

**Example 2: A stanza from ‘A stud and a babe’ (ILY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST: conditional:</th>
<th>TT: present:</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>Zhan sen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's not that I can’t be diverting</td>
<td>我既能妙趣横生对你</td>
<td>I can be full of wit and humor with you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes I can even thrill</td>
<td>我又能让你高兴</td>
<td>I can also please you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But I’d just be so much better at flirting</td>
<td>可是我要成为调情的高手</td>
<td>But I want to be a master of flirt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the above song, the American slang terms ‘stud’ and ‘babe’ are converted into *ku ge* (酷哥 – trendy and handsome elder brother) and *la mei* (辣妹 – spicy younger sister) owing to there being no Chinese equivalence readily available for these English terms. The sense and feel cannot always be transferred by simply copying the equivalent linguistic devices, as de Beaugrande and Dressler point out:

Whether a text is acceptable may depend not on the “correctness” of its “reference” to the “real world,” but rather on its believability and relevance to the participants’ outlook regarding the situation. (1981: 151 original emphases)

‘Stud’ originated from the field of horse-breeding and therefore it carries a strong sense of reproductivity in addition to being healthy, strong, and able. Owing to cultural differences, the topics of sex and reproductivity are rarely mentioned in public among Chinese people and therefore some shifts in translation are unavoidable. The Chinese translated term for ‘stud’ is a recently invented trendy term *ku ge*. *Ku* is a Chinese phonetic equivalent of the English word ‘cool’. The character *ge* originally means elder brother and here it is used as a general term to address a young man in a respectable way. The term refers to someone who is handsome and fashionable. Clearly the implication here is more of appearance. In the West, ‘babe’ normally refers to a young and sexy girl who is looking for fun. Again, there is no such term readily available in the Chinese culture. *La mei* originally came from the Chinese translation of Spice Girl – as in the pop group, which attracted many fans among young Chinese women. *Ku ge* and *la mei* pair nicely together for ‘stud’ and ‘babe’, which signify the role model of the handsome and the fashionable for young people.

The other significant characterization strategy employed in this song is the replacement of the subjunctive mood with the affirmative mood. Although at the beginning, the TT uses *yao chengwei* (要成为 – want to become) to imply that they are not yet what they hope to be, it is not as clear as the ST which repeatedly reminds the audience with: ‘if only’, ‘if I were’ and ‘would be’. It is possible to use Chinese equivalent phrases such
as *yaoshi* … *gai duohao* (要是…该多好) or *ruguo woshi* (如果我是) to translate ‘if I only’ and ‘if I were. However, it involves more characters than the limited syllable space, especially when subsequently Julie and Jason start, in their duet, to describe the ‘would be’ figures they wish to be. Therefore, instead of following the ST faithfully, the TT omits the subjunctive mood phrase of ‘would be’ and replaces it with a declarative mood of ‘I am’.

Also, in relation to the musical phrases, in the source text stanzas ‘If I were a stud, If I were a babe’, ‘if’ is on a weak lead and the stress note is on ‘I’. However, in the target text, *wo* (我 – I), as the first character in the stanza, falls on a weak beat for ‘if’ in the source text. To compensate the mismatch in emphasis between the target text and the existing music, a Chinese character *jiu* (就 – exactly) is added before the verb *shi* (是 – be) to emphasize the verb. Since *jiu* is now the second character in the stanzas, and as it is always pronounced in an emphasized tone, it also fits the music perfectly for singing ‘wo jiush ge kuge’, and ‘wo jiush ge lamei’ (我就是个酷哥, 我就是个辣妹 – ‘I am exactly a stud’ and ‘I am exactly a babe’).

The saved spaces are then filled by the additions of some popular Chinese expressions to describe each body shape. For instance, ‘My Arms Would be stronger’ is translated into *jianbang jianzhuang youxing* (肩膀健壮有型 – robust shoulder shape), which would link to a bodybuilder’s perfect masculine figure, whilst ‘My locks would be flowing’ is translated into *yingtaozui xiaomanyao* (樱桃嘴小蛮腰 – cherry shape mouth and willowy waist), an idiomatic reference originating from a description of two maids of Bai Juyi (772-846) – one of the best known poets of the Tang Dynasty14. Since then, this term has been used for the most admired model features of the traditional Chinese female beauty.

Would these expressions confuse the audience? They might, if through solely reading them. However, since musicals are a multi-semiotic theatrical genre, the lyrics are not

---

14 One of these two maids was accomplished at singing and the other at dancing. Having seen their performances, the poet’s friend Meng Qi 孟棨 (fl. 886) wrote a note describing the singer as having a cherry shaped mouth, and the dancer as having a willowy waist. The Chinese text of Meng Qi’s poem *Shi Gan* in his *Benshishi《本事诗 事感》* reads as follows: “白尚书（白居易）姬人樊素，善歌；妓人小蛮，善舞。尝为诗曰：‘樱桃樊素口，杨柳小蛮腰。’” 后亦以“蛮腰”指善舞女子的细腰。Retrieved from: 汉文学网 http://cd.hwxnet.com/view/kjodbdimdjofbhcl.html.
standalone channels of communication. Although, to start with, the TT audience may not be as fully aware of the subjunctive mood as the ST audience, the stage performance would undoubtedly produce far more direct visual effects to accompany the song lyrics. Eventually, when Julie and Jason admit to each other that they are anything but owners of these ‘ideal’ appearances and figures, such sharper contrast not only helps the characterization, but also creates even more comical effects.

In comparing the ST and TT, therefore, there are losses incurred in faithfulness concerning sex and reproductivity, as well as the subjunctive mood. However, the translation and its cultural-specific intertextuality produce gains in linking to the target social and cultural conventions which would help create resonance with their audience. Also, the translation maintains coherence with the changes made, and its rhymes and rhythms for singability. The ST’s theme portrays two young people struggling to recognize that dating is all about revealing one’s self. Without super figures and appearances, people can still find their love and happiness. Thus, the translation functions to “produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention” (Grice 1971: 58, cited in de Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981: 116). In other words, the localized characterization connects with the target cultural context, which enables the audience to grasp the dramatic effects intended in the source text.

These contemporary approaches employed in the translation suggest that in the current Chinese entertainment market where Western musicals are regarded as representative of the trendy genre of Western culture, employing popular and stylish language and cultural references for the characterization may help win empathy with the target audience cohort in China.

*Example 3: Stanzas from ‘Slipping through my fingers’ (MM)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slipping through my fingers All the time</td>
<td>指间时光流逝 太匆匆</td>
<td>Time slips through my fingers Too hurried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I try to capture Every minute</td>
<td>任岁月把 记忆的脚印 渐渐的抹去</td>
<td>Let time Gradually erase The footprint of memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The feeling in it</td>
<td>只剩时光流逝 太匆匆 女孩小小心事</td>
<td>Only left with time slipping away Too hurried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slipping through my fingers All the time</td>
<td>Do I really see what’s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In another case, deviation of lexis is used in the target text to strengthen the characterization. ‘Slipping through my fingers’ is Donna’s internal monologue expressing her regret for not having spent more time with her daughter while she was growing up. This title is also the key reprise for the chorus which is repeated three times in each paragraph. The usual practice for translating such lines would be following the source text with the reprises (such as with Fei Yuanhong’s translation\textsuperscript{15}). However, this time there are deliberate deviations in each reprise. First, it is 指间时光流过 (zhi jian shi guang liu guo – time slips through my fingers); secondly, it is 只剩时光流过 (zhi sheng shi guang liu guo – only left with time slipping away); and thirdly, it is 只恨时光流过 (zhi hen shi guang liu guo – only hate to see the time slipping away).

Although these three reprises may look different from each other when they are back-translated into English, the deviation only occurs in one word in each line, i.e., from zhi jian (between fingers) to zhi sheng (only left) to zhi hen (only hate) whilst the phonological coherence is retained owing to the homophonic nature of 指 (zhi) and 只 (zhi). From the semantic perspective, through these deviations, Donna’s feelings are conveyed progressively in order to cohere with her thinking process. For instance, from being unable to capture the time, to being left behind and unable to understand her daughter’s mind, and then to wishing but being unable to catch up with her daughter’s fast growing pace. In this way, as growing stronger with each reprise, Donna’s love and affection for her daughter are further strengthened. From the pragmatic perspective, these one-character deviations do not interrupt the format of reprises, and hence fully reflect the equivalent functions and impact of the source text.

\textsuperscript{15} In Fei Yuanhong’s translation, the title and the reprises follow the source text with the same line throughout the entire song: shiguang cong cong yi qu bu huitou (时光匆匆一去不回头 – time flies irretrievably). For details see Fei Yuanhong’s blog, ‘Fei Yuanhong de Yishu Shijie’, at: http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4c6ccb530100ucsp.html.
While we have been analyzing these deviations and their effects, there is also a crucial actant whose role in underlying these translation shifts cannot be ignored: the translator herself. During my interview, when the translator recounts her working with this song, she was still feeling very emotional. As an undergraduate student living away from her parents, she says: “It was by thinking of my parents that I was able to write these lyrics (CE, personal interview, 2011-9-21). It is this personal circumstance that situates her in the context and enables her to “express the deepest thoughts and feelings of the characters at that moment” (Larry Brown, 2007).

Example 4: Stanzas from ‘Waiting’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But I got baggage!</td>
<td>我却有负担 (fudan),</td>
<td>But I have a burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional baggage,</td>
<td>那精神上的负担 (fudan),</td>
<td>The psychological burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A planeload of</td>
<td>即便就是负担 (fudan),</td>
<td>Even though it is a burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baggage,</td>
<td>也要开心承担 (chengdan).</td>
<td>Must bear it cheerfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That causes much</td>
<td>…</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saggage</td>
<td>我有负担 (fudan),</td>
<td>I have a burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…</td>
<td>那精神上的负担 (fudan),</td>
<td>The psychological burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We got baggage</td>
<td>即便是负担，要开心承担 (chengdan),</td>
<td>Even though it is a burden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional draggage</td>
<td>花费时间——</td>
<td>Must bear it cheerfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And we been luggin' around this baggage a long, long time</td>
<td>时间——</td>
<td>Spending time —</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Deviation is very much a language specific feature for which it may not always be possible to find equivalence in a different language. In the source text of the song ‘Waiting’ in ILY, to portray the character’s mental stress, the first stanza has three lines all ending with the same word ‘baggage’, and hence builds up a regular pattern for the audience’s ears. Then suddenly, it ends unexpectedly in the fourth line with a deviation – ‘saggage’. Although this is an invented word by adding the suffix ‘gage’ to the word ‘sag’, it gives a clear clue for the audience to deduce that it is formed by following ‘baggage’. This lexical form of ‘defeated expectancy’ (Leech, 1985: 49), or ‘internal deviation’ (Cook, 1992: 139), effectively breaks the regular ending of the stanza and draws the audience’s attention to its climax: ‘saggage’.

In the same way, another invented word ‘draggage’ is also used in the next stanza. Since both are analogical word creations based on the same suffix of ‘baggage’, they all
metaphorically link to the extended burdening effect of ‘baggage’. Hence, they are cohesive and coherent for both meaning and rhyming and flag up their novelty for attention. The emphasis is made through what Leech refers to as “the degree of strangeness one feels with a lexical innovation” (1969: 43). He observes: “If a new word is coined it implies the wish to recognize a concept or property which the language can so far only express by phrasal or clausal description” (ibid. 44). The lexical innovation also adds humour to this song, in which the pressure on the character’s mind is thereby encased with light hearted comical effects.

Owing to the untranslatability of these invented words, there are no equivalent lexical devices to match both the sense and the form of ‘saggage’ and ‘draggage’ in the target text; and the meaning is thus slightly shifted. To achieve the matching forms on rhyme schemes and the deviation patterns, fudan (burden) and chengdan (bearing) are used to convey ‘baggage’ and ‘saggage’ respectively, as both of them are formed by two characters and they share the identical second character dan, and hence rhyme with each other. However, grammatically, ‘baggage’, ‘saggage’ and ‘draggage’ are nouns, whilst in the TT fu dan is used as a noun (although it can also be used as a verb); but cheng dan is a verb. This change causes both syntactic and semantic discrepancies in the target text: from ‘a planeload of baggage, that causes much saggage’ to ji bian jiu shi fu dan, ye yao kai xin cheng dan (即便就是负担，也要开心承担 – Even though it is a burden, Must shoulder it cheerfully). As a result, the coherence established through the collocation between the humorous hyperbole ‘a planeload’ and the key word baggage is thereby re-established into a different syntactic structure. This lexical choice shows the translator’s negotiations with the many interacting factors.

Example 5: Stanzas from ‘Waiting’ (ILY)

Again, under the same theme, further shifts are made for the characterization to fit into the target cultural context. Cultural factors are one of the key elements in musical lyrics translation which influence the negotiation between faithfulness to the source text and effects for the reception.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GUY: We came to buy shoes</td>
<td>盖伊: 我们来买鞋</td>
<td>Gai Yi: We came to buy shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Like she needs more shoes!</td>
<td>她并不缺鞋</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Have only been through one</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
But so far we haven't been through
The shoe department
I was dragged here
I was nagged here
Now she's left me
(holds up a handbag)
Holding the bag here

Nailed up here in Macy's
Haven't seen the wife since noon
Jailed up here in Macy's
I hope I'm paroled real soon
Twitching here in Macy's
Lord, can't I escape somehow
Bitching here in Macy's
Won't someone just -- shoot me now

Here, when comparing the accuracy of the meaning between the source and target texts, there are obvious shifts occurring. For example, in the source text, Guy goes with his wife to buy shoes at Macy’s and he is left to look after his wife’s shopping bags. Feeling that he is being ‘dragged’ and ‘nagged’ there and then ‘nailed’ and ‘jailed’ for the whole afternoon, he is desperate to be paroled and ‘escape’ from the ‘twitching’ and ‘bitching’, which makes him feel that he would rather be shot.

The choice of the lexis in the source text focuses on Guy’s feelings of boredom and longing to be freed. In the target text, however, these feelings are shifted to his physical exhaustion and anxiety for money. Guy feels yanfahua (眼发花 – eyes blurring); sizhima (四肢麻 – limbs numb); xinrumpiaozhua (心如猫抓 – as if a cat is scratching my heart); and danxin douli xinyongka (担心兜里信用卡 – concerns about the credit card in his pocket); and is so danjingshoupata bashangchang doumaixia (担惊受怕她把商场都买下 – anxious that she will buy up the whole shopping mall). These shifts, especially the use of the vivid expressions and metaphors, help the audience ‘elicit
mental imagery”, and hence “assist in devising contexts” (cf. Levelt et al. 1977, cited in de Beaugrande & Dressler, 131) of the hot topic of a wife-v-husband spendthrift scenario. Guy’s character is therefore differently portrayed – from ‘would rather be dead than to be constrained’ to ‘being frightened to be left with an overdrawn credit card’. As this seems to be more prevalent in contemporary Chinese culture than contemporary Western culture, it is therefore more likely to achieve resonance with the audience. And yet, it is still coherent with the storyline of the source text in which Guy complains about his wife’s insatiable appetite for shoes, (although this may not necessarily be of concern to him if she herself pays).

Like storylines, characterization is also closely related to the target cultural context and, therefore, it requires the musical translator to see the macro picture of the musical product, while dealing with the micro linguistic conversions. The ultimate goal is to represent the imported musicals as fully cohesive and coherent translation works to engage the target audience.

Conclusion
Translating musicals is a consumer oriented art of balance and prioritization. Since there are many factors involved in this genre such as the linguistic, stylistic, dramatic and cultural specifics, negotiations among these factors are necessary. In this chapter, the discussion has focused on multiple perspectives including language and context, stylistic features and dramatic cohesion and coherence. They are among the major aspects which musical translators face, and negotiate with, in order to produce a target text which will engage the audience.

The textual considerations in this chapter reflect the theoretical approach of ANT, in which every actant has its agency and is capable of changing while interacting with other actants. Therefore, they cannot be expected to remain the same in any circumstances. This is precisely why Latour considers them mediators rather than intermediaries (2007: 39). These actants are intertwined and may influence each other during the translation process.

The in-depth analysis demonstrates that during the musical libretto translation, each area of such influence within the text may also be considered as an actant – e.g. syllable
count and singability. Sometimes, it may not be possible to be clear cut about specific categorizations, as they may be linked in one way or another. For instance, in an example of meaning change for humorous effects, it may turn out that it is not just the humour that determines the translation shift, since it may also be due to the translator’s considerations of other aspects such as the rhyme and rhythm and the right syllable count for matching the singability. Viewed from ANT’s perspective, these aspects could be seen as actants competing with each other intratextually, with some becoming dominant during the human actants’ negotiations and interactions. As a result, strictly semantically faithful translation may give priority to actants within the text that are not prioritized in the source text, thus reconfiguring the actant power relations. Therefore, a consumer oriented approach taking into account the aspects which could enhance the reception is crucial for musicals’ libretto translation. The differences between ST and TT have to be seen in relation to the overall purposes of the production and the need to satisfy audiences. In this regard, musicals involve a special form of translation where consumer orientation and user orientation play a much more important role.

The various aspects discussed here are all directly related to the target reception. In other words, the integration of language and culture, the stylistic features and the dramatic cohesion and coherence, constitute the essential criteria for consumer-oriented musical libretto translation. In the next chapter this discussion will continue, but turn onto a different perspective: singability and its interacting aspects such as syllable count, syntax, rhymes and rhythms.
Chapter 4. Singability, Performance, and Translation Decisions

Having already discussed the textual shifts incurred during negotiations on the linguistic, dramatic and cultural aspects, in this chapter the discussion focuses on two key and closely-related considerations relevant to musical lyrics translation: singability and performance, and how they affect the translation decisions with regard to textual development. The analysis is mainly based on the comparison between the source and the target texts, supplemented by discussion of other potential translation choices. The first part of the chapter, which constitutes the majority of the analysis, deals with aspects of singability including syllable count, syntax, rhyme and rhythm, and tones, and involves an evaluation of the gains and losses entailed. The second part of the chapter deals with how issues of performance such as choreography and mise-en-scène influence translation decisions. Given the fact that these latter issues have a relatively lesser direct impact on the textual formation of the lyrics and their translation, this discussion is necessarily shorter than that for singability.

Whilst each subsection focuses on the categorized features, owing to the interrelating nature of these multiple aspects, sometimes the discussions may also briefly touch upon other related aspects, e.g., the syntax may also interfere with the rhyming scheme. As with those aspects discussed in Chapter 3, in addition to these multi-perspectival considerations, the translation decisions also involve interactions with other stakeholders such as the production team members and the audience. The collateral evidence from interviews with these stakeholders about their inputs, and feedback from audience surveys, will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.1 Singability
As discussed in the Introduction, singability refers to ensuring that the lyrics fit in with the musical framework in such a way that the performers are able to sing them clearly for the audience to follow. Closely linked with phonological, stylistic, and syntactic features, singability is one of the key aspects which determine whether a singable lyrics translation is effective in complying with the stylistic norms and meeting the audience’s expectations.
Only when the song is singable can it then enable the written lyrics to communicate with the audience. This is because in musicals, song numbers have different functions. For instance, songs can help plot development or narrative (although relatively rarely); they also contribute to characterization, setting moods, and complementing the action etc. (see Brown, 2007). Accuracy would be important for plot, narrative and characterization, although less so for moods and actions. Therefore, one might expect gains and losses during the translator’s negotiations in prioritizing the one, whilst compromising the other. Perhaps for these reasons, Franzon emphasizes: “Here singability means not just ‘easy to sing’ but something akin to the way skopos theory describes a good translation: suitable in every relevant way for the particular purpose” (2008: 375).

Singability is achieved through various ways of collaboration between composers and lyricists. Sometimes the lyrics come first and the music is then fitted in, such as with the Broadway duo of Rodgers and Hammerstein. However, in many cases it is the music which is considered first\(^{16}\), such as with the British musical composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and his songwriting partners. At still other times, it is a simultaneous creation. When Stephen Sondheim writes both lyrics and music, he says: “They come together. Always” (Barnett, 2012). When lyrics and music are created separately, the one which comes later would always be aimed to fit in to the one which came first. Whether working on both lyrics and music, or only lyrics, the American musical theatre lyricist and composer Stephen Schwartz says, “The craft of lyric writing, to me, involves making the words fit into the music in a way that seems inevitable” (cited in De Giere, n.d.).

In addition to their relationship with the musical framework, lyrics also follow their own conventions. Known as sung poems, lyrics share some of the same aesthetic devices used in poetry, such as rhyme and rhythm, although their purpose is to be sung by the performers and listened to by the audience. Furthermore, as one of the theatrical semiotics in a musical product, the lyrics written for theatrical performances need to be integrated with the other semiotic aspects, such as the musical framework.

\(^{16}\) Gershwin notes: “most of the lyrics … were arrived at by fitting words mosaically to music already composed” (*Lyrics on several occasions*, Alfred A Knopf, 1959, cited in Lehman, 1972: 106)
For these reasons, the ways of translating lyrics are even more constrained and there is little room for the translators to manoeuvre. The common practice in the translation of musicals is for the original lyrics to be converted into the target language while the music remains unchanged. This task is thus “about manipulating language under constraint” (Tims, 2013), a practice which Herbert Kretzmer the translator or, as he calls himself, co-writer of the English version of Les Misérables, describes:

You cannot negotiate with a bar of music, just because you’ve thought of a great rhyme. You may have something that would have even Sondheim quaking in his shoes, but you can’t put it in if there isn’t space for it. You are interrupted by that bar – like the bar of a jail. And you have to find your freedom while you are in prison”. (Hunt, 2012)

From a researcher’s perspective, Franzon (2008: 377) finds that “a singable song translation is inevitably a compromise between fidelity to the music, lyrics and performance”:

Songs are an especially strong challenge to the tendency to equate translation with semantic closeness: a song translation that strives to be semantically accurate can hardly be sung to the music written for the original lyrics, and a song translation that follows the original music must sacrifice optimal verbal fidelity. (ibid)

As discussed in Chapter 3, a solely linguistic approach for translation, i.e., dealing with only the semantic aspects, cannot fully cover the multi-dimensional perspectives of both the meaning and the function of the lyrics. Malmkjaer points out: “In linguistic interaction involving only written language, cues to interpretation such as tone of voice, stress, intensity and cadence are lost” (1998: 31). Sir Arthur Sullivan said over a century ago: “Words pretty enough to read are not always effective when sung” (1885/2003). Low also stresses: “a singable song-translation requires ‘performability’” (2005:192-193). During the translations from Western musicals into Chinese, whilst following the rules of music first (as music is usually not to be changed), the translators have to convert the texts with Chinese linguistic and stylistic constraints on lexis and syntax.

The dimension of singability for lyrics’ translation is thus extended from “the attainment of musico-verbal unity between the text and the composition” (Franzon, 2008: 375) to include the functionality for both performers and audiences. Clearly, when a musical is translated and performed in another language, it is crucial that the translated lyrics are singable for the performers. When the performers feel comfortable
in singing the lyrics, it will be easier for the audience to understand. Therefore, singability is an important parameter in song translation as it has strong determining effects on the audience’s enjoyment.

In such situations, whilst singability clearly takes precedence, the accuracy of the content seems relatively flexible. In the translation of musicals, different translation strategies seem to be employed for the expressive functions in characterization, or narrative, as well as those for complementing the mood and the action etc. The translators appear to be creating new texts “inspired by” the source text, bearing in mind various constraints. From the perspective of ANT, this is how the source text – one of the actants – plays its role in the network of musical translation.

This practice suggests that lyrics are likely to be areas of translation gain and loss and that translation changes may be due to the above-mentioned factors. All these perspectives interact with each other, and therefore the outcome cannot be determined by a single factor alone. The translator’s role is to find the ways to balance these multiple aspects, and decide which are prioritized and which are compromised in certain situations to the best benefit of the target audience. YC recounts his approach in dealing with these various aspects:

As for whether the English lyrics can be sung after being translated into Chinese, there may be two situations. First, the translation of the source text meaning into Chinese does not fit into the accustomed Chinese singing methods. These problems concern lexis, rhyming, and syllable lengths. For example, ‘he calls me’ has three syllables, although it would be difficult to translate this sentence into three characters. Second, certain lyrics in the source text are not suitable for the Chinese scripts, as some of the scenario would not be appropriate when converted into the Chinese context. Additionally, these songs are for theatre performance, and therefore the stage effects are very important. To solve all these problems, one should try as much as possible to translate in complying with the Chinese norms of singability and make the Chinese lyrics suit the original meaning, as well as the Chinese song, singing, and theatrical conventions. (Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3)

The discussions of this chapter will focus on the following aspects: syllable count; syntax; rhyme, rhythm, and tones; together with performance-related issues. Although these aspects may become constraints on the translator’s conversion of the meaning of the source text, they may not always be negative. Perhaps greater constraint means more creativity, as advocates of strict metre in poetry have always maintained. For example,
Stravinsky considers: “The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one’s self of the chains that shackle the spirit” (Stravinsky 1947: 65).

### 4.1.1 Syllable count

When translating singable lyrics for musicals, matching the same syllable count with the source text is one of the most difficult tasks. Bishoff, the American director for ILY, says: “It is always a problem of fitting it, as you know, when you are doing scripts, you are free to have as many syllables as you like, but lyrics are very constrained by how many notes there are” (Personal interview, 2012-4-24). For the Chinese translators, it has always been an important aspect. This is because, since the music usually remains unchanged, using the same or nearly the same numbers of characters (syllables) as the source text is crucial to ensure that the target text fits into the existing musical framework for singability purposes. Otherwise, if the target lyrics contain more or fewer syllables than the source lyrics, it may alter the designated relationship between the original lyrics and their corresponding music. As a result, it may change the rhythmic pattern and affect the song’s mood and emotion in the translated work. It could also make the song difficult to sing clearly and hence difficult for the audience to understand.

Having translated several French operas into Putonghua during the 1980s, Sun Huishuang considers syllable count the first constraint on the translation of singable lyrics. He explains:

> The number of the characters in the target text is strictly restrained by the number of musical notes and the source text syllables. There has to be a match between the Chinese characters and the original musical notes and the lyrics’ syllable count. This is owing to the fact that one of the basic elements for singing is the note value”. (1999: 236)

Another veteran song translator, Xue Fan, also emphasizes that the number of characters in the translated Chinese lyrics should be the same as the number of syllables in the original lyrics (2002: 121). From a different perspective, JB, the musical director for the three musicals discussed in this thesis, also shares these views:

> If there are nine musical notes, there must be nine characters, even if the translator has to change the sentence and rewrite a new one with free translation, but not literal translation. The weak notes must correspond to the functional/empty words, and the strong notes to the content/notional words. (Personal interview, 2011-9-21)
The following are examples illustrating how the syllable count is maintained through negotiation with the meaning of the source text:

4.1.1.1 Syllable count vs meaning

*Example 1: A stanza from ‘Slipping through my fingers’ (MM)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Text and syllable count</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin (with syllable count)</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schoolbag in hand (4)</td>
<td><em>Bei qi shu bao</em> (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She leaves home (3)</td>
<td><em>Ta hui shou</em> (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the early morning (6)</td>
<td><em>Wei xiao xiang wogao bie</em> (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waving goodbye (4)</td>
<td><em>Nian qing de xin</em> (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With an absent-minded smile (7)</td>
<td><em>Zao yi fei xiang qu yuan fang</em> (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put schoolbag on back</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>She waves her hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Smiling and saying goodbye to me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The young heart</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has long flown afar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this example, the target text keeps to the exact syllable count of the source text, which ensures the original word-music relationship for singability. Here, the syllable count is maintained through lexical and syntactic shifts and the reorganization of the stanzas. In stead of faithfully copying the source text word by word, almost every line of the stanza is paraphrased. Some of them are changed, such as ‘Put schoolbag on back’ instead of ‘in hand’, ‘the young heart’ instead of ‘an absent-minded smile’; some are deleted: e.g., ‘she leaves home in the early morning’; some are added, such as ‘has long flown afar’; some are relocated and restructured, such as ‘waving goodbye’ which becomes “waves her hands” and “saying goodbye”.

These different aspects are closely connected with each other, and at the same time affect each other. For example, ‘Schoolbag in hand’ could be translated literally to *shou na shu bao* (手拿书包) which contains exactly four syllables. However, for children nowadays, their school bags are usually backpack style and therefore it normally collocates with the verb *bei* (背) in Chinese, i.e., carrying things on one’s shoulder or back. The next sentence ‘she leaves home in the early morning’ could be translated literally to *ta li kai jia, zai qing chen* (她离开家，在清晨). However, first, the syntax is

---

17 In this chapter, for the purpose of illustrating a clearer relationship for singability between the source and target texts, and the musical framework, when the Chinese words are presented in the form of *Pinyin*, they will be separated by characters/syllables rather than by words, e.g., *xuesheng* (student) will be displayed as *xue sheng*. 
not quite right, since in Chinese when time is used as an adverbial clause, it is very rarely at the end of the sentence. Secondly, it contains only seven syllables to replace the nine syllables in the ST, which means that some of the music notes would not be clearly noted. Furthermore, there is a loss of rhythm when punctuation of the lyrics doesn’t correspond to the musical rest, e.g., the musical stress on ‘home’ would fall on the less emphasized character kai (开) thus making it difficult to understand.

It is acceptable that this line of the stanza is omitted altogether, since the situation is clearly implied in the narration. The saved space is then given to accommodate the extended translation of the subsequent sentence ‘waving goodbye’ to ‘she waves her hand, smiling and saying goodbye to me’. Here, ‘smiling’ (微笑) is brought forward from the next sentence in the source text ‘with an absent-minded smile’. In the source text, ‘an absent-minded smile’ portrays a little innocent child who doesn’t yet share the same feelings as her mother. However, the nearest literal Chinese equivalent, xin bu zai yan (心不在焉), would sound as if the mother is blaming her daughter’s mind for being miles away. Therefore, the translation doesn’t follow the ST faithfully but, instead, is rewritten as ‘The young heart has long flown afar’ to indicate the child’s carefree nature.

These manipulations demonstrate the translator’s endeavour at balancing the demands of multiple factors. Maintaining the syllable count not only involves the numbers, but also how the central sense of the source text, including the storylines and characterization, is represented for the comprehension of the target audience. Although there is considerable semantic gain and loss, the overall beneficial effect outweighs accuracy. The target text conveys an appropriate emotional content, without altering the storylines and characterization, so that the audience can grasp the central meaning of the original musical. The translators CE and JF recall their manoeuvre between the source and target texts:

Matching the syllable count is a must, but it does not have to follow the original sentence. We sometimes have to discard our plan, and an entire sentence, in order to match the syllable count. Sometimes, we would swap the order of the stanzas. If it still doesn’t work, we would change the meaning. Speak naturally in the idiomatic Chinese way. For the localized versions, the stipulations on the musical scores are very strict. In other words, one cannot make any modifications to the original scores, not even additions to or omissions from the lyrics are allowed. (Personal interview, 2011-9-21)
Clearly, within the constraints of the syllable count, the translators’ priority is to convey the intended meaning of the source text, and find the best way to fit it into the context of the target text, aspects which de Beaugrande and Dressler refer to as ‘intentionality’ and ‘situationality’ (1981: 113). For these purposes, the translators’ priorities are “not what the source text looks like, but what this scene says, and then to say it naturally in Chinese” (CE & JF, personal interview, 2011-9-21). Therefore, for them the source text needs to be “chewed up and then mixed together” (ibid.). Instead of seeking accuracy to the source text, the translation strategies employed clearly intend to achieve a balance of singability and comprehension for an effective reception. This may have been part of the reason why their translation received positive reviews by both the experts and the general audience.

Example 2: Lines from ‘The baby song’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin (with syllable count)</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well I dread That I'm regressng (8) With my head This baby's messing (8)</td>
<td>Wo hai pa yao hui dao cong qian (8) Xian zai nao hai zao gao yi tian (8)</td>
<td>我害怕要回到从前 现在脑海糟糕一团</td>
<td>I am afraid to return to the past Now my mind is muddled</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘The baby song’ is a confession by Frank, who discovers that he has lost himself unwittingly since his newly acquired fatherhood. This scene starts from how Frank is over the moon, and his entire life seems to swirl around the baby. When his friend Fred comes to visit the family, he unconsciously speaks to his friend in a babyish language, such as calling a horse ‘horsey’. Shocked by the changes in Frank, Fred says to him before leaving: “Frank, remember when you used to be – interesting. You used to have interesting thoughts about life, love, work! But now, Frank – ‘horsey’”. To show that he would not want to experience such scenes again, he adds ironically: “Call me when he graduates college, Frank”.

The Chinese term for regressing is tui hua (退化), but it contains only two characters which are shorter than the tri-syllabic word regressing. Although the target stanza could be paraphrased to match the syllable count, such as: wo hai pao zi ji zai tui hua (我害怕自己在退化 – I dread myself regressing), the end-rhymes would be altered.
As one of the most important features in the translation of lyrics, rhyme is always carefully maintained for its aesthetic value. Reflecting the neat rhymes of *regressing* and *messing* in the source text, the target text also sets each sentence to end with the corresponding rhymes of *qian* and *tuan*. If the word *tui hua* were used, both the syllable count and the rhymes would have to be adjusted, which might result in completely rewriting these sentences. Furthermore, *tui hua* is difficult to understand when singing because it is quite formal and thus more often used in written form. To make it yet more complicated, in listening *tui hua* could be confused with another homophone *tui hua* (蜕化), which means degenerating.

Whilst the target stanza *hui dao cong qian* (回到从前 – returning to the past) seems to have achieved a balance with the syllable count, the end-rhyming as well as the comprehension, ‘returning to the past’ is somewhat ambiguous because of the phrase *cong qian*. Since Fred has just remarked what an interesting person Frank used to be, it is unlikely *cong qian* refers to this period. Therefore, it must mean when Frank was as young as his baby son. In which case, a clearer phrase would be ‘when I was small’, but the same problem is back again: there may be more syllables than the space can accommodate.

Although the current choice has a certain ambiguity, it is compensated for by the subsequent stanzas in the song when Frank helplessly confesses and pleads for God’s help to stop his babyish behaviour, which indicate that *cong qian* refers to the baby age. This example illustrates the complexity of the simultaneously interacting perspectives faced by the translator during the translation process for musicals. Clearly the syllable count is the priority here, but it is at the expense of loss of the original meaning. Often, the best effects can only be achieved through the balance between priority and compromise.

*Example 3: Stanzas from ‘Spin’ (Spin)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spin Everybody’s doing it</td>
<td>Hu yan luan yu Mei ge ren dou zhe me zuo Hu yan luan yu Mei ge ren dou</td>
<td>胡言乱语， 每个人都这么做 胡言乱语， 每个人都这么说</td>
<td>Talk nonsense, Everybody does this Talk nonsense, Everybody speaks this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spin Everybody’s full of it</td>
<td>...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another strategy employed for matching the ST syllable count with the TT is restructuring the TT lexis and syntax, which is almost like jigsawing the linguistic components in order to represent the original work. For those expressions in the source text which have no equivalent readily available in the target text, translators usually have to explain the meaning, which may require a lengthy sentence. This method would be suitable for reciting passages or conversations. However, for performing lyrics, which are constrained by the syllable count and rhymes etc., jigsawing the single syllabic characters may help provide effective solutions in certain situations. For example, as discussed in Chapter 3, ‘spin’ is not a word which can be translated directly into Chinese, owing to its metaphorical connotations. Hence, negotiations occur during its translation both as the title of this musical and as the theme song. Since Chinese characters are monosyllabic, the Chinese words and phrases are formed by combining one or more of these single syllabic characters. Therefore, rather than looking for equivalent words containing the same syllable count in the target text, as in alphabetical languages, the Chinese characters have greater potential to be jigsawed around. For instance, the Chinese equivalent of the English word ‘kitchen’ is *chu fang*, which is literally *chu* (kitchen) + *fang* (room). These two characters can be easily separated, and combined with others, to form different words or phrases, e.g., *chu shi* (chef/cook), *chu yi* (cooking skills), and *chu ju* (cooking utensils).
Since I have already discussed the translation of ‘spin’ as the title of this musical in Chapter 3, the focus here will be on its different conversions in the song lyrics themselves. As the name of the theme song, ‘Spin’ starts and ends this musical. In order to summarise the song as well as the musical story, ‘spin’ is translated into *hu yan luan yu* (胡言乱语 – talking nonsense). This Chinese idiom refers to people talking with unsubstantiated statements. Hence it conveys, to some extent, the sense of not being completely true, which ‘spin’ implies. However, as part of the lyrics, ‘spin’ acts as the lead-in for the reprise by the chorus in the background.

It would be a real struggle to squeeze this four-character phrase into the music designated for a single syllable word. QA, the translator, describes the multiple perspectives she encountered: “I was considering the singing, and the rhyming. When the whole stanza uses the same rhyme, there aren’t many choices for words. The original meaning must also be respected” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10). As a result, although *hu yan luan yu* is used in some parts of this refrain – perhaps for initiating the audience with the intention of the source text – in other parts it is replaced by three different single-syllabic words: *ting* (听 – listen), *kan* (看 – look) and *tan* (叹 – sigh).

Clearly, here the syllable count takes priority over meaning. The lexical choice of these words incurs loss in both the equivalence with ‘spin’, and its impact through internal repetition. However, these replacements collocate coherently in the target lyrics jigsawed with them. For example: ‘listen’ collocates with ‘talking’; ‘look’ (collocates) with ‘doing’, and ‘sigh’ (collocates) with ‘faking’. In so doing the word ‘spin’ and its intended connotation in the source text are recreated through a different kind of cohesion and coherence in the target text. Together with matching the syllable count with the music, the lyrics are easily sung and understood by the audience. In this way, it becomes possible to appreciate what de Beaugrande and Dressler mean when they observe that: “the configuration of CONCEPTS and RELATIONS which underlie the surface text, are mutually accessible and relevant” (1981: 4. original emphases).

When discussing the balance between sense and singability, Peter Low considers that “[i]n a genre where syllable-count is important, the need to stretch sense arises just as naturally” (2005: 194). Nevertheless, in addition to meaning, the translation seems to
have suffered considerable loss in linguistic register, metaphor, modernity and hence characterization. In a way, it is a high price to pay for singability here. The fact that this word has different translation treatments in this musical for different situations demonstrates not only the clear consumer-oriented translation strategies employed to achieve the functions and the purposes of the TT, but also how the translator negotiates with different perspectives to arrive at such strategies and priorities.

4.1.1.2 Padding words

Adding padded words is another translation technique commonly used to match the syllable count. CE and JF find: “One should avoid using padding words as far as one possibly can, but sometimes they are unavoidable, therefore, we still have to use them” (Personal interview, 2011-9-21). The following are two examples concerning this issue.

**Example 1: A stanza from ‘Money money money’ (MM)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST (with syllable count)</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin (with syllable count)</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my dreams I have a plan (7)</td>
<td>Wo meng xiang hui you yi ge (7)</td>
<td>我梦想 会有一个 (他)爱我</td>
<td>I dream that there will be a Ten millionaire (he) falls in love with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I got me a wealthy man (8)</td>
<td>Qian wan fu weng (ta) ai shang wo (8)</td>
<td>我不用熬夜去工作</td>
<td>I don’t have to work all night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wouldn’t have to work at all (8)</td>
<td>Wo bu yong ao ye qu gong zuo (8)</td>
<td>我无忧无虑多快乐</td>
<td>I am so happy to have no worries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’d fool around and have a ball (8)</td>
<td>Wo wu you wu li duo kuai le (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this song, the sentence ‘If I got me a wealthy man’ was restructured with a padding subject ‘ta’ (他) to make up the syllable count, and also to maintain the music stress. Similar to the English relative pronoun clause ‘who …’, the structure of the duplicated subject is more often used in spoken Chinese. Otherwise, if translated literally, this sentence could be:

{如果我找到一个富翁}  
ru guo wo zha dao yi ge fu weng!  
[if I find a wealthy man]  
If I got me a wealthy man

This translation contains nine syllables, which means that there is an extra character without an allocated musical note for it. There would also be a problem with the
musical stress owing to the difference in syntax. As in the source text, the strong beats are on the second (I), fourth (me), seventh (thy) and eighth (man) syllables. Whereas, if taking this literal Chinese translation, the emphasized characters/syllables such as the first (ru), and the third (wo) would be on the weak beats. The following is the current translation:

{千万富翁 (他) 爱上我}
/lqian wan fu weng (ta) ai shang wo/
[ten millionaire (he) falls in love with me]
If I got me a wealthy man

Although not accurate in the strict sense with either meaning or form, this target text preserves the syllables count with a matching musical stress. In addition, another important gain from the padding word is the rhyming effects (which will be covered in more detail later in a separate subsection). Whilst the source text has its rhyme scheme of AABB, the target text establishes its own one of ABBA. The next example also illustrates such considerations.

Example 2: A stanza from ‘Always a bridesmaid, never a bride’ (ILY)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin (with syllable count)</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For Tabitha, (4)</td>
<td>Wei Ta-bi-tha (4)</td>
<td>为 Ta-bi-tha</td>
<td>For Ta-bi-tha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wore Taffeta (5)</td>
<td>Wo chuan shang bao sha (5)</td>
<td>我穿上薄纱</td>
<td>I wore chiffon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should never, (4)</td>
<td>Kan shang qu a (4)</td>
<td>看上去啊</td>
<td>It looks ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People laugh-at-ya (5)</td>
<td>Wo zhen de hen sha (5)</td>
<td>我真的很傻</td>
<td>I am really very stupid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this stanza, ‘you should never, people laugh-at-ya’ is spoken along, instead of being sung, with the music. An interjection a (啊 – ah) is added to make up the syllable count for the Chinese translation of ‘you should never’, which is a three-character phrase kan shang qu (看上去 – it looks). Even though a does not add any actual meaning to the sentence, it is not merely a random addition, but correlates with the other sentences to form the same rhyme in the target text.

Using the same rhymes for the target text as are in the source text is considered, by some translators (e.g., the translators for MM) and researchers (e.g., Fu Xianzhou, 2012), to be one of the best ways to ensure that the target text fits into the existing music framework. This may have been the reason why these two lines are not translated.
literally into, for example, *ni zhen bu gai, bie ren hui xiao ni* (你真不该, 别人会笑你), because of their different rhymes.

### 4.1.1.3 Adding/subtracting syllables

In some particular circumstances, more syllables than one are used to share one music note, and less in other instances.

*Example 1: lines from ‘I love you, you’re perfect, now change’ (ILY)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But I</td>
<td><em>ke shi wo</em></td>
<td>我……</td>
<td>But I (CD changes to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So I</td>
<td><em>suo yi wo</em></td>
<td>我……</td>
<td>但)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause I</td>
<td><em>yin wei wo</em></td>
<td>我……</td>
<td>So I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this song, the expressions ‘but I’, ‘so I’, and ‘cause I’ are intended to be short, i.e., each containing only two syllables. Since English is a stress-timed language, it is clear that ‘I’ is the emphasized word in the source text. For the same reason, the slang style ‘cause’ is used instead of its proper form ‘because’, in order to create similar effects as ‘but’ and ‘so’. In contrast, whilst partially stressed by the different tones of each character, Putonghua is more like a syllable-timed language, in which every character/syllable should be clearly pronounced, irrespective of whether they are content words or functional words. In this stanza, although the Chinese equivalent of *I (wo)* is a single character of one syllable, the Chinese equivalents of *but (ke shi)*, *so (suo yi)* and *cause (yin wei)* are all dissyllabic phrases of two characters, which cannot be shortened.

In order to accommodate the extra syllables in the source text, they are squeezed together in the target text to share the music note for one syllable. This is a risky solution as it could be difficult to sing and to hear clearly. The reason why this strategy is employed for this song may be due to the fact that these words are very common and therefore, even when they are sung quickly together, there would be little ambiguity or misunderstanding on the part of the audience. Even so, *ke shi* has been revised to the informal *ke* in the musical’s promotional CD, while the other two *suo yi* and *yin wei* remain, owing to the fact that they do not have informal equivalents.
Example 2: One syllable for several musical notes

However, sometimes when there are no equivalent musical-lyrical relations which can be matched, the audience’s interest is prioritized. For example, in the song ‘Thank you for the music’: there are ten syllables in the line ‘Without a song or a dance what are we’ in the source text, and there are two short words – ‘or’ and ‘a’ sharing one musical note. The target text does not follow this line literally as it would take many more characters to convey its meaning. Therefore, it is shifted into: *jiu rang wo men yi qi fang sheng chang* (就让我们一起放声唱 – let’s sing aloud together). However, in this translation, there are only nine characters/syllables, although it could easily be made into a ten-syllable line by adding *ge* (歌) before the last character *chang* (唱) since *ge* and *chang* together also mean ‘sing’. The reason for this discrepancy is, as JB explains: “we would not allow two characters *yi qi* to squeeze in so tightly under two semiquavers, as the clarity of the singing would be affected” (Personal correspondence, 2011-11-12).

These examples once again illustrate the importance of matching the syllable count with the source text for singability. It is always one of the first aspects with which a musical lyrics translator seeks to comply. In the case of *Spin*, when talking about her translation process, QA says: “I would listen to the recording and decide the number of TT characters according to the ST’s syllable sense. I would check the scores if I couldn’t clearly hear the syllable sense.” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10). She believes that there is a different relationship to the music between English and Chinese:

The original relationship between English and the music is matched very comfortably, but it may not necessarily be the case when replaced by Chinese. If it is a creation, the lyricist and the composer must consider this relationship. Since it is now an import, we have to respect the source text. (ibid.)

QA found that following exactly the syllable count and musical notes may sometimes cause uneveness when singing in Chinese. She described her fitting the lyrics for one of the songs in *Spin*:

Having listened to the recording of the original song, I felt that these phrases should be translated into: *shi fou fang qi* and *xuan ze wang ji* (是否放弃，选择忘记). However, there are five notes on the scores, so I was asked to add a character for each phrase as *shi fou yao fang qi, xuan ze qu wang ji* (是否要放弃，选择去忘记).” (ibid.)
Whilst syllable count plays an important role for making the lyrics translation singable in musicals, a translator’s task is not just to mechanically fit into the target text. Under the constraints of the existing musical framework, and the original music-lyrics relationship in the source text, the translator operates from multiple perspectives and seeks the most effective balance. Whenever there are conflicts between syllable count and other interrelated aspects, the effective singability for both the performers to sing, and for the audience to understand, seems to be the priority.

4.1.2 Syntax
Having the same syllable count in the target text can help ensure the matching of the translation with the musical framework. However, it does not necessarily guarantee that the target text matches the syntactic structures of the source text, which cohere with the musical stress and punctuation. This is owing to the different language specificity such as syntactic and grammatical conventions. As mentioned earlier, Chinese phrases are formed by one or more single syllabic characters and, therefore, there is plenty of potential for the language to extend and develop in all kinds of dimensions, just like a jigsaw. Therefore, it is not surprising that Li and Thompson (1981: 14) find that “Mandarin has a very large number of polysyllabic words”. Nevertheless, however many the numbers of the syllables, the numbers of syllables and characters always correspond with each other in Chinese words, i.e., if there are three syllables, then there will be three characters. In these phrases, some characters retain their original meaning, such as fan (meal) and guan (place) to form the word fanguan (restaurant). While some others lose their original meaning, e.g., xing li (luggage) where, although xing retains its meaning of walk, li loses its meaning as a plum or as a surname. Matching the syllable count in the source text with the music notes allocated to them involves rephrasing the Chinese lexis, which may require a restructuring of the syntax.

4.1.2.1 Syntax and musical rests
Singability means that the syntax of the lyrics should be coherent with the musical phrasing, otherwise it will affect the audience’s comprehension of the meaning.

Example 1: A line from ‘Always a bridesmaid, never a bride’ (ILY)
‘Always a bridesmaid, never a bride’ is a narrative song in ILY as an example discussed in Chapter 3. In one of the stanzas, a ten-syllable line says: ‘but I had a hunch, her marriage was doomed’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>But I had a hunch, her marriage was doomed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TT</td>
<td>{可我知道她的新郎很花}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TT (pin yin)</td>
<td>/ke wo zhi dao ta de xin lang hen hua/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BT</td>
<td>but I know her bridegroom very philandering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above Chinese translation of the source text, the target text matches exactly the same syllable numbers as the source text. However, this is not an accurate translation of the source text. To be faithful in terms of the meaning, it could be translated into: ‘可我有一种预感，她的婚姻注定要失败’ (可我有一种预感，她的婚姻注定要失败). In this way there would be six extra characters/syllables and therefore the syntactic structure would be different, hence the singability is affected.

Clearly, the way in which the current translation manages to match the syllable count is through compromising the accuracy to the source text. The lexical shifts, such as the omission of ‘hunch’, ‘marriage’ and ‘doomed’, altered, to a certain extent, the meaning of this sentence. As a result, instead of making a subjective comment about this unpromising marriage, in the target text the bridesmaid only offers an impression about the bridegroom. Nevertheless, the target text signals a similar outcome to the source text. In this way, the gist of the passage is preserved, and the shift would not affect the audience’s overall understanding of the character’s narration on her views.

However, this restructuring of the target text may cause certain dislocations of the syntactic structure. There is a comma after ‘hunch’ in the source text, which corresponds to a rest in the musical phrase. In the target text, since there is no break in the sentence, this musical rest falls after the fifth syllable. It turns out to be a misplaced gap, as the characters ta (she) and de (of) together form the Chinese equivalent for the possessive case ‘her’ and hence, a gap between these two characters would break the sentence. This may have been insignificant if this song were a musical accompaniment for setting the mood or atmosphere. However, for a song which is itself very much a drama, with carefully crafted humorous and witty details, the match of syntax and punctuation between the lyrics and the musical phrases also needs attention.
This example illustrates that when balancing the meaning, syllable count and rhymes, syntactic structure is also a key aspect for the effective singability. Drawing from his own experience as the translator of several Western operas, Sun Huishang stresses the importance of retaining for lyrics translation the same punctuation and the rests for breathing following the musical phrases. Otherwise, he points out: “it would result in the song being neither singable nor comprehensible” (1999: 304).

4.1.2.2 Syntax and musical phrases
As part of the syntactical compatibility between the source and target texts, the groupings of the words reflect the rhythmic patterns of the lyrics, since they correspond with the musical phrase. The example below shows a revised translation in order to meet such requirements in the song ‘Does your mother know’ and its belittling connotation.

Example: A line in ‘Does your mother know’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT2 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But I can’t take a chance</td>
<td>/bu neng/ yin wei/ zhe yang/ cannot because of this</td>
<td>/bu neng gou/ jiu zhe yang/ cannot just like this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the above example, the source text ‘But I can’t take a chance’ has six syllables, which are divided into two three-word groupings by a musical phrase of two semi quavers followed by a crotchet. However, the first version of the target text, bu neng yin wei zhe yang (不能因为这样), constitutes three two-character phrases, bu neng, yin wei, and zhe yang. As a result, in TT1 the two-character phrase in the middle is forced to separate and join the two phrases on either side, i.e., bu neng yin (不能) and wei zhe yang (为这样), with yin and yang on the emphasized beats. For a singing lyric, this could be difficult to make sense of, and uncomfortable for even those who do understand it. On the advice of the musical director, this translation was revised into two three-character phrases of bu neng gou (不能够) and jiu zhe yang (就这样). In this way, it not only retains the meaning of the source text, but also matches well with the musical phrases, as well as making it clear for singing and for following.

4.1.2.3 Syntax and musical stress
Syntactic differences between languages are one of the major causes for the mismatch of the musical stress in the target text.

**Example 1: Two translation versions for a line in ‘Thank you for the music’ (MM)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT2 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Thanks for **all the** joy they're bringing | {谢谢它创造的美丽}  
/lxie xie ta chuang zao de mei li/  
[thanks for the beauty it creates] | {带我飞到梦的远方}  
/ldai wo fei dao meng de yuan fang/  
[lead me to fly to faraway dreamland] |

As shown above, in this song the musical keynote for the line ‘Thanks for all the joy they're bringing’ is on the word ‘joy’. However, in TT1 *lxie xie ta chuang zao de mei li* (谢谢它创造的美丽), that same emphasis falls on *zao*, which is the second part of the Chinese phrase for ‘create’, *chuang zao*. When spoken, *chuang* and *zao* work together with an equal relationship, i.e., they share the same length and stress. Coincidently, their tones are also the same. However, in this line, when they are located in the musical framework, their relationship becomes unequal. Not only is there a gap of an ascending fifth interval between them, but also *chuang* falls on a quaver with a weak beat of the bar, whereas *zao* is on a crotchet for the first strong beat of the next bar. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the Chinese director notes: “*ta* and *zao* become the accented words, which result in this line being malpositioned for the meaning, and therefore it cannot be understood” (HG, personal interview, 2011-9-20).

In addition to the mismatch at the level of musical stress, the mismatch of the tonal stress is also noticeable. As a tonal language, Chinese tone features will inevitably conflict with the music framework and that is why, in the Chinese theatrical (*Xiqu*) tradition, the music must be adjusted to accommodate the lyrics (more details regarding this tradition will be discussed in the next section on tones). In this case, both *chuang* and *zao* are 4th tones, and therefore would best be placed on the same pitch. Owing to the foregoing changes encountered on three levels, i.e., note value, beat, and tone, the unnatural discord between these two characters makes the phrase difficult to understand. That is probably why it was revised.
In TT2, this sentence is: *dai wo fei dao meng de yuan fang* (带我飞到梦的远方 – lead me to fly to the faraway dreamland). Although it is not as semantically faithful as TT1, it expresses the song’s central meaning – the happiness which Sophie feels that music has brought to her. This compromise enables a more important gain on the syntactical compatibility with the musical framework. Thus, the lyrics fit in with the musical stress, i.e., *fei* and *meng* coincide with the emphasized words ‘all’ and ‘joy’ in the source text, through the musical stresses. In addition to the lyrics-music relationship, the restructured translation also takes into account the overall coherence within the target text itself (e.g., a song offers wings for flying away to a dreamland), including its naturalness and rhyme.

**Example 2: A line from ‘I will be loved tonight’ (ILY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT2 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And <em>I will be loved tonight</em></td>
<td><em>wo jiu yao bei ai zai jin ye</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>I will be loved tonight</em></td>
<td><em>wo bei ai yong bao jin ye</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>我就要被爱在今夜</em></td>
<td><em>我被爱拥 抱 今 夜</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, even when the translator is aware of the musical stress, sometimes there is little room to manoeuvre on the syntactic level owing to the constraints of the music. ‘I will be loved tonight’ expresses the character’s happiness after long years of loneliness, hoping to finally find a man who loves her. This line is both the title and the key refrain, which recurs five times in the song. As the musical emphasis is on the words ‘I’, ‘will’, ‘loved’ and ‘night’, and with a musical rest before the last two syllables ‘tonight’, there does not seem to be much room to maneuver. Also, although the passive voice used in the source text is not as common in Chinese as in English, to convert it into an active voice, such as: ‘And he will love me tonight’, would shift the emphasis from ‘I’ to ‘he’, and from ‘love’ to ‘me’.

All these aspects may have contributed to the decision in favour of the almost word-for-word literal translation: *wo jiu yao bei ai zai jin ye* (我就要被爱在今夜). However, some problems still remain, e.g., the unidiomatic use of an agentless passive, *bei ai*, sounds very ‘translationese’. Also, even after omitting the first word ‘and’, the target text still has one extra syllable than the source text. These apparently slight problems are not ignored. In the promotional CD, the translation of this sentence is revised to *wo*
bei ai yong bao jin ye (我被爱拥抱今夜 – I will be embraced by love tonight).

Although ‘embraced by love’ is still a passive voice, when ‘love’ is shifted from a verb to a concept, it becomes more poetically and rhetorically sophisticated, and hence more acceptable for a passive voice structure. The better matching syllable count also helps balance the target text for both singability and comprehension.

4.1.3 Rhyme, rhythm and tones

Rhyme, rhythm, and tones are amongst the most distinctive features of Chinese song lyrics, because song lyrics are often considered as poetry set to music. This understanding stems from a very important characteristic of the Chinese poetic heritage. The common Chinese term *shige* (诗歌 – poetry), which combines *shi* (poetry) and *ge* (song), clearly indicates their close inner connection. Wu Xiangzhou (2010) points out: “An important characteristic of ancient Chinese poetry is the interdependence of poetry and music. Many poems exist as part of the musical composition”. Chinese poems were believed to be singable when written, such as those in *Shijing* (诗经 – The Book of Songs), the first Chinese poetry collection on record from around the 11th Century BC. All of these poems were originally lyrics with music attached for singing. Unfortunately, for many reasons, including defective notation techniques and orally based teaching and learning practices, the scores were gradually lost. Consequently, attention naturally shifted to focus on the features of rhyme, rhythm and tones for recital effects.

Inherited from such poetry tradition, lyrics in traditional Chinese theatre (a term which also refers to *xiqu* or Chinese opera) always comply with the poetic conventions for rhyme, rhythm and tone, although not so strictly. Since they are among the most important criteria for the aesthetic value of the poetic work, when the Chinese *xiqu* playwrights (in the Chinese theatrical tradition, the playwright composes both the script and the lyrics) compose their lyrics, they have to negotiate between meaning and these conventions.

There was a famous ‘debate’ in Chinese theatrical history concerning the roles of lyrics and music18. Tang Xianzu (1550-1616) who wrote *Peony Pavilion* and several other

---

18 Tang and Shen were commenting on each other’s work to a third person, and did not directly debate with each other.
theatrical classics, and Shen Jing (1553-1610) were both famous playwrights in the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), although their views on the role of the lyrics were described as opposite like ice is to coal (Wang Jide (?-1623), 1959: 165). Tang considered the content and style to be more important than the music. He considered that rigidly following the rules of music would suffocate the content and style, resulting in the inability to form sentences (Yu Qiuyu, 1983: 72). He therefore asserted that he “would rather bend, so as to break everyone’s voice, in order to maintain his intended meaning” (Wang Jide, ibid.). As a result, the performers often found the lyrics difficult to sing. Shen, on the contrary, would very carefully follow the conventions for rhyme, rhythm, tone, and music, even if it had to be at the expense of dislocated sentences (ibid.).

These two different perspectives highlight two contrasting functions of the lyrics: Tang emphasizes the literary and aesthetic values in their own right; whilst Shen prioritizes the lyrics to fit in with the conventions of rhyme, rhythm, tone, and music for the performance. Shen’s theory was developed further in practice by Li Yu (1610-1680), who was a playwright as well as a producer and director. From his own experience with a successful entertaining troupe, Li advocates performability: “the purpose of the lyrics is specifically for staging” (Li Yu, 2007: 100).

This debate has always had profound influences on the development of the lyrics-music relationship in traditional Chinese theatre. For instance, the format of qupaiti (曲牌体 lyrics follow music) has been replaced by banqiangti (板腔体 music follows lyrics), so that the lyricists are not required to rigidly fit their lyrics into the musical forms. It may have influenced the development of the contemporary working format for song writing, wherein the lyrics come first and the music comes second.

However, for the translation of Western musical lyrics, it is the opposite priority since with the imported works, the music is normally preserved and the lyrics need to be translated in order to fit into the music. When Les Misérables came to the Chinese mainland in 2002, a translation of the lyrics for use as surtitles, voluntarily submitted, was turned down by the Shanghai Grand Theatre owing to it being an exquisite text to

---

19 That was just an angry declaration after his work was revised by Shen. He did try to comply with the conventions for rhyme, rhythm, tone and music in his lyrical writings whenever possible. If he had not done so, we might not now see his masterpieces, such as Peony Pavilion, still being performed around the world.
read but near impossible to sing (Qian Shijin, quoted in Chong Yan, n.d.). The evaluations and priorities for lyrics translation, and their effects on Western musicals, hence need to be adjusted.

4.1.3.1 Rhyme

Jakobson points out: “Poetry in its epitome – the short lyric poem – involves rather a system of equivalent pieces of information expressed in various symbolic forms, the most characteristic of which is rhyme” (1985: 171, original emphasis). In Chinese poetry, rhyme plays a particularly significant role. As discussed earlier, through the Chinese tradition, poems and songs were closely connected. Nowadays song lyrics are still keeping their rhymes, although not so strict as in poetry.

Formed by characters, the rhyme schemes in the Chinese language are not denoted by letters of the alphabet as in English. However, the same principle is adopted for their phonetic features, i.e., the vowels, to arrange the rhyming patterns for the end rhymes in a stanza. This can be marked by the Chinese Phonetic System – Pinyin System

In the Pinyin system, vowels are called finals, and consonants are called initials. Within the Chinese characters, the positions of the initials (if there is one) and finals are always arranged as ‘initial + final’, as their names indicate. In other words, Chinese characters may or may not start with initials, but they always end with finals, e.g., ai (love); da (big); zou (walk). Although some characters have look-alike consonants at the end, they are in fact compound finals which contain mixtures of initials and finals. For example, in ting (stop) and xian (fresh), [ing] and [ian] are compound finals. Hence, there is no danger in Chinese to have a line finishing with consonants such as ‘th’ or ‘m’, which are difficult to sing at the end of a lyrical line. However, as in English, closed vowels would worry Chinese performers if they fall on a high pitch or a long note.

Rhyme is one of the key devices for songs in musicals to achieve their aesthetic effects. Hence between the Broadway songwriting partnership Richard Rodgers (1902-1979), the composer, and Lorenz Hart (1895-1943), the lyricist, Rodgers was especially

---

20 Pinyin is an alphabetically based tool developed in 1957 for assisting the phonetic annotation of Chinese characters. It has since been applied in wider fields, including dictionary indexing and computer keyboard input methods. In this thesis, the Chinese rhyming schemes will be explained using the Pinyin system.
impressed with Hart’s appreciation of lyrical techniques such as “inner rhyming” (Zollo, 2002), to which Chinese musical translators always pay particular attention. YC says: “the Chinese lyrics basically depend on rhyme schemes, and these require a strategy of free translation” (Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3). The following examples illustrate two of the ways in which rhymes are negotiated and prioritized in the target lyrics.

a) Rhyme over meaning

**Example 1: Lines from ‘Super trouper’ (MM)**

Accuracy often takes a secondary position when it conflicts with rhyme and syllable count – the two most important features for singability. Another example is ‘Super trouper’ (MM). Here, two lines are describing the characters’ happy memories of their past: ‘smiling having fun, feeling like a number one’. The end rhyme is ‘fun’ and ‘one’. The translated target text is

\[
\text{xiao de duo yu kuai, gan jue zi ji zui jing cai} \quad (\text{笑得多愉快, 感觉自己最精彩})
\]

which, when translated back, is: ‘smile happily, feeling (my)self most splendid’. The reason the second line was not translated literally as \(\text{gan jue zi ji shi di yi} \ (\text{感觉自己是第一})\), which is faithful and accurate to the source text and with the right syllable count, is clearly related to the end rhyme. If faithfully converted, the second line would end with \(\text{yi} \) which does not rhyme with the previous line \(\text{kuai} \). Whilst maintaining the overall sense of the ST, the current translation ends with \(\text{cai} \), which matches the previous line’s end rhyme perfectly.

**Example 2: Lines from ‘I will be loved tonight’ (ILY)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source text</th>
<th>TT and Pinyin</th>
<th>TT and Pinyin in CD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can go from week to week</td>
<td>(\text{Guo le yi zhou you yi zhou}) (\text{Guo le yi nian you yi nian})</td>
<td>(\text{Guo le yi tian you yi tian}) (\text{Guo le yi nian you yi nian})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You can go from year to year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(\text{过了一周又一周}) (\text{过了年又一年})</td>
<td>(\text{过了一天又一天}(\text{tian})) (\text{过了又一年}(\text{nian}))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, in ‘I will be loved tonight’ (ILY), the rhyme-word is shifted from an accurate translation \(\text{zhou}\) (week) to \(\text{tian}\) (day). This is because \(\text{zhou}\) does not rhyme with \(\text{nian}\) (year), which is the key word in the next line. By changing it to \(\text{tian}\), the target text becomes a neatly rhyming couplet. From the perspective of singability, \(\text{tian}\) is a more open vowel than \(\text{zhou}\), and therefore it is easier to sing and to hear. This shift away from a perspective of semantic accuracy to the source text illustrates the precedence of
rhyming in lyrics translation. In addition to storyline development and characterization, it is more often moods rather than facts which the lyrics in musicals aim to create. The translation decision to compromise the accuracy for the rhyming effects, and hence singability in this song, is clearly driven by such functions.

b) Following the ST rhyming

Example 4: Stanzas from ‘Mamma Mia’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mamma mia, here I go again</td>
<td>Mama mia hai shi</td>
<td>妈妈咪呀还是忘不了</td>
<td>Mamma mia, still can’t forget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My my, how can I resist you?</td>
<td>Bye Bye bu gai shuo de tai zao</td>
<td>Bye Bye 不该说的太早</td>
<td>Bye Bye shouldn’t have said so soon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamma mia, does it show again?</td>
<td>Mama mia ying jing tao bu diao</td>
<td>妈妈咪呀 已经逃不掉</td>
<td>Mamma mia, can no longer escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My my, just how much I’ve missed you?</td>
<td>Lai Lai yi ge yong bao ye hao</td>
<td>来来一个拥抱也好</td>
<td>Come come, a hug will do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HG (the Chinese director for MM) also considers that the compatibility of the translation with the original lyrics should be emphasized: “It can be free translation and doesn’t have to be literal translation. However, the mood of the song must be conveyed. It must rhyme” (Personal interview, 2011-9-20). In the following example, the strategy for copying the rhyme scheme of the source text is employed to reflect the original lyrics-music relationship.

As shown in the back translation, in order to maintain the rhyme scheme, the target text has kept the central meaning of the source text but with a completely different narration, e.g., from ‘here I go again’ to hai shi wang bu liao (还是忘不了 – still can’t forget); and from ‘Yes, I’ve been broken-hearted’ to Kan bu dao ni de shi jian (看不到你的时间).
The time that I can’t see you). In particular, the two pairs of parallel lines, built on the rhymes of the expressive particles in the source text, are cleverly done. Copying the vowels of the expressive particles ‘my my’ and ‘why why’, the target text converts them to the similar lead words ‘Bye Bye’, *lai lai* (come come) and *kuai kuai* (quick quick). The target text thereby not only copies the repetitive pattern from the ST, but also creates perfect cohesion and coherent feelings for the characters. Engel calls this effect ‘particularization’ (1972: 50), which is essential for musical lyrics to focus ideas and feelings. To change from ‘resist you’ to ‘saying bye bye’, and from ‘miss you’ to ‘a hug’ injects more vivid and tangible affection into the song.

In terms of the meaning, on the other hand, there are clearly discrepancies between the source and target texts, e.g., ‘Why, why did I ever let you go’ is translated into *Kuai Kuai ba wo dai dao ni de mian qian* (快快，把我带到你的面前 – Quick quick, let me come to you). This may be owing to the literal Chinese equivalent of ‘why’ (为什么) containing three syllables: *wei shen me*, which would not be able to match the source text and its musical framework. Therefore, although this translation is effectively a parody of the source text, since the rhyming scheme relates intertextually with the source text, the translation strategy employed here is clearly singability orientated. According to the translator JF, the connections established with the source text stem from their “tendency to use the source text rhyme” (Personal interview, 2011-9-21). In other words, it was intended to fit the translated lyrics into the musical framework, rather than relating it semantically to the source text. This may be due to the fact that most of the Chinese audience may not be familiar with the ABBA songs, and therefore, a less semantically accurate translation is acceptable.

Fu Xianzhou, a researcher of musicals, points out: “Translators of lyrics from English to Chinese seek not only the semantic coherence between the source and target texts, but also the similarity of their phonetic forms” (2012/3: 63). He stresses: “The similarity of the phonetic forms, which includes the rhythm, the syllable count, and the vowels and consonants, is the key to ensuring the suitability of the matching between the target text and the music (ibid. 65).
Although the song has been considerably rewritten, the central meaning of the source text is kept with cohesion and coherence to the song as a whole. Such a manipulation is the result of negotiations between the interacting aspects and then seeking a balance for the best effects. The slight loss of accuracy to the source text is compensated by the singable target text seamlessly fitting in with the musical framework, so that it is easy to sing and clear for listening to.

4.1.3.2 Tones
As part of the phonetic devices of the Chinese language, tones play a key role in verbal communications. This is why, although the same written form is used on the Chinese mainland, people from different regions with different dialect and different tonal systems, may not always understand one another when speaking. As discussed at the beginning of this section, tones also play a key role in reciting and even singing Chinese shige. This is owing to tone being one of the determining elements of the Chinese rhyming system, which is based on both the vowels and the tone patterns of Chinese characters. Wang Li considers that tone and rhyme in poetry are very closely related to each other. For instance, he points out: “The same characters with different tones usually cannot rhyme” (1979: 5).

A recent study even suggests that the reason why we cannot find the music scores for ancient Chinese poems is not as people previously believed that they were lost. The tonal characters themselves act not only as the linguistic devices, but also as the ‘musical notes’ (Song Guangsheng, 2009). Wu Xiangzhou also found that in ancient China there was a singing method based on the characters’ natural tones (2006: 221). Although these findings still need more evidence for confirmation, they illustrate the potentially powerful role which tones may contribute to singing. Since for the time being I am unable to further explore in this interesting direction owing to the scale of this thesis, I will only focus on the interacting role which tones play with the musical framework in lyrics translation.

However, in song lyrics, when tone meets music, even though it coordinates well with the rhyme, it would inevitably be lost to the tune of the music. Undoubtedly, as in any language, sung words are more difficult to follow than spoken words. For tonal languages, it is even more so. Therefore, a commonly shared tradition among the
Chinese theatre audience is very telling: *ting shengshu, kan shuxi* (听生看熟戏 – listen to an unknown tale by the storyteller, watch a familiar repertoire in the theatre) (for a useful discussion see Cui Wei, 2007). This means that one goes to the storyteller if one wants to learn a story; and one goes to the theatre if one wants to watch its performance\(^{21}\). This is why it has recently become a common practice for Chinese *xiqu* performances to also start using surtitles for songs (but not dialogues) in theatres. This is also one of the main reasons why in Chinese films, whenever there is a song, there are usually subtitles even though it is sung in Chinese. These practices indicate the need to assist the audience in understanding the sung lyrics.

From a different perspective, a Chinese scriptwriter’s views may help with further insights about this tradition. Through observing the Italian performance of *Turandot* by Puccini in Beijing in 1998, and his own *Sichuan* opera based on the same storyline, a successful Chinese scriptwriter Wei Minglun summarizes four major differences between them. He believes that the Western opera focuses on vocal skills, the orchestra, lighting, and *mise-en-scène*; whilst the Chinese *xiqu* focuses on libretto, drama, emotion, and the logical development of the storyline (2002). Thus, if the audience is not already acquainted with the story, it is hard to both grasp the suspense of the storyline and enjoy the highly exquisite performance at the same time.

Under the influence of such theatrical traditions, the importance of the roles that libretto and storyline play in theatrical performances is understandable. The Chinese audience is used to paying more attention to the libretti and the storylines (although some audience members may well prefer performances over stories for their own particular reasons, such as fans following their idol). As one of the key elements for comprehension, if the tones get lost, the audience’s understanding and enjoyment of the performance will be adversely affected.

---

\(^{21}\) Storytelling in Chinese is known as *shuoshu* (talking book) or *pingshu* (commenting book). ‘Book’ here refers to story books such as novels, and the storyteller is called *shuoshu ren* (说书人- the person who narrates books). The storyteller not only narrates the stories from books, but also adds his/her own explanations and comments, as well as performing some gestures. Since it usually only requires one person with a few simple props, such as a fan; a ‘*xing mu*’ (a kind of wooden hammer to signal an emphasis), a table and a chair, it can be performed almost anywhere and at minimal cost. Even to this day it remains a popular entertainment genre.
This cultural background may have implications for the translation strategies employed for translating Western musicals and their effective reception. For the audience, tone loss could be even more of a hindrance since the story and its context are new, and consequently a little confusing or misleading detail may easily affect their appreciation of the storylines and of the characterization. In fact, the findings from my online audience surveys give such indication: 38% of respondents consider tone loss to be one of the major difficulties in their understanding of the lyrics and in following the story. This difficulty may also contribute to 75% of respondents preferring surtitles to singable translations. In this respect, visual communication, as discussed earlier in terms of characters, appears to strengthen the content side of the translation, and to offset some of the problems in the sound medium.

Tone could be a daunting challenge for those who are not familiar with tonal languages. Fiz Shapur, the music director for the Chinese translated version of *Cats*, realized the crucial role of the Chinese tones: “Taking into account the Chinese syllables, phonology, and in particular the tones, is very difficult. The slightest mistake will cause ambiguity” (Zhang Yan, 2012). This remark shows the impact which tones may have on music, which may affect singability.

The relationship between tones in the lyrics and the music has always been an issue for Chinese playwrights. Yu Huiyong (2008: 15-16) defines the relationship between music and lyrics as the restrictive relationship of the lyrics’ tone to the melody’s undulating motion. He explains: “If the tone and the melody are coherent with each other, the song is harmonious and easy to understand. If the lyrics are compromised to follow the music, they will become unnatural or even misleading” (ibid. 7).

Therefore, according to Yu, the traditional Chinese theatre favours following the norm of ‘music obeys lyrics’ (ibid. 10), and the main reason is:

> Music is more flexible than lyrics since it can express the lyrics in many different ways, though there may not be many synonyms with different tones to fit the same music. That is why, in the contemporary theatre composition, fitting music to lyrics is much more commonly used than fitting lyrics to music. (ibid. 11)
This is also common practice in the other forms of song writing in China. Since the characters’ change in tone with the music is inevitable, ‘music obeys lyrics’ does not mean that the music completely follows the lyrics, otherwise the lyrics would be recited rather than sung. The rationale for this method is the relative movements in the tone values of Chinese characters. For instance zou lu (走 路 – walk) is a two-character phrase, with zou in the fall-rise third tone, and lu in the downward fourth tone. As long as the music follows this movement, the lyrics-music relationship is natural and coherent, which is called ‘zheng zi’ (正字 – correct tonal order of characters). Otherwise, if the music goes against the lyrics’ natural tonal movements, it becomes ‘dao zi’ (倒字 – reversed tonal order of characters), which could cause confusion or misinterpretation. Yu illustrates (ibid. 20-21) 15 different musical phrases to match zou lu, with varied compositions of the numbers of notes, intervals, and rhythmic patterns. There is no doubt that, when the music and the tones of the lyrics are in harmony with each other, the songs are more comfortable to sing and easier to understand.

From the linguistic perspective, Chao Yuan Ren also found that Chinese song composition is under the influence of this particular lyrics-music relationship. As the most distinguished contemporary linguist in the Chinese language (who devised the tonal notation for transcribing the pitch variations for Putonghua) and a highly regarded amateur song composer, Chao points out: “It is almost impossible to completely separate the different functions of the phonetic pitch from the spoken language and the singing phrases” (1987: 4). Through experiments on his own compositions into the relationship between the language tones and the music’s melody, Chao found:

There is not so strict a match on the stress accent between the Chinese words and music, as in the alphabetical languages. However, if the tones of the Chinese words are not matched properly, they would be drawn into the musical tunes. The concern is that the listeners would find them difficult to understand. Even when they did understand, they would feel it unnatural for listening. (2005: 15)

Wang Zhenya, a well-known music composer and educator, compliments Chao’s work for achieving excellent artistic effects:

A basic musical theme evolves following the lyrics, the tones, the meaning, and their different positions in the musical structure, as well as the changes to the contents, containing similarity with differences and coherence with variations. (1992: 89)
Nevertheless, although these strategies employed in the Chinese theatre and song composition are effective, it would be difficult to apply them in the translation of Western musicals owing to the fact that the music usually remains unchanged. Therefore, it is the lyrics that have to change in order to match the melody, and this is when the conflicts between the tones and the music surface. Zhao Jiyun, the Chinese music director for the Chinese translation of *Cats* explains:

> While converting English polysyllabic words into monosyllabic Chinese characters, you can’t forget about the tones in Chinese. There are times when the character’s tone goes down while the melody goes up. The melody can’t be changed, so we adjust the lyrics to better match with it. (Song, 2012)

Clearly, the issue between the tonal features of the Chinese language and music adds one more complication to the challenges a translator faces. As Jin Fuzai notes:

> The difficult point in musical translation is how to ensure that the Chinese lyrics’ tones cohere with the melody, and how to ensure the compatibility between the Chinese tones and the English syllables. (2012: 51)

Some other Chinese song translators also regard tones as one of the most crucial phonological issues in musical lyrics translation. Xue Fan, a veteran translator of musical and song lyrics, believes that apart from conveying the source text meaning and the appropriate grasp of the literary language, rhyme and rhythm, how well the ‘zheng zi’ and ‘dao zi’ are handled is extremely important for the quality of the translation (2002: 146).

Obviously, nobody would expect lyrics to fully maintain their natural tones alongside the music and, therefore, it is not uncommon to see the ‘dao zi’ lyrics in many pop songs. It does not matter much when these songs stand alone and we can get used to the ‘unnatural’ change after hearing them repeatedly. For instance, an example of ‘dao zi’ quoted by Xue Fan (2002: 138) concerns a phrase which means ‘come back’, and then becomes ‘come ghost’ owing to the reverse movements of the melody from its natural tones. However, since this was one of the hottest songs at the time because of the singer’s charismatic appeal, it was heard almost everywhere and many people learnt to sing it without complaining of this mismatch.

On the other hand, for songs of the dramatic genre such as in operas or musicals, it is a different matter when they function for characterization and the development of the
story. It is crucial that the audience should simultaneously understand the meaning with minimum confusion, since they may not have a second chance to listen to the songs again during the performance. With such considerations in mind, the translators of MM assert that: “We strive to make every word understood by the audience in the first instance, just like listening to a speech” (CE & JF, personal interview. 2011-9-21). The following are a few examples illustrating how negotiations between the lyrics’ tonal movements and the musical framework have taken place.

**Example 1: A line from ‘Thank you for the music’ (MM)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT2 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What a joy, what a life, what a chance!</td>
<td>{这快乐，这人生，这精彩！} /\zhe kuai le, zhe ren sheng, zhe jing cai/ [this joy, this life, this splendour]</td>
<td>{一颗心，一份爱，一片天！} /lyi ke xin, yi fen ai, yi pian tian/ [a heart, a love, a sky]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this song, the sentence ‘What a joy, what a life, what a chance!’ was first translated into \zhe kuai le, zhe ren sheng, zhe jing cai (这快乐，这人生，这精彩！– this joy, this life, this splendour), a faithful translation except for the last phrase. The change made in translating ‘chance’ is certainly not due to non-equivalence in lexis, as it can be translated literally in Chinese to \ji hui or \ji yu. However, as the last phrase of the stanza is on the accented high notes of that bar, it would be difficult to sing either hui or yu since they are closed vowels (according to the Chinese rhyme convention). Cai is an open vowel, and therefore it is easy to sing with the music, which may well be the reason that it was chosen. However, there is still a problem with the tones for the phrase. In speech, jing cai is pronounced on the falling sequence of the 1st to 3rd tones. When it is set to the music of an ascending second interval, this phrase sounds more like ‘quiz’ (竞猜), which has the same spelling in pinyin although with the upward tones. This is the situation that Yu calls ‘music and lyrics set against each other’ – 腔词相背 (2008: 8).

In the second translation version, the target text is entirely rewritten to: \yi ke xin, yi fen ai, yi pian tian (一颗心，一份爱，一片天！– a heart, a love, a sky). It shifts not only the meaning, but also makes use of the Chinese classifiers for each noun, which helps with padding the three-character phrases to match the syllable count in the source text.
The outcome is that the end-phrase is in the tonal sequence of 2nd-4th-1st, and thus comfortably matches the corresponding music phrase. Yu calls this kind of ‘music and lyrics going along with each other’ (腔词相顺) (2008: 10). Also, the ending vowel for tian belongs to a group of open vowels in the Chinese rhyming system and can thus be sung easily.

This practice illustrates how the translators attempt to balance the different perspectives through compromising the accuracy of the source text in order to prioritize singability.

For the translators of MM:

The first important task is ease of singing, which means a complete match between the lyric’s syllable count and the music; the second one is ease of understanding, which means ensuring that the language tones match well with the melody. (CE & JF, personal interview, 2011-9-21, my emphasis)

Xue Fan’s experience tells him that since “lyrics translation is restricted by the contents and choice of words, etc. in the source text, it is not realistic to expect a complete match between the movements of the target text tones and the melody of the music” (2002: 145).

However, “When the musical stress fits the linguistic accent, it can express [the meaning] fully, and also be comfortable to listen to”, says JH, one of the performers in MM (Personal interview, 2012-9-22). The lyrics translation which impressed him most was a song called ‘One of us’. The translation for ‘feeling stupid, feeling small’ is na me tian zhen na me sha (那么天真那么傻 – so naïve so stupid). The repeated adverb na me is on the descending second intervals on both occasions, which corresponds to their range of the fourth and the light tones. The word tian zhen is on a unison interval, which corresponds to its tone range of 1st-1st. The last word sha is on a descending sixth interval from me. (Although na me is raised both times from its natural tones on the music notes, it is one of the fixed phrases which has no homophone to cause confusion). In this way, the tonal movements from the first tone for tian zhen downwards to the third tone for sha, more or less match the melodic movements, and therefore they sound as clear as if in their naturally spoken tones.

Example 2: A line from ‘Voulez-vous’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT2 (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nothing promised, No regrets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>{一切都取决于你}</th>
<th>{一切都由你决定}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/yi qie dou qu jue yu ni/</td>
<td>/yi qie dou you ni jue ding/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[everything is up to your decision]</td>
<td>[everything is up to your decision]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A similar instance also occurs in the song ‘Voulez-vous’ in MM, where the line ‘Nothing promised, No regrets’ is shifted into *yi qie dou qu jue yu ni* (一切都取决于你 – everything is up to your decision). While the tones for *qu jue* should be an upward of 3rd-2nd, the music runs in the opposite direction with a descending third interval, which results in ‘*dao zi*’ when sung.

Furthermore, from the point of view of syntax, the source text consists of two short phrases with a comma separating them. Although there is no rest in the music score, the syntactic stress should be on the first and the fifth syllables, i.e., ‘no’ in ‘nothing’ and ‘no’ in ‘no regrets’. However, the target text is a single whole sentence on its own and therefore, the comma in the source text falls between the two-character phrase *qu jue*. As a result, the emphasis shifts to the second character *jue*, which not only breaks its connection with *qu*, but also makes it sound as if it is the lead for the following part of the line. This inappropriate syntactic emphasis makes the target lyrics uncomfortable for listening, and possibly difficult to understand. Fortunately, the translators said in my interview that they had already realized this discrepancy and accordingly came up with a revised paraphrase for the same meaning: *yi qie dou you ni jue ding* (一切都由你决定). In this way, rather than the upward tonal movement of 3rd-2nd for *qu jue*, *you ni* is on the downward tonal movement of 2nd-3rd, which matches the descending interval in the music and thereby sounds more natural.

**Example 3: Changing music for the tone?**

This sense of naturalness can be very powerful owing to the instinct of Chinese speakers for the tones they are brought up with. During my interviews with the translators for MM (CE & JF, 2011-9-21), they recall a very interesting incident concerning the tones. In the song ‘Money Money Money’, the sentence *ren men yao qiu tai gao* (人们要求太高 – people demand too much) proves to be an uneasy task for the performer. This is owing to *tai* sounding like the third tone with the corresponding music note, instead of its original fourth tone, which makes the phrase *tai gao* almost
unrecognizable. During the rehearsals, owing to her natural reactions towards this word, the performer wanted to change back to its natural tone, which made the English music director very anxious. If he had understood the reasons behind it, he might have been more understanding and allowed an adjustment for that particular musical note.

4.1.3.3 Rhythm
In Chinese classical poetry as Yuan notes, a rhythm is determined by two factors: the syllabic grouping and the rhyming (2005: 97-98). He explains:

Phonetically, the Chinese language has no noticeable differences in terms of being either long and short or stressed and unstressed, so these cannot form the rhythm. The Chinese poems always rhyme at the end of the line, which is a pause for both meaning and sound. This pause, together with rhyming, can make an even stronger sense of rhythm. (ibid. 99)

The syllabic phrases on alternating tones form the regular pattern of stress in Chinese poetry. In Chinese classical poetry, not only the tonal phrasing groups are required to alternate within the lines, certain sentences also need to contrast with their opposite pairing in terms of meaning, part of speech, tone, and structure of the phrases if they are couplets. For instance, for a *qi yan* poem (七言诗) with seven characters per line, the alternating tonal patterns could be AABBAAB followed by BBAABBA, etc. It is this combination of tones and phrasing, together with the rhyme schemes, which forms the rhythmic cadence of Chinese poetry.

As previously mentioned, although the Chinese song lyrics are regarded as sung poetry, they do not strictly follow the poetic conventions. However, song lyrics have to be able to fit in with the musical framework. When the lyrics match the musical phrases, and their tones and rhymes integrate with the melody, meter and tempo, the poetic features and the music complement each other well. The rhythmic lyrics can help strengthen the songs’ impact and contribute to their aesthetic effects on the audience. My online audience surveys show that 25% of the audience rate *lang lang shang kou* (朗朗上口 – reciting rhythmically) as the most enjoyable aspect of musical lyrics.

The following examples illustrate how the rhythmic effects are sought in lyrics translation of musicals.
Example 1: Stanzas from ‘S.O.S’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT (with Pinyin)</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When you’re gone</td>
<td>{你走掉}</td>
<td>You depart, how can I find a way to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can I even try to go on?</td>
<td>{我怎么 有办法 去寻找}</td>
<td>search</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you’re gone</td>
<td>{你走掉}</td>
<td>You depart, how can I survive, it can’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Though I try, how can I carry on?</td>
<td>{我怎么 活下去 办不到}</td>
<td>be done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The song ‘S.O.S’ in MM has a parallel construction with the repetition of the lead line of ‘when you’re gone’. The rhyme scheme of ABAB works perfectly within the musical framework. The target text endeavours to reflect the connection between the source text and the musical framework, because the rhythmic patterns of the song are strongly emphasized by the musical phrasing. The target text is grouped into eight three-character phrases. In this way, it closely follows the musical phrases and punctuations in order to ensure that the target lyrics match the song’s rhythmic pattern. This arrangement is very helpful for the performers to follow the rhythms and is thus clearer for the audience to listen to.

Example 2: Stanzas from ‘Mamma Mia’ (MM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT (with Pinyin)</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was cheated by you</td>
<td>{我还记得当年}</td>
<td>I still remember that year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And I think you know when</td>
<td>{莫名被你欺骗}</td>
<td>Inexplicably cheated by you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So I made up my mind</td>
<td>{我还记得那天}</td>
<td>I still remember that day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It must come to an end</td>
<td>{离开你的身边}</td>
<td>When leaving you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...</td>
<td>{一眨眼我看见你在微笑}</td>
<td>……</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{一瞬我心开始燃烧}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The commonly used devices for creating the rhythmic patterns include various syntactic structures such as repetition and rhyming. Translation usually follows the source text.
structure to match the musical phrasing for the rhythmic effects. In this theme song of MM, the target text not only copies the rhyme scheme from the source text to realize a perfect match with the existing music (as already discussed in the section on rhyme), but it also employs the syntactic devices to create the matching rhythmic patterns. For example, with the first stanza, although the target text retains the central meaning of the source text, it cannot be said to be a faithful translation in the strict sense. In other words, there seems almost no equivalence at the semantic, syntactic and grammatical levels.

This is the practice as Susan Bassnett observes: “The musical rhythms dominate the verbal structures, and translators have to reconceive the text entirely” (2000: 101). Through using repetitive devices for building parallel constructions, the cohesion of the stanza is established in the rewritten target text. The first and third lines are the same except for the one change from dang nian (that year) to na tian (that day).

In the next stanza, the source text is itself a near parallel structure. It is converted into a neat parallel pair, although some shifts in meaning do occur: yi zha yan wok an jian ni zai wei xiao, yi shun jian wo de xin kai shi ran shao (one blink I see you’re smiling, one split second my heart starts burning). Furthermore, in both stanzas the target texts are equipped with neat end-rhymes, which is how Chinese rhyme complements rhythm (Yuan, 2005: 99). The combination of these parallel features and rhyme schemes employed in the target text plays an important role in strengthening the rhythmic patterns to match the steady metre and moderate tempo of the music. This translation strategy clearly demonstrates the translators’ evaluations of their priority on the aesthetic effects for the lyrics’ rhythmic appeal over their literal accuracy.

In the foregoing first part of this chapter, the discussions concern the aspects of syllable count, syntax, rhyme, rhythm, and tone, as well as how they are negotiated to achieve the singability of the lyrics’ translation. In the second part, I will focus on the performance related issues, and investigate whether and how these factors influence the singable lyrics’ translation of musicals.

**4.2 Performance-related issues**
Song numbers in musicals are not the same as stand-alone songs, since they have to cohere with the multiple aspects involved for stage performances, including the choreography and the mise-en-scène. This is not just about whether the lyrics are able to be performed by the actor or actress, it is also about their overall audio and visual integrity for the audience. In other words, it is about what the audience hears and what they see as a whole. Therefore, in addition to the literal meaning and the singability, the performance-related issues are also important interacting factors for the translators to consider in their translation decision making process.

4.2.1 Coherence between libretti and choreography

Concerning choreography in musicals HG, the Chinese director for the Chinese translation of MM, says:

Dance interacts with lyrics, that’s why during the rehearsals, the English choreographer always asks for the meaning of the lyrics. Although the choreography was already set, they would make some minor adjustments according to the syntax of the Chinese lyrics”. (Personal interview, 2011-9-20)

When the translators work on their target text, the considerations are more on the semantic aspects and the relationships between lyrics and music, as we have already discussed. However, sometimes performance related issues may also occur, which may lead to negotiations between the lyrics translation and the other aspects of the production.

*Example 1: Prioritizing the choreography for the cultural adaptation*

For example, in MM the main character Donna sings ‘Money Money Money’ telling of her struggles with life and desires to win at casinos in Las Vegas or Monaco. According to the translators:

It was initially translated into ‘winning the lottery’ to suit the Chinese context. However, as the choreography for counting the cards in Vingt-et-un had already been fixed, the translation was therefore revised to gambling at a casino in Macao. Since these places are non-referential, using Macao makes sense as well (CE & JF, personal interview, 2011-9-21).

*Example 2: A stanza from ‘Under attack’ (MM)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Won’t somebody please, <em>Have a heart</em>, Come and rescue me</td>
<td><em>Shei neng jie gei wo yi shuang shou</em>, <em>Dai wo tao chu zhe</em></td>
<td>谁能借给我一双带我逃出这里</td>
<td>Who can lend me a hand, Help me escape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since lyrics and choreography are both among the major semiotic codes in theatre performances, it is important to ensure coherent relations between the audio-visual interactions in order to provide the audience with holistic enjoyment. When possible, translators themselves often seem to take initiatives to link their translation with the choreography. For example, the song ‘Under attack’ in MM describes Sophie’s nightmare about the complicated relationship with her three possible fathers. Part of the choreography is a group of dancers with their hands outstretched to portray Sophie’s desperation for help. Taking this visual image into consideration, the translators rewrote the target text as ‘who can lend me a hand, take me away from here’, making the lyrics more coherently related with the choreography.

Example 3: Lines in ‘Don’t panic’ (Spin)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT in Pinyin</th>
<th>TT</th>
<th>BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus, move, go</td>
<td>Zuo, you, zou</td>
<td>左, 右, 走</td>
<td>Left, right, go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watch your back...</td>
<td>Yan hu</td>
<td>掩护</td>
<td>cover</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interaction between lyrics translation and choreography does not merely reflect on what is to be linked, but also on how to link them. ‘Don’t panic’ in Spin is a situational song accompanied by fast dance movements. Having unwittingly encountered some criminal activities in his investigation, Jackson has become the target for these criminals. He and his girlfriend Klara are trying to escape but the gang is hot on their heels. While they are trying to find their way out, the men following them are frantically searching every nook and cranny. The sense of fear and anxiety is expressed through the fast tempo in both the song number ‘Don’t Panic’ and its accompanying choreography.

The choreography for the pursuing gang has a fast and rhythmic pattern in a typically regimental style. Reflecting such actions, short imperatives ‘focus’, ‘move’, ‘go’ and ‘watch your back’ are used in the source lyrics to further intensify the mood. Normally, translating these short stanzas involves rewriting as, when no direct equivalent can be found in the target language, there is less room for manoeuvre, such as explaining in a different way.
In translating this song, the target text copies the source text form by using the brief terms ‘left’ (左), ‘right’ (右), ‘go’ (走) and ‘cover’ (掩护). Clearly, some of them are not faithful equivalents of the source texts, such as ‘left’ and ‘right’. They could be translated literally, e.g. ‘focus’ could be literally translated as  

ji zhong jing shen (集中精神) or ji zhong zhu yi li (集中注意力), which contain four and five syllables respectively. ‘Move’ can also be literally translated to yi dong (移动). ‘Go’ has the equivalent zou (走); and ‘watch your back’ could be literally translated into a four-character phrase xiao xin bei hou (小心背后).

Although these translations can faithfully retain the meaning of the source text, most of them have more syllables than the source text, so that the performers would find it difficult to recite in the context along with their acting for that scene. Even if they work hard to overcome these difficulties and manage to recite, while dancing with the accompanying rapid movements on stage, the audience would still find it difficult to follow.

Therefore, the performability of the lyrics takes precedence in the target lyrics over their literal conversion. Although, from the textual level, ‘left’ and ‘right’ do not seem to have any relevance to their source texts, they do in fact correspond well with the stage performances. These succinct military-command sounding terms correspond with the searching movements of forward and backward while circumspectly looking left and right. The semantic loss in translation is thus compensated by the coherent audio-visual stage effects.

**4.2.2 Coherence between lyrics and set design**

The coherence between lyrics and set design also plays an important audio-visual role in the overall theatrical effects. If they do not blend with each other, it may distract the audience from the storylines.

*Example 1: ‘Thank you for the music’ (MM)*

In ‘Thank you for the music’, the sentence ‘I am the girl with golden hair’ was first faithfully translated. Since the cast in the Chinese translation are all Chinese, it would
create an odd contrast to the image for both the performers and the audience. It was revised to ‘I am so lucky to sing this song for you’.

Example 2: Three versions of lines from ‘I have a dream’ (MM)

‘I have a dream’ is the song at the very end of the musical when the set changes to indicate the ending of the story. The example below shows three different translation strategies employed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT A (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT B (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
<th>TT C (with Pinyin and BT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I'll cross the stream I have a dream</td>
<td>跨过溪流 我有个梦 kua guo xi liu Wo you ge meng I cross the stream I have a dream</td>
<td>走上旅程 朝梦远行 Zou shang lü cheng Chao meng yuan xing Start the journey Towards the dream</td>
<td>岁月匆匆 我有个梦 Sui yue cong cong Wo you ge meng Time flies I have a dream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In TT A, ‘cross the stream’ is faithfully translated into 跨过溪流. However, the Chinese director suggested that the translator should reconsider the effects of the image. The rationale is that, in the source text, ‘cross the stream’ metaphorically implies overcoming difficulty. However, the literal translation is ambiguous. ‘Stream’ is a familiar term and image used in Chinese poetry and paintings, and it is always depicted as poetically and scenically symbolic. Therefore, for Chinese audience, ‘stream’ would not signify any obstacles. On the contrary, it would represent very pleasant Arcadian scenery.

TT C was a surtitle translation version by FYH (2007) for performances by the original cast, when they came to China in 2007. Here, ‘cross the stream’ was translated into ‘岁月匆匆’ which is a well-known Chinese metaphor. Its vivid and personalized image of swiftly moving time signifies seeking the right moment in life when ‘the time is right for me’. Clearly, this translation focuses more on the literary value of the lyrics themselves.

TT B is the lyrics for the current Chinese version. The reason why the shift was made from ‘cross the stream’ to ‘走上旅程’ was, as the translator explains, in order to relate to the stage design for this song number. In this scene, Sophie is saying goodbye to her mother and father and is about to set out on the journey with her boyfriend to explore
the outside world. While she is singing and they start walking towards the back of the stage, where there is a huge full moon in the sky, a light-effect path emerges to indicate their long journey. Although the lyrics translation does not follow the source text faithfully, it corresponds to the stage design and the performance, which helps to create a coherent audio-visual effect for the audience.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated the significant roles singability and performance-related issues play during the process of translating lyrics for musicals. Singability and performance related issues refer to the degree of fit between the target text and the existing musical framework as well as the staging. In addition to conveying the meaning of the source text, the translator has to ensure that the target text reflects the relationships between the source text and both the music and the staging.

Songs act in musicals to define characters, to narrate stories, as well as to set moods. Therefore, singability and performance-related issues are amongst the core aspects in the translation of musicals, as they concern both the performers and the audience. Whether the lyrics are able to be sung clearly by the performers inevitably affects the quality of the show, and more importantly, the reception, i.e., whether the audience can understand the lyrics, and consequently follow the storylines and the characterizations, for their full enjoyment of the musicals.

These comparisons and in-depth analyses of the source and target texts show that, in order to achieve effective reception, translators seek to negotiate between conveying the meaning of the source text and the various aspects related to singability and performance, including phonological, stylistic and syntactic features, as well as mise-en-scène. Such negotiations often result in changes being made to the target text. More often than not, elements which affect singability and performance of the lyrics, such as syllable count, syntax, rhyme, rhythm, tone, and staging, tend to take priority over faithfulness to the source text.

In addition to the changes made in the target texts, the discussions also involve possible alternatives together with feedback from interviews with translators and the audience surveys. This collateral evidence supports the findings that the translators’ decision-
making processes are influenced by various elements – actants, in ANT’s perspective. The consumer-oriented translation strategies employed, for the benefit of both the target text users, i.e., the production team members, and the receiving audience, help the translators to achieve a balance between these interacting aspects in the target text.

As discussed so far, translating musical libretti involves multi-perspectival dimensions well beyond the linguistic and textual levels. Hence, inputs from various stakeholders, such as the musical production team members and their professional expertise, and the receiving audience’s interests and their feedback, may also play significant roles during the translation process. The next chapter will focus on the interactions between translators and these stakeholders, and how their interactions affect the development of the target text.
Chapter 5. Interacting with the Stakeholders: case studies and audience surveys

Introduction

“The musical theatre is the most collaborative of arts” (Matthew White, 1999: v).

In the previous two chapters, I discussed how the lyrical conversions are negotiated in relation to linguistic, dramatic, and cultural factors, as well as to singable performance, during the textual development. This chapter now turns its attention to the influence of the stakeholders’ inputs and the interactions between the translators’ and the stakeholders’ perspectives as they affect the development of the target text. The discussion focuses on the translator as an actant in ANT’s terms who, operating under the constraints of the source text and interacting with other actants in the network, i.e., the various stakeholders involved, aims to produce a consumer-oriented target text in order to engage the audience. Data from stakeholder interviews and audience feedback surveys will be used to examine how, in each of the three musicals (ILY, Spin and MM), the development of the translated text is influenced by the inputs from various stakeholders, including the audience, and how these stakeholders’ domain-specific knowledge, expertise and interests play their significant roles during the interactions and negotiations.

Four specific questions will be addressed: First, in what ways do the stakeholders’ inputs influence the development of the target text; Second, how do translators respond to and interact with other stakeholders’ inputs; Third, how their differing expert knowledge is negotiated to reach a consensus; Fourth, what role the audience’s feedback plays in affecting the development of the target text.

Since each of these three cases under consideration in this thesis has its own unique modes of networking between specific stakeholders (actants in ANT’s term), the first part of this chapter analyses each of these musicals in turn as individual cases each providing differing perspectives on these issues. The second part focuses on the audience surveys conducted alongside these musicals’ performances, and aims to take a different viewpoint, namely that of the receivers, to compare against the perceptions from the production side. Although audience surveys do not influence translation
directly, the findings will provide evidence which will give certain indications on whether the consumer-oriented strategies used by the translators and the production team members are in line with the audience’s expectations, and hence achieve their objectives. In other words, the surveys serve as an evaluative instrument. Before examining the case studies, I begin with an introductory overview of three interlocking factors in this network connection: the role of the text, of the audience, and of the translator. These will help frame the detail which follows.

The first factor: the role of the translator
The translator plays a key role in the process of representing a musical for a different culture. In the Chinese director of MM, HG’s words: “Lyrics translation is really the most important part. If it does not work, this musical won’t work, especially for MM, as the other parts are all copied [from the original version]” (Personal interview 2011-9-20). However, musical translators do not work in isolation. There is a clear correlation of particular modalities with particular stakeholders, such as singability with performers. Therefore, the translators are part of a team for a production in which everyone is related to everyone else.

Although the extent of the translators’ involvements with other stakeholders (actants) varies between each of my three case studies, after their initial translations, the translators are all involved with their production teams in the process of revising the target texts. Such collaborations between the translator and the production team seem to be the common practice, as none of the translators in my cases departed after submitting their translations, and none of their translated texts was performed on stage without any changes being made.

Since the translators are usually native speakers of the target language, they are also part of the audience in the target culture, and hence would share the audience’s expectations for the translation. Such insider’s knowledge provides them with the means to select what they believe are the most effective translation strategies for the audience. However, the translators’ decisions are by no means always final. The musical’s genre features, together with its strong consumer orientation, require the translators’ practice to reflect the perspectives of other stakeholders, including the director, the musical director, the
choreographer and the performers, as well as the power relations and weighting of the respective stakeholder’s input.

The second factor: the role of the stakeholder

As discussed in the Introduction, a musical libretto is not for reading, but for performing, listening and viewing. Instead of being directly accessed by the reader through print, it is represented to the audience by the actors through their performances. In this sense, these actors are the first readers as well as the direct users of the translated text. They are mediators between the original play and the target audience. For them, the target text is the foundation for making a storyline come alive and, hence, their inputs directly influence the translated text.

This means that the translator operates under multiple influences in translating musicals. The textual conversion has now been transformed into a multi-semiotic discourse incorporating the director, the music director, the choreographer, the performers, as well as the audience. They operate under the influence of “a network of semiotic units belonging to different cooperative systems” (Elam, 1980: 6). Therefore, translating musicals is like an orchestra involving various players and instruments, and each plays a role, as an actant in a network, in the representation of the musical as a holistic product.

Pugliatti believes that the dramatic text “should not be seen as ‘units of the linguistic text translatable into stage practice’”, but rather as ‘a linguistic transcription of a stage potentiality which is the motive force of the written text’ (1976: 18, cited in Elam (1980, 2002: 191). This is because, as Elam explains: “[t]he performance brings about a multiplication of communicational factors. At each stage in the process there arises, rather than a single element, a complex of potential components” (ibid. 32). For Elam, text “is determined by its very need for stage contextualization” (ibid. 187). He considers that the stakeholders involved in a theatre production who may have contact with the texts include:

The director, whose decisions and instructions determine to a considerable extent the choice of transmitters, … together with such auxiliary influences on the performance as the set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, composer, stage manager, technicians, and the actors themselves in their capacity as decision-makers, initiative-takers, and funds of ideas (ibid. 32).
For these reasons, adjustments of the texts are likely to occur owing to each of these stakeholders’ specific presentational and practical requirements, as well as their cooperation.

The third factor: the role of the audience
The audience’s interests play a crucial role in the production of musicals. As discussed in the Introduction, for the musical genre every consideration is given to elements such as the contemporary and local themes, the multi-semiotic features, as well as the comedy because, as a form of commercially driven popular art entertainment, musicals need to quickly meet the audience’s expectations in order to achieve an enduring successful reception. Therefore, the producers and the production team always try to make adjustments in responding immediately to the audience’s reactions and feedback. In the same way, I make use of this mechanism for this research.

Principally adopting ANT as the conceptual and theoretical framework is useful in helping trace the interactions of these stakeholders and seeing how they affect the evolvement of the target text. As discussed in Chapter 2, ANT advocates that every role in the network has an agency, that they exist in relation with others, and that it is their interactions which make a difference to the course of events.

A musical’s production may be considered, as elaborated earlier in Chapter 2, to function as a fairly stable network environment in which various stakeholders work together to achieve their common goal of making the musical successful. Like the network in ANT, the translator’s role is inextricably linked with the other ‘actants’ as shown in the diagram in Chapter 2 (p. 43). Their interactions and negotiations involve various aspects of the semiotics, including singability and performability, involved in the libretto translation, in order to achieve a successful reception. Therefore, however the networking or interactions are established amongst these stakeholders, and whatever the interrelated factors such as expert knowledge and power-relationships, the negotiations, whether resulting in either priority or compromise, will be driven towards the interests of the audience.

5.1 Case studies of the Chinese translation of three Western musicals
Through the data collected from my field studies such as interviews and correspondence, as well as the secondary data from the public domain including media coverage, personal blogs and musical fans’ community websites, the discussions in this section focus on the different networks and interactions in each translation process occurring in the Chinese translation of three Western musicals – i.e., ILY, Spin, and MM.

Owing to the lack of complete data, as discussed in the methodology section of Chapter 2, I do not intend to fully describe the translation processes in the making of these three musicals. Instead, each of the following sections focuses only on a particular mode of network. In the first case, ILY, the focus is on the director and the cast – the ‘translation forum’. In case two, Spin, the principal focus is on a different style of network, where the negotiations occur specifically between one translator and one particular actor. More radically, the third section on MM assesses the democratization of the network, in which the audience is brought in to play an active role as stakeholders rather than just passive receivers.

The data in each case (for each musical) shows how particular networks are differently structured to find particular solutions to particular problems. Sometimes, such as for the first case, in which a painstaking line by line checking by the director and the cast takes place, the stakeholders’ role in the textual development and the issues of ownership negotiations are highlighted. Owing to the scale of this thesis, these discussions necessarily provide only partial views of each network. Nevertheless, the issues manifested during the process of translating musicals, such as consumer-oriented stakeholder interactions and expert knowledge, are powerfully illustrated by the data discussed below.

5.1.1. ILY: negotiations between the translator, the director and the cast
5.1.1.1 The influence of ‘Habitus’
In the Chinese translation of ILY, which is co-produced by the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre (SDAC) and Broadway Asia Entertainment (BAE), Joel Bishoff, the American director for the original version, was invited by the Chinese producer to direct the Chinese version. Before his arrival in Shanghai, Bishoff and YC (the translator) had already been discussing the script translation via email correspondence. Their
negotiations show one of the ways to understand the motivations behind the stakeholders’ interactions and the particular roles they play in the network.

As discussed in Chapter 2, ANT advocates the heterogeneous nature of the networks and therefore the actants, whether human or non-human, can make things happen during the network interactions. From this perception, the particular circumstances and experiences of the stakeholders can be considered as factors which consciously, subconsciously, or even unconsciously affect how they act. Bourdieu’s concepts of symbolic capital (which I have briefly discussed in Chapter 3 concerning the influence of the symbolic capital attached to some of the musicals, such as MM) and habitus are useful to further this understanding.

Bourdieu defines habitus as follows:

The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, ... which generate[s] and organize[s] practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (1990: 53)

Thompson also defines this term in a similar sense:

The habitus is a set of dispositions which incline agents to act and react in certain ways. The dispositions generate practices, perceptions and attitudes which are ‘regular’ without being consciously coordinated or governed by any ‘rule’. (John B. Thompson, 1991: 12, cited in Simeo ni, 1998: 16)

This statement would imply that one’s mind and behaviour are formed and developed during one’s experiences of life’s conditions. From this perspective, habitus may help trace the root of the actants’ agency that could also play a role in influencing the translators’ selection, revision, and evaluation of translation, as well as their interactions with other stakeholders (actants). If habitus concerns the human actants themselves, the combination of their own habitus, and their symbolic capital could influence the agency of the actants during their interactions in the network.

During the initial translation of the script for ILY, the development of the target text seemed to be influenced by the habitus and the symbolic capital relating to the professional work of both the translator and the director. In other words, their domain specific knowledge, as well as the experience gained from other aspects of their work,
may have already been embedded in them as a form of habitus. The habitus may subsequently enable the translator and the director to be “recognized as legitimate competence, as authority exerting an effect” (Bourdieu, 1986: 49), and hence acquire their symbolic capital as regarded by others. For these reasons, I will use the term ‘professional habitus’ (Simeoni, 1998: 18) and ‘professional symbolic capital’ for this specific context.

YC, who translated the scripts, is not a professionally trained translator. In fact, he is considered the “most prolific playwright in China” as “his plays written during the past decade have been staged more than those of any other living Chinese playwright” (Conceison, 2011: 311-312). In addition to his dramaturgy, as the deputy general manager of the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre (SDAC), YC has also been involved with the company’s marketing strategies for the audience’s reception. Drawing on such professional expertise and experience in both fields, he has a clear perception as to both the role and the function of the text. In our interview, YC recalled his first encounter with the source text of ILY:

I had several translation drafts. To start with, the translation tended to follow the source text but it could not be sung, especially with the inverted syntax, and therefore I always felt constrained. Later on, I had more of a sense of ‘writing’, which feels good (Personal interview, 2012-1-8).

This is why, on the transcript, it was clearly stated that YC’s work is ‘translation and adaptation’, rather than straight translation. From this experience, he realised that some free space to manoeuvre would help contribute to the musical’s effective resonance with the target audience. The clear focus on audiences and markets, in addition to the professional symbolic capital of his own dramaturgy, enabled him to prioritize the dramatic effect over accuracy. He said: “In translating musicals one may rewrite, even revise, so long as it is within the space and fits in with the storylines and the emotional expressions” (ibid.).

While YC found his way to negotiate with the source text, Joel Bishoff had different viewpoints on certain aspects. For instance, as a contemporary comedy, the prominently humorous and comical features of ILY were part of the focus of their negotiations. In our interview, Bishoff described his perceptions:
[YC] is an accomplished playwright in his own right and he did a great job. But the problem we still had was that the words became a little bit [YC]’s and not Joe DiPietro’s [the original playwright]. Some of the jokes are [YC]’s jokes and not Joe DiPietro’s jokes. So I took a little bit of time to find the way to translate [YC]’s jokes back to Joe DiPietro’s jokes, without losing their flavour. I had to find a half way point between [YC]’s jokes and Joe’s jokes. I couldn’t go all the way to Joe’s jokes because they would make no sense. If it went all the way to [YC]’s jokes, that wouldn’t be as exactly the characters I want them to be. So a lot of time was spent working on that (Personal interview, 2012-4-24).

The reasons why Bishoff insisted on retaining the original comical features may have stemmed from his role as one of the creators of the original musical long before his role as the director: “I really worked with them as an editor for a few years before we were actually doing the scripts” (ibid.). Such inside knowledge, plus the experience of directing various versions of this musical for over ten years, may be said to have helped in forming his professional habitus. His remarks reveal his attitude and motivation but they also reflect a rational analysis. He was passionate about the authenticity of the musical but at the same time, since he knew it thoroughly, he was in the position to allow more room for the Chinese translation to manoeuvre. This professional habitus was also manifest in the negotiations concerning the lyrics and their singability.

Singability, as discussed in Chapter 4, is one of the key aspects of lyrics translations. In most cases, the musical framework remains unchanged and it is the translator’s task to convert the source text into a target text which can fit in with the existing music, as well as matching the meaning, syllable count, syntax, etc. YC was fortunate, as Bishoff was able to play the dual roles of both the director and the music director, thanks to his close involvements with the original production. As Bishoff recalled: “I knew the music intimately, and I knew where we could expand the music a little bit to fit the lyrics, like a couple of syllables here and there. Sometimes it was not possible, and a lot of the time it was” (ibid.). Therefore, the collaboration between them went as follows: “[YC] and I worked back and forth, and that took a few weeks. He would send me scenes and songs22, and I would write back notes, and then he would readjust” (ibid.). Through allowing flexibility, this kind of negotiation effectively helps reduce the unnatural translationese which often occurs when converting the lyrics into a different language for the existing musical framework.

22 YC converted his Chinese translation back into English and then sent it to Bishoff for discussions.
This flexibility also allows the target text to accommodate both the linguistic and the cultural differences, in order to connect more closely with the target audience’s culture and lifestyles. For instance, some of the allusions which would make the American audience laugh may not be familiar to the Chinese audience, and therefore their comical effects may not be appreciated. Working together and exchanging ideas enabled Bishoff and YC to find more effective ways to create resonance with the Chinese audience. For example, using well-known quotations, such as *yi wan nian* (ten thousand years) from Stephen Chow’s popular film *A Chinese Odyssey*, to replace the corresponding American references in the original version, received much laughter and applause during the Chinese translation performances. Jimmy Roberts, the composer of this musical, was also very complimentary about the necessary cultural adaptations made in the Chinese version. He says that creating resonance with the target audience is far more important than a literal translation (Chen Anna, 2007).

The interactions between Bishoff and YC were influenced by their perceptions of the role of the lyrics translation, as well as by their professional habitus and symbolic capital. On the one hand, from his expertise and experience, YC was able to rewrite parts of the translation in order to incorporate them with the cultural and dramatic elements which are familiar to the Chinese audience. On the other hand, inviting Bishoff to direct the Chinese translation was part of the producers’ marketing strategies. Bishoff’s name is closely linked with the authenticity of the original musical and, therefore, it would be a selling point to satisfy the audience’s demand for the ‘original sauce and flavour’ (more details in the second part of this chapter). This strategy coincided with Bishoff’s objectives for retaining the original features and style of the source text, which is partly due to his close involvements with the original work.

Furthermore, as YC and Bishoff are both fully aware of each other’s professional habitus and symbolic capital, they appreciate each other’s work. If it had been a different director, he or she may not have shared the same feelings as Bishoff had towards the original version, or such a thorough knowledge as to allow flexibility. At the same time, if it had been a different translator, he or she may not have had YC’s dramatic expertise together with his astute understanding of the market and the audience. If the director didn’t have the professional symbolic capital Bishoff possesses, which effectively enabled him to act as the final arbiter with the decisive power in the network,
the ‘translation forum’ (see 5.1.1.2 below) may have broken down due to the boredom of cast. Therefore, even in the same situation, different actants with different habitus and symbolic capital may generate different outcomes when they interact with each other.

These interactions reflect ANT’s actants in a network as ‘mediators’ (Latour 2005: 39), who react to others’ interests or situations and make changes through negotiations. The translator responds to the input of the stakeholder, in this case the director, and as a result the translated text develops into a more balanced representation for the Chinese audience. It is the dynamic nature of the network which enables the mediators interact with each other to bring about change.

5.1.1.2 The cast and the translation forum
For Bishoff, working through the translated text with the translator is only the first phase. Whether the translated libretto is really workable, and especially whether it can engage the target audience, are crucial. Whenever directing a musical, he elaborates: “I always listen to how the audience reacts, or does not react, and then make adjustments. I always like to sit amongst the audience in the back row, and see how they react” (Personal interview, 2012-4-24). However, although Bishoff has directed nearly 20 different versions of ILY, this time it is different. He finds: “It is trickier in Asia because the characters are Americans, not Japanese or Chinese. The references have to make sense to whatever the culture I am in. So, I can’t make something that is obscure to them but might be true”. Therefore, he says: “The script was very important. I was concerned about what would work and what wouldn’t work” (ibid.).

In order to gain a deeper feel for the target audience, with whom he was unfamiliar, Bishoff decided to start with the cast and get them involved with the translated text before the actual rehearsals. Treating the cast as his first audience, he devoted a full week to going through the target text with them, checking its meaning, and testing its stage effects as well as the practicality. He recalls:

First we had to work on the lyrics just to make them as close to the original as possible. And then I had them sung to hear whether they scanned correctly or not. So that took time. There was a lot of discussion about that (ibid.).
Indeed, that was a rather unusual working style for both the Chinese producer and the cast. While the producer was concerned at the time consumed, the cast was rather bored by the lengthy discussions. LYL, the leading actor, jokingly called these discussion sessions “boring translation forum” in the diary on his blog (2006). During the ‘translation forum’, LYL describes: “We work together with the script translator, the director and his interpreter, checking the script word by word and sentence by sentence. Only after the preparatory work had been completed, could we then start the actual rehearsals’” (ibid.). As if that were not vivid enough to show his boredom at such a working style, he inserted a few snapshots exaggeratedly showing himself in one of the close-ups of, in his own words, “the biggest yawning”, followed by falling straight to sleep at the desk. He even pleaded with his fans to leave messages to cheer him up (ibid.). LYL’s reaction demonstrates that each actant may react in their own way. Whilst the picture of the ‘biggest yawning’ on his blog may well be intended as a light-hearted joke, it nevertheless implies that this is not the actors’ duty, although they are considered useful to make contributions to the lyrics translation.

LYL’s fifth diary entry records in detail the first daily meetings. It gives a glimpse of the working methods behind the scenes and the inputs by the production teams to the translated text:

This was the first day of our director’s arrival in Shanghai. We sat around and read through the scripts. I read a sentence in Chinese, which the interpreter relayed to him in English. He thought about it and then told the interpreter his comments and suggestions, which the interpreter relayed to me in Chinese. I then followed the interpreter’s relay to think of a line which was suitable for stage performance, which the interpreter passed on to him again. If he thought that it was OK, that sentence was accepted. Otherwise, we would go through the cycle again until his “OK”. It was so tiring! I felt as if in a maze! (ibid.).

Clearly, Bishoff’s knowledge and experience bestowed him with a powerful position during his working with the cast. In order to achieve a successful reception, he made use of every possible resource available. He not only regarded the cast as his first audience to ensure this American story’s accessibility to the Chinese audience, he also “asked the cast to bring their ‘life’ to the show, including their dating experiences and what they know about Chinese culture” (Wang Jing, 2007). According to Bishoff, contemporary comedy is the key reason for this musical’s enduring success. In the Chinese version, some adjustments suggested by the cast were made specifically for the Chinese
audience, including many adapted humorous references. For instance, in the scene ‘Whatever happened to baby’s parents?’ the Chinese character ren was used to illustrate the relationships between people within a family (discussed in Chapter 3). Bishoff said that he hoped the Chinese audience would be able to become completely immersed in the story as a result (Pan Yu, 2006).

This might have been a painful experience at the time, but it eventually won the full appreciation of the cast, as they learnt that libretto translation requires a collaborative effort in order to help with the audience’s understanding. LYL noted:

Language conversion is the part which needs the most patience during the whole rehearsal. It requires the joint efforts by the director, the translator, and us in order to ensure that the libretti fully express the intention of the English playwright and make it easier to be understood by the audience. (2006)

LYL was very happy that his input was appreciated by the director, and in the end he proudly told the media: “Many of my lines in this musical are revised following my own idiolect” (Wang Shujing, 2007). LYL’s change of attitude here indicates a possible node of engagement, which Wenger (1998: 200) has referred to as ownership (as discussed in Chapter 3), i.e., the authority and the power relations negotiated between different stakeholders’ interactions in a network. To start with, both the Chinese producer and the cast were unprepared for Bishoff’s ‘translation forum’. When LYL moaned in his diary that he couldn’t wait to get on with his part of the job – the rehearsals – it seemed to signal disengagement and a failure to understand the collaborative nature of translation in the theatre. The network which Bishoff set up for inviting the cast to join the translation process looked as if it was about to break down.

As discussed in Chapter 2, during the process of networking, the key mechanism of ‘translation’ is, according to Law, “always insecure, a process susceptible to failure. Disorder – or other orders – are only precariously kept at bay” (2009: 145). It seems that when an actant sets up a network through ‘translating’ either themselves or others by connecting multiple nodes in order to realise their particular objectives, they cannot predict success. There is always a risk that when one node goes wrong the whole thing may break down. This is exactly what happened to Callon’s case of importing the Japanese scallops to St. Brieuc Bay in France, which we will discuss in more detail later.
However, the musical production is a different network as there is an institutional binding force which helps stabilise the ‘translation’ process. This binding force comes from the common goal of the production – consumer orientation – towards which every stakeholder strives in order to make the translated musical successful. It is this common goal which underpins an umbrella network for the production within which various interactions take place. The producers can be seen as managing the umbrella network, and imposing their power to ensure that the common goal is paramount. The stakeholders in the production team negotiate their perspectives from differing domain-specific knowledge. The combination of the different network priorities helps stabilize the production team. It bears a resemblance to scientific laboratory settings, where Law finds that it is “the multi-discursive ordering of the laboratory that secured its relative stability” (Law, 2009: 149), as he believes that these differentiations contribute to stability and enable an organization to “hold itself together” (ibid.).

Even though some ‘translation’ may fail during the interactions between individual stakeholders, their negotiations for the common goal ensure that the umbrella network does not ultimately break down. The institutional binding force means that they could execute power by replacing the actants, if necessary, in order to keep the umbrella network stable. Working under the umbrella network, the cast members consciously follow its goal, as they understand that their personal goal can only be fulfilled when the common goal of the umbrella network is realized. It is through the combination of the imposing binding force of the umbrella network and the stakeholders’ willingness to be ‘translated’ that their ‘worknet’ (Latour, 2005: 143) can be held together.

The above case of ILY demonstrates how such an umbrella network effectively holds the production team together, even when there is an initial lack of interest from the cast in doing the translation of the lyrics, instead of their own ‘duty’ of acting. By the end of the ‘forum’, LYL was very pleased with the outcomes, and in particular he had found ways to personalize the characters and make them his own. The feeling of himself being in there behind these lines gave him a sense of acting himself. Significantly, this ownership not only refers to his personal mark on the characterization, it also demonstrates his talent in an area which is not within his expertise. For this reason, the sense of ownership may also play a role in raising his interest for the task – in ANT’s
LYL’s story illustrates that musical translation benefits from network interactions by stakeholders across disciplines and communities, e.g., the translator and the production team. Their contributions enable the connection and inclusion of the dramatic experts’ perspectives with the translator’s perspective. In this way, the sphere of translation activity can be enlarged from a translator’s solitary operation to a collaborative network. Since the multi-semiotic features involved in musical translation require integration of different kinds of expertise, it is crucial that the divides between different domains of knowledge can be bridged through ‘boundary practices’ (Wenger, 1998: 114-115), in which members of different communities establish grounds for interactions.

In contrast to some literary translations, where translators may jealously guard their sole authority against any changes made to their translated text, collaboration and co-operation between stakeholders seem to be crucially important in musical translations. During the discussions on the lyrics translation with the cast, YC was never left uninformed. Although he could not be present much of the time, owing to his responsibilities as a senior staff member of SDAC, they consulted him whenever changes needed to be made to the translated text.

Remembering these occasions, Bishoff was very complementary about YC’s reactions:

[YC] was very generous about letting us change from what he had done, and I was very happy about it because he could have had a big ego about it, and have said: ‘Look, this is a translation’. But he was really terrific about it, he said: ‘No no no, that’s fine, that’s fine’” (Personal interview, 2012-4-24).

Bishoff also highly regards the input of the cast during the ‘translation forum’: “They were really collaborative, and they contributed to the translation” (ibid.). This working format explains why eventually “only about 60% of the initial translation made it into the final version” (Personal email, 2011-3-23).

These concerted efforts by various stakeholders, such as the cast members in the ‘translation forum’, are the key to the musical’s successful reception. In 2007, when this Chinese version was invited to be the very first foreign production of an American
musical staged in off-Broadway, New York, running alongside the original version, it received a warm reception. As Wang notes, “Michael Sag [The senior manager at Broadway Asia Entertainment and the co-producer of this musical] says that the Chinese cast has brought a completely different cultural perspective to the material, as opposed to what the American cast did” (Wang Jing, 2007).

5.1.2 Spin: negotiations between the translator and the cast

Whilst in case one we examined the interactions led by the director involving the cast members prior to the rehearsal, here in case two, it is the cast members who initiated the interactions through their inputs on the target text during their rehearsals. Stemming from their theatrical expertise, these self-motivated negotiations and adjustments resulted in certain textual changes to the translation.

Although produced by the same company, SDAC, the process of making the Chinese translated version of Spin presents a different scenario. Despite there being many other interesting interactions taking place, the main focus of this case study is on the inputs from the cast members and their negotiations with the translator. This section will illustrate in detail how these different viewpoints and interests were negotiated; how certain aspects were prioritised or compromised; and hence how the outcomes reflected on the development of the translated text.

5.1.2.1 Negotiating textual priorities

As discussed in Chapter 2, the actants interact with each other in the network and make differences, rather than simply following their designated tasks, such as a cast member of a musical production only reciting the translated libretto as it is written in the script. The interactions between the translator and the actors which took place in Spin stem from their differing priorities towards the target text, which led to changes in the target text, but not without compromises. Based on my interviews with both parties, I will examine, at the micro level, two occasions when these compromises in the target text are made through the negotiations between two actants, i.e., one cast member and the translator. Given the intricacy of the interactions involved, the following will be divided into four subsections. The present subsection will describe the basic interactions of these actants; section 5.1.2.2 will then examine these negotiations within the ANT
framework; section 5.1.2.3 will cover issues of expertise in these negotiations; finally, 5.1.2.4 will examine the creative contributions from some production team members.

In this production team QA, the translator, was not only responsible for the libretto translation, but also acted as the interpreter for the Western director. Therefore, she had been working with the production team all the way through the rehearsals. During this process, while witnessing how the texts were tested by the cast, she was also engaged in a considerable number of negotiations with them.

As a translator, QA sets her priority to convert the source text faithfully into the target text in order to let the audience see the authentic production in the target language. However, the production team focused more on the coherence of the storyline, the characterization, and the performability in order to present the musical to the best effect for the audience. These ‘Source v. Target-oriented’ approaches, though both legitimate in their own right, may clash in certain situations. QA remembers that there were frequent discussions and negotiations during the rehearsals: “When the cast had different views, they would raise them” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

One of the most illustrative incidents of the actants’ interactions concerns a translated stanza which caused disagreement between QA and LI, one of the cast members. LI is a veteran theatre actor as well as a lecturer specializing in theatre dialogues. With such a background, he naturally took the initiative to help with the rehearsals and offered practical advice and suggestions to other cast members, which were well received. The stanza in question comes from the song ‘At the top’, in which the Chairman of the manipulating dark force is trying to lure Jackson, the young journalist, to join their organisation since Jackson’s investigations are close to uncovering their dirty deals. QA’s initial translation of the source text is shown as TT1 in the following example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 and BT</th>
<th>TT2 and BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the top,</td>
<td>在巅峰,</td>
<td>你好我好,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sea of smiling faces, piling up all flatteries on you,</td>
<td>众颜欢笑 谄媚讨好, 阿谀奉承 百依百顺。</td>
<td>大家都好,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to do everything for you.</td>
<td>At the top, A sea of happy smiles, flattering and pleasing, Docile and obedient.</td>
<td>唯有强者他们能够在巅峰。 You are fine, I am fine, we are all fine, Only the powerful can stay at the top.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lines from ‘At the top’ (Spin) (1)*
However, QA recounted that during the rehearsals an actor raised questions on the translation (TT1), as he believed that the Chairman was trying to convince Jackson and to grab the latter into his camp (ibid). The actor QA mentioned was LI, who also recalled the same incident during my interview:

My reaction was subconscious. I just felt very strange and would not like to say those words. For an actor, how would a character speak, what his image is, what perspective he takes on thinking…. We must find the most suitable way to convey all these aspects, and we must reach a consensus” (Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

QA appreciated LI’s feedback. As the first user of her text, as well as the presenter of her text, if he did not feel comfortable in performing it, the text would not help effective characterisation. Therefore, QA accepted his suggestions and revised this stanza into a clearly persuasive as well as more colloquial version (TT2). The formal idioms are omitted in the first half of the stanza and replaced by an easily understood line ‘nihao wohao dajia douhao’, borrowed from a fairly well-known song Nihao (Hello) by the band Miqi de Chuang (Miqi’s Bed), which won the eigthth place in a CCTV internet song competition in 2005.

Again, in the same song, LI made another suggestion for revising a sentence from TT1 to TT2 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 and BT</th>
<th>TT2 and BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nobility of mind and honour guides us. Laws and rules were only made for lesser men.</td>
<td>我们由尊严荣耀指引，不屑受规则法律束缚</td>
<td>我们由尊严荣耀指引，所有江湖的规矩我们定</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are guided by dignity and honour, Disdain to be restrained by the rules and laws</td>
<td>All the rules in the brotherhood/underworld are made by us</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lines from ‘At the top’ (Spin) (2)*

According to QA, LI believed that the TT ‘Disdain to be restrained by the rules and laws’ meant to exceed laws and rules, and thereby his proposed revision ‘All the rules in the brotherhood/underworld are made by us’ was coherent with it. However, QA was not convinced: “I was arguing with him as I thought that he was wrong, as ‘disdain to be restrained by the rules and laws’ is different from ‘making rules’” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).
Without being restricted by a source text, LI viewed the text for its dramatic function. In fact, his idea of using the idiom of _jiang hu_ (江湖 – underworld) with ‘making rules’ was inspired by the phrases _bai dao hei dao_ (白道黑道 – white force and black force) which QA had introduced earlier in this song. These two terms relate coherently with each other, and refer to the underworld or brotherhood settings where the opposing powers are competing, e.g., the government and the anti-government camps. These terms often appear in some specific genres of Chinese literature, including classics such as _Shui Hu Zhuan_ (水浒传 – Water Margin or All Men Are Brothers) by Shi Nai’an (施耐庵 1296-1371) and contemporary martial art fictions by Louis Cha (aka Jin Yong). Therefore, _jiang hu_ echoes _bai dao hei dao_ perfectly in terms of both cohesion and coherence. The metaphorical use of these Chinese cultural references not only fits well with the storyline by referring to the mafia-like dark forces, but also helps establish a resonance with the target audience through horizontal intertextuality (as discussed in Chapter 3).

LI also added the interesting term _wu jian dao_ after _bai dao hei dao_ because, he says:

> This musical was categorised as light comedy which is exactly what we must show. Although _Wu jian dao_ sounded a little odd, it was fun. It was also the title of the film (Infernal Affairs) with which everybody is familiar, so I used this reference here. (Personal interview, 2010-5-8, 11)

Through his input, the intertextual references were introduced for cultural reconfiguration in the target context. This was welcomed immediately by LI’s fellow actors. He recalled: “This phrase suddenly flashed through my mind during the rehearsals, so I added it to the lyrics. All the cast members felt very good about it” (ibid.). From the linguistic point of view, it is also a good match since by adding _wu jian dao_ after _bai dao hei dao_, these three phrases put together are not only coherent in meaning, but also form a rhyming and rhythmic pattern of parallel construction in which all three phrases share the same ending _dao_, as shown in the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 and BT</th>
<th>TT2 and BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Popes and kings and presidents will clamour to confide in us</td>
<td>白道黑道所有人对咱们仨都敬三分</td>
<td>白道黑道无间道对咱们仨都敬三分</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Baidao heidao</em> and everyone would acknowledge us three some respect</td>
<td><em>bai dao hei dao wu jian dao</em> would acknowledge us three some respect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LI’s views focus on the dramatic effects of the translated text.

Translation should not only ensure the correct meaning, but the translator needs to consider what effects a spoken sentence creates. The translated texts are not just words, they are the spirit. We must be very clear as to what exactly they intend to express” (ibid.).

His views address the core issue of the functions of the translation and their effects on the reception. Therefore, it is natural that the translated text should allow changes in order to transmit such effects. Otherwise, as he asserted: “Rigidly clinging to the source text can only make the target text lifeless” (ibid.).

On the other hand, QA’s focus in her translation was more linguistically oriented. She recalled her thinking process for adapting the source text ‘Popes and kings and presidents’ into the Chinese reference of bai dao hei dao: “My mind was completely focused on the wording and the rhyming, so jiang hu didn’t even enter my thoughts” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10). However, she says that the reason she chose this phrase was because she could not find a faithful Chinese equivalent for it. “Bai dao hei dao shares the same ending word dao to reflect the two ‘P’ s for ‘popes’ and ‘president’ in the source text” (ibid.).

Owing to such different perspectives towards the target text, when LI tried to persuade QA, her first reaction was not without resistance. As a translator, it is natural that QA was deeply drawn into the linguistic aspects (i.e., focusing on the relationship between the source and target texts), rather than voluntarily making seemingly unnecessary additions. What eventually made QA accept LI’s alterations was the consumer-oriented perception of the text. She explained: “His suggestion was indeed coherent with the textual development. Bai dao hei dao and jiang hu do sound natural for the audience” (ibid.). She seemed to appreciate from this incident that the actors are the users of her text, and therefore their feedback can act as a verdict on the effectiveness of her translation. It reminded her of what she had learnt at school: “My drama teacher said that if the actors feel comfortable, the libretto translation doesn’t need to be altered” (ibid.).
LI’s suggestion was supported by JB, the musical director, who was present at the time:

This revision incorporates both the meaning of the translated text and our experienced stage expert’s performing style, as well as his understanding of the character. I personally think that it was a very good point. Therefore, I agreed with him singing in that way. My reasons were: 1, it fits in with the character’s personality; 2, they were the kind of words which that character would say; 3, it conforms with the way of the Chinese language expressions – simple and easy to understand, and natural to listen to by the audience. Compared with the literal translation, I feel that this kind of sentence is easier to understand and more fluent. More important, it fits in with the characters’ accustomed expressions. I think it is extremely important that the language styles, including the lyrics, are in line with the personalities of the characters in the story. (Personal correspondence, 2010-5-20)

Clearly, whilst, as Franzon finds, “the actors’ contribution is not encoded as such in dramatic texts” and therefore “[t]heorists cannot draw definite parameters”, nevertheless, “the performance situation will entice actors to do, speak, or show things that are inspired or even dictated by the verbal text” (2005: 274). In the above case, the negotiations with LI during the rehearsals helped QA to perceive the translated text more for its consumer-oriented priority rather than only for its linguistic equivalence. It demonstrates that the inputs of the stakeholders in the production not only influence the development of the textual translation, but also provide valuable training resources for translators to learn through practical experience. During the process of the negotiations his fellow cast members also play important roles in improving the effectiveness of their production. In the following section, the ANT model of ‘translation’ will be employed to analyse what steps, during the above negotiations, LI took in eventually managing to persuade QA to agree with him.

5.1.2.2 The stages of persuasion
As we have suggested earlier, when translating musicals, the target text is not merely a ‘user’s manual’ for the production team to follow. Rather, the team members make necessary adjustments in order to present it effectively on stage. These production team members can be considered as the actants in a network because they are ‘mediators’. Through interacting with each other, they make changes and contribute to the development of the target text, rather than functioning as ‘intermediaries’, who simply follow the designated instructions and produce the expected outcomes.
In Chapter 2 we discussed Callon’s case for importing the Japanese scallops to St. Brieuc Bay in France, and noted certain key analytical terms. It may be recalled that in his analysis, Callon describes the ‘four moments’ in the ‘sociology of translation’, i.e., problematisation, interessement, enrolment and mobilisation (1986: 6-15). I will employ these terms below as these four stages may help explain the negotiations between QA and LI in Spin, discussed in the previous section.

There is a difference, however, since the actants already work as team members for this musical production which can be viewed as a type of established network. I referred to this network as the umbrella network earlier in the case of ILY. Although these production team members all have different specialities, they work together under this umbrella network towards the common goal – making the production successful and enjoyable for the audience. Therefore, these interactions are different from Callon’s case, which documented the start of a brand new network. Nevertheless, the four stages of the ‘translation’ process may be borrowed for the analysis of how different views are negotiated and agreement finally reached between these stakeholders during the process of the musicals translation.

As mentioned previously, owing to his background, LI naturally had a critical eye for the translation. During the rehearsals, he did not merely follow the lines of the translated text but was actively seeking ways to improve the stage effects. QA, on the other hand, focused more on the linguistic relationship and faithfully conveying the meaning of the source text. Based on my interviews with both LI and QA, and the detailed thoughts recorded from both viewpoints, I attempt to explore the negotiation process between these two actants using the four stages of ‘translation’ for ANT.

LI first identified the problems in the translated text (e.g., ‘A sea of happy smiles, flattering and pleasing, docile and obedient’ and ‘Disdain to be restrained by the rules and laws’). He found that the target text did not really fit in with the characterization and the storyline of the translated musical. Also, he felt that the expressions in the target text were awkward to sing and hence difficult for the audience to understand. This could be considered as the first stage, which Callon calls ‘problematisation’.
Callon describes this stage as when the focal [actant] “determined a set of actors and defined their identities in such a way as to establish themselves an obligatory passage point in the network of relationships they were building” (Callon, 1986: 6). As discussed in Chapter 2, the “obligatory passage point” (OPP) is, as the name describes, the raison d’être for all the interactions in the network. In Callon’s own case, the OPP concerns the ‘actants’ knowledge and consensus about the scallops:

If the scientific colleagues hope to advance knowledge on this subject … if the fishermen hope to preserve their long term economic interests, then they must: 1) know the answer to the question: how do scallops anchor? and 2) recognize that their alliance around this question can benefit each of them (ibid. 8).

Although unconsciously, LI acted as the focal actant who, having discovered the problems, identified that the translator QA was the actant with whom he needed to negotiate in order to make adjustments to these lines. LI set the functions and the reception of the target text as his priority (the OPP in Callon’s terminology), e.g., the dramatic effects and the audience’s understandings of the target text.

LI approached QA and tried to persuade her to perceive the translation from his viewpoint. He successfully convinced QA that focusing on the functions, especially the audience’s understanding, would help both the production and her translated text to become more effective. QA appreciated LI’s rationale and hence agreed to cooperate. This second stage may be viewed as what Callon calls “interessement”, which is when an ‘actant’ manages to persuade others to join in the network for dealing with the problems identified.

Following LI’s advice, QA revised her translation on one occasion and accepted his suggestions on another. This third stage may be viewed as what Callon calls ‘enrolment’, which is “the group of multilateral negotiations, trials of strength and tricks that accompany the interessements and enable them to succeed” (1986: 10). Furthermore, LI’s input gained recognition by other production team members. The musical director highly praised LI’s proposed revisions to the target text, and strongly supported his views. His input set an example for the other cast members, especially the younger ones, to be more active in initiating their own creative inputs for their roles in the musical, as well as co-operations with the rest of the cast, in order to improve their performance for the effective reception. This may be seen as what Callon refers to as
the fourth stage of ‘mobilisation’ (1986: 14), since not only the initially designated ‘actor’, but also a more dynamic network, are both ‘mobilised’ within the production team.

While these four stages of ‘translation’ are theoretically logical and workable, the outcomes may not always be as expected. In Callon’s own case, the experiment of importing the Japanese scallops into French waters failed, owing to the facts that “the state of beliefs fluctuate with a controversy” (1986: 16) and “the identity and characteristics of the implicated actors change” (ibid.). This is because, as Latour points out, on the one hand:

  The actors do not simply transmit things, but add elements of their own by modifying the argument, strengthening it, and incorporating it into new contexts” (1987: 104);

and on the other hand:

  The total movement of the ball, of a statement, of an artefact, will depend to some extent on your action, but to a much greater extent on that of a crowd over which you have little control. The construction of facts, like a game of rugby, is thus a collective process (ibid.).

As illustrated previously in my stakeholders diagram (Chapter 2), the negotiations between the production team members and the translator occur in a multi-factorial manner. With the producer’s perspective for the audience and the market, and the translator’s considerations for language, performability, and reception, the source text is converted to the first draft of the target text. It then reaches the production team, as the first users of the text, at rehearsals. This is the stage when the translator enters the network when the TT is ready for the production team to rehearse. It is when the exchanges of views and negotiations take place between the various production stakeholders and the translator. Although the audience (as the perceived receptor stakeholder) is not physically present at this stage, their interests are in fact the underlying factor for the negotiations between the production stakeholders and the translator. Whether the negotiations concern the meaning of the text, or the way to enact the text, the aim is to produce a musical that audiences enjoy.

These negotiations may go back and forth many times until agreement is reached over the revised target text for performance on stage. In one famous case, as Elaine Page
remembers, the lyrics for ‘Memory’ in *Cats* were revised several times by Tim Rice, but the final version was rewritten by Trevor Nunn only the night before the show (The Story of Musicals, BBC4, 2012-1-10). These revisions may continue even after the premières in response to the audience’s feedback. Therefore, responding to the audience’s reception may be viewed as a further stage – a fifth stage beyond Callon’s ‘four moments’ of ‘translation’. It helps make the networking process more complete through the evaluation of the outcomes and effectiveness of the musical product, as well as for modifications before further testing. It should be made clear that in these case studies, the macro level perception of Callon’s ‘translation’ model is only attempted through applying micro versions for the situations encountered in specific musical translation negotiations.

### 5.1.2.3 Negotiating differences of expertise: the role of consumer orientation

In addition to the different perceptions towards the priority of the texts between the translator and the production team members, as shown in the previous sections, the stakeholders’ expertise and how they perceive their own roles and inputs in relation to the others also contribute to their reactions during the negotiations. Georg Malvius, the guest director from Sweden, acknowledges the difficulties QA faced throughout the rehearsals: “Deciphering theatrical language is the most difficult part of her work” (Personal interview, 2010-5-8). WJ, another cast member, agrees: “During the rehearsals, the lyrics and the dialogues have all been adjusted through discussions with QA, but she is not a professional director after all” (Personal interview, 2010-5-11). Therefore, WJ strongly believes that “the meaning of the translated source text relies on the director’s transformation of it into a dramatic language” (ibid.).

LI believes that, in addition to the stage performance, there may be other aspects which need co-operation between linguistic and other expert knowledge. For instance:

> Some musical knowledge such as the major third or minor third, etc., for which the musical director would know exactly how the lyrics should be fitted in, but with which it is not fair to require a translator to be familiar. Therefore, some minor revisions are always necessary” (Personal interview, 2010-5-11).

Clearly, from the viewpoint of the production team, QA was a language expert and not a professionally trained actor. This situation signals a potential power clash between the two professions and their different perceptions and expertise. When facing such
situations, should translators act as loyal guardians of the semantic accuracy of the source text, or should they compromise it in the interests of the production stakeholders? The translation norm which QA adhered to is the former. Therefore, when LI suggested alternatives to her translation, she was not at first convinced (as seen in 5.1.2.1). On one occasion, she argued: "That sentence has its own meaning, … I would translate what the texts are trying to say" (Personal interview, 2010-5-10). This is consistent with QA’s assertion that she is under the influence of a “force” and, hence, she is only a “carrier” for the original work (ibid).

The way she repeatedly said that she felt it was not her own writing and that she was driven by an unseen force reveals the translator’s attitudes towards the source text and her motivations for the target text. This “force” may come from what ANT refers to as the agency of the non-human actant, as discussed in Chapter 2. In this case, it was the source text and the author behind it which affected her decision making. This “force” may also come from the translation norms of faithfulness and accuracy, which are commonly followed by practitioners, despite the fact that translation scholars have long since expanded their conceptualization of translation. QA seems to feel that her professional discipline dictates that she should not take liberties in altering the source text. This experience left QA with a dilemma: even after she had compromised her translation in the interests of the actors and the audience, she still had some doubts and wondered if she should still stick with her role as a ‘carrier’. She recalls:

I now step back to see the overall logic of it. But what should I do in future? Should I do the opposite? What should I do when the actors suggest something different? (ibid.)

Following a professional norm may itself also act as a way to flag up one’s specialist status. It is the know-how and experience that distinguishes whether one possesses sufficient knowledge and ability to be recognised as an expert. For instance, one interesting theorisation to shed light on this is the notion of ‘discursive competence’ (or discursive knowledge), as elaborated by Bhatia (2004:144). Bhatia describes ‘discursive competence’ consisting three sub-competences: textual competence, generic competence, and social competence (ibid. 144). In this case, there seems to be a clash between QA’s textual competence as a translator and LI’s generic competence in the performing arts. On the one hand, QA’s strategy in faithfully translating the source text into the target text indicates that this is the translation norm with which she was
complying. On the other hand, LI’s profound understanding of the role that language plays in the theatrical context is crucial for the effectiveness of the translation version. QA’s reluctance to accept LI’s proposed alterations to the target text may stem from her self-perceived professionalism. First, as a translator, textual conversion was her area of expertise. Amongst the other production team members, she was the one who knew what the source text says and how to convey it into the target text. This linguistic knowledge equipped her with the ‘textual competence’. LI’s suggestions may have made QA feel that her authority and her ownership of the TT as the expert was challenged, and so she was reluctant to give in easily to an outsider.

However, LI’s theatrical expertise, both theoretical and practical, made him the perceived authority within the production team, even though he was not a professional in the sense of doing the translation. As one of the production cast members who is going to make the characters come alive and the story attractive on stage for the audience, he can be seen as a co-author of the text. In other words, the text is, as discussed earlier regarding its role, a foundation through which the production team could add their inputs. In this respect LI, as well as the others in the production team, have a practical sense of whether the translation will work.

Compared with LI’s theatrical expertise and experience derived from his interactions with the audience, QA clearly had an “expertise and domain-specific knowledge deficit” (Neather 2012: 262). When different levels of expertise clash, potential tensions over who has the deciding voice, or who is regarded as having the discursive competence, will surface. Such tensions inevitably affect the ways in which the stakeholders react and respond to each other.

Although these two domains are working alongside each other as part of a single network in the process of making a musical production, together they may be considered as being in a provider-user relationship. Libretto translation serves to convey the storylines and characterisations to the audience through the production team. Therefore, the production stakeholder must first feel comfortable with it, and then they can perform it well and consequently make the end user – the audience – enjoy it. This adds more credit to LI’s ‘discursive competence’.
Expertise on its own may not always be sufficient to convince other stakeholders in musicals translation, owing to the negotiations surrounding consumer orientation and the commercial success. For instance, if LI’s suggestions were only for his own preferences and not in the interests of the production and the reception, even if these were expert suggestions, QA might not necessarily give in. In that case, the situation might become a mere power struggle between the two domains, and each of them could insist upon their own expertise. Therefore, LI’s emphasis on the effectiveness of the text on stage for the audience touched on the core issue, which eventually convinced QA. In the end, the clash of the two different domains was resolved through their consensus on the main purposes of the text. QA agreed to revise her translation because, she said: “He felt that it was logical, he was happy, and the audience was happy to see it” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

The interactions between the actor and the translator in Spin demonstrate that, in a network involving stakeholders from multiple domains of knowledge and expertise, a commonly shared goal acts as a determining factor for them to reach mutually agreed outcomes. The deciding voice here is the user of the text, i.e., the actors who perform the text on stage, since they have better sense of what text is more effective on stage. It was the dramatic effects aimed at the audience’s enjoyment that played the key role in the actors’ negotiations here. Therefore, in the process of translating musicals, consumer orientation helps the dynamic interactions between the stakeholders’ negotiations with their differing expertise.

5.1.2.4 Stakeholders’ creative adjustments
The previous section examined the micro details of the stakeholders’ interactions taking place during the process of a musical production. Those intricate negotiations concern specific translation issues between an actor and the translator. However, with their stage experience, the actors also respond to the audience’s reactions on the spot with their own creative inputs. Hence, there are also opportunities for them to act upon their own individual agency when making small adjustments to the target text, without necessarily having to negotiate with the translator.

In this section, then, I will discuss a different kind of interaction: the actors’ own interventions with the target text and the multimodal elements on stage. Instead of
acting as ‘intermediaries’ and simply following the target text, these actors work as ‘mediators’ and take their own initiatives to assess the functions of the text, and make their own adjustments in response to the audience’s reactions. Although these inputs are more in the nature of ad hoc changes, which may not always be revised in the initial transcripts, the actors bring in their expertise and creativity, and demonstrate the active role which they play within the production network.

A musical libretto functions in a similar way to other theatre text which is, as Bassnett considers, “a kind of blueprint that actors use as the basis of their performance” (2000: I.c.1). This is because for plays, “readers get to know the characters through dialogues”, and hence “the dialogues are highly characterised for not only what to say but also for how to say it” (Dong and Ma, 2006: 260-261). In musicals, especially in translated musicals, what to sing and say, and how to sing and say both lyrics and dialogues, require a collaborative effort.

Besides lyrics and dialogues, other multi-semiotic interactions include how to coordinate between, for example, the lyrics and the dance movements as well as the stage settings. That is why Leah Morland, the choreographer for the Chinese translation of MM, often consults with the cast about the lyrics during rehearsals. She said during a rehearsal: “We already discovered that some of the translations are just that little bit different and we are trying to make adjustments, and that’s what makes it special” (Anon. i, 2011).

This is why a translated musical libretto is very rarely treated by the production team as an unchangeable sacred object. Rather, it is more akin to what Marowitz finds in theatre:

> The director is always using his personal mine-sweeper to discover what is lurking beneath the surface of the text, and the actor is always trying to divine what a character is really feeling as opposed to what he is saying. … It is the director, in conjunction with his actors, who is obliged to turn its words into actions; its actions into units; its units into tempi; its lines into “throughlines” (2005: 33).

Pavis also points out that the theatrical text “reaches the audience by way of the actors’ bodies” (1992: 136). This is the crucial aspect which made Bassnett change her mind regarding the translator’s role, and the need for co-operation between a translator and
the other stakeholders in the production team. This was exactly how ZK, one of the two
script translators for MM, carried out their translation:

The reason why we didn’t add any cultural references that did not exist in the
original version was only to provide an accurate and comfortable text, based
upon which the director and the actors could build with their creativity.
(Personal email correspondence, 2011-11-20)

When LI was trying to persuade QA to listen to the cast members’ views, he recalls:

The actors had to sing these songs dozens of times, so their feelings and views
should be respected. They would make adjustments continuously rather than
repeating the same things every day, which is boring. We must evoke the
audience’s emotions and consider the audience’s cultural background. Only in
this way would the communication be effective. If the text can’t make sense to
us, how do we present it to the audience? (Personal interview, 2010-5-11)

It takes concerted efforts from the directors and the actors to find the most effective way
to present the original story to the target audience. This is why, just as Bishoff did for
ILY, in Spin “The director would sometimes ask us during the rehearsals what we
thought about making any improvements” (LI, ibid.). In my group interviews (2010-5-
11), all the cast members strongly supported the idea that the translator and the
production team members such as the director, the music director, the choreographer,
and the cast, should work together in order to ensure expert quality for both the
linguistic and artistic domains. TL, who plays the leading role in Spin, explains: “We
don’t follow literally the original version, as the Chinese audience would not be able to
understand it. Also, some expressions are not suitable. Adjustments would be made in
the translations” (ibid.).

For ZM, also a cast member in Spin, the central meaning is more important than
accuracy in translation. She says: ‘The lyrics translation should be as a new song based
on summaries of the original one” (ibid.). As for dialogues, she says: “I made
adjustments in many places because at least I can get it performed to present the right
meaning. If I myself can’t understand it fully, the audience would understand it even
less” (ibid.).

ZM recalls an incident in the second act. Her character and a friend were trying to
escape from the friend’s office after saving the criminal evidence on a computer, but
they were being followed and the pursuers were close behind. The translated text for her
role was: “What choices do we have?” Although this sentence is perfectly understandable for the English audience, the style is rather formal in Chinese, especially in a panic situation. The word ‘choice’ is also unclear, i.e., whether it refers to the choices for safeguarding the evidence or for escaping themselves. She says:

I feel it should be: ‘Can we get out through other doors? So I said just that. The audience would feel confused and not know what I was talking about if I had said (literally in Chinese): ‘women haiyou sheme biede xuanze ma’ (ibid.).

The reason why ZM made these adjustments may be in part owing to her previous experience when playing a role in *ILY* before *Spin*. Such expert knowledge equipped her with the confidence to make judgements on what to prioritise on stage and what should be compromised. WJ also believes that the imperative for a translation is whether it makes sense to the audience, for which the production stakeholders act as the Quality Assurance for its dramatic effects. He says:

If there is no major discrepancy from the principal logic, the text may be rewritten as much as possible until the desired effect is achieved. At least we, the creative team members, should feel that the logic is right, and then make the audience feel that it is pretty close”. (ibid.)

Just like ZM, another cast member FN also tried to explore ways to enhance the dramatic effects. From his experiences in interacting with the audience, he said: “I found in theatres the Chinese and Western cultures have different points at which audiences burst into laughter from the humorous and comical effects” (Personal interview, 2010-5-8). He talked about his opinions and his personal touch for the characterisations:

I made some additions which are understandable by the Chinese audience and coherent with the character. They are also for stimulating the atmosphere and enriching the characterisation, so that the audience enjoy the story more. (ibid.)

The reason why FN made changes whenever he felt it necessary was, he said, “because the music and the lyrics are there to serve the play” (ibid.). For instance, ‘Nothing Personal’ is one of the leading songs in *Spin*, incorporating humour and ridicule, as well as the rhythmic pattern and the corresponding choreography. However, FN said:

When singing in Chinese, there are places where the rhymes of the lyrics do not fit in with the music. At the start, I felt uncomfortable with certain words. So I made changes to the singing methods. I used a cathartic singing style, sometimes spoken, or even yelled it out explosively (ibid.).
He then started talking about his latest input:

My performance today is slightly different from two days ago. I’ve changed it again in a few places, and I am looking for more comfortable ways for expression. For example, there is a phrase wo wo tou, which I always felt does not quite express the strength when I sing it. So I stress the last character tou by prolonging the note, which feels much better. There are also some small alterations such as changing from closed vowels to open vowels for singing purposes. (ibid.)

His efforts may have helped make this phrase stand out. An audience member made comments on ‘Cando’, an independent website for theatre audience feedback, which referred to wo wo tou as one of the “highlights” of the lyrics’ translation (Luo Jia, 2010-5-8).

The inputs of the cast not only involve their expert knowledge, but also their individuality. When the actor feels uneasy at singing the lyrics, it may indicate a similar effect on the audience. Therefore, LI considers that the negotiations between the translator and the actors are crucial to creating better dramatic effects for the audience:

There are different ways to express the meaning of the same word. The key points are whether it fits in with the situation, the actor, the story and the culture. Every actor has their own physical conditions. Some actors may feel less comfortable with this way and more comfortable with that way. When performing on stage, sometimes changing a word may enable an actor to perform better. Everyone has their own characteristics. It is all about how to bring out an actor’s individuality. (Personal interview, 2010-5-11)

Sometimes problems appear even though the lyrics would seem to fit perfectly in every respect, but there are issues concerning performability and practicality. QA remembers an encounter with TL for a song called ‘Touched by an angel’. Having tried many times, TL asked if QA could change the last phrase of the line wo bi shang yan, liu zhu zhe shun jian (我闭上眼，留住这瞬间 – I close my eyes, retain this moment) on to the high notes. Although after the initial draft translation, QA explained: “I had already sung these songs myself first and taken recordings, and therefore they are usually singable” (Personal interview, 2010-5-10). It was not until the rehearsals that she realised the difference: “The demo I made was very soft and so the humming style was fine. However, it would be very uncomfortable for him to sing it with an explosive style on stage” (ibid.).
As a result, QA altered the phrase from *zhe shun jian* (这瞬间 – this moment) to *zhe yi qie* (it all - 这一切). In this way, it is much easier to sing *yi qie* with the similar vowels [*i*] and [*ie*] than *shun jian* in which both characters end with the more demanding combination of a vowel plus a nasal consonant, i.e., [*un*] and [*ian*]. Also, the consonant [*q*] is an aspirated sound which is easier to sing on a high note than the unaspirated sound [*j*]. QA said: “I was very happy to make the adjustment for him because, when he sang with such a struggle, it made me feel uncomfortable to listen” (ibid.). In these cases, it was about the translator making necessary adjustments in response to the demands of the production team when problems arise during the rehearsals, rather than negotiating with them.

The examples in this section offer a glimpse of the kind of interactions which a translator may encounter during the process of translating musicals. To various extents, the production team members make necessary adjustments based on their perceived audience reception, about which the translator may or may not be consulted. Sometimes, accuracy in relation to the source text may have to be compromised in order to ensure its overall dramatic effects as well as its practicality. Therefore, the development of the target text may not be under the full control of the translator. Instead, it may be influenced by various stakeholders’ inputs, and hence reflects their dynamic interactions.

### 5.1.3 MM: the audience’s involvements

In contrast to the previous two case studies, which focus on the input to the textual evolution from the production side such as the director and the cast, in this third case study, I will move to the reception end and illustrate how the consumer’s interests and feedback are perceived, how they influence the translation strategies, and are then reflected in the development of the target text. This discussion will focus on MM.

MM is the first major Western musical translated into Putonghua on a large commercial scale. Since its première in Shanghai on 8th July 2011, it has been performed for two runs totalling 292 shows around 19 cities on the Chinese mainland. Its third run of over 100 shows started on 2nd August 2013. It has broken many Chinese stage performance records. The longest stage performance in China previously was the play *Tea House* by
Lao She (1899-1966), which ran for a total of 600 shows during a period of 55 years (Wu Bin, 2013).

A key factor determining this success is the producer Tian Yuan’s insistence that the musical be staged ‘for market, for audience, and not a political task’ (Fang, 2011). While Spin and ILY were both small scale musicals introduced more for testing the market, MM was launched on a large scale with a clear commercial gain in mind. Tian’s statement marks a shift away from the previous emphasis on the public educational value of performing arts in favour of consumers’ interests as discussed in Chapter 1. With this focus, the producers and the production team have made many efforts in bringing the audience onto the scene from the very start. These strategies demonstrate the producer’s determination from the outset to encourage audience participation in order to make it a success.

5.1.3.1 Encouraging the audience’s active participation

The producer of the Chinese translation of MM took two unprecedented initiatives in Chinese musicals’ translations: publishing the song lyrics translation before the rehearsals in order to invite public feedback; and running free public previews before its première. These decisions demonstrate the producers’ recognition of the important role that the audience plays in making the production successful. When considering the translation of musicals as a network, the audience functions as one of the key actants. As the consumer of the musical product, their interests and expectations are what the production actants aim to satisfy.

As early as March 2011, four months before its première, the producer of MM held a press conference for the translator to meet with the media and with some potential audience members – more actants are thus introduced to this interacting network. This publicity attracted large numbers of audience members, including musical fans who had already seen the original performances. Some of them may have seen it in 2007 when it was performed in Shanghai, whilst some may have seen the original version abroad, and others may have seen the film version. At the press conference, the Chinese translation for ‘Dancing Queen’ was released and audience feedback was invited.
Many enthusiastic fans of musicals started participating in discussions about the translations. For example, one of the most popular musical fans websites Chinamusical.net has a column called ‘I have a dream’ dedicated specifically to the Chinese translation of MM. By September 2013, it had discussed over 130 topics with over 2000 responses. Among those who joined the discussions of the lyrics translation, several answered the call by MM and submitted their translation samples for selection. Two enthusiastic members were chosen from the competing candidates and hence became part of the translation team for the Chinese version of MM.

In July, 2011, the full list of the Chinese translation lyrics was published on the production company’s website United Asia Live Entertainment. Publishing the translated lyrics not only helped widen the awareness of this production, it also encouraged many valuable comments and suggestions. For example, one of the songs titled ‘Our Last Summer’ was initially translated into qunian xiatian （去年夏天 – last year’s summer). Since the English phrase ‘last summer’ is normally translated in this way, it wasn’t spotted during the ‘back translation’ process, in which the Chinese experts were invited to convert the Chinese translated lyrics back into English so that the British director could check their accuracy. However, some audience members pointed out correctly that, according to this storyline, when Donna and Harry meet again after 21 years, the word ‘last’ cannot possibly have meant ‘last year’. It was corrected, and the song title was rewritten to xiari huiyi （夏日回忆 – summer memory) (Anon. ii, 2011). In this way, the target text still reserves the meaning of a past setting without causing any ambiguity. Although the loss occurs on the reference to a ‘last time’, it does not affect the storyline, as it was clearly stated at the beginning of the play that Donna hadn’t seen any of these three men for 21 years.

Although there are clear commercial considerations behind such a move, the producer did recognize the important role that the audiences play. Through “participatory democracy” (Pateman, 1970) (although the audience may not physically participate in the decision making process), their views have influenced the shaping of the musical production. The audience members are invited by the producer and they become part of the network with active participation through their views and feedback. Their inputs are taken into account and thus contribute to the shaping of this musical product. Such
involvements give them a sense of ownership and a stake in the text, which in turn encourages their further involvement during the process. In this way, the production has already attracted considerable audience interest.

Having successfully evoked the potential audience’s interest in making comments and suggestions for the lyrics translation, the producers’ decision to offer free previews before its formal opening made news at the time. It is common practice for musicals to have previews (public rehearsals) for a considerable period prior to the formal première in order to invite the audience’s feedback, and make necessary adjustments. For instance, Kenrick (2000/2003) describes such practices in Broadway:

Some producers opt for four to six weeks of Broadway previews. … New shows usually undergo revision during previews. Songs, scenes, and bits of business that seemed fabulous during rehearsals are often scrapped. Now and then, a performer is replaced or a role is cut.

These remarks further illustrate that audience reactions can influence the making of musicals. In this way, the audience also plays a role which influences the stakeholders’ decision making, and hence the audience can also be considered as one of the actants, even though they may not be physically in the same place and at the same time as the production stakeholders. However, this was the first such experiment in China. Therefore, there were concerns and doubts at the time that these free shows might lead to the loss of some ticket-buying audience.

However, the producers persisted. Whether it was part of their contract or to demonstrate their determination to learn step by step from the operations of the Western musicals’ industry, these free previews did help with their publicity as well as getting to know the audience’s feedback and suggestions. The Chinese director HG recalled: “In fact, our translation wasn’t finalised until all the rehearsals had been completed. Even during the performances, we are still revising it based on the effects on site” (Personal interview, 2011-9-20). Tian Shui, who performed Donna in this musical, remembered:

The previews brought the cast into contact with the audience, which enabled our interactions with them for the humour and the emotional moments in the story. In fact, it was from the previews that the word of mouth started its “intensive bursting out” (Quoted in Sa Beining, 2011).
Some of the most reported Chinese adapted elements which impressed the audience were the jokes that Shen Xiaocen, the actress who plays Tanya, inserted in the Shanghai dialect for her character. Encouraged by the very positive reactions from the audience at the previews, the production team decided to make these jokes a permanent feature in the Chinese version. This proved to be successful again with the Beijing dialect, and the producers have since developed a strategy for inviting jokes in the dialect of their touring destination before arriving at that city. Wherever they go now, these jokes in the local dialect are always among the highlights of the show and well received by the local audience. The British director Paul Garrington shared his strategies for this Chinese version in a TV interview:

In the translation, I try to encourage very specifically Chinese expressions, phrases, and comedy, and using a bit of the local dialect of Shanghai, which the audience seem to enjoy, including some Chinese dancing in the choreography. So the show doesn’t feel that it is imported, but created here, and that is very important. (cited in Anon. i, 2011)

FO, who plays Harry, one of Donna’s three boyfriends in MM, believes that the audience’s participation is very important for the production team’s artistic creation: “Based on the audience’s reactions, we get to know how to express ourselves better” (Personal interview, 2012-9-20). During my interview, he gave a detailed account about an incident when portraying Harry. When Harry tells Donna and the others, in an indirect way, that he is gay, he says:

\[ Ni gen nide Suofei xinlianxin, wo gen wode Laolunsi shi duanbei qingshen \]

\( \text{You and Sophie are heart and soul, I and Lawrence are deeply in love as in Brokeback Mountain,} \)

which was the surtitle translation made for the original version when it visited Shanghai in 2007. Whilst satisfactory when read as surtitles, if an actor had to say it in this way, the audience would feel that he was speaking ancient Chinese. Therefore, we revised it to: “You see there are many different types of family, you have Sophie at home together, I am with my Lawrence”. We acted like that to start with, but there was no response from the audience. So we wondered if we could add the word ‘boyfriend’ – a man who has a boyfriend. The British director didn’t agree; perhaps because of the difference in understanding between China and the West, or maybe he felt that it was too direct. After a couple of performances, he became impatient and said that perhaps I should give it a try. Then all of a sudden, the audience immediately responded. This is a difference between Chinese and Western culture, whether we can give the audience a more direct interpretation. Eventually he was persuaded – persuaded by the theatre audience’s reactions. This musical has many audiences, and some of them have come to watch the performance several times. I do not mean
‘boyfriend’ is bad, the key is how to say this phrase in order to make the audience understand (Harry’s) status and the situation” (ibid).

This incident clearly illustrates the roles of the actor, and especially the audience, in influencing the translated text. Through the reactions in the theatre, the directors and the actors can receive on the spot feedback from the audience. This is more spontaneous than feedbacks through reviews, blogs etc., and enables the actor-audience interactions on and off stage. Equally, the audience is very proud of their participative role. Having been to the first preview of MM, Xuan Ran, one of the musical fans, said in his review on his blog: “we audience are also an important part of the development of musicals” (Xuan Ran, 2011).

If the feedback which MM received from the previews is more for micro level improvements, such as certain expressions or cultural references, the same production company’s next project, the Chinese version of Cats, was forced to go against the common practice of musicals and provide surtitle translations for the song lyrics owing to the strong request by the audiences at the previews. In fact, some audience members had already expressed their wishes to have surtitles for MM. For instance, a musical fan named Crystal said in her review: “How wonderful if there were Chinese surtitles at the encore so that we could sing together” (crystal53451, 2011). However, the producers insisted that it was the commonly accepted rule in all language versions not to have surtitles because they may distract the audience from fully enjoying the stage performances. Clearly, the compromise made for Cats is an exception in order to accommodate the Chinese audience’s desire to be able to follow the storyline (as discussed in Chapter 4). While one can try to familiarise oneself beforehand with the storylines of MM in order to follow the songs’ meaning, it would be difficult to follow the lyrics in Cats, especially when the actors are singing while dancing. Therefore, the British producers eventually agreed to prioritize their audience’s interests over the rules. This incident proves again the power of consumer orientation to change conventional practices in the cross-cultural presentation of musicals.

5.1.3.2 Reacting to the audience’s feedback
Following the announcement of selecting MM as the first large-scale Chinese version of a Western musical, there were concerns about its compatibility with Chinese culture,
especially the main character Donna’s personal life as mentioned above. Although the Chinese production company flags up the story’s main theme as representing the universal relationships of family, friendship and love, some doubtful voices can still be heard.

For the Western audience, the use of ABBA songs is the most attractive point of this musical. Many audience members go to the theatre to enjoy these songs which they have been brought up with and which thus bring back memories of their past. They know that the story is only made as a vehicle for these songs and hence even if it is a little outside their values, they only see it for fun as it is a musical comedy. For the Chinese audience, however, the skopos is different. Without such deep connections with these songs, the story, as a brand new tale for them, becomes the focus of their attention.

One of the most controversial dialogues for translation occurs in the brief conversation between Sophie and Donna. At her wedding, Sophie expresses her understanding and gratitude to her mother, saying: “I don’t care if you’ve slept with hundreds of men, you’re my mum, and I love you…” . Donna’s answer is: “I haven’t slept with hundreds of men!” The Chinese translation went through two revisions before the final version (as shown below):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ST</th>
<th>TT1 and BT</th>
<th>TT2 and BT</th>
<th>TT3 and BT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Part of the dialogue between Sophie and Donna in MM

Although clearly “hundreds of men” is intended as a hyperbole to show that Sophie's love for her mother can stand the strongest moral test, it has gone too far in the Chinese cultural context. Since the story of MM is based on ABBA songs, which came onto the
scene during the 1970s following the rise of the sexual freedom movement in the West, this reference would therefore make sense to the Western audience. However, the Chinese audience would be unfamiliar with those social circumstances.

For the Chinese version, although the Chinese audience might be prepared to be the innocent bystander observing a story from a distant world, the performance by a Chinese cast, singing and speaking in Chinese, creates a closer connection between them and the story. This illusion of ‘it-happens-among-us’ amplifies the effects and hence makes audience discomfort even more acute. Some audience members expressed their concerns about this issue. In response to these comments, ‘hundreds of lovers’ and ‘hundreds of men’ in the source texts were changed to the vague term ‘more fathers’, together with Donna’s answer of ‘only three’ in the target text. In this way, the ‘unreal’ links between the Chinese cast and the sexual freedom movement are softened.

In addition to the ideological issues, there are occasional details in the story which also seem to be too sensitive for the Chinese context. Some audience members made suggestions through contacting the production team for alternatives in such cases. On one occasion, just before her daughter Sophie’s wedding day, Donna was shocked to know that the three possible fathers have suddenly appeared. Feeling insecure and fearful that someone was coming to take Sophie’s affections away from her, Donna exclaimed to her best friends: “I’ve done a bloody good job with Soph, all by myself, and now I’m going to be muscled out by an ejaculation!” The Chinese translation was initially a literal conversion. However, the term ‘ejaculation’ is not one that Chinese people would use in daily life, and therefore it would be uncomfortable for the audience to hear at such a public venue.

QD, the Chief Executive of Chinamusical.net – a musical fans website, has previously translated a number of Western musicals with surtitles, including the original version of MM in 2007. He said during my interview with him, and on the discussion board with other musical fans on Chinamusical.net (2011-7-17), that he repeatedly raised the issue with the Chinese producers about this translation term, and suggested replacing it with zhong ma (种马 – stallion). Clearly, this term was difficult for the translator, and so it
was revised several times from *fengliu langzi* (风流浪子 – Casanova) to *jingchong* (精虫 – sperm) to *shejing* (射精 – ejaculation), eventually being finalized as *zhong ma*.

A similar case also occurs when Sophie is telling her best friends about how she has found out from Donna’s diary the names of her three possible fathers. She says: “The sperm donor has a name. Well, three names. Sam, Bill or Harry”. The Chinese translation for the term ‘the sperm donor’ is literally *jingzi juanxianzhe*, and then revised slightly to *jingzi juanzengren*. According to QD:

> During the previews, the translation for this term was *jingzi de zhuren* (the owner of the sperm). It is really difficult to imagine an innocent girl would use such words. I asked the people around and they also felt that this term was not appropriate. I wonder if it will be improved after the opening (ibid.).

It was indeed improved. The Chinese translation for this term was revised to *xiao kedou* (小蝌蚪 – little tadpole), which comes from a well-known children’s story in China called *Little Tadpoles Looking for their Mum*. As the titles suggests, the story is about a group of tadpoles’ journey to find their Mum. To imply that Sophie is also looking for her father, the Chinese translation uses quotation marks for ‘mother’ to indicate its metaphorical sense, and at the same time adds a little humour to the scene. Even though it is not easy to get the effect of the quotation marks in performance, the story’s context is sufficient to eliminate any misunderstandings. The fact that this translation has been used for 400 shows around the Chinese mainland indicates that the audience feels comfortable with it.

The case of MM demonstrates that, in the context of musical translations, the network is enlarged to include the audience. Rather than merely being passive receivers waiting to be entertained, the audience acts as one of the actants and mediators in the network. Their interest and feedback play important roles in the development of the textual translation. As a consumer-oriented popular art entertainment, one of the key factors for making it a successful musical production is the close connections and dynamic interactions with its audience.

### 5.2 Audience survey

The three cases which I have discussed in the first part of this chapter give snapshots of several different modes of network interaction from the perspectives of the production
team members and how, from their perspectives, they respond to the audience’s feedback. In the second part of this chapter, I will focus on the audience themselves and their views, through the three audience surveys conducted. These surveys relate to the audience feedback used by the real producers and, hence, their reactions provide a different angle for evaluation. Although these results are not fully representative, the findings can at least give indications of the audience’s expectations for the translated musical productions.

5.2.1 Overview

One of the most significant differences for musical translation is the much greater audience participation. At the receiving end, the audience is by no means a passive onlooker in a musical translation production. On the contrary, they are sometimes perceived as playing the dual role of ‘prosumers’ and, to a certain extent, they help shape the translated musical production, as in the case of MM discussed earlier. Cronin considers that for crowd-sourced translation in the digital age:

[I]t is the potential audience for the translation that does the translation. … The consumer becomes an active producer, or prosumer. It is no longer a question of the translator, for example, projecting a target-oriented model of translation on to an audience, but of the audience producing its own self-representation as a target audience”. (2013: 100)

Although not quite to the same extent of the ‘prosumers’ in the field of digital technology, the modes of influence exerted during the process of musical translation range from the direct to the less direct, and to the perceived. In the case of direct influence, the audience convey their views to the producers (e.g., through the fans’ posts described above). A less direct level of influence is exerted through the reactions of the audience during performances. That is why Bishoff, the American director for ILY, says that he often sits discreetly amongst the audience, observing and noting down their reactions. And at the perceived level, influence is found in the producers’ anticipations of audience expectations.

In order to hear the audience’s feedback and reactions about the translated musicals, I have conducted three online audience surveys over the past four years during which the Chinese translations of Western musicals have been gradually taking shape on the Chinese mainland. In addition to the textual analysis of the translation itself, these
surveys aim to supplement my interviews with the stakeholders on the production side for cross examination of the findings.

This section focuses on certain key issues from the findings of my audience surveys, such as the comprehension, stylistic features and adaptations of cultural reference, in order to test the effectiveness of the translation strategies employed by the translators. While in the previous discussion I focused on certain micro level inputs during the interactions among the various stakeholders, this section seeks to provide broader perspectives on the audience’s role, and find out whether their wishes and expectations are channelled through to the translator’s strategies, thereby affecting textual development.

Owing to the limitations of these surveys, including their coverage of the potential (consumer) population and their self-selective nature, the data does not claim to have full validity, and is not wholly representative in a strict statistical sense. Nevertheless, the comments appear to be genuine reactions and reasonably reliable. Also, the respondents were under no obligation or peer pressure, and no incentives were offered which might otherwise have introduced bias. The reasonable numbers of the respondents, together with the clear results, qualify the surveys as indicative of reactions from at least a significant part of the consumer population.

5.2.2 The design
The findings from my pilot survey, which was conducted in 2008 with groups of Chinese students studying in the UK, indicate that when the audience enjoys the translated Western musicals, the libretto translation, although not fully credited, is one of the core elements. These respondents were conversant in English and to some extent culturally adjusted from living and studying in the UK, and hence their views are not fully representative as an audience of the Chinese translation of Western musicals. However, although the three surveys conducted later on the Chinese mainland had different populations, the results were not so different, which gives certain justification to the pilot survey. From experience gained by the pilot survey, the design for the interrelated questions and the rankings in these subsequent three surveys was improved, thanks to the online survey tools which prevent the potential errors from selecting more than one answer.
The focus of these surveys is set on the libretto related aspects, such as understanding the storylines, rhyme and rhythm, and humour; as well as how the sample populations feel about the strategies employed, such as using Chinese elements for cultural adaptation. The main categories concern the libretto-specific information, including comprehension, compatibility and resonance. Although some other aspects, such as peer pressure, also influence the audience’s preferences, these will not be discussed in this thesis owing to the limited scale of the surveys (see Appendix II).

For the ease of the respondents to complete and to give a spontaneous reply, the questions are structured to incorporate multiple-choice questions which were mainly close-ended (with open-ended notes for optional comments), and either dichotomous or scaled. With some questions, multiple alternative combinations are embedded into a single question for obtaining the required specific information, and to reduce the length of the questionnaire. In order to understand in more detail the audience’s feelings about the specific aspects, for most questions there is an optional space of ‘please explain’ for the respondents to expand their views further. In this way, the audience responses are not restricted to only the requested options. The researcher can additionally receive much richer supplementary data from the audience’s in-depth views. These additional comments and feedback may also help the researcher cross-check the reliability of the survey responses.

The first survey was created in August 2009, when I started to investigate the Chinese translation of Western musicals. At that time, ILY was the only Western musical (in English) translated by a professional theatrical company and which was performed as a commercial production. The link for the survey was initially sent out through the musical fans’ website ‘Chinamusical.com’ and the respondents were, at the beginning, mainly within the musical fans’ community. The link for the survey was also disseminated through other contacts, including various university intranets. As more and more people completed it, the questionnaire gradually became accessible through keyword search on the internet, and the respondents expanded to a wider population and geographical distribution (including mainland China and overseas).

The reason why the first survey was allowed to run for nearly four years was mainly because it had been widely spread, and therefore more and more respondents gradually
found their way to complete the questionnaire. It was encouraging to know that people were sufficiently interested, and sufficiently self motivated, to complete it. More important, since the data gives entry logs for their time of posting, it is possible to look at responses for particular periods e.g., pre MM, during MM and post MM. This data is useful for the comparison of changing trends during different periods of time in order to identify any significant constants.

The two subsequent surveys inherit the general themes and structures of the first survey, although revisions are made on some questions to incorporate the specifics of the two new musicals Spin and MM. Some questions are revised, and some new questions are added, in response to audience comments from the previous surveys. For example, more options are included for surtitles; and specific questions were added which target the particular translation strategies adopted, such as keeping English in the Chinese lyrics for MM.

5.2.3 The respondents
The total number of respondents for all three surveys is 375, including 290 for Survey 1 (22/8/2009-10/7/2013); 64 for Survey 2 (14/5/2010-11/5/2011) and 21 for Survey 3 (15/12/2011-3/3/2012). The vast majority of the respondents across all three surveys are between 18 and 30 years of age, with the approximate ratio of two females to one male. The education level is also consistent, with the majority being either at undergraduate or postgraduate levels. The results for incomes in each survey are also similar: with the majority on average income, followed by below average. Regarding the respondents’ language and location, Survey 1 shows that 89% of the respondents are Putonghua speakers and 86% are living on the Chinese mainland. In terms of the respondents’ occupations, Survey 3 shows that students are the largest group (37%) followed by ‘other’ (32%) which includes freelancers, followed by teachers (21%) (for full details see Appendix III).

5.2.4 The findings
5.2.4.1 The demand for surtitles
As discussed in Chapter 4, the differences between the two languages make the incompatibility of the translated lyrics with the existing musical framework inevitable in terms of linguistic expressions, stylistic features as well as cultural references. In order
to gain more accurate feedback from the audience on the effectiveness of the translated libretto, the survey questions are designed to approach these issues from various angles. For instance, concerning the importance of comprehension in viewing musicals, questions are designed to ask what the audience’s preferred forms of the performances are, how much they understand of the shows, as well as their rankings in importance for the various elements of musicals. In this way, the answers are correlated consistently to provide a fuller picture.

Chart 1. Survey 1: The preferred forms of performances

Chart 2. Survey 2: The preferred forms of performances
First of all, in order to find out how important comprehension is for the audience, the first question in each survey asks the audience’s preferences for the ways of performing these musicals’ lyrics. In the foregoing charts for all three surveys, the results from both Survey 1 and Survey 3 consistently show that surtitles are the preferred option for the vast majority of the respondents. In Survey 1, 74% of the respondents prefer to watch the musicals ‘performing in foreign languages’ with Chinese surtitles. For the same question, Survey 2 and Survey 3 offered more alternatives than Survey 1, such as surtitles in both languages, which were subsequent adjustments made in response to the first survey. Survey 2 reveals that performances in foreign languages are favoured over those in Chinese by a ratio of 92% to 8%, which clearly indicates a necessary dependence on surtitles.

Again in Survey 3, although I was aware that the audience’s preference for surtitles with the original cast may be affected by their desire to see particular performers, the results nevertheless show that the surtitles play a much stronger role than the cast (whether it is the original or the Chinese). Without surtitles, even if the musical is performed by the original cast, only 6% of the respondents favour it. Similarly, with the Chinese cast,

Chart 3. Survey 3: The preferred forms of performances

23 Here, ‘in foreign languages’ could mean with either foreign or Chinese casts, as some Chinese drama schools and universities prefer to use English when they perform Western musicals, e.g., Beijing University Musical Club performed ILY in English with Chinese surtitles, in March 2011 (http://www.damai.cn/ticket_24372.html).
nobody favours non-surtitles. Therefore, the overall ratio in Survey 3 between surtitled and non-surtitled versions is 94% to 6%.

Such a sharp contrast indicates that there must be multiple reasons involved. A number of the respondents mentioned the influence from watching foreign films or videos with subtitles, and one such respondent noted in the comments: “got used to reading subtitles through watching films in English” (Q3, Survey 1). However, theatre surtitles are different from screen subtitles. Instead of sharing the same screen with the pictures, as in both films and videos, surtitles in theatre are usually put on either side of the stage, or above it. This is why some respondents in Survey 1 recognized that surtitles distract their concentration during their viewing of the musical (Q3 in Survey 1, Chart 5).

5.2.4.2 The importance of storylines

So, what would make the respondents risk distracting their concentration in order to favour surtitles when viewing musicals? Except for the influence of screen subtitles, why are the respondents so attached to surtitles when viewing musicals? This question recalls the discussions in Chapter 3 about the traditional Chinese theatre goers. Their common practice was to listen to talk shows for the novel tales but go to theatre for stories they are already familiar with, so that they can concentrate on the staged performances. Does this tradition still have any influence on the current Chinese audience for Western musicals? For those imported Western musicals which are not widely known, what are their priorities?

A number of questions in each of the three surveys are designed to find out more about those aspects of musicals for which the audience feel they need the help of surtitles. One of these questions invites the respondents to rank in order of importance the different elements of musicals such as music, storylines, and singing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Importance</th>
<th>Survey 1</th>
<th>Survey 2</th>
<th>Survey 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>Music 39%</td>
<td>Music 67%</td>
<td>Music 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singing 17%</td>
<td>Singing 7%</td>
<td>Songs 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Storylines 10%</td>
<td>Storylines 22%</td>
<td>Storylines 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stars 20%</td>
<td>Stars 0%</td>
<td>Stars 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dancing 8%</td>
<td>Dancing 1%</td>
<td>Dancing 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staging &amp; lighting 6%</td>
<td>Staging &amp; lighting 3%</td>
<td>Staging &amp; lighting 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>Music 18%</td>
<td>Music 21%</td>
<td>Music 32%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows the respondents’ top two rankings in importance. Among the six aspects, invariably music is considered the most important followed by the singing and songs. The storylines’ positions in each survey are as follows:

- In Survey 1 they are considered the most important aspect by 10% of the respondents (4th place in terms of percentage); and the second most important aspect by 15% of the respondents (again 4th place in terms of percentage).
- In Survey 2, 22% of respondents consider them the most important aspect (2nd place in terms of percentage); and 27% of respondents consider them the second most important aspect (again 2nd place in terms of percentage).
- In Survey 3, they are considered the most important aspect by 22% of the respondents (2nd place in terms of percentage and equal with songs); and the second most important aspect by 11% of the respondents (3rd place in terms of percentage).

The above data shows clearly the considerable importance of the storylines to the Chinese audiences, which indicates that comprehension may be the main reason for the respondents to opt for surtitles in the performances of (Western) musicals. The emphasis on music and singing as well as broad storyline, rather than issues of detail, is consistent with translation adaptation rather than literal fidelity; the audience wants to understand the story and enjoy the music, and not necessarily every cultural reference. QD believes that the musicals’ uniqueness is that they attract the audience through their stories, rather than just one or two stars (2011).

### 5.2.4.3 The Language difficulties when listening

In order to cross check in which way, and to what extent, the respondents understand the storylines when viewing musicals, and the language difficulties which may be encountered, a number of further questions are followed-up to approach these issues from different angles. For instance, as shown in Chart 4 below, both Surveys 1 and 2
ask respondents whether they find the storylines easier to understand when viewing surtitles or when listening to the performance in Chinese, and how much they understand in each case. The results from both surveys are very similar: with 68% and 63% of the respondents respectively thinking that surtitles make it easier to follow the storylines; and with only 13% over both surveys choosing ‘listening in Chinese’.

Chart 4. Survey 1 and 2: Ease of comprehension

In Survey 1, the same question in Chart 4 has a list attached detailing some possible language difficulties (multiple answers allowed) for viewing musicals both when listening in Chinese and with surtitles. Chart 5 below shows: 39% of respondents chose tone loss; followed by 26% choosing lexis and 25% choosing syntax. Clearly, these factors would more likely cause problems when listening than when viewing with surtitles, although 27% of respondents recognise the fact that surtitles distract from their concentration. For example, one respondent noted: “Reading surtitles distracts one from seeing the performance” (Q3, Survey 1).

Chart 5. Survey 1: Causes of the difficulties
Clearly, listening to the lyrics is more difficult for understanding the meaning in any language than reading surtitles. The Chinese language presents even more difficulties in this respect owing to its unique features such as tones, as discussed in Chapter 4.

5.2.4.4 The pursuit for ‘Original sauce and flavour’

The fact that the respondents prefer surtitles to the translated lyrics shows that they are aware of the difficulty in making a completely different language fit perfectly with the original show, not only in meaning, but also with the original musical framework. Therefore, ‘original sauce and flavour’ becomes the most frequently used key-phrase in all three of my surveys. For instance, in the first question for each survey, this phrase is quoted in 76 out of 204 respondents’ comments for Survey 1; 17 out of 50 for Survey 2; and in 3 out of 5 for Survey 3.

Nevertheless, the respondents’ preference for ‘original sauce and flavour’ does not mean that translation is less important to them. On the contrary, amongst the respondents’ comments which refer to ‘original sauce and flavour’ (yuanzhi yuanwei – 原汁原味), comprehension (lijie – 理解, liaojie – 了解, mingbai – 明白, and dong – 懂) is mentioned in 36 out of 76 comments for Survey 1; 10 out of 17 for Survey 2; and 1 out of 3 comments for Survey 3. These results show that respondents consciously relate their viewing of musicals to comprehension. It indicates that they do need translation to assist their understanding of musicals but, at the same time, they are concerned about the compatability of the translated lyrics with the original musical and stylistic features. One respondent explains: “Lyrics need to be rhymed. It is difficult to make the Chinese performance fit perfectly for both meaning and listening. However, surtitle translation has no such restrictions and it is more poetic” (Survey 1). This is because the surtitle only translates the source text meaning briefly, and does not have to be singable and performable.

In addition to the quantitative data showing the choices which the respondents made, the non-obligatory options attached to certain questions for briefly explaining their choices also provide valuable insights. Both their explanations and the frequency of using certain keywords reveal the reasons behind their choices. For instance, the phrases lijie, liaojie, mingbai and dong, which are all equivalents for comprehension in Chinese, are used in all three surveys. In the first question for Survey 1 concerning the respondents’ preferred forms of performance, these phrases appeared in 157 out of 204
comments; in the first question for Survey 2, these phrases appeared in 14 out of 50; and in the first question for Survey 3, they appeared in 2 out of 5. They also appeared in 2 out of 4 comments for the fifth question in Survey 3, which requested the respondents’ views on the strongest advantage of the Chinese translation of MM.

For the Chinese audience of Western musicals, it seems that language comprehension plays a very important role in their enjoyment of musicals’ performances. The following explanations of their preferences for surtitle forms offer a micro picture of the respondents’ views:

- Many quarrels or dramatic climaxes, the more I wish to understand, the more I am confused… (Q3, Survey 1);
- May be able to both enjoy the singing with the ‘original sauce and flavour’, and also understand the storylines (ibid.);
- I think that surtitles are very useful, otherwise I cannot follow the story at all (ibid.);
- After all, musicals are from the West. More often, even if the translation for the Chinese performance is good, they may not be able to fully restore the rhymes and the artistic conception. I personally enjoy the singing with the ‘original sauce and flavour’, with which I can enjoy the charm of different languages and cultures. I very much agree that good surtitles translation can help the audience better their understanding (ibid.);
- I prefer the form of ‘original sauce and flavour’; having surtitles is for understanding (ibid.).
- Performing in Chinese can further widen the audience cohort. Nowadays, those who enjoy musicals on the Chinese mainland are from considerably high levels of education, because language is a large barrier to comprehension. However, for many veteran musical fans, they would hope to view the performance with ‘original sauce and flavour’ (ibid.);
- Because, the story would not be so attractive if one cannot understand the plot. For me, singing is more important than dancing (ibid.)
- I am used to reading surtitles… sometimes the Chinese songs really cannot be understood through listening because of their tone loss (ibid.)

After seeing the debut of MM, a musical fan pen-named Eric-phantom wrote a review which echoes the above comments from the audience surveys:

The biggest advantage of the Chinese version is that one doesn’t need to look at surtitles, and can therefore concentrate on the performance on stage. One can pay close attention to various small details, and listen to the dialogue translation. Having been carefully thought over, and with recreation, the translation is more fluent and generally accords with the Chinese customs. Compared with the dialogues in some Chinese versions of foreign plays, this translation has much less translationese. (2011)
These comments reveal that apart from their enjoyment of seeing the original musicals, the majority of the respondents prefer the surtitle translation over the singable translation owing to their preference for ‘original sauce and flavour’. At the same time, there are also indications of a certain lack of confidence from the audience in the singable translation. The reasons for this are partially due to Chinese language-related issues such as tone loss (as discussed in Chapter 4). Therefore, surtitles are crucial as they may provide clearer information for the audience to follow the storylines.

This view recalls the dubbing of foreign films, which was very popular in China until the 1990s. One of the most well-known producers on the Chinese mainland is the Shanghai Film Dubbing Studio. Nowadays, many audiences who have seen their dubbed films still cherish their outstanding quality. However, Yun Feiyang and Yang Beibei (2013) found that after “VCRs as well as (more) recently VCDs and DVDs entered into tens of thousands of ordinary households, the peak of the dubbed films suffered a sudden demise in the 1990s”. According to Xu Xiaoqing (2014), with “the constant improvement of the Chinese audiences’ proficiency in foreign languages, the ‘original version with subtitles’ is now the prevailing screen mode”.

However, as a form of live performance, musicals’ surtitles are different from subtitles for screen products such as films and videos, as mentioned earlier. Also, since musicals are produced to last for long periods, it is worth investing time and effort to offer the audience the most satisfying experience in terms of comprehension of the storylines, characterisation and artistic quality.

### 5.2.4.5 Stylistic features

In addition to the language issues, stylistic features are also a key area for libretto translation. One question aims to find out how important these features are to the Chinese audience’s enjoyment of Western musicals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of Importance</th>
<th>Survey 1</th>
<th>Survey 2</th>
<th>Survey 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Rhyme and rhythm 37%</td>
<td>Rhyme and rhythm 40%</td>
<td>Artistic conception of the lyrics 47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese cultural elements 29%</td>
<td>Easy to understand 26%</td>
<td>Chinese elements 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Easy to understand 17%</td>
<td>Humour 20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

202
2nd Humour 34%  
Easy to understand 34%  
Rhyme and rhythm 21%  

Easy to understand 28%  
Rhyme and rhythm 26%  
Humour 25%  

Easy to understand 32%  
Humour 26%  
Artistic conception of the lyrics 26%

Table 2. The respondents’ top two rankings for the stylistic features of the libretto in order of importance

Table 2 above shows the respondents’ top two rankings for what they consider the most enjoyable aspects in the libretto translations. Rhyme and rhythm, artistic conception of the lyrics, humour and ease of understanding are the most important priorities.

The respondents’ comments gave more detailed explanations for their choices. For instance:

• The advantage of the Chinese version is the ease of understanding, so that I can follow the story when viewing the performance. If the Chinese translation keeps the original styles well, then the humorous dialogues, tuneful songs and authentic dances can create resonance with the audience. (Survey 3. Q5).
• For lyrics, the first emphasis is the beauty of the rhyme and rhythm; the next is they must be understandable for the audience (Survey 1. Q5);
• Lyrics should be more superior than life, not vulgar, and meaningful. The best lyrics should be humorous, lively, distinctive, rhyming and rhythmic. But they should also be easily understandable, and not be completely separated from the mass audience. As for the ‘Chinese elements’, don’t deliberately use them. It is best to let them be digested ‘invisibly’ (Survey 1. Q5);
• For a musical, only if I could understand the story would I go to see it. I would be able to remember it if the lyrics are rhyming and rhythmic. It would attract me if the Chinese references are appealing and humorous (Survey 2. Q6)

The audience’s interests and preferences for the stylistic features suggest that the translation strategies for musical libretti need to have more emphasis on these specific genre features. To reflect the original musical’s style in translation is also one of the most important aspects for both the translators and the production teams. For instance, HG and JB, the Chinese director and the Chinese music director of MM, would not compromise the translation which was merely plain conversion of the source text. HG said:

The English lyrics can be very direct, but they have rhyme, they have impact and they have rhythmic patterns. Simply following the meaning of the source text would make the Chinese translation too direct. They are not songs anymore as the inner feeling is completely lost. (Personal interview, 2011-9-20)
CE, one of the translators for MM, considered the audience’s appreciation and resonance to be the translator’s best reward. She recalled:

I am very happy when I see some comments on weibo (the Chinese equivalent of Twitter). I often see that audience are quoting some of our translated lyrics. The most quoted is ‘Thank you for the music’ and ‘I have a dream’. When I translated them, I felt that they would be remembered by the audience. The words are simple and commonly used, but not too plain. (Personal interview, 2011-9-21)

The experts in the field also have positive views on the libretto translations for MM. Jia Ding, a well-known lyricist, made his ‘verdict’ after seeing the show: “The lyrics translation is particularly idiomatic, with rich literariness, and expressed very smoothly” (cited in Yang Beibei, 2014). The honorary president of the Central Academy of Drama Xu Xiaozhong highly commended the Chinese version of MM. He specifically remarked on the lyrics translation, and considered it “a relatively good translation with fairly vivid characteristic language” (cited in Anon. iii, 2011). Xu Shuya, the president of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music, also praised the libretto translation as very successful, especially in relation to its audience’s appeal in contrast to opera:

During the process of presenting musicals from the English version to the Chinese version, the unsuccessful libretto translation often leads to serious damage. This is because opera and musicals belong to two different artistic dimensions. While opera is a relatively high art within the entire arts market, musicals, owing to their own particular genre, should first and foremost be light. It is popular art for the mass audience. The Chinese version incorporates in its adaptation some Chinese cultural contents. I also heard currently popular words and expressions; for instance, some recently fashionable phrases, or the frequently quoted internet language terms. While making the audience laugh, they realised a kind of cultural communication. … Musicals should have stronger market power through the consumer than other types of the performing arts. On the Chinese mainland, an opera very rarely manages to perform more than 10 shows in any one city. Even some of the most popular shows initially may only manage a half full house for their final performances. However, the final performance of the Chinese version of MM in Beijing still consistently entertained almost a full house. Clearly, the audience whole heartedly enjoyed it. (ibid.)

Clearly, the translation of the lyrics won praise from both industry insiders and ordinary theatre goers. This is supported by the result of 90% of the respondents in my third survey saying that they would be interested to view other Chinese translations of Western musicals in the future (Appendix III).
The success of CE and her working partner JF comes from positioning themselves as part of the audience, as they were from the musical fans community before taking up this assignment. Therefore, they hold the dual identities of ‘prosumer’. As a musical fan herself, CE was always aware of this: “In fact, we are audience. We could be actors, or audience, but we do not consider ourselves as mere bystanders between these two, because that would adversely affect our viewpoint” (Personal interview, 2011-9-21). This positioning enables them to approach the lyrics from both ends of the production line and thereby make their translation strategies more effective for the reception.

These voices from the production teams illustrate clear links between the production and the audience. As seen in my analysis in Chapters 3 and 4, of the perspectives of textuality and singability, the attention to, and efforts for, making the lyrics easy to understand and enjoyable for the audience come from consumer orientation, which is the driving force for the entire production team. These efforts may have contributed to the outcomes which show that, for the category of ‘all or almost all’ respondents who understood the Chinese translated lyrics without surtitles, there is a significant leap from 7% in Survey 1 and 11% in Survey 2 to 53% in Survey 3 (Q4, Q4 and Q2 respectively, see Appendix III). This increase in Survey 3 is also consistent with Question 9 later on in the same survey, which shows that 83% of the respondents consider ‘no language barrier’ as their first or second most important advantages of the Chinese translation. All these results indicate steady improvements in the quality of musical libretto translation and in meeting the audience’s expectations.

5.2.4.6 The Chinese elements
As already touched upon under the stylistic features in the last section, another key element in musical libretto translation is the use of localised references. The surveys show that the insertion of Chinese elements, for example, adapting cultural references, jokes in local dialects and Chinese ethnic minorities’ choreography, has gradually been embraced by the audience. Chart 6 below illustrates the changing views on the compatibility of the Chinese elements over the period of the three surveys.
Chart 6. Three surveys: Compatibility of the Chinese elements

This Chart shows a consistent increase in the numbers of respondents saying ‘Yes’ and conversely decreasing numbers saying ‘No’ for the Chinese elements. It indicates that as Western musicals become a mass produced entertainment for a wider market in China, localizations become more in demand. This has already happened with the successful South Korean translation version of the German rock musical *Linie 1*. During its 14 years’ continuous performances (1994-2007), the localized elements were annually updated in order to establish more current connections with the audience. The director Kim Min-gi was praised for “giving new life to the original story” (Hata Yuki). This result is significant especially when considering the strong voices for the ‘original sauce and flavour’ as mentioned earlier. It implies that the translation quality has been improving towards a combination of authenticity and adaptation.

**Conclusion**

Through three case studies for the translation of Western musicals – ILY, *Spin* and MM – into Putonghua, this chapter has explored the dynamic nature of musical libretto translation. Borrowing the approach of ANT, it has investigated how the translators interact with various stakeholders, when viewed as actants in a network, to produce a consumer-oriented translation for musical production. The findings suggest that the development of the target text is under the influence of multiple factors and differing perspectives.

First hand data collected from the field studies, such as the interviews with the translators and other stakeholders in the production team, together with the online audience surveys conducted over the past four years, provide valuable insights for the understanding of the contexts in which translators of musicals operate. The analyses of
these three cases show that, owing to the specific genre features of the musicals, the perspectives based on the relationship between the source and the target texts, as well as between the existing musical framework and the newly arrived target text (as discussed in the previous two chapters) are not the only factors which influence the development of the target text.

Other factors, such as social, cultural, and ideological contexts, also play significant roles in the development of the target text. The revisions to the target texts are the outcomes of negotiations between the audience’s expectations and the producers’ willingness to accommodate the consumers’ interests. From the perspective of ANT, the production team may be considered as an umbrella network with consumer orientation as the common goal everyone interacts to achieve. Working in this environment, translators are not only directly, but also immediately, confronted by the demands of different users of their translations, i.e., the directors and the actors.

Close examinations of the data demonstrate the significant nature of dynamic interactions between translators and stakeholders in musical translations. These three musicals illustrate different situations. Sometimes, as in the case of ILY, the ‘worknet’ interactions involve the director and the cast in order to ensure the comprehension and the practicality of the libretto. Sometimes, as in the case of Spin, stakeholders (actants) from different professions with differing expertise negotiate their perceptions in order to reach a consensus in the best interests of the audience. In the case of MM, the emphasis is more to encourage the audience’s participation and contribution in the shaping of the production, in order to achieve resonance with the consumers. During these interactions, the translators’ roles are also influenced by multiple influences, such as professional symbolic capital and power-relations, for which the translators need to respond to their differing perspectives and specialities.

Furthermore, through channels such as the media and blogs, as well as the direct interactions between the actors and the audience in the theatre, the audience may also play an active role in influencing the development of the musical libretto translation. The directors and the actors may make necessary adjustments according to the audience’s feedback. In order to understand the audience’s expectations and feedback, as well as for the purposes of triangulation, the second part of this chapter has presented
the findings of the three audience surveys conducted during the past four years. They show consistently that the Chinese audience, whilst enjoying the music and singing in musicals, consider comprehension of the musical’s storylines a very important aspect.

Although these findings cannot claim to be exhaustive and are unlikely to be representative, as discussed in the methodology section (owing to their self-selecting nature, the relatively small number of respondents, as well as lack of control over the sample populations), they do offer a different perspective from which to analyse and evaluate the textual translation. The surveys also help identify correlations between stakeholder decisions and consumer views, such as in regard to comprehension and stylistic features. The findings show clearly that libretto translation is an important tool for the Chinese audience to understand the musicals’ stories. They also give indications towards the areas of attention needed for the improvement of libretto translation. As many respondents explained, comprehension forms a very important part of their viewing of musicals and good translation can make their experiences much more enjoyable.

The investigations and findings of the different stakeholders’ influences on the target text confirm that, for musical libretto translations, the development of the translated text is under multiple influences from differing stakeholders, or actants, and their interactions in the network. Instead of focusing on the linguistic aspects only, translators need to respond to these stakeholders’ inputs – their expertise and their perceptions of the audience, as well as the audience’s expectations – in order to ensure the *skopos* of the translation is fully realized.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

To conclude, I shall start by summarising the main views and arguments before proceeding to discuss the originality, contributions and limitations of my work, as well as its implications for future studies. Finally, I shall provide my concluding remarks.

6.1 The main views and summary
6.1.1 The main views
Translations of Musicals are becoming more common following their commercial successes in the global popular entertainment market. As a novel and commercially successful phenomenon on the Chinese mainland, musicals present the translator with new problems, and frequently involve adaptations for an audience unfamiliar with either the genre, or the topics. Thus, questions are raised about the role of the translator and the nature of translations, as well as the effects of consumer orientation. A research approach based merely on comparisons between ST and TT cannot fully explain the libretto’s textual developments for the purposes of stage performances, not least because multi-semiotic elements and various stakeholders are involved during the translation process. Therefore, a more holistic theoretical perspective is needed in order to understand these issues.

Through three case studies presenting the translation situations in this context, this thesis illustrates how the translator operates under multi-perspectival influences and through dynamic interactions with a variety of contributors. The findings suggest that a consumer-oriented collaborative translation strategy plays the key role in translating a musical libretto for different cultural contexts. Clearly translators do not operate alone and deal with the language conversion solely from the textual perspective. Instead, their linguistic choices and translation strategies are inevitably influenced by various elements. These sources include a variety of production stakeholders and their theatrical knowledge, their expertise, the way they perceive the musical’s reception, as well as the audience’s expectations and feedback. The collaboration takes place in various forms from case to case depending on the translation issues arising as well as the different nature of stakeholders and the networking involved. The translator’s role is to respond to, and negotiate with, these multiple perspectives and decide which are to be prioritized or compromised in certain situations to best benefit the target audience.
6.1.2 Summary of the findings

In addition to the chapters for the introduction, the theoretical framework and methodology, and the conclusions, the analytical chapters in this thesis are structured to reflect ANT’s two main methods of ‘following the actors’ and ‘following the inscription’. They are organised according to the objectives of the research. Whilst Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are all devoted to investigating how a translator works in a complex working environment, Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the handling of problems arising from the interplay of textual and linguistic features with theatre semiotics. These problems include aspects such as storylines, characterization and singability. Chapter 5, by contrast, investigates how the development of the target text is influenced by the inputs and feedback garnered through collaborations and interactions from differing stakeholders, including the production team members and the audience. The network’s components and relations have been confirmed by this investigation, and this proves useful in forming an overall picture of the position of the translator.

The findings of Chapter 3 show that, in the translation of musicals, linguistic and textual accuracy is legitimately of less importance and can be sacrificed for purposes of audience reception in given contexts when it impedes comprehension. This is because, as one of the multi-semiotic features in a musical, lyrics translation serves the purpose of ensuring the audience’s comprehension and enjoyment of the performance. Conversions for elements of language and culture, as well as stylistic and dramatic features may be viewed as specific types of adaptation that respond to the target audience’s feedback. In order to ensure a musical’s appeal to the audience, the translator has to negotiate the linguistic elements with cultural, stylistic, and dramatic factors. These factors may be prioritized or compromised, depending upon the translator’s evaluation of the functions of the translation. The balance of these aspects plays an important role in maintaining the textual coherence of the target text to be both easy to understand and, at the same time, performable. Using ANT’s approach helps the understanding of these aspects as well as the analysis of the factors and their relationships, which are essential for developing a coherent model of textual analysis to benefit the musical’s translation.

The in-depth analysis of the textual examples also shows that, during the negotiations, the audience’s expectations and interests are more often given precedence in the target
text than faithfulness and accuracy to the source text. This is because consumer orientation plays a significant role in making the target texts more culturally relevant and acceptable. It flags up the sense of novelty and symbolic capital associated with the appeal of this Western form of popular art entertainment to the Chinese audience. It also triggers the need sometimes for radical adaptations of the cultural and stylistic elements to fit in with the target context. In this way, consumer-oriented translation strategies help improve the overall engagement of the audience towards achieving an effective reception.

The findings from Chapter 4 show that singability and performance-related issues are amongst the key aspects which determine whether a lyrics translation is effective. As the first users of the translated lyrics, if the performers feel comfortable in singing and acting them, this helps the audience follow the storylines and the characterizations, and thereby enhances their enjoyment of the musicals. Various examples in my case studies illustrate the different translation strategies employed by the translators for negotiating the multiple interacting aspects of the song’s phonological, stylistic and syntactic features, as well as the mise-en-scène incorporating the performers’ perspectives. Sometimes, in order to prioritize the song’s expressive functions with characterization, narrative, mood, and action, accuracy of the content becomes relatively flexible. For instance, some stanzas are restructured, and sometimes the meaning is shifted, in order to match the required syllable count or the rhyme scheme; or to maintain a harmonious coherence between the existing musical framework and the rise and fall of the Chinese tones; or to coordinate with the visual effects of the choreography and stage design.

Employing ANT’s main concepts of network and ‘translation’, Chapter 5 demonstrates the dynamic interactions involved by various stakeholders during the process of musical libretto translation. The findings confirm that musicals constitute an area where translation issues meet multiple pressures, including artistic, cultural, and commercial demands. The development of the translated musical libretto is subject to the influence of a variety of stakeholders. Operating in such an environment, part of the translators’ work is to respond to and negotiate with, differing stakeholders’ inputs – their expertise and their perceptions of the audience, as well as the expectations from the audience themselves – in order to ensure that the skopos of the translation is fully realised.
These stakeholders, i.e., the production team members such as the producers, the director, the music director, the choreographer, and the performers, as well as the audience, are linked to the translators and/or the translated text in a variety of complex ways. The production stakeholders’ theatrical knowledge, experience, and expertise, together with the audience’s feedback, all contribute to the effective development of the libretto translation. Viewed from this perspective, the translator’s role becomes more that of a proposer of the target text, rather than its finalizer, affected by power relations as well as differences in the priorities of the stakeholders during the network interactions.

In order to describe these stakeholders and their interactions with each other, the discussion employs ANT’s approach by assuming the translator to be an ‘actant’ operating in a network environment alongside the musical production team members, who are also considered as actants. The communications and negotiations between them can then be viewed as network interactions. Data collected from interviews with the translators and other stakeholders in the production team reveals that when working together to produce the translation version of musicals, the translator and the other stakeholders interact with each other as ‘mediators’ who are “laying down net-works” through their “work-nets” (Latour, 2005: 132). The diagram I proposed (discussed in Chapter 2) is an attempt to reflect this “work-net” process: from the translator receiving their briefing from the producer and completing the first draft target text (TT1), to the translated text taking shape under the influence of multiple stakeholders’ inputs and becoming TT2, TT3, etc. This model also allows me to order information and assess its relative importance in dealing with the competing demands of performers and the source text.

The audience’s role is also important as their feedback, through channels such as media, blogs, as well as direct interactions with the actors in the theatre, may influence the development of the musical libretto translation. That is also why the musical producers often sit amongst the audience to observe their reactions, and make revisions wherever fitting. This process may well continue throughout the show’s run, to reflect the continuous social and cultural changes taking place at the time. Clearly, the revisions to the target texts are the outcomes of negotiations between the audience’s expectations and the production team’s (including the translator’s) perceptions of the consumers’
interests. The online audience surveys were conducted in order to identify correlations between stakeholder decisions and consumer views, for the evaluation of the musical libretto translation and its effectiveness with regard to audience reception. The findings consistently show that the Chinese audience considers the libretto translation an important tool for their enjoyment of the musicals.

Overall, the findings confirm the initial expectations proposed for this thesis which are: libretto translation for musicals involves a variety of collaborations between the translator and the other stakeholders. During these collaborations, whether there are interactions and negotiations, prioritization or compromise, making gain or incurring loss, they are underpinned by a clear consumer-orientation – to meet the audiences’ expectations.

6.2 Originality and contribution
6.2.1 An under-researched topic
As a consumer-oriented popular art entertainment, a musical is different from other theatrical forms, such as opera, in terms of its genre features and, more importantly, its target reception. This dissertation is the first attempt to investigate consumer-oriented collaborative translation for musicals. Through exploring the under-researched topic area of musical libretto translation practice, it makes contributions towards the understanding of the translator’s role and the dynamic interactions involved in collaborative translation. It also reveals linguistic and performance aspects to be the decisive factors in the decision-making process for musical libretto translation, as well as who has power for a given decision.

As noted in the Introduction, studies on musicals translation have been relatively few, and the most recent contributions (Minors, 2013, Low, 2013) still focus mainly on textual issues. This thesis is not confined to the comparison of texts but takes into consideration a range of factors. It attempts to investigate, beyond the textual perspective, the dynamics of collaborative musicals translation. Supported by extensive first-hand empirical data gathered from field studies, including the translation texts, interviews with the translators and the musical production team members, as well as the audience surveys, and the in-depth analysis, it brings together the multiple perspectives
of musicals’ translation. Thus, this study provides valuable insights of the translation practices in this specific genre.

6.2.2 Collaborative translations and their varieties in practice

Although theoretically it is a widely accepted view that theatrical translation (if not also other translation fields as a whole) involves collaboration between translators and other experts, there seems to be a lack of evidence from both scholars and practitioners. On the one hand, such a view has not been widely reflected in the scholarly research, a situation which is indicated by Susam-Sarajeva’s call for new frameworks and tools beyond the text-based approach (2008: 190). On the other hand, some practitioners also may be continuing to operate in the traditional text-based way of the ‘one man show’. That may be why a decade after Susan Bassnett (1998) had described the ‘ideal’ situation of collaboration between the translator and the performers, Eaton (2008) was still calling for a collaborative stage translation over the solitary one.

Taking the three musicals as case studies, this study has explored the process of making the Putonghua translations of Western musicals for the mainland Chinese audience. It is one of the very first studies which seeks to go beyond that apparently obvious point of ‘collaborative translation’ (which, as argued above, nevertheless needs to be rehearsed), to ask more detailed questions as to the ways in which the translator and the production team collaborate. Even the few who recognize that there are other stakeholders involved (e.g., Shestakov, 2005), have not provided sufficiently sustained or in-depth analyses. No one has so far really investigated the situations in practice with such detailed data.

Through exploring whether, how, and to what extent the stakeholders’ interactions affect the textual development for musical libretto, the findings confirm the crucial importance of collaborative translation in making a musical commercially successful. Even within the field of musicals’ translation itself, a multiplicity of different modes of collaborations and network interactions exists. The case studies in Chapter 5 illustrate three different modes of interactions and negotiations of expertise and authority between translators and the production team members, in terms of their structures of networks and particular problems and solutions. For instance, the ‘worknet’ (Latour, 2005: 132) was set up in ILY between the director and the cast specifically for revising the translation. In Spin, during the ‘translation’ process, a particular actor’s theatrical
experience and expertise helped the translator through a steep learning curve. In MM, the audience’s participation through their feedback, right from the start of the translation process, demonstrates the active role that the audience plays in shaping the musical’s libretto translation. The evidence helps both underpin the theoretical discussions and strengthen the textual analysis for the case studies.

6.2.3 A new approach employing ANT and its modifications

The underlying rationale for principally employing ANT as the theoretical framework and the methodological approach is its dynamism. Law defines ANT as “methods of analysis that treat everything in the social and natural worlds as a continuously generated effect of the webs of relations within which they are located” (2009: 141). This understanding allows the incorporation of interdisciplinary perspectives (in this case translation, theatrical and literary studies, and sociology) for the analysis of organic and constantly evolving networks. ANT’s main concepts of actant, mediator, network, and ‘translation’, open up a new perspective for this study.

Although ANT has been applied in a few research cases in the translation field, which mainly concern print translation, their focuses are mainly on the collaborations with which the translators are involved, rather than how these collaborations are reflected in the actual development of the translation text. Cressman stresses that “network evaluation needs to move beyond simply noting connections and focus on describing the nature of these connections” (2009: 11).

Through investigating the detailed network interactions, this study shows that, for musical translations, the stakeholders cannot always be expected to act in the same way. For instance, different performers may have different ways to portray the characters on stage, depending on their experience, expertise, and personal preferences, etc. Their perceptions help shape the translation draft to a performance text. This is precisely why Latour considers the ‘actants’ in a network as ‘mediators’ rather than ‘intermediaries’ (2005: 39). Therefore, the output of their interactions is individualised and differs depending upon the specific circumstances, rather than being predictable. However, if the stakeholders fail to persuade or, in ANT’s term ‘translate’, each other, what could happen? Is the production team going to break up, similar to Callon’s case of the scallops in St. Brieuc Bay? Clearly, both stability and dynamic interactions are
important for the production team, since only when it is stable can it successfully present the outcome of the stakeholders’ dynamic interactions.

Therefore, whilst employing ANT’s approach has helped this research yield insightful results for musical libretto translation, it is worth reflecting on the theoretical challenges for ANT raised by the study. Specifically, this investigation finds that, for the case of musical libretto translation, the network interactions manifest themselves more effectively in an environment which is a little different from that described by the ANT theorists. Hence, the situation of musical translation suggests a limitation of ANT, which needs to be refined accordingly.

The findings from the investigations indicate that there is a need to have an overriding ‘umbrella network’ in order to underpin the stability of the network where stakeholders’ micro-interactions take place. During their interactions, when the stakeholders act as ‘mediators’ with differing perspectives, their interactions have the potential to undermine the stability of the network. The musical production may be considered as an umbrella network, i.e., it acts as an institutional framework within which the stakeholders share a mutual understanding (as the obligatory passage point in Callon’s term) and work for their common goal – making the musical for the enjoyment of the consuming audience. This is owing to musicals’ strong market orientation as a form of popular art entertainment, and therefore the audience’s interests underlie every production stakeholder’s input (although each of them would also have their personal goals, including career enhancement and financial gain). Through harmonizing conflicting demands, and negotiating with a range of non-textual factors, the translator has been shown to play a significant role during the interactions with other stakeholders under the umbrella network. As a result, the common goal of consumer orientation functions as a binding force for the umbrella network as well as to stabilize it. For this reason, the umbrella network is needed to ensure that, even when the interactions between individual stakeholders do not work out, negotiations involving accommodation or compromise will take place. Thus, the production does not break down.

The stabilization of the umbrella network by the binding forces of the common goal and the institutional framework is similar to what Law, drawing on Foucault, refers to as
“discursive stability” (2009: 149). He observes: “It was the multi-discursive ordering of the laboratory that secured its relative stability. When one mode of ordering became problematic, others might be more effective” (ibid). Law concludes that discourses, and the fact that “they are different”, makes “an organization hold itself together” (ibid).

This is also true in the case of the translation of musicals. The production team embodies a variety of different discourses, including each of the team members’ theatrical expertise. The common goal of consumer orientation can be viewed as one of “the mode[s] of ordering” – the principal one – owing to the musical’s strong commercial objectives. Otherwise, when different areas of expertise clash (e.g., between the translator and the actors), they may each insist on their own legitimate reasons and consequently get nowhere. The umbrella network, with its common goal, can both facilitate and stabilize the multi-semiotic features and the dynamic collaborations through interactions from the differing stakeholders’ perspectives which are needed for musicals’ translation. The stakeholders’ micro-negotiations contribute to shaping the network and, at the same time, allow the necessary accommodation or compromise between each other’s perspectives.

These attempts at applying and modifying ANT to a cross-disciplinary subject, together with critical examination of its usefulness and limitation, provide new dimensions for its application in a wider field.

6.2.4 The diagram for the analysis of musicals’ translation
This study attempts, for the first time, to develop a tool to investigate the collaborations and interactions involved in musical libretto translation. Based on ANT and the findings of the investigations, the diagram (p. 43) of the stakeholders and their inter-relations is devised to describe the dynamic nature of the musical libretto translation process. The multiple factors, the production stakeholders’ expertise, as well as the audience’s feedback, all play their roles in this network environment. The diagram shows that each connecting line between a stakeholder and the translator is a potential influence on the development of the final target text, and hence one may hypothesise that translation changes may arise from the interactions at each point of contact. The usefulness of this approach in organizing the information has been demonstrated in the thesis.
6.3 Limitations

Whilst attempting, with an innovative and interdisciplinary study, to gain insights of an under researched area proves exciting and rewarding, the findings are inevitably subject to certain limitations.

In terms of the topic area, the analysis looked at the translation of musicals from the perspective of a product-oriented descriptive approach to the process of the textual development, rather than of performance or drama or theatre studies. Therefore, no claims for generalizability on specific translation issues are made beyond these limits. Since the focus is on the interlingual translation of the libretto, the aspects of theatrical performance are only relevant insofar as they affect the textual translation. This same limitation applies to the music, i.e., it is only relevant insofar as the music is concerned with the lyrics. The translated language in this research only covers English and Putonghua, which is spoken on the Chinese mainland and with which these three sample musicals have been performed up to the present. In addition to these anticipated precautions, some limitations were also discovered during the process of this research concerning the application of the theoretical framework and the methods of data collection.

6.3.1 Follow the actant

Whilst experimenting with ANT’s dynamic approach for the translation of musicals has proved to be stimulating for this thesis, the limitations should be noted.

First, it indicates the limits of ANT’s applicability in translation studies, and the apparent conflicts between an investigation of social factors and the role of the individual stakeholders. Secondly, whilst I was able to “examine the inscription” (Van House, 2001), i.e., conducting the textual analysis based on the source and the target texts, it was not possible for me to fully comply with the other aspect of the methodological approach of ANT, which is to ‘follow the actor’ (ibid.) in the strict sociological and ethnographic sense, such as directly observing in real time the translator’s operations and their interactions with other stakeholders. This is owing to the rules governing closed rehearsals. As a result, most of the evidence was obtained through interviews with the relevant parties over the periods when the musicals were being performed.
6.3.2 The non-human actant

Owing to the limited evidence, the notion of texts (both ST and TT) as non-human actants cannot be fully discussed (but only briefly mentioned in Chapter 2). The limit is apparent for investigating the interactions between the thinking human and an inanimate text, and how the text exerts influence on the stakeholders. For instance, if we consider text as a non-human actant, it should play a part in the translation process and thereby influence the decision making; but how? As an actant, the ST should not be regarded as simply a passive object, but with an agency, which can make differences to a certain extent. The role it plays and how it interacts with others in the ST milieu would influence the translators on how they represent and situate the event in the TT context. The ST’s meaning, the social cultural implications it carries, as well as the circumstances of its use, may all inform the translator, and hence affect his or her decisions.

To take the issue further, each area of such influence within the text may also be considered as an actant at a more micro level (what we might term a ‘sub-actant’), e.g., singability, syllable count and tone; and/or with a less concrete form (what we might term an ‘intangible’ actant), e.g., storylines and marketing purposes. Since these actants are interrelated with each other, it may not always be possible to categorise clearly the changes made during the translation. However, the roles and the relationships of these ‘sub-actants’ and ‘intangible’ actants, need to be recognized during the human actants’ network interactions.

From this perspective, actants could be seen as competing with or reacting to each other intratexually, with some becoming dominant. It may be, for example, that rhyme and rhythm, as actants, exert a more powerful agency upon translators in the interactions of textual units than do actants such as syntactic rules, an observation that would echo – from an ANT perspective – Jakobson’s classic observation that “The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination” (1960: 358), i.e., that in poetry, equivalences within the text, such as rhyme or rhythm, supercede the usual syntagmatic links in importance. Genre conventions and stylistic features also have an effect on determining the particular mix of relations of certain actants within the text. When these are translated through a human actant which then in turn encounters other human actants in the network, the
dominance of different actants within the text may incur changes – being prioritized or compromised. As a result, strictly semantically faithful translation may give priority to actants within the text that are not prioritized in the source text, reconfiguring the actant power relations.

6.3.3 The audience survey
As discussed in the Introduction, audience interests play a crucial role in the production of musicals. Musical producers always endeavour to meet the audience’s expectations and respond to the audience’s reactions and feedback. Therefore, it is necessary for this thesis to incorporate the audience surveys as they provide important empirical evidence for exploring factors in translation which go beyond the ST-TT relationship, in particular the consumer orientation and audience feedback. However, as discussed in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 5, I am fully aware that the audience survey has significant limitations. For instance, the surveys are not highly systematic, and do not involve coverage of a large and diverse population. Their anonymous and self-selective nature means that I have no control over the survey population. For these reasons, the surveys do not claim to have full validity and they are not fully representative, but only provide indications of the audience’s expectations.

These shortcomings are anticipated, and therefore the surveys play a minor role in assisting my case studies. The findings of the surveys are not intended to be transferable or generalisable, but act as a supplement to the general picture of the audience’s reactions and how their feedback and participation are taken into account and consequently influence the development of the translation. The results only serve to supplement my textual analysis and qualitative data from interviews as part of the case study, rather than being used for detailed statistical measurements. These limitations are rectified through cross-checking other data sources, such as interviews with various stakeholders and audience members. Nevertheless, the reasonable number of responses with consistent comments, together with their clear results, still qualifies the surveys as indicative of reactions from an important part of the consumer population. The audience’s responses reflect their preferences and expectations, providing useful evidence for cross-checking and evaluation between stakeholder decisions and consumer views regarding the effectiveness of the consumer-oriented translation strategies employed by the translator.
6.4 Future research suggestions

More and more Western musicals are being introduced to the Chinese mainland, providing rich research opportunities in this field. Avenues for further follow-up studies could include changes in the audience cohort having greater familiarity with the genre; the translators’ authorial rights over translations in a complex situation, such as who “owns” the translation; the role of the fans’ community practice in musicals translation; and the Chinese audience’s strong preference for surtitle translation and its possible connections with their cultural heritage, as well as with the iconic features of Chinese characters.

6.5 Implications

The findings from the investigation respond to the research questions of this study, and help to achieve its objectives, which are to further the understanding of the translator’s role and operations in a complex working environment. These findings have two main significant implications for both practice and research in the translation field.

First, for the musicals’ libretto translation practitioners, a good translation does not necessarily mean only converting the source text accurately to the target text. In addition to the language matters, they need to take into account the other semiotic elements involved. Whilst it is not fair to demand that the translator have expert knowledge of all other semiotic elements (even if they do, they may not share the same artistic and stylistic approaches and perspectives as these stakeholders), they can work with those professional experts. As these stakeholders are the first users of the translation text, their feedback is very valuable for the performability and practicality of the target text on stage. The audience’s expectations and feedback also play a crucial role, owing to musicals’ market orientation. The findings from this study imply wider professional considerations for the translator and, in particular, consumer orientation. Working in such an environment, the translator needs to respond to, and negotiate with, these stakeholders and their interests, in order to produce an effective translation.

Second, a translator is not solely responsible for the TT. As shown in the diagram in Chapter 2, the translation process is more complex and involves dynamic collaborations and interactions from multiple stakeholders and perspectives. To reflect such practice, musicals translation research needs to move beyond the traditional practice of
comparison of texts and take into consideration a range of factors. The translation text evolves under the influence of multiple perspectives, including the stakeholders’ expertise and the audience’s feedback. The translator’s role needs to be looked at from a more dynamic perspective. Therefore, a more coherent model for textual analysis is needed in order to account for how multiple influences are negotiated to produce a translation which reflects the stakeholders’ inputs and, more importantly, meets the audience’s expectations.

6.6 Concluding remarks
This study has presented a translation situation which is more dynamic, involving multiple contributors, and where the translator is not operating alone or taking sole responsibility. It has demonstrated that these dynamic interactions, combined with consumer-oriented translation strategies, play an important role during the process of translating musicals. This is one of the special characteristics which make musical translators distinct from others, as not all translators work in such circumstances. Most of them normally only receive critiques from editors or other translators, and hence any public comments usually come long after publication (e.g. of a novel). During the process of musicals translation, by contrast, translators are not only directly, but also instantly, confronted by the demands of the different users of their translation, e.g., the directors and the actors. These users are equipped with theatrical expertise and professional experience and, at the same time, the consumer’s interest is always the most important consideration. The translators have to interact with these text users, and produce texts on the basis of feedback in order to achieve a satisfactory reception. In this way, the translation practice is not confined to the linguistic matter, but contributes to the wider purpose of social engagement of the audience, and allows the musical to best achieve its entertainment purposes.

Brown observes:

Musical theater has become one of the most popular forms of stage entertainment today. Musicals combine the full spectrum of all the arts: words, singing, dancing, stage spectacle, providing audiences with something for just about every taste. (2007)
This is because there is a well-followed maxim among industry insiders. Lehman Engel, the founder of the prestigious New York based BMI Workshop for musical theatre composers, lyricists, and librettists, advised his trainee of this motto: “Know your audience” (cited in Stempel, 2010: xv).

Perhaps we might add: “Know your network”. For both translators and scholars of musicals translation, an understanding of the network is paramount.
Bibliography


-- (2007). Translations “in the making”. In Michaela Wolf & Alexandra Fukari (Eds.),
Constructing a sociology of translation (pp. 135-169). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.


-- (1992). Don’t throw the baby out with the bath school! A reply to Collins and Yearley. In Andrew Pickering (Ed.) Science as practice and culture (pp. 343-368). Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Chao, Yuan Ren. 赵元任. (1987).《中文的声调、语调、吟唱、朗诵、按声调谱曲的作品和不按声调谱曲的作品》. 中国音乐, 1987/2 , 1-5.


http://bbs.chinamusical.net/viewthread.php?tid=22885&extra=page%3D1&page =1


http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_4c6ccb5301000bti.html


http://www.theatrevoice.com/2265/mamma-mia-catherine-johnson-on-theatrevoice/


http://film.thedigitalfix.com/content/id/69457/mamma-mia-interview-with-writer-catherine-johnson.html
Franzon, Johan. (2005). Musical comedy translation: Fidelity and format in the


-- (1993). *We have never been modern*. Translated by Catherine Porter. Cambridge, MA:
Harvard University Press.
http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_48e6bff201000679.html


Wang, Li. 王力. (1979).《诗词格律》. 北京: 中华书局.
http://www.chinavalue.net/Media/Article.aspx?ArticleId=5323&PageId=1
Wu, Peng. 武鹏. (2005). 爱音客自排音乐剧，因版权问题沪版《剧院魅影》无奈夭折. 新闻晚报, Retrieved on 20 April, 2006 from:
http://xwwb.eastday.com/eastday/node29/node168/node2499/userobject1ai37737.html
http://www.guoxue.com/?p=964


Appendices

Appendix I: Interview Questions

I. Interview questions for ILY and Spin

文字处理
1. 您在翻译中是否遇到歌词的可唱性问题？如何考虑并解决的？
2. 如何处理中文特有的唱词四声丢失的问题？
3. 如何处理中文特有的唱词“倒字”的问题？
4. 如何使歌词容易唱，又富于美感，是否追求中国戏剧中歌词的效果？

文化差异
1. 如何在语言的处理上解决文化差异？
2. 由于中、英文的差异，有些语言表达需要做调整或改编、甚至改写。这样做时的依据是什么？效果怎样？
3. 如何帮助观众理解原语中的外来典故？
4. 改编或改写后的中文表达或典故是否与原语兼容？

观众：文化传统，娱乐，期望值，理解能力，可唱性，传唱性
1. 如何满足观众的欣赏口味？
2. 翻译中考虑娱乐目的比重有多少？
3. 翻译中对歌曲的流传有何考虑？
4. 翻译中是否考虑过中国戏剧传统特点？有哪些考虑？
5. 翻译中对归化与异化的平衡有何考虑？
6. 对观众构成（年龄、教育、收入、职业等）有何考虑？
7. 观众对翻译有何评论？

制作人：市场—吸引和满足观众
1. 对市场有何考虑？
2. 翻译时导演和制作人有什么要求？是否有严格的框架？还是比较自由？

II. Interview questions for MM

制作人
1. 您们是如何选定《妈妈咪呀》来制作中文版的？翻译这部音乐剧的卖点是什么？
2. 选定该剧时对文化和翻译上的考虑是什么？这是一个非常西方的故事，与中国文化传统存在很大差异，您们采用了什么翻译策略来吸引观众，满足他们的欣赏口味并产生共鸣？
3. 翻译团队是如何选定的？他们的翻译过程是怎样的？译文完成后又是如何编辑的？演员是如何参与翻译的（例如他们可能对角色有不同的理解）？观众的反馈又是如何被吸收到翻译中的？对译文的评估是从哪几个方面进行的？译文最后定稿的衡量标准是什么？
4. 您们认为中国观众对西方音乐剧的兴趣如何？您的目标观众是哪些人 - 年龄/职业/教育程度/收入/英语程度？从为市场、为观众、以现场娱乐为核心理念出发，您们为中国观众加入了一些特有的娱乐因素？
5. 您们为该剧做了大量宣传推广活动，包括开设官网、媒体见面、多种形式的演员访谈等，除此之外，是否有计划出版光盘和光碟等来促销剧中歌曲？您们预期剧中的主打歌曲会在国内广泛传唱吗，比如在卡拉 OK?
6. 您们认为中国的戏曲传统会影响观众对西方音乐剧的期待吗？

For the director(s):

I understand that there were considerable re-creations involved during the rehearsal process in terms of the translation of the English text toward the final Chinese performed version. I hope that you wouldn’t mind my asking you some questions in these respects:

1. When directing the Chinese version of MM, which main areas were you concentrating on, i.e. storylines, music, dance, culture, audience reception? And why?
2. In the Chinese version, did you emphasize the faithfulness to the original version or adapt it more for the interaction and entertainment of the Chinese audience? How did you balance these two aspects?
3. What’s your view on the role that the lyrics play in an adapted musical version, especially in MM?
4. What adaptations or re-creations were made for this Chinese version, and why?
5. Did you encourage the production team, i.e. the music director, the choreographer, as well as the actors to actively involve themselves with adjusting the lyrics from their own perspectives? If yes, what did you gain from their involvements? Do you also take into account the audience’s comments for your adaptation and re-creations?
6. What did you hope from the Chinese audiences’ reactions? Was their response what you had expected?

翻译（剧本和歌曲）:

1. Is there any brief of the requirement and/or criteria for how to translate the scripts/lyrics from the commissioner before you are assigned the task?
2. 您在翻译《妈妈咪呀》时希望达到的目标是什么，例如：让观众听起来舒服，容易听懂，让演员唱起来轻松，与音乐合拍，与舞蹈协调？
3. 您在翻译中是否遇到文化差异的问题？具体是什么问题？是否需要本土化？如果需要，请举例说明您是如何做的？为什么这样做？
4. 您认为使用本土元素，比如中国俚语或成语，会与原剧协调吗？观众会接受吗？
5. 您在歌词中保留原文是想达到什么效果？目前观众反应如何？
6. 从表演的角度和从观众的角度考量，请举例说明在译文初稿与最后的定稿之间所做的改动有哪些？
7. 您对音乐剧翻译中的可唱性、四声丢失以及“倒字”等问题如何看？您在翻译《妈妈咪呀》的过程中是如何解决这些问题的？
8. 中国戏曲歌词或流行歌曲的歌词对您的翻译有什么影响，比如诗化、合辙押韵等？
9. 翻译唱词时，如果在意思和戏剧效果之间作出选择，您会选哪一个，为什么？

For the music directors 音乐总监:

Are there any occasions when you have to change the music for the Chinese lyrics/dance/scene? If yes, what are they? And why?
您是否有时需要为中文唱词或舞蹈或场景而修改原音乐？如果是，请举例说明改了什么？为什么这样改？

For the choreographer 舞蹈总监:

Are there any occasions when you have to adjust parts of the choreography in order to match certain localized Chinese cultural elements, lyrics and scenes? If yes, what are they? And why?
您是否有时需要为本土化元素、中文唱词或场景，以及观众的欣赏和接受而重新设计舞蹈？如果是，请举例说明做了什么改动？为什么这样改？

演员:
1. 演唱时，歌词对你来说应该具有哪些特点才会让你感觉唱起来舒服自然，易懂，动人？
2. 音乐剧表演中唱词的难度主要体现在哪些方面？
3. 在排练《妈妈咪呀》时，您参与过对翻译的互动吗，比如，您是否对自己的台词或歌词提出过修改的建议？如有，请举例说明。
4. 有些观众认为观看西方音乐剧应该看原班人马，那才是“原汁原味”，您对此怎么看？
## Appendix II. Online survey questionnaires

### Survey 1:

**音乐剧翻译观众调查**

#### PAGE 1

1. **前言**

此问卷为学术调查，旨在通过收集观众对外剧在中文地区演出的反馈，探讨如何使唱词翻译更为观众着想，满足观众的欣赏习惯与要求，使其更容易产生共鸣。您的想法与建议将有助于音乐剧翻译人员对译文的改进与完善，从而使观赏音乐剧成为融艺术欣赏与娱乐享受于一体的愉快体验。

如果您还没看过西方音乐剧中译版，可从下面链接参考《剧院魅影》主题曲的中译版：
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB&hl=en-GB&v=y5FER3v8Ft8

答卷者无需提供姓名，有关个人信息将予以严格保密。

进入下一页请点击“后一页”键，回到前一页请点击“前一页”键，填写完毕请点“完成”键。

#### PAGE 2

2. **音乐剧中文译版观众调查**

**Q1**

1. 观看西方音乐剧（如：《剧院魅影》，《悲惨世界》，《狮子王》，《妈妈咪呀！》，《猫》，《我爱你》等）演出时，下列形式中，您喜欢哪种？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>形式</th>
<th>喜欢</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>用中文演出</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>中文演出配中文字幕</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>外文演出</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>外文演出配中文字幕</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>中文演出配外文字幕</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

请说明原因

---

242
### Q2
2. 看音乐剧演出时下面哪方面对您来说更重要？（请根据重要性将下述项目排名，1为最不重要，6为最重要，每个数字只能使用一次。）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>音乐</th>
<th>看懂故事</th>
<th>明星</th>
<th>演唱</th>
<th>舞蹈</th>
<th>舞台与灯光设计</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

请说明原因

### Q3
3. 您认为看音乐剧中文版演出时，下列哪种形式更容易看懂剧情？（请从 1-3 中任选一项）妨碍您看懂剧情的原因有哪些？（请从 4-12 中任选多项）

- ☐ 1. 听中文演唱更容易明白剧情
- ☐ 2. 看字幕更容易明白剧情
- ☐ 3. 不确定
- ☐ 4. 看字幕容易分散注意力
- ☐ 5. 听演唱容易分散注意力
- ☐ 6. 因为声乐难免丢失使中文演唱难懂
- ☐ 7. 词汇难度使听演唱难懂
- ☐ 8. 词汇难度使看字幕难懂
- ☐ 9. 句子难度使听演唱难懂
- ☐ 10. 句子难度使看字幕难懂
- ☐ 11. 语法难度使听演唱难懂
- ☐ 12. 语法难度使看字幕难懂

请解释您选项的原因，并举例说明。

### Q4
4. 如果您觉得听演唱更容易看懂剧情，您听懂的部分大概是多少？（请从 1-4 中任选一项）

如果您觉得看字幕更容易看懂剧情，您看懂的部分大概是多少？（请
从 5-8 中任选一项）

Q5
5. 在歌词与对白中，您最欣赏下列哪方面？（请按高低排名，1 为最低，4 为最高，每个数字只能使用一次。）

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------------|
| 通俗易懂 | | | |
| 与中国文化有关的元素 | | | |
| 押韵，朗朗上口 | | | |
| 幽默感 | | | |
| 其它（请说明） |

Q6
6. 您认为翻译中加入的中国元素（如：音乐剧《我爱你》把布鲁斯威利斯翻译为成龙）与原剧情协调吗？

- 1. 是
- 2. 否
- 3. 不知道

请解释您选择的原因，并举例说明。

Q7
7. 您所知，外国音乐剧名曲是否在中国广为而且频繁传唱？您本人经常听或唱这些名曲吗？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>传唱</th>
<th>听</th>
<th>唱</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

请补充说明

Q8
8. 去剧院看戏的时候，您更喜欢看中国戏曲还是西方音乐剧？您每年大概看多少次？

更喜欢

中国戏曲

西方音乐剧
Q9
9. 您的母语是什么？您的居住地是哪里？您的教育程度是什么？
   1. 语言       2. 所在地       3. 教育程度

Q10
10. 请说明您的年龄、性别和经济收入情况：
   1. 年龄       2. 性别       3. 经济收入

PAGE 3

3. 致谢

如果您有兴趣就音乐剧翻译进一步交流意见和想法，请将您的姓名和电邮地址寄至 ngzhong@gmail.com 以便我们与您联系。有关您的个人信息将予以严格保密。

非常感谢您的参与。

https://www.surveymonkey.com/MySurvey_EditorFull.aspx?sm=CRMUqovxwn6mQE
VnSQYNxfjasaEFVuPCoTtD3WkI7FtM_3D
Survey 2

看音乐剧 原文还是中文版？

此问卷为学术调查，通过收集观众看外国音乐剧的反馈，探讨如何使唱词翻译更满足观众的欣赏习惯与要求。您的想法与建议将有助于音乐剧翻译人员对译文的完善，使观赏音乐剧成为赴艺术欣赏与娱乐享受于一体的愉快体验。衷心感谢您的参与！

Q1
1. 下列音乐剧演出形式您喜欢哪种？
   请选择您选择的原因：
   
Q2
2. 看音乐剧时下面哪方面对您来说更重要？（请用 1-6 排名，1 为最重要，6 为最不重要）
   
   a. 音乐
   
   b. 看懂故事情节
   
   c. 明星
   
   d. 演唱
   
   e. 舞蹈
   
   f. 舞台与灯光设计
   
请说明您选择的原因：
   
Q3
3. 下面哪种形式更容易看懂剧情？
   
   请选择您选择的原因，如：听与看各自有哪些利弊？
Q4
4. 如果不看字幕，您大概能听懂多少？

Q5
5. 依靠字幕，您大概能看懂多少？

Q6
6. 歌词与对白中，您最欣赏下列哪方面？（请按1-5排名，1为最高，5为最低）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>选项</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. 通俗易懂</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 中国元素</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 押韵，朗朗上口</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 幽默感</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 其它</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

其它（请具体说明）：

Q7
7. 音乐剧中文版有时会借用一些中国元素，如《绯闻绯闻》中用了“白道黑道”，“江湖规矩”，“吃了豹子胆”等，您认为它们与原剧协调吗？

请选择您选项的原因，或举例说明：

Q8
8. 据您所知，外国音乐剧名曲是否在中国频繁而且广为传唱？您本人经常听或唱这些名曲吗？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>传唱</th>
<th>听</th>
<th>唱</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

请补充说明：

247
Q9
9. 请说明您的性别、年龄、教育程度和经济状况：

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>性别</th>
<th>年龄</th>
<th>教育程度</th>
<th>经济状况</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www.surveymonkey.com/MySurvey_EditorFull.aspx?sm=2FjWOsFTrHe_2FSCBmOtLsn1od8oKT6JWhPu08gXavlww_3D
调查问卷

音乐剧《妈妈咪呀》中文版观众调查

PAGE 1

1. 前言

观众朋友，欢迎您参与这份学术问卷调查。这是为音乐剧翻译研究所做的无记名调查，旨在了解观众对《妈妈咪呀》中文版的看法，探讨如何使其更好地满足观众的欣赏习惯与要求。答案没有对错，其结果只用于研究领域。您可以自愿选择是否回答所有的问题，但您的完整答案将让我们有机会全面了解您的宝贵意见，让今后的音乐剧中文版给观众带来更完美的艺术享受和娱乐体验。衷心感谢您的支持！

如果您看过音乐剧《妈妈咪呀》的英文版和中文版，请回答所有的问题。如果您只看过中文版，请从第三个问题开始回答。

进入下一页请按“后一页”键，返回前一页请按“前一页”键，填写完毕请按“完成”键。

PAGE 2

2. 问卷

Q1
1. 您最欣赏下面哪种形式演出的《妈妈咪呀》？（请按顺序排列，1 为最高，7 为最低）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. 原班表演中文字幕</th>
<th>B. 原班表演英文字幕</th>
<th>C. 原班表演配中英文字幕</th>
<th>D. 中方表演配中文字幕</th>
<th>E. 中方表演配英文字幕</th>
<th>F. 中方表演配中英文字幕</th>
<th>G. 其它（请说明）</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

如方便请说明原因


Q2
2. 看《妈妈咪呀》英文版和中文版时，歌词和唱词可以理解多少？

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>英文版</th>
<th>中文版</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

如方便请说明影响理解的最大障碍是什么。

Q3
3. 观看《妈妈咪呀》时，您最感兴趣的是哪些方面？（请按顺序排列，1为最高，7为最低）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. 理解故事</th>
<th>B. 明星</th>
<th>C. 音乐</th>
<th>D. 歌曲</th>
<th>E. 舞蹈与灯光设计</th>
<th>F. 舞台</th>
<th>G. 其它（请说明）</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

如方便请说明原因：

Q4
4. 歌词与对白中，您最欣赏下列哪方面？（请按顺序排列，1为最高，6为最低）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. 通俗易懂</th>
<th>B. 中国元素</th>
<th>C. 抑扬顿挫</th>
<th>D. 幽默感</th>
<th>E. 歌词意境</th>
<th>F. 其他（请说明）</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q5
5. 您认为《妈妈咪呀》中文版的最大优势是什么？（请按顺序排列，1 为最高，5 为最低）

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A. 语言无滞</th>
<th>B. 本土化</th>
<th>C. 容易学唱</th>
<th>D. 票价可接</th>
<th>E. 其它（请说明）</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

如方便请说明原因：

Q6
6. 你认为在音乐剧中使用本土化元素，如中国方言等，与剧情协调吗？

- ☐ 1. 是
- ☐ 2. 否
- ☐ 3. 不确定

如方便请说明原因：

Q7
7. 您喜欢中文歌词翻译中保留英文原文吗？

- ☐ A. 喜欢
- ☐ B. 不喜欢
- ☐ C. 都可以
- ☐ D. 不确定

如方便请说明原因：

251
Q8
8. 您认为音乐剧中文版翻译应该忠实于原剧吗？
   A. 应该忠实于原剧
   B. 应该尽量忠实于原剧
   C. 不需完全忠实于原剧
   D. 不必忠实于原剧
   E. 不确定
如方便请说明原因：

Q9
9. 您今后是否有兴趣观看其它西方音乐剧的中文翻译版？
   A. 有兴趣
   B. 没兴趣
   C. 不确定
如方便请说明原因：

Q10
10. 请说明您的性别、年龄、教育程度、职业以及大概经济收入（这个问题希望了解观众群的构成，请务必填写）：

   1. 性别  2. 年龄  3. 教育程度  职业：  经济收入

   如果您的职业不在选择范围之内，请在此说明

PAGE 3
5. 感谢
如果您有兴趣进一步交流想法，请将您的姓名和电邮地址寄至xgkong33@gmail.com 以便我们与您联系。您的个人信息会严格保密。

非常感谢您的热心参与。

https://www.surveymonkey.com/MySurvey_EditorFull.aspx?sm=0I2yAz5Aya5ell9e0ePwL0u_2FSBd7tuFtD_2Bsg7Cu88uk_3D
# Appendix III. Table of responses from all three online surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Survey 1</th>
<th>Survey 2</th>
<th>Survey 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>音乐剧翻译观众调查 2009-8-22 – 2013-7-10; received 290 responses. (ILY)</td>
<td>看音乐剧：原文还是中文版？ 2010-5-5 – 2011-5-11; received 64 responses. (Spin)</td>
<td>音乐剧《妈妈咪呀》中文版观众调查 2011-12-4 – 2012-3-3; received 21 responses. (MM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1 Preferred performing forms</td>
<td>1 Perform in Chinese 3%; 2 Perform in Chinese with Chinese surtitles 2%; 3 Perform in foreign languages 16%; 4 Perform in foreign languages with Chinese surtitles 74%; 5 Perform in Chinese with foreign language surtitles 5%.</td>
<td>Preferred performing forms A Perform in foreign languages with Chinese surtitles 33%; B perform in Chinese with English surtitles 2%; C perform in foreign languages with both Chinese and English surtitles 59%; D perform in Chinese with both Chinese and English surtitles 6%.</td>
<td>Ranking the performing forms A perform by the original cast with Chinese surtitles 31%; B perform by the original cast without surtitles 6%; C perform by the original cast with both Chinese and English surtitles 44%; D perform by the Chinese cast with English surtitles 6%; E perform by the Chinese cast without surtitles 0%; F perform by the Chinese cast with both Chinese and English surtitles 13%; G other 0%.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 Ranking the importance</td>
<td>1. Music 39%; Star 20%; 2. singing 33%; 3. Staging and lighting 16%; 4. Storylines 15%;</td>
<td>Ranking the importance 1. Music 68%; Storylines 22%; 2. singing 35%; 3. storylines 27%;</td>
<td>Comprehension: English: most 50%; Chinese: all or almost all 53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3 Ease to understand: Surtitles 68% Listening to Chinese 13% Not sure 18% Reasons of difficulties: Tone loss 39% Lexis 26% Syntax 25% Surtitles distracting the</td>
<td>Ease to understand: Surtitles 63%; Listening to Chinese 13% Not sure 24%</td>
<td>Ranking the most enjoyed aspects: 1. music 39%; storylines/songs 22%; 2. songs 42%; music 32%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4</td>
<td>Comprehension: No surtitles: Very little 18% Half 39% Most 36% All or almost all 7%</td>
<td>Comprehension: With surtitles: Very little 3% Half 10% Most 36% All or almost all 51%</td>
<td>Ranking most: Artistic conception of the lyrics 47% Chinese elements 18% Humour 18% Ranking second place: Easy to understand 32% Humour 26% Artistic conception of the lyrics 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>Ranking the aspects in libretto Ranking most: Rhyme and rhythm 37% Chinese cultural reference 29% Easy to understand 17% Ranking second place: Humour 34% Easy to understand 34% Rhyme and rhythm 21%</td>
<td>Comprehension: With surtitles: Very little 0% Half 2% Most 21% All or almost all 77%</td>
<td>Ranking the advantages of MM 1. no language barrier 41%; 29% easy to learn the songs 2. no language barrier 42%; localised elements/easy to learn the songs 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>Compatibility of the Chinese elements: Y 15% N 64% Don’t know 21%</td>
<td>Ranking the aspects in libretto Ranking most: Rhyme and rhythm 40% Easy to understand 26% Humour 20% Ranking second place: Easy to understand 28% Rhyme and rhythm 26% Humour 25%</td>
<td>Compatibility of the localised elements Yes 60% No 15% Not sure 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7</td>
<td>The Western musical songs in China Singing widely and frequently: Neither 42% Listening frequently 81% Listening occasionally</td>
<td>Compatibility of the Chinese elements: Y 34% N 28% Don’t know 38%</td>
<td>Keeping English in the Chinese lyrics? Like 35% Don’t like 20% Both fine 35% Not sure 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>About the audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under 18 9%</td>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18-30 82%</td>
<td>Male 30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40 8%</td>
<td>Female 70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50 1%</td>
<td>Age:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51-60 0%</td>
<td>Under 18 15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61 and above 0%</td>
<td>19-29 45%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>30-39 30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male 23%</td>
<td>40-49 10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female 77%</td>
<td>50-50 0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Income:</td>
<td>60 and above 0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High 1%</td>
<td>Education:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Above average 6%</td>
<td>Primary school 0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Preference between Chinese Xiqu and the Western musicals:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chinese Xiqu 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western musicals 93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How often watch them: Chinese Xiqu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 times 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 times 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western musicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 times 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 times 39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>About the audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Putong hua 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non Putong hua 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Location:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Chinese mainland 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hong Kong 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taiwan 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macao 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Overseas 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University and above 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Secondary school 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary school 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Western musical songs in China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singing widely and frequently:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neither 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening frequently 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sining 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singing frequently 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sining occasionally 41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should the translation be faithful to the original version?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As much as possible 65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It doesn’t have to be completely faithful 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No need to be faithful 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interested in other Chinese versions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Y 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average 19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above average 6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below average 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low 22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix IV. Quotes from interviews in Chinese – in sequential order

Chapter 2:

QA: 我觉得我在翻译时，有时感觉it is very weird，I actually get the feeling it is not me writing, it is a force. 如果是自己写的东西反而会有self doubts. 我现在想，为什么当时我会敢跟他争，那是因为这不是我的东西，我是在传达原作。我自问，真的是有这种force，还是你自己的意思？操作的时候真分不清。 (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

Chapter 3:


YC: 大部分的观众还是为年轻观众，年龄在 40 岁以下，受过高等教育，有钱有闲的人。(Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).

YC: 因为中文名字直译过来有些长，也有些怪，而如果翻成《我爱你》的话不如《I Love You》来得时尚。 (Personal interview, 2013-2-21).

QA: 因为没有找到意思相对又能和音乐相契合的中文词能对应。演员觉得顺。(Personal interview, 2010-5-9.)

YC: 根据人物的特定环境、故事的发生与发展，是否本土化处理，当然要考虑观众，有些差异可以改成观众理解的，不损失原来效果。(Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).

QD: ‘From the first touch’ 没有翻译，我觉得可以翻成“第一次心动”。(Personal interview, 2012-1-7).


JF: 把原文意思全扔掉了，如回翻，肯定通不过。当歌曲不合格，我是当成戏剧做的。这样并不合适，但当时没办法。原来翻的是：‘给我给我给我，一个男人今晚’。但我觉得我讲不出这种话来。


YC: 如何满足观众的欣赏口味？不同的戏，要有不同的定位，上海本地观众还是比较喜欢轻松的、时尚的。(Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).

Chapter 4:

YC: 英文歌词翻译成中文是否可以演唱，那可能有两种情况，一是原意翻译成中文后不合适中文习惯的唱法，这有词、韵的问题，也有长短不一的问题，例如：he call me, 三个音节，全意翻译中文三个字就较难。二是有些歌词，不合中文学本，有些情境要改成中文环境就不太合适了。而且是剧场演出，也要看重剧场效果。解决方法：尽量地按中文可唱性去翻译，让中文更适合原来的意思、中文学词以及中文演唱，而且着重于剧场的创作规律。(Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).


CE & JF: 对字数是必须的，但并不一定留原来的句子，有的时候为了对字数，我们把原来的方案都换掉了，一整句都推翻了。有时会前后倒装，不行再换意思。用正常的中文说正常的话。在这种地方制作的版本里，其实它对原谱的谱面是规定的。也就是说，你不能对原谱的谱面做任何改动，增字减字其实都不行。(Personal interview, 2011-9-21).


QA: 我当时考虑唱，而且要找到韵，整段都要用这个韵，没有多少字可用，而且要尊重原来的意思。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).


QA: 我听录音，靠英文歌词的音节感觉来决定翻泽字数，听不清楚音节感觉的时候看乐谱。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 原来的英文与音乐的结合很舒服，但换成中文就不一定。如果是创造，词曲作者一定会考虑这里的联系，但现在是 import，只能尊重原文。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).
QA: 我听了原曲后的感觉应翻成“是否放弃，选择忘记”，但谱子上却是5个音符。音乐指导就让我加一个字，说每一个音符都有它的意义，请你尊重它。于是就翻成：“是否要放弃，选择去忘记”。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

HG: 谢谢它创造的美丽目前重音在“它”、“造”上，造成意思错位，听不懂。(Personal interview, 2011-9-20).

YC: 中文基本靠韵，在翻译时要意译来进行。(Personal correspondence, 2009-6-3).


Chapter 5:


YC: 翻译有几稿，一开始的翻译是跟着原文做，没法唱，倒装句等。总是缩手缩脚。后来就更多是‘写’的感觉，就好了。(Personal interview, 2012-1-8).

YC: 音乐剧翻译只要在它的空间里面，可以写，甚至可以改，只要适应它的情节和情绪表达就可以了。(Personal interview, 2012-1-8).

QA: 演员有不同的认识，他们就会提出来。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).
LI: 我的反应都是下意识的反应，就觉得很奇怪，我不愿意这样说。因为对于演员来说，这个角色，他要怎么说话，他是怎样的形象，他应该从一个什么角度去思考，...要找出哪个是最合适的表达，要达成一个共识。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

QA: 我当时就跟他争，认为他不对，“不受束缚”是超越的意思，和“定规矩”是不同的。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

LI: 这个本子定位是轻喜剧，就是要表现这个东西。无间道虽然有点怪，但很有意思，而且又是一部大家都熟悉的影片的名称，所以就把它借鉴进来了。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8-11).

LI: 排练时灵光一现就加上了，大家都觉得非常好。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8-11).

LI: 翻译不仅要意思正确，而且要考虑一句话说出来是什么效果。因为翻过来的不是话，是“神”，它到底要表达什么东西，一定要搞清楚。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8-11).

LI: 死守原文只能死亡。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8-11).

QA: 我当时用“白道黑道”时完全是考虑翻译的字和韵，并没有想到用“江湖”。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).


QA: 他提的确实跟上下文有连贯性。白道黑道和江湖，观众听着也顺。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 我的戏剧老师说，如果演员觉得舒服，就不用改译。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

JB: 江湖规矩，白道黑道”，是我们那位经验丰富的舞台表演艺术家根据翻译过来的意思，融入他的舞台表演风格，再加上他对角色的理解而改变的。我个人认为那是非常不错的一个点，所以我同意了他那样唱。我觉得: 1，那符合他的角色个性；2那是那个角色会说出的话；3符合中文语言方式，简单明了，让观众听起来非常自然；这就是我觉得那样可以的原因。我觉得类似这样的东西会比英文直译过来的语句更易懂，更通顺，同时，也是最重要的，符合了剧中人物性格的表达习惯。我想语言风格符合角色性格，这非常重要，包括唱词。(Personal correspondence, 2010-5-20).

WJ: 但在排练的过程中，歌词、台词都有调整，都跟QA一块儿商量，但QA毕竟不是专业导这个的。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

WJ: 翻译过来的原文的意思要靠导演把它变成戏剧化的语言。(group interview, 2010-5-11).
LI: 有些音乐专业知识如大三度、小三度等，翻译起来比较吃力，而音乐指导一听就知道应该怎么样，但要求一个翻译，有点勉为其难。所以要做一些微调。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

QA: 但是那个 sentence has its own meaning, … I would translate what the texts are trying to say. (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 我觉得我在翻译时，有时感觉 it is very weird, I actually get the feeling it is not me writing, it is a force. (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 我现在想，为什么当时我会敢跟他争，那是因为这不是我的东西，我是在传达原作。我自问，真的是有这种 force，还是你自己的意思？操作的时候真分不清。… 但我之所以敢于 argue with him is because I trust, I feel that I am not writing something for me, there is something and I am just a载体 for it. – the English content is by the interviewee. (Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 我现在就step back，去看整个的逻辑关系。但是以后我该怎么办，是不是要跑到这一边来？还有，再遇到演员提出意见时怎么做？(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 他觉得通，他觉得高兴，观众看得高兴。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).


LI: 演员得唱几十遍，得尊重他们。演员也会不断调整，每天都复制同样的表演没有意思，要调动观众的情绪，考虑到观众的文化背景，这样沟通起来才会有效果。你连我们这一关都过不去，我们怎么向观众传达？(Personal interview, 2010-5-11).

LI: 导演在排练时有时也会问：你觉得这个地方怎么样更好？(group interview, 2010-5-11).

TL: 我们不是一板一眼按原文做，这样中国观众不会理解，另外表达也不太合适，会做一些调整。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

ZM: 歌词翻译应该是根据原来大意重新编一首歌。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

ZM: 我改了很多，至少让我自己演得出来，把意思正确表达出来，如果我自己都不理解，观众就更不可能明白。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

ZM: 原台词翻译是：“我们还有别的选择吗”(do you have another choice)? 我的感觉应该是：我们是不是可以从别的门出去？我是这么理解的，也就这么说。因为“我们还有什么别的选择吗”，观众肯定觉得很模糊，不知道在说什么。(group interview, 2010-5-11).
WJ: 如果在大的逻辑上没有太大的差池，可以尽情发挥，直到最终效果，至少我们这些创作人员觉得：对，就是这个意思，让观众觉得“八九不离十”。(group interview, 2010-5-11).

FN: 我觉得中外幽默笑点不同。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

FN: 我会加一些全国观众都听得懂的东西，为角色加一些合理的东西，调动气氛，丰富人物，让观众更欣赏故事。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

FN: Nothing personal虽然很国际化，但换成中文唱，跟音乐有不押韵的地方。刚拿到这首歌的时候，个别地方会感觉不舒服。所以我会把它改成宣泄的方式，用说，或者爆发式喊出来。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

FN: 今天演出时就跟前两天有点不同，我改了几处，找找更舒服的表达，比如那个“窝窝头”唱起来老是觉得不够给劲，我就把那个“头”用拉长音强调一下，就好多了。还有一些小的地方，比如说把闭口音改为开口音唱。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

FN：因为音乐唱词都是为戏服务的嘛。(Personal interview, 2010-5-8).

LI: 同样的词有不同的表达，关键看场合。它是以一个适合我，适合这个剧情，并且适合这个国情的方式。因为每个演员的生理条件是不一样的，有的人会觉得这样不舒服，那样更好。但真正在舞台上操作，有时改一个音可以让我们发挥得更好。每一个人都有其个性，怎样才能让演员把他的个性发挥出来。(Personal interview, 2010-5-11).

QA: 我自己都先唱一遍，录下来。所以一般都能唱。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 我做 demo 的时候是很轻柔的，他用爆发式就很不舒服了。哼唱的处理可以，台上就不一样了。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

QA: 其实我很愿意给他改，因为他唱得费力，我听着也不舒服。(Personal interview, 2010-5-10).

HG: 所以最终的版本的确立实际上是在所有的排练完成以后，甚至在演出的过程中，根据现场的效果，我们还在改。(Personal interview, 2011-9-20).

FO: 再根据观众的反应，我们到底是要该怎样更好的去表达我们自己。(Personal interview, 2012-9-20).

FO: “你跟你的索菲心连心，我跟我的劳伦斯是断背情深”，根据美国剧本或英国剧本是这样翻译，这是那个妈妈咪呀来中国演出时英文版字幕上的字幕的翻译。但是如果单看文字还习惯，翻译字幕还可以，但演员一定要这么说，观众感觉好像是在说中国古文一样。“你看家庭有很多种，你的家里有你和索菲，我的家里有我跟劳伦斯”，一开始就这样演，但观众没有反应，但后来有一次我们想演时是不是能加上一个男朋友，作为男的有一个男朋友，开始导演不愿意，中西对
同性恋的概念认为这样不太好，他觉得太直白是因为什么的？我不明白他的意思，他也没说反正我们这样跟他建议反正他觉得他说不能用，后来演了两场他不耐烦了，说你要不试试，后来呼一众观众下面马上就有反应了，这就是中西方文化一个差异，我们就通过观众来证实我们的灵气？是不是能给观众一个更直接的反馈，最后他被说服了，通过现场的反馈被说服了，我们通过这个演员的二次创作，加上观众对我们这个，而且这个戏观众人很多，有的人看了好多遍，不是说男朋友这个名字是坏，名字并不是主要的，关键是怎么说‘男朋友’三个字，让大家明白这是一个什么状态什么状况。(Personal interview, 2012-9-20).

QD: 台词的问题我和主办方一再提出，尤其是第一场预演，Donna 第一幕发飙那场，说的就是“三次射精”，然后再改成“三匹种马”的。(2011-7-17).

QD: 在预演期间还是一直翻译“精子的主人”的，真的很难想象一个清纯姑娘内心独白会用这样的词，问了身边的人也觉得这样说不合适。不知公演是否有改进。(2011-7-17).

- 看了字幕就看不到表演了 (2012/3/7 in Q3, Survey 1).
- 歌词需要押韵，中文演出很难做到意思上与听觉上都完美。但翻译成中文字幕可不受此拘束，更有诗意！(10/20/2009, Survey 1).
- 很多吵架或者情节高潮时，越想看懂越想晕啊... (8/29/2009 (Q3, Survey 1).
- 既可以欣赏原汁原味的演唱，又可以理解剧情 (10/21/2009);
- 字幕的话个人觉得很有用，不然故事根本没法看 (12/7/2009).
- 因为音乐剧毕竟是西方的，很多时候，即使中文演出翻译得很好，也不一定能够将押韵、意境全部还原。个人比较欣赏原汁原味的演唱方式，可以欣赏到不同语言、文化的魅力。我很赞同，好的字幕翻译会帮助观众有更好的理解。(12/28/2010, Survey 1).
- 中文演出更能够扩大音乐剧的受众面，毕竟现在大陆欣赏音乐剧的都是文化层次较高的人群，因为语言是理解的一大障碍；但对于很多资深的音乐剧迷而言，更希望看到原汁原味的原剧演出。(2009/9/6, Survey 1).
- 因为听不懂情节故事就没那么吸引人了，而我重视演唱胜于舞蹈。2013/2/12(Survey 1, p. 41).
- 习于看字幕……中文歌有时真的因为四声跑调而听不懂 (2012/8/11, Survey 1).
- 中文版优势是易懂，观看时跟得上剧情，如果中文版演绎能较好的保持原剧风格，则原剧的诙谐幽默对白，好听的歌曲，本性的舞蹈，都能引起观众的共鸣。(2012/2/25, Survey 3, Q5).
• 歌词首先要强调韵律之美，其次要让人听懂 (2009/10/30, Survey 1. Q5, p. 103).

• 歌词应该高于生活，不能流俗，而且应该有意思。幽默，生动，鲜明，朗朗上口最好；但也适当通俗易懂，不完全脱离群众。至于“中国元素”，不要刻意用中国元素，消化于“无形中”最好。(2009/8/22, Survey 1. Q5).

• 音乐剧首先要看得懂才会去看，要朗朗上口才会记住，有中国元素有韵味，幽默才会吸引我。(2010/6/8, Survey 2. Q6).

HG: 英文它可以很直，但它押韵，它有一种冲击力和跳跃的节奏。完全白话译过来，太直了，不是歌，完全没有一种情感的东西。(Personal interview, 2011-9-20).


Appendix V. The pilot audience survey

About the pilot survey: indications and issues arising

The aims
The research objectives of the thesis are to identify the parameters of effective strategies for musical libretti translation into Chinese; one of which is the audience reaction. Hence, this pilot survey hypothesises and attempts to investigate the factors which affect the Chinese audiences’ enjoyment of Western musicals concerning comprehension, reception, inclusion and participation, as well as the compatibility of the libretto translation after viewing Western musicals. The report concludes that certain Chinese specific language and cultural factors need to be taken into account for the determination of translation strategies in order to meet the audiences’ perceived expectations.

Owing to the unavailability of any live Chinese translated version of Western musicals on show here, this survey has the following limitations: video clips are substituted as the sample materials (surtitles are for stage performances and used on the top, or at the sides, of the stage, while subtitles are used on screen for films and videos), therefore, they are not the same as the real musical performances; the survey was conducted in classroom setting and the respondents are all students at Portsmouth University, therefore it is not a representative sample of the whole population. Nevertheless, the survey may still represent a part of the Chinese audience and their views on the Chinese translated musicals.

The research design

1. Content

The process of questionnaire formation starts from brainstorming all possible questions related to the research questions concerning the rôle of consumer-oriented translation for stage performances, the cultural presuppositions and, in particular, the libretto translation and its effects on musical audiences. The first step was to specify the information needed and eliminate some non-libretti translation aspects. It was decided that some aspects, such as the popularity of the musicals enhanced by promotional strategies, corporate entertainment, peer pressure and parent guidance, will not be discussed at this stage owing to the scale of this pilot survey.

It was then followed by establishing the nature of the problems and corresponding research problems in order to define the questions for my initial hypothesis. If the audience enjoys the translated Western musicals, the libretti translation, although not fully credited, would be one of the core aspects. However, when the audience enjoy musicals, do they have to understand them in details, namely, are the narration and the development of the story the determining factors? Or, are there other important components which have nothing to do with the translation of libretti; such as the famous actors’ singing, the Western costume, the high-tech stage-setting?

The research approaches are then developed. Based on the proposed questions, the main aims for the research design focus on finding out:

- **What** are the audience looking for (novelty, general, specialist, expert, entertainment or peculiarity)?
• **How** do they feel about the libretto translation? (listening compared with surtitle translation in terms of comprehension, concentration/distraction, )

Therefore, four categories were set for investigating the subject specific information in terms of the audience reactions to Western musicals: comprehension, reception/resonance, inclusion and compatibility.

**Comprehension**: the degree of understanding which the TT audience obtain from the translated lyrics (libretto without dialogue).

How important do the audience consider that understanding and being able to follow the development of the story and characters in the musical count in their enjoyment, compared with other factors such as music, dancing, star actors and stage settings, which would affect the audiences’ overall rating of the musicals? In other words, it is hypothesised that the lyrics translation is not the only determining factor for the success of the musicals, and the musical cannot be successful without it. Even though there is a tradition in opera for enjoying the performance without necessarily understanding the lyrics, musicals are different. It is a type of popular culture and the audience see it as light entertainment. They would not wish to spend hours to familiarise themselves with the story beforehand, not to mention that there are so many different musicals showing nowadays. People would like to enjoy themselves rather than work hard to figure out the story and the characters. In order to confirm these assumptions, questions concerning the audiences’ preferences and their views regarding the importance of the libretto form part of the questionnaire.

**Reception**: the way the audience reacts to the musical.

If the musicals receive positive reactions, it indicates that the musicals are appealing to the TT culture. These can be expressed in various ways, such as from the audience and the media e.g., web and blog discussions and published reviews; audiences’ participation, e.g., using the songs from musicals for their singing competitions, singing in Karaoke, at home with a Karaoke kit; playing the recording in places such as shops, hair salons, restaurants; listening from MP3; buying CD and DVD of the musicals. Therefore, some questions are designed to collect data on these activities.

**Inclusion/accessibility**: the extent of relating to the TT audience, the sense of sharing something in common so as to be able to resonate with it.

The culturally orientated adaptation in translating libretto means more direct reference to the TT culture. If the audience see that there is something recognisable, familiar and accessible (regarding these as some of the highlights of the performance), it would indicate that they welcome the cross-cultural treatment. They would feel that they are included – not merely observers and excluded as ‘others’.

The survey aims to find out whether the audience recognise the TT cultural identity or do they feel like outsiders or others, being distant and even excluded, and get lost? Whether adapting the local reference/elements to replace the unfamiliar ST culture helps to bridge the gap, or does it sound strange and unsuitable?
Compatibility: the way of translating lyrics fits in, without conflict with the existing TT, historical, cultural, and national contexts, such as aesthetic ideology and philosophy, theatrical tradition, local value, taste and expectation, as well as the language specifics including tones, rhymes and rhythms and genre characteristics.

2. Structure

In order to get a spontaneous reply, the questions are structured incorporating mainly closed-ended multiple-choice, dichotomous and scales for easier and quicker to answer. In some questions, multiple alternative combinations are embedded in a single question in order to obtain the required specific information and to reduce the length of the questionnaire. However, there are two questions requiring (not compulsory) open-ended explanations for their choices, which aim at finding out the reasons behind the choices. Also, at the end of the questionnaire, there is a space designated for any open-ended further comments which are not covered by the questionnaire.

3. Wording

Due to the nature of this pilot survey for identifying both factual and opinion information from the potential audience of Western musicals, the wording attempt to be clear, answerable, specific and substantive. Particular attentions are paid to avoid leading questions and ambiguous and terminological words.

4. Order

As the logical connections between questions perceived by the respondents will affect their responses of the questions, the beginning of the questionnaire is designed for obtaining basic information in order to establish involvement and rapport. These opinion questions are not only straight forward and non-threatening but also show respect to the respondents’ views. Some questions involve classification information such as age; gender and financial situation are left at the end of the questionnaire. There is no identification information required in this survey. The questions also follow a logical sequence of the process of enjoy the musicals such as from overall impression to more specific details. Some questions are also logically interconnected for the purpose of assessing reliability and validity.

The questionnaire is designed to comply with the ethical and professional approach of anonymity and confidentiality in order to protect the respondents’ privacy. The respondents are invited to leave their contact details for further interview if they so wish.

Following table shows the questions with their intended aims:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Aims of the questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. 这三个音乐剧视频您喜欢哪种？</strong> How do you prefer to see these musicals?</td>
<td><strong>This question test whether the lyrics translations are effective to enable the translated musicals to become favourable with the Chinese</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 用中文演出 performed in Chinese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 用外文演出配中文字幕 subtitled in Chinese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 外文演出无翻译 performed in the foreign language without translation or subtitle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Please state the reasons for your choice</strong></td>
<td><strong>What does this question test?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the reasons for you to choose the option? Please state.</td>
<td>This question tests whether the musical libretti are more important, as is the case with Chinese operas or songs, than other aspects. It will indicate whether the Chinese audience need to follow the narrative more closely as is the case with the traditional Chinese operas, or are they more musically orientated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 看这些音乐剧时下面哪方面对您来说更重要？(请选择性将下述项目排名，1 为最不重要，6 为最重要) What ranking would you give in terms of importance to the various aspects of musicals? (place the following in order of importance, 1 for least important, 6 for most important)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 音乐 music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 看懂故事情节 being able to follow the story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 明星 stars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 演唱 singing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 舞蹈 dancing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 舞台与灯光设计 stage setting and lighting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 下面哪种形式更容易看懂剧情？(请选一项) Which of the following did you find easier to follow? (Please choose one)</td>
<td>This question tests whether the lyrics translation is singable as well as hearable. If the translation is effective in singing, it should also be effective in hearing and without having to seek help from reading the subtitles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 听中文演唱更容易明白剧情 Listening to the singing in Chinese is easier to follow the narration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 看字幕更容易明白剧情 Subtitles enable me understand the narration more clearly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 不确定 don’t know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 原因是什么？(请任选多项) What are your reasons? (Please choose as many as you like)</td>
<td>This question tests whether the libretti translation is more effective as is more favourable to audience compared with the subtitle translation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 看字幕比听演唱分散注意力 Looking at the subtitles is more distracting from viewing the performances than listening to the singing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 因为四声难免丢失使中文演唱难懂 It is difficult to catch the meaning through listening because of the inevitable loss of tone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 词汇难度使听演唱难懂 vocabulary difficulties in understanding when listening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 词汇难度使看字幕难懂 vocabulary difficulties in understanding when viewing the subtitle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 句子难度使听演唱难懂 sentence difficulties in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Do the translations seem compatible to the SC? (Please rank the following, 1 for least, 4 for most)
   a. yes
   b. no
   c. don’t know

5. 你认为翻译中加入的中国元素与原剧情协调吗？(请按高低排名，1为最低，4为最高)
   Which following part of the libretti do you enjoy the most? (Please rank the following, 1 for least, 4 for most)
   a. 与中国文化有关的元素 Chinese cultural reference
   b. 押韵，朗朗上口 Poetic: rhyme and rhythm
   c. 幽默感 Humour
   d. 其它（请具体写出）Other (please indicate)

6. 如果您觉得看字幕更容易看懂剧情，您认为翻译中加入的中国元素大概是多少？(请任选一项)
   If you find it easier to follow the singing through listening, what approximate proportion did you need to refer to? (Please choose one)
   a. very little
   b. about half
   c. most of it
   d. all (or nearly all) of it

7. 如果您觉得看字幕更容易看懂剧情，您认为翻译中加入的中国元素大概是多少？(请任选一项)
   If you have to refer to the subtitles in order to follow the meaning of the lyrics, what approximate proportion did you need to refer to? (Please choose one)
   a. very little
   b. about half
   c. most of it
   d. all (or nearly all) of it

8. 如果您觉得看字幕更容易看懂剧情，您听懂的部分大概是多少？(请任选一项)
   If you find it easier to understand from the singing, what approximate proportion did you need to refer to? (Please choose one)
   a. very little
   b. about half
   c. most of it
   d. all (or nearly all) of it

   A more accurate measurement of the audiences’ view for singability/hearability – audio vs. visual

   A more accurate measurement of the audiences’ view for subtitles – visual vs. audio

   This question tests in more detail whether the Chinese audience feel that there are some things which they are able to share so as to actively enjoy, rather than just remains passive observers.

   This question tests whether cultural adaptation in translation is compatibly done and makes the Chinese audience find that the culturally adapted translations are compatible to the SC, such as using Chinese reference to replace source cultural
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. 据您所知，外国音乐剧名曲是否在中国广为而且频繁传唱？</td>
<td>Are you aware of songs from foreign musicals being sung widely and/or frequently in China?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 频繁而且广为传唱 wide &amp; frequent</td>
<td>singability/hearability(?) to such an extent as part of their personal/intimate leisure activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 广为传唱但不频繁 wide but not frequent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 频繁但没有广为传唱 frequent but not wide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 既不频繁也没有广为传唱 neither</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 不确定 don’t know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. 如果剧中的歌曲可在卡拉 OK 点听，您会去点吗？</td>
<td>If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to order them for listening?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
<td>singability/hearability(?) to such an extent as part of their personal/intimate leisure activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. 如果剧中的歌曲可在卡拉 OK 点唱，您会亲自唱吗？</td>
<td>If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to sing them yourself?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. 您对中国传统戏曲有兴趣吗？</td>
<td>Are you interested in traditional Chinese operas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 不知道 don’t know</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. 晚上去剧院看演出时，您会选择下列哪种？</td>
<td>For a night out of musical theatre, which of the following would you prefer to see?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 中国传统戏剧 a traditional Chinese opera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 西方音乐剧 a Western musical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 两种一样 both equally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. 您的母语是什么? What is your mother tongue?
   a. 普通话 Mandarin
   b. 非普通话 non-Mandarin

   This question checks the respondents’ language ability for the validity of their responses, and also to cross-check with other questions.

15. 您的居住地是哪里? Where are you based?
   a. 中国大陆 Mainland China
   b. 香港 Hong Kong
   c. 台湾 Taiwan
   d. 澳门 Macao
   e. 海外 overseas

   This question checks the respondents’ geographical spread.

16. 请说明您的年龄、性别和家庭经济状况: Please state your age, gender and economic status:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>性别</th>
<th>年龄</th>
<th>家庭经济状况</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>男</td>
<td>18-30岁</td>
<td>高收入 High income group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40岁</td>
<td>较高收入 moderate income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50岁</td>
<td>中等收入 average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51-60岁</td>
<td>较低收入 below average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61岁以上</td>
<td>低收入 low income group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   This question aims to identify any correlation between the sample population and their preferences.

Fig. 1

Methods of data collection

1. The respondents

The subject groups are made up by the Chinese students who are native speakers from Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan and currently studying English/Chinese translation at BA and MA levels in Portsmouth University. They are chosen because they share many of the characteristics of potential audiences of Western musical productions in China and, therefore, may be viewed as indicative of a larger population for the measurements of variables. Owing to their studying and living in the UK and their experiences of Western culture, they are more likely to form a determining element of potential future audiences for the Western musicals in China. In fact, some of them have already seen Cats, The Lion King etc. in China and some of them are intending to see Les Misérables in London.

2. The instrument and the administration
Data were gathered from questionnaires and group discussions. The survey was conducted in classroom settings. The respondents were invited to watch the chosen video clips and then answer the questionnaire. Afterwards, there were semi-structured discussions when some of the respondents started asking and expressing their views concerning some of the questions such as why they wouldn’t choose to sing songs from the Western musicals in Karaoke, which helped to clarify some of the reasoning behind their choices. I took this opportunity to introduce some more examples, such as Chinese cultural adaptations, which had not been included due to the limitation of the short videos. The discussions were recorded afterwards.

In order to cross check the respondents’ preferences and views, their personal information such as their age, gender, education, economic status, social classes and interest also form part of the questionnaire. The subject specific information aims to test the effectiveness of the libretto translation. For these questions, the procedures on ethical issues which have been learnt from the research training programs are complied with accordingly.

3. sample materials:

The selection of sample materials is based on the following criteria:

- they are Western musicals currently showing in China to ensure that the research is relevant to contemporary practice;
- they include the variety of on-going types, i.e. non-translated, translated in surtitles (substituted for subtitles in this pilot survey) and fully translated for performance in Chinese, to ensure that the respondents are in the position to contrast the differences in order to decide their preferences;
- they are all songs and not spoken or linking recitative, hence, libretto is the focus for questioning;
- they are all visual materials and not just testing the listening, thereby resembling the real musicals;
- their original versions are all in English, which is the case with the vast majority of the Western musicals currently showing in China;

Owing to their unavailability (there is no Chinese translation version of any Western musical presently on show here in the UK), after a search of video clips of Western musicals available on the internet, three were selected in substitution for this pilot survey as follows:

I. Les Mis "I Dreamed a Dream" in London 4:02
   http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Qm5Hw0Wnlw&feature=related

II. Les Misérables: I Dreamed A Dream (Subtitle: Chinese) 4:37
    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOipTn0tQEk&feature=related

III. A. I love you, you're perfect, now speak in Mandarin Chinese 8:35
     http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2007/05/i_love_you_youre_perfect_now_speak.html
B. “I love you, you’re perfect, now change” - in Chinese! 1:56
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QttUTbtnxYc

The first and second are both sung in English although the second one has Chinese subtitles on the screen. The third one is from a Chinese translation version of the same named Broadway musical. The success of the Chinese version in China has won an invitation to show it off-Broadway and thereby became the first ever musical in Mandarin performed there.

The findings

Among the total sample population of 30, the majority are from Mainland China and speak Mandarin. Some respondents are from Guangdong province in China and therefore consider their local dialect of Cantonese as their mother tongue. The ratio between the genders is predominantly female. There is no significant gender partiality between male and female in terms of their answers to the questionnaire. As they are all students, the majority are in the 18-30 age bracket. Their economic status is overwhelmingly of average income (75%) and medium high income (25%). (Fig. 13)

In order to test whether the lyrics translations are effective for enabling the translated musicals to become favourable with the Chinese audience, Question 1 asks the audiences’ preferences among 3 different forms of Western musicals currently on show in China, and the results are as follows (fig. 2):

Q. 1, How do you prefer to see the musicals (please choose one)?

![Fig. 2](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QttUTbtnxYc)

Correspondingly, for Question 3, asking which is easier to follow: the large majority chose reading the subtitles. The reasons given for this preference are mainly for understanding the libretti/story. Significantly, on the other hand, the reasons given by some respondents for their preference in listening to the singing in Chinese are for its reception and more interesting considering the audiences’ mother tongue and cultural influence. One respondent left his comments regarding the Chinese surtitles in foreign language performances which he saw in China, saying that the surtitles may distract the audiences’ concentration so that details of the actors’ expressions and unique performances would be missed. Also, it is interesting to note that all three respondents who are in the 31-40 age brackets prefer to see the musicals performed in Chinese. Among them, 2 are MA translation students with much higher command of English and one of them is from Hong Kong who has been settled in the UK for a long time. (fig. 3)
Q. 3, Which of the following musical performances did you find easier to follow?

![Graph showing the percentage of respondents who find easier to follow singing in Chinese, reading subtitles, listening to the singing, and don't know.](image)

The reasons why that majority of the respondents prefer and find it easier to understand the subtitles could be: a. it is the most familiar form of following foreign films; b. it is easier to follow when these subtitles are on screen rather than overhead or at the side of stage as is the case with musical/opera performances, which would distract the audiences’ concentration. Some respondents pointed this out during subsequent discussions.

When cross-checking with questions 5 and 6 concerning the approximate proportion of the meaning of the lyrics which the respondents were able to understand through either listening or reading subtitles, a large majority find that reading the subtitles is easier to follow the narration of which 90% can understand at least half. (fig. 4) On the other hand, even though they can only understand approximately half of the lyrics by listening, 10% of the respondents found that listening is easier for following the narration: and were these respondents who, in question 1, chose their preferences for listening. Might these apparently contradictory results be influenced by their preferences for listening to the singing and not being disturbed by the subtitles? Or are they merely careless responses? It needs further investigation. These questions are self-assessments aimed at incorporating the respondents’ previous experiences in order to compensate for the shortcomings of the musical extracts in the sample materials.

Q. 5, If you find it easier to follow the singing, what approximate proportion of the meaning of the lyrics were you able to understand from the singing?

Q. 6, If you find it easier to read the subtitles in order to follow the meaning of the lyrics, what approximate proportion were you able to understand from reading?

![Graph showing the percentage of respondents who were able to understand through either listening or reading subtitles.](image)
These results also correlate with the outcomes from Question 2 for ranking the degree of importance attached to the principal components in musicals in order to test whether the musical libretti are considered more important than other aspects, as is the case with Chinese operas or songs. The overall weighted average percentage shows that being able to follow the story is ranked in importance at second highest place (18%) behind music. In number of responses which give the top ranking, it is equal with music at 30% (fig. 5), which may reflect the influence of the traditional Chinese operas for its emphasis on the libretti.

Q. 2. What ranking would you give in terms of importance to the various aspects of musicals? (place the following in order of importance, 1 for least important, 6 for most important)

![Fig. 5](image)

Fig. 5 also shows the contrast between the greatest and the least importance attributed to the various aspects in musicals by the respondents. It is evident that being able to follow the story is crucial for a large number of the respondents, although there is also a significant number of respondents who consider it the least important. These rather contrary results mean that, for the full survey, this question needs to be clarified through re-wording and/or cross checking.

There are also indications from the responses to question 4 regarding the reasons for the difficulties in following the lyrics/story, whereby the major difficulties (88%) are from listening including: loss of 4-tones (21%); vocabulary (29%); syntax (25%) and grammatical difficulties (13%). Among them, tone loss and vocabulary difficulties (together totalling 50%) are largely inter-related. Apart from 8% who find the subtitles distracting, and 2% find the sentence structure difficult to follow, any other problems in understanding when viewing the subtitles are only 2%. (fig. 6) This indicates that, as a tone oriented language, Chinese is even more difficult to understand through listening to the sung form than from reading it. Although this survey uses subtitles instead of surtitles which are for live musicals, it is evident that the libretti translation for listening has many more constraints in order to be effective compared with the subtitle translation for reading.

Q. 4. What are the causes for your preferences for listening or reading the surtitles?
Questions 7 and 8 test what role cultural adaptation plays in the libretti translation among other key characteristics and its compatibility to the ST. Is it compatibly carried out and does it make the Chinese audience feel included so that they are able to identify with and enjoy, or do they feel just like outsiders? Considering the survey could not show a full performance from which the respondents could appreciate the contributions the Chinese elements make in various crucial moments, the results are not a total surprise: the Chinese elements rank in third place behind rhyme and rhythm (1st), and humour (2nd). (fig. 7)

Q. 7, Which following part of the libretti did you enjoy the most (rank the following, 1 lowest, 4 highest)?

Also, in question 8, which tests whether the Chinese audience find that using Chinese reference to replace source cultural reference are compatible/harmonious, the respondents who are happy with the Chinese elements (Bruce Willis is substituted as Jackie Chan) count the smallest proportion at 13% (fig. 8).
Q. 8, Do you think that any Chinese references (e.g. Bruce Willis is substituted as Jackie Chan) which are adapted in the translations are compatible?

The reasons given for lack of recognition in adapting the Chinese elements are mainly (9 out of 14 who offered comments) for their preference of ‘original taste and flavour’. However, 3 respondents commented that the adaptation of Chinese elements is a desirable method to localise the production as some audience may not know the specific Western references. Therefore, adapting these references into the Chinese equivalents would help the audiences’ imagination in order to fully appreciate the story, as well as to increase the humorous effects. Indeed, these comments support the keen interest shown for humour in question 7 which is also reflected in reality: according to Chinese theatre reviews, some of the most warmly welcomed Chinese elements created the climactic moments of humorous effects. The findings from this survey may encourage translators to consider employing translation adaptation strategies to both overcome the cultural barriers and to convey the humorous effects to the TC audience.

Encouragingly, during the subsequent discussions, the majority of the respondents were convinced that adapting Chinese elements would be acceptable.

Questions 9, 10 and 11 aim to find out the popularity of the musical songs among the target population and the role they play (participation and contribution) in it. The results (fig. 9) show that the ranges for the wide and frequent are disparate, while either and neither are very much in line with each other.

Q. 9, Are you aware of songs from foreign musicals being sung widely and/or frequently in China?
Corresponding to the above results, in questions 10 and 11, the overwhelmingly majority of the respondents chose not to order for listening and none chose to sing in Karaoke. During discussions after completion of the questionnaire, quite a number of the respondents told me their reasons: singing these songs requires professional training as they are too difficult for most people to sing. As with Karaoke, people would like to find some songs which they can sing and not just listen to which, of course, is the whole point of Karaoke. Apparently, this sample population finds that the main obstacles are technical difficulties. (fig. 10)

Q. 10, If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to order them for listening?
Q. 11, If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to sing them yourself?

![Fig. 10](image1)

Questions 12 and 13 aim to identify whether this sample population is familiar with the traditional Chinese opera and what are their preferences between the Chinese operas and Western musicals. The aims are to establish links from different perspectives in order to see whether their preferences are influenced by the Chinese theatrical tradition, e.g. in question 2 (the ranking of importance attached to the various aspects of musicals) and question 7 (the most enjoyable part of the libretti). The findings show fairly similar percentages between those interested and those not interested in traditional Chinese operas, with a small percentage of don’t knows (fig. 11).

Q. 12, Are you interested in traditional Chinese operas?

![Fig. 11](image2)

Correspondingly, for a night out at musical theatre, although the majority of the respondents prefer to see Western musicals and only a small percentage prefers Chinese operas, there are 33% who believe that they are of equal preference. These mixed results are rather a pleasant surprise. It shows that even though the younger generation of Chinese, such as this sample group, are currently studying and living in the West and known to be a more Westernised audience, especially when they are learning English and are even studying in the West, a third of them gave Chinese operas and Western musicals an equal rating for
their choice of entertainment. This factor might be food for thought for translators to consider when employing their translation strategies. (fig. 12)

Q. 13. For a night out at musical theatre, which of the following would you prefer to see?

Fig. 12

Following table shows the detailed statistic results for all questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 这三种音乐剧视频您喜欢哪种？How do you prefer to see these musicals?</td>
<td>a. 4, 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 用中文演出 performed in Chinese</td>
<td>b. 26, 87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 用外文演出配中文字幕 subtitled in Chinese</td>
<td>c. 0, nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 外文演出无翻译 performed in the foreign language without translation or subtitle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>请说明您选择的原因 What are the reasons for you to choose the option?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 看这些音乐剧时下面哪方面对您来说更重要？ (请根据重要性将下述项目排名，1 为不重要，6 为最重要)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(place the following in order of importance, 1 for least important, 6 for most important)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 音乐 music</td>
<td>a. 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 看懂故事情节 being able to follow the story</td>
<td>b. 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 明星 stars</td>
<td>c. 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 演唱 singing</td>
<td>d. 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 舞蹈 dancing</td>
<td>e. 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 舞台与灯光设计 stage setting and lighting</td>
<td>f. 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 下面哪种形式更容易看懂剧情？（请任选一项） Which of the following did you find easier to follow? (Please choose one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 听中文演唱更容易明白剧情 Listening to the singing in Chinese is easier to follow the narration</td>
<td>a. 3, 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 看字幕更容易明白剧情 Subtitles enable me</td>
<td>b. 25, 83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
understand the narration more clearly
c. 不确定 don’t know

c. 2, 7%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. 原因是什么？（请任选多项）</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are your reasons? (Please choose as many as you like)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 看字幕比听演唱分散注意力 Looking at the subtitles is more distracting from viewing the performances than listening to the singing</td>
<td>a. 4, 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 因为四声难免丢失使中文演唱难懂 It is difficult to catch the meaning through listening because of the inevitable loss of tone</td>
<td>b. 10, 21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 词汇难度使听演唱难懂 vocabulary difficulties in understanding when listening</td>
<td>c. 14, 29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 词汇难度使看字幕难懂 vocabulary difficulties in understanding when viewing the subtitle</td>
<td>d. nil, nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 句子难度使听演唱难懂 sentence difficulties in understanding when listening</td>
<td>e. 12, 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. 句子难度使看字幕难懂 sentence difficulties in understanding when viewing the subtitle</td>
<td>f. 1, 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. 语法难度使听演唱难懂 grammar difficulties in understanding when listening</td>
<td>g. 6, 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. 语法难度使看字幕难懂 grammar difficulties in understanding when viewing the subtitle</td>
<td>h. 0, nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. 其它（请说明）other (please state)</td>
<td>i. 1, 2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5. 如果您觉得听演唱更容易看懂剧情，您听懂的部分大概是多少？（请任选一项）</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you find it easier to follow the singing through listening, what approximate proportion of the meaning of the lyrics were you able to understand from the singing? (Please choose one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 很少 very little</td>
<td>b. 3, 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 一半 about half</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 大部分 most of it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 全部（几乎全部）all (or nearly all) of it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. 如果您觉得看字幕更容易看懂剧情，您看懂的部分大概是多少？（请任选一项）</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you have to refer to the subtitles in order to follow the meaning of the lyrics, what approximate proportion did you need to refer to? (Please choose one)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 很少 very little</td>
<td>b. 3, 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 一半 about half</td>
<td>c. 15, 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 大部分 most of it</td>
<td>d. 9, 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 全部（几乎全部）all (or nearly all) of it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. 歌词与对白中，您最欣赏下列哪方面？ (请按高低排名，1 为最低，4 为最高)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which following part of the libretti did you enjoy the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. You think that any Chinese references (e.g. Bruce Willis is translated as Jackie Chan) which are adapted in the translations are compatible?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Don’t know

   Please explain the reasons for your choice, or give examples.

9. Are you aware of songs from foreign musicals being sung widely and/or frequently in China?
   a. Frequent and widely sung
   b. Widely sung but not frequent
   c. Frequently sung but not widely
   d. Neither frequently nor widely sung
   e. Don’t know

10. If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to order them for listening?
    a. Yes
    b. No

11. If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to sing them yourself?
    a. Yes
    b. No

12. Are you interested in traditional Chinese operas?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know

13. For a night out of musical theatre, which of the following would you choose?

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most? (Please rank the following, 1 for least, 4 for most) (25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. 与中国文化有关的元素 Chinese cultural reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 押韵，朗朗上口 Poetic: rhyme and rhythm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 幽默感 Humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 其它（请具体写出） Other (please indicate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. 您认为翻译中加入的中国元素（如：用成龙代替布鲁斯威利斯）与原剧情协调吗？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that any Chinese references (e.g. Bruce Willis is translated as Jackie Chan) which are adapted in the translations are compatible?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 不知道 don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. 您所知，外国音乐剧名曲是否在中国广为而且频繁传唱？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you aware of songs from foreign musicals being sung widely and/or frequently in China?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 频繁而且广为传唱 wide &amp; frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 广为传唱但不频繁 wide but not frequent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 频繁但没有广为传唱 frequent but not wide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. 既不频繁也没有广为传唱 neither</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. 不确定 don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. 如果剧中的歌曲可在卡拉 OK 点听，您会去点听吗？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to order them for listening?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. 如果剧中的歌曲可在卡拉 OK 点唱，您会亲自唱吗？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the songs are available on Karaoke, would you intend to sing them yourself?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. 您对中国传统戏曲有兴趣吗？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you interested in traditional Chinese operas?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. 是 yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. 否 no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. 不知道 don’t know</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. 晚上去剧院看演出时，您会选择下列哪种？</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For a night out of musical theatre, which of the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
following would you prefer to see?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>中国地方戏 a traditional Chinese opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>西方音乐剧 a Western musical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>两种一样 both equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>其它(请说明) other (please indicate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>3, 10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>17, 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>10, 33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>0, nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. 您的母语是什么? What is your mother tongue?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>普通话 Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>非普通话 non-Mandarin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>19, 63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>11, 37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. 您的居住地是哪里? Where are you based?

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>中国大陆 Mainland China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>香港 Hong Kong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>台湾 Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>澳门 Macao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>海外 overseas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>24, 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>4, 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>2, 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>0, nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>0, nil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. 请说明您的年龄、性别和家庭经济状况: Please state your age, gender and economic status:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>性别</th>
<th>年龄</th>
<th>家庭经济状况</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>男 male</td>
<td>18-30 岁</td>
<td>高收入 high income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男 male</td>
<td>31-40 岁</td>
<td>较高收入 medium high income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男 male</td>
<td>41-50 岁</td>
<td>中等收入 average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男 male</td>
<td>51-60 岁</td>
<td>较低收入 below average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>男 male</td>
<td>61 岁以上</td>
<td>低收入 low income group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女 female</td>
<td>18-30 岁</td>
<td>高收入 high income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女 female</td>
<td>31-40 岁</td>
<td>较高收入 medium high income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女 female</td>
<td>41-50 岁</td>
<td>中等收入 average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女 female</td>
<td>51-60 岁</td>
<td>较低收入 below average income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>女 female</td>
<td>61 岁以上</td>
<td>低收入 low income group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>性别</th>
<th>年龄</th>
<th>家庭经济状况</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>MHIG 7, 25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>27, 90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>AIG 21, 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3, 10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>26, 7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 13

Summary of the key points:

- 90% of respondents found that they can understand at least half of the libretti/story by reading the subtitles. 10% preferred to listen to the singing in Chinese due to its clearer reception.

- 88% of the language difficulties in following the lyrics/story came from listening, which indicates the overwhelming difficulties in understanding the tone-orientated Chinese when listening to the sung form.

- Being able to follow the story is ranked at second highest place just behind music, which may reflect the influence of the traditional Chinese operas with its emphasis on the libretti.
• The ranking of importance for adapting Chinese elements is in third place behind rhyme and rhythm (1st), and humour (2nd). Some have reservations over their compatibility to the original story.

• The uneven spread and frequency of the musical songs and their unpopularity in Karaoke seem to stem from the lack of professionally trained singing skills.

• Even to these young and Westernised respondents, the influence of the Chinese theatrical tradition is still evident.

It is concluded that being able to understand and follow the story is very important for the Chinese audience and the language difficulties may discourage them from fully appreciating the Western musicals. This may derive from the influence of the Chinese theatrical tradition. They only welcome the cultural adaptations with Chinese elements when they are compatible with the original context.

Issues arising

1. Design problems:

Material: the limitation of accessibility made the sample material out of alignment with the real musical. In the full survey, the respondents will have already seen the real musicals with surtitles in order to ensure the accuracy of the survey for transferability and generalisability. Nevertheless, the difficulties revealed in the pilot survey in understanding the libretti, when being sung is anticipated. It is a common feature of all languages that understanding singing is more difficult than reading. For Chinese, where tones are the crucial part of its phonetic components, the loss of tones in the singing only makes it even more difficult to understand the story/libretti.

The respondents’ feedback on the questionnaire design is positive for its clear instructions and straightforwardness to answer. However, in questions 2 and 7, when using continuous variables for measuring the importance (question 2) and preferences (question 7) of various components in musicals, the respondents were asked to rank them from 1 to 6 (question 2) and 1 to 4 (question 7) with 1 as the least and 6 or 4 respectively as the most. Although 67% and 83% respectively of the respondents answered according to the instructions, the remainder answered the questions by using some rankings more than once; hence, their responses were not included in the findings and the percentages from these questions were based only on the total of properly completed answers. In future, the instructions should be more clearly stated that each grading may only be used once per category.

Also, questions 3, 5 and 6 are inter-connected in order to find out whether listening or reading is easier for the respondents to understand and consequently the approximate proportions of their understanding. However, it could cause confusion as some respondents went on to answer both 5 and 6. In the full survey, questions 5 and 6 could either be attached to question 3 or with clearer instructions for the respondents to skip the subsequent irrelevant one.

Conclusion

Despite its limitations and design defects, the results from this survey indicate certain characteristics of the Chinese audiences’ priorities and preferences for enjoying
Western musicals, which are largely in line with the proposed hypotheses. It shows that, although music is the most important component in musicals, being able to follow the lyrics/story ranks next along with the singing. Compared with reading subtitles, listening to the singing prove to be much more difficult owing to the problems emanating from tone loss and thereby lexis during the singing. Although the majority of respondents found easier to follow the show by reading surtitles rather than listening to the singing, some stated that reading interfered with their concentration for enjoying the performances. Therefore, translation strategies specifically for the Chinese language and cultural characteristics need to be developed in helping to overcome these difficulties. The Chinese audience, even those who have experienced Western education and culture, are still be influenced by their own theatrical heritage, which should be taken into account in employing the libretti translation strategies.

However, although there is a minority of the respondents who believe that adapting the Chinese elements when translating Western musicals to Chinese would help the audiences’ understanding and reception, the majority of this sample group prefer the ‘original flavour and taste’, which is contrary to the warm welcome some translated Western musicals have recently received in China. More evidence needs to be gathered through further investigation and a full survey to validate this finding and ensure its representativeness. Another finding which does not appear to support the hypothesis of participation is that the overwhelming majority opted neither to listen (90%) nor to sing (100%) in Karaoke, the reason for which is: they are technically too difficult for ordinary amateurs to sing (at least they don’t dislike the songs). It indicates that if the lyrics are easy to understand and follow, then they would be easier to sing as well – which is consistent with the characteristics for popular art.

Although this is only a pilot survey with a small selected sample population, the findings give clear indications on the major issues concerning the Chinese audiences’ expectations towards the translation of Western musicals. It helps to clarify the research hypotheses for further investigation in the full survey.
CURRICULUM VITAE

Academic qualifications of the thesis author, Mrs. SORBY Stella Lanxing:

- Received the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) Chinese Language & Literature from Renmin University of China, July 1982.

- Received the degree of Master of Arts Translation and Interpreting from University of Bath May 2000.

October 2014