

# An Analysis of Two Chinese Translations of Motion Events in *The Call of the Wild* from the Perspective of Skopos Theory

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**Abstract:** This article centers on *The Call of the Wild*, an English novel by American author Jack London, alongside two Chinese translations by Dajie Liu and Menglin Zhang, and Rongyue Liu. Seventy sentences containing motion events and their corresponding translations were randomly selected for analysis. The study focuses on the primary elements of motion events—manner, path, and ground—and examines their Chinese translations through the lens of Skopos theory. Skopos theory emphasizes whether translators can adopt appropriate translation strategies according to various contextual factors during the translation process. Compared to verb-framed languages, satellite-framed languages possess a richer vocabulary for manner verbs, express more detailed manner information, use more satellite words to indicate paths, and incorporate more background information. Verb-framed languages, by contrast, typically express manner information only when necessary and tend to include less background information. The analysis reveals that both Chinese translations embody the core principle of Skopos theory: translation strategies are determined by their purpose. To fulfill the novel's translation objectives, the translators adeptly adjust their strategies for motion event components based on different contextual needs. It is noted that the Chinese translations do not fully retain the characteristics of English as a typical satellite-framed language. This observation aligns with Skopos theory's purpose-oriented approach, which prioritizes translation goals over strict adherence to source text characteristics.

**Keywords:** Skopos theory; Motion event translation; Manner; Path; Ground

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## 1. Introduction

The studies of translation tend to have a closer link to other disciplines these days. How language is acquired, produced, used, and comprehended has been studied by cognitive linguistics, as well as how expressions vary with

people from different language backgrounds. It provides new perspectives to the study of translation by focusing on the process of translation instead of the translation result itself, and the role of translators has been transferred to the mediators between languages rather than just language experts.

Motion events typically involve an entity's movement moving from one position place to the other, which is the most basic and pervasive experience in daily life<sup>[1]</sup>. Motion events have emerged as a focal point in cognitive linguistics, with numerous studies exploring their cross-linguistic expressions. In 1985, Fillmore proposed the Source-Path-Goal motion schema within *Frames and the Semantics of Understanding*. However, Talmy presented an alternative model, the Figure-Motion-Path-Ground schema<sup>[2-5]</sup>, which has since gained wide acceptance in motion event theory. According to Talmy<sup>[2-5]</sup>, four basic internal elements make up a motion event, namely figure, motion, path, and ground. The figure represents the moving object, typically expressed as a subject noun. Motion refers to the act or state of movement, whether dynamic or static, and is often embedded within verbs. The path component can be viewed from two perspectives: if in motion, it indicates the trajectory relative to the ground, and if locative, it shows the figure's position on the ground. This path component may be encoded directly in the verb (a "path verb") or as a bound affix or a particle (a "satellite"), as seen in English. The ground serves as the reference object that the figure interacts with, such as the starting or ending point of the movement. In addition to the aforementioned internal components, external components like manner and cause are also included to form a co-event. By looking into the way of the path component encoding, Talmy divided languages into two categories: the verb-framed language and the satellite-framed language. Verb-framed languages characteristically encode path information in main verbs, whereas satellite-framed languages characteristically encode path information in particles that subordinate to the main verbs. Talmy<sup>[5]</sup> believed that both English and Chinese should fall into the category of satellite-framed languages.

In Slobin's study in 1996<sup>[6]</sup>, he put forward the concept of plus-ground clause and minus-ground clause. The former refers to a clause that includes at least one or more ground components, and the latter refers to a clause that does not contain any ground components. Slobin further classified manner verbs into two tiers<sup>[6]</sup>. First-tier manner verbs include commonly used verbs such as *run*, *walk*, *jump*, and *fly*. Second-tier manner verbs convey more nuanced manner details, like *waddle* (walking with short steps like a duck), *limp* (walking with difficulty due to an injury), *stagger* (walking unsteadily as if about to fall), and *shuffle* (walking slowly with feet barely lifting off the ground).

Previous studies on the typology of languages have shown that motion events are expressed differently in different languages<sup>[4,5,7-9]</sup>. In the studies of lexicalization patterns, Talmy<sup>[3]</sup> distinguished two notions: meaning and form. The elements of meaning, which are also the semantic components of motion events, include motion, path, figure, manner, and cause. In the linguistic expressions of form notion, the elements involve categories of words such as verbs, prepositions, nouns, or sentences and clauses. The satellite morpheme proposed by Talmy belongs to form elements. On the basis of these notions, Talmy's studies of lexicalization patterns focus on the matching relation between meaning and form, which later triggered Slobin's translation study on motion events in 1996<sup>[9]</sup>. In *Two Ways to Travel: Verbs of Motion in English and Spanish*, Slobin studied motion events and their translations in several English and Spanish novels<sup>[9]</sup>. Then, he did a similar research with 11 languages<sup>[10]</sup>, which inspired other researchers like Ibarretxe-Antunano<sup>[11]</sup> and De Knop and Gallez<sup>[12]</sup>. Researchers in China, like Yan<sup>[13]</sup>, Shao<sup>[14,15]</sup>, Luo<sup>[16]</sup>, and Li<sup>[17]</sup> studied how English and Chinese are different in motion event expressions. Bai and Li<sup>[18]</sup> did research on the relexicalization process of motion events during English-to-Chinese (E-C) translation in 2009.

This article aims to explore the conveyance of manner, path, and ground information during the E-C translation process of *The Call of the Wild* by analyzing the expressions of these key motion event components in the original English text and two translated versions. The significance of this study lies in its unique approach; while prior research has been conducted on translations of *The Call of the Wild*, almost none have examined it from the perspective of motion events. This study represents a novel application of Skopos theory, potentially providing

valuable insights into the integration of translation theory and motion event analysis in literary works.

## 2. Skopos theory

Put forward in the 20th century, Skopos theory may be regarded as the most significant theory of functional translation. “The end justifies the means”<sup>[19]</sup> is the core idea of Skopos theory. It characterizes translation as an intercultural exchange process that is driven by distinct objectives and aims<sup>[20]</sup>. It advocates that translation should break away from the bondage of the source language, and the translator should adopt translation strategies and methods according to the purpose of the target language.

The theoretical development has experienced three main stages. Katharina Reiss first proposed Skopos theory in her book entitled *The Possibilities and Limitations of Translation Criticism*<sup>[21]</sup>. Although her study was still on the basis of equivalence theory, she believed that sometimes it was not possible to realize equivalence between the source language texts and the target language texts. The purpose of the translation instead of the equivalence should be taken into consideration first, and this is the origin of Skopos theory. Then her student Hans Vermeer developed Skopos theory<sup>[22]</sup>. He published an article entitled “General Translation Theory Framework” in 1978, in which he first proposed the basic principles of Skopos theory. In 1984, he and his teacher Reiss co-authored the book *General Theory of Translation*. In this book, Vermeer believed that translation (including interpretation) was based on the conversion of the source text. Skopos theory was further developed by Christiane Nord after Reiss’ and Vermeer’s achievements. He believed that most translation activities have various kinds of intentions<sup>[23]</sup>. He also proposed that translators must be able to defend their chosen purposes in specific translation cases, which aimed to get a better understanding of the choices of literal translation and free translation<sup>[24]</sup>. The translator may choose literal translation, free translation, or any other strategies according to the different translation purposes.

“Skopos rule” is regarded as the guiding principle in Skopos theory. It means the translation activities are decided by their purposes, or “the end justifies the means”<sup>[25]</sup>. Vermeer also introduced the coherence rule, referred to as “intratextual coherence,” which asserts that “the target text must be sufficiently coherent to allow the intended users to comprehend it, given their assumed background knowledge and situational circumstances”<sup>[26]</sup>. Nord proposed the fidelity rule, emphasizing the importance of intertextual coherence between the source text and the target text<sup>[23,24]</sup>. Nord perfected the Skopos theory and advocated that the translator should respect the original text and coordinate the relationship with the original author and initiator<sup>[27]</sup>. The hierarchy of these three rules is not equivalent; the coherence rule and fidelity rule are subordinate to the Skopos rule, and the fidelity rule is further subordinate to the coherence rule.

Many translation studies have been conducted with Skopos theory, yet none of them is carried out from the perspective of motion event components.

## 3. Materials and procedure

### 3.1. Materials

The English novel *The Call of the Wild*, authored by American writer Jack London, holds significant literary value and has been translated into Chinese over 40 times. These translations have been the subject of numerous studies, primarily focusing on cultural terminology, language style, and communicative aspects. However, the novel’s rich use of motion event expressions has not yet been thoroughly investigated. This article aims to fill that gap by analyzing how motion events are rendered in the E-C translation process from the perspective of Skopos theory. The study utilizes two Chinese translations as primary materials, examining the treatment of the three key components of

motion events: manner, path, and ground.

This article utilizes *The Call of the Wild*, a renowned 1903 novel by American author Jack London, as the primary material for analysis <sup>[28]</sup>. Set against the backdrop of the Gold Rush, this adventure tale follows Buck, a dog who is stolen and transported to Alaska where sled dogs are in high demand. Buck’s journey from a pampered domestic pet to a sled dog struggling for survival in the harsh Alaskan environment is rich with vivid descriptions of motion events. The original English version used in this research is sourced from Project Gutenberg (<https://www.gutenberg.org/>), which provides access to over 57,000 free eBooks that are no longer under copyright.

With more than 30 Chinese translations of *The Call of the Wild*, there is significant variability in quality. This study examines two versions of Chinese translations: one <sup>[29]</sup> by Dajie Liu and Menglin Zhang, who were the first to translate the novel in 1935, and the other <sup>[30]</sup> by Rongyue Liu, whose translation was published by Shanghai Translation Publishing House in 2011. The latter is notable as this publishing house is the largest comprehensive translation publisher in China, ensuring a high standard of translation quality.

### 3.2. Procedure

To fulfill the objectives of this research, this article randomly selects seventy sentences from the complete seven chapters of the novel as sample materials. Each selected sentence includes at least one motion event and represents a complete motion event: in the narrative, the protagonist is depicted in a different location following the movement <sup>[9]</sup>. These motion events can manifest as brief trajectories (tracking) as shown in example 1a or as extended (stretched) journeys illustrated in example 1b, both featuring motion event clauses in which the protagonist clearly ends in a new location after moving. This study focuses primarily on self-initiated motion, while caused motion will not be analyzed.

#### Example 1

a. He entered the camp.

他走入帐篷。

b. The rabbit sped down the river, turned off into a small creek, up the frozen bed of which it held steadily.

雪兔迅速沿河跑去，转入一条小支流，沿其冰冻的河床始终跑得飞快。

The corresponding motion event translations of the selected sentences are collected from the translation versions from Rongyue Liu, which will be referred to as Text (Liu), as well as from Dajie Liu and Menglin Zhang, which will be referred to as Text (L & Z) in the article.

In this article, manner, path, and ground components in motion events will be located and counted separately to display the differences between the source text and target texts. Then the causes that lead to the results, which are the different translation strategies adopted during the language conversion process, will be discussed from the perspective Skopos theory.

The categories of manner, path, and ground expressions collected in this article are presented with examples in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** The category and examples of manner, path, and ground expressions

	Category	English examples	Chinese examples
	First-tier manner verb	run, walk, fly, jump	跑, 跳, 飞, 走
	Second-tier manner verb	wonder, stagger, limp, rush	徘徊, 阔步, 疾动
Manner	Manner adverbial	slowly, softly, smoothly, restlessly, leap by leap,	平稳, 慢慢, 飞速, 像逝影般地
	Manner description	in a friendly manner, panting and frothing, astonished, wounded	喘着气, 流着口沫的, 受惊的, 受伤的

**Table 1 (Continued)**

	Category	English examples	Chinese examples
Path	Path verb	advance, leave, follow, exit	离开, 跟随, 上, 下, 回
	Satellite	in, out, over, across, through, toward, to	来, 去, 出, 起
Ground	Plus-ground clause	he skirted the frowning shores on rim ice; he plunged through the wooded breast of the island	卡车离开汽船后把它送到了一个大火车站; 它又穿过大营地四处去找

## 4. Results

Results of the manner, path, and ground component expressions will be presented separately in this part.

### 4.1. Encoding of manner

Regarding manner expressions in the source text and translations, this research has the following results from the data collected.

#### 4.1.1. Frequency and types of manner verbs

Motion verbs integrated with manner information are manner verbs: the main verb of a motion event is a semantic integration of motion and manner components.

Among the 70 samples, there are 55 manner verbs in the source text, 54 manner verbs in the Text (Liu), and 63 manner verbs in the Text (L & Z). The number of manner verb types is presented in **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** Number of manner verb types

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Number of manner verb types	29	16	19

The manner verb types from the samples are listed as below:

Source text: lurch, shoot, spring, burst, sweep, leap, roll, run, limp, race, plunge, fly, stagger, swing, drive, rush, dart, truck, walk, flash, twist, wander, dash, scramble, slid, dance, roam, crawl, stamp

Text (Liu): 射, 扑, 冲, 跑, 奔, 走, 爬, 涌, 跃跳, 奔跑, 扎, 跨, 游荡, 跳舞, 纷飞, 徘徊

Text (L & Z): 疾动, 走, 跳, 扑, 闪, 冲, 蹒跚, 飞舞, 掠, 拖, 爬, 狂奔, 阔步, 徘徊, 跃, 游走, 跳舞, 驰, 急驰

It can be observed that the number of manner verbs does not vary significantly among the three texts. Yet regarding the number of manner verb types, the source text is obviously higher than that in both translation texts: the source text is 81.25% higher than Text (Liu) and 52.63% higher than Text (L & Z).

From the data collected, it is clear that the source English text contains more types of second-tier manner verbs. For example, regarding the motion of walk, the source text includes “lurch,” “limp,” “sweep,” “stagger,” “stamp,” “dash,” “wander,” etc., while the Text (Liu) only includes “游荡” and “徘徊” and the Text (L & Z) includes “蹒跚,” “阔步,” “徘徊,” and “游走.” The source text evidently outnumbers the types of second-tier manner verb numbers in both Chinese translations (**Table 3**)

**Table 3.** Second-tier manner verb type in the source text and translations

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Number of second-tier manner verb type	26	15	16

It also can be observed that regarding the use of motion verbs, the source text makes finer distinctions: when describing the same motion, the source text has more diverse manner verb types than the translations. Some examples from the materials are presented in **Table 4**.

**Table 4.** English manner verb and its translation

Original English text	Chinese translations
spring, plunge, bound, dash, shoot,	跳
scramble, crawl, across	爬
spring, drive, sweep, rush, leap, fly	扑
burst, spring, drive, rush, flash, plunge, dart	冲

It should be noted that some Chinese manner verbs, such as “爬,” are polysemous words. It contains two types of motion, as explained in the *Modern Chinese Dictionary*, the first is “人或动物伏地慢行” (humans or animals move slowly with body close to the ground), the second is “攀登, 攀援而上” (go up). Thus, its corresponding manner verbs in English are also different according to the context and they represent totally different motions. Very few Chinese polysemous manner verbs are collected from the samples and their meaning are identified during data collection.

The results displayed in **Table 3** and the examples in **Table 4** show support for Slobin’s opinion: as a satellite-framed language, English usually expresses manner information by manner verbs and it has a diverse lexicon in the types of manner verbs.

#### 4.1.2. Frequency of manner adverbials

Slobin<sup>[8]</sup> pointed out that, in verb-framed languages, main verbs are usually used to express the path of motion, so manner information is mostly encoded by other approaches. This is another difference between verb-framed languages and satellite-framed languages. One way to express manner of motion is to use manner adverbials. The number of manner adverbials employed in the original English novel and in the two translations is shown in **Table 5**.

**Table 5.** Number of manner adverbials (word and phrase)

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Number of manner adverbials (word and phrase)	21	33	31

From the data collected, a higher frequency of manner adverbial employment is observed in Text (Liu) and Text (L & Z). Neither of them outnumbers Jack London’s source text in the manner adverbial quantity, indicating that manner adverbials are more frequently used in Chinese to express manner information, which is consistent with Li and Bai’s<sup>[18]</sup> study in 2009. This result implies that the Chinese do not have the same satellite-framed language features as the original English novel does.

### 4.1.3. Frequency of descriptions

Descriptions are used to describe the “internal state or physical condition of a moving entity” or “features of the physical setting that could influence the manner of motion”<sup>[31]</sup>.

As shown in **Table 6**, 16 descriptions can be found in the original version, 16 in Text (Liu) and 16 in Text (L & Z), which means regardless of forms, the translations and English are the same when conveying manner information by using descriptions.

**Table 6.** Number of descriptions

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Number of descriptions	16	16	16

## 4.2. Encoding of path

Path verbs refer to the verbs that are integrated with path information. Path expressions in the source text and the target texts, relevant data are collected as below.

### 4.2.1. Frequency of path verbs

From the chosen examples, the number of path verbs in three texts is displayed in **Table 7**.

**Table 7.** Number of path verbs in the source text and translations

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Path verbs	37	51	48

There are a total of 37, 51, and 48 path verbs in the source text, Text (Liu), and Text (L & Z) respectively. Both Chinese translations have more path verbs than the English text, which indicates that Chinese are more likely to express path information by using path verbs. According to Slobin<sup>[32]</sup>, a higher frequency of path-verb employment in path information representation is a characteristic of verb-framed languages, which means the data here suggests the Chinese translation is not a typical satellite-framed language as the source text does.

### 4.2.2. Frequency of satellites

From the chosen examples, the number of satellites in three texts is displayed in **Table 8**.

**Table 8.** Number of satellites in the source text and translations

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Satellite	93	63	47

In terms of the total amount of satellites, the numbers are 93, 63, and 47 for the source text, Liu’s text, and L & Z’s text respectively. Both Chinese translations have fewer satellites than the source text, which is in line with the previous study that Chinese employs fewer satellites than the satellite-framed languages do.

## 4.3. Encoding of ground

The reference of the motion is ground. On the basis of Slobin<sup>[9]</sup>, ground clauses are categorized into plus-ground clauses and minus-ground clauses. The former includes one or more ground components, and the latter does not

contain any ground components.

The percentages of plus-ground information in every motion event in the three texts are presented in **Table 9**.

**Table 9.** Percentages of plus-ground information in every motion event

	Source text	Text (Liu)	Text (L & Z)
Plus-ground information	76.4%	74.6%	70.8%

From **Table 9**, Chinese presents a slightly lower plus-ground information percentage in every motion event, which supports Slobin's opinion<sup>[32]</sup>. He stated that satellite-framed language users tend to use more ground elements per clause than verb-framed language users do. Thus, the way Chinese translations expressing ground information is not quite similar to the English source text, which is a typical satellite-framed language.

#### 4.4. Summary

After data collection, results are presented as follows: when expressing manner components, the English text utilizes a much larger number of second-tier manner verbs than translations do; the number of adverbials (word and phrase) in Chinese translations is much bigger than that in English source text; the source text and its translation have the same manner description number; when expressing path components, the source text is likely to use path satellites, which are far less showed in Chinese translations; during path translation, there are more path verbs in Chinese translations than that in English version; Chinese's percentages of plus-ground information in every motion event are slightly lower than that in English.

The comparisons between the source text and target text show that English is more inclined to use manner verbs to express manner components and to use satellites to express path components; while Chinese tend to use adverbials to express manner information and use path verbs to express path information. Regarding the number of ground component expressions, Chinese is slightly lower than that in English. The expressions of these three elements in English samples conform to the characteristics of satellite languages, which proves that English is a typical satellite-framed language. The two Chinese versions, however, as the translations of a typical satellite-framed language, do not embody all the characteristics of it.

#### 5. Discussion

Unlike the translation of practical texts, literary translation does not have a definitive standard regarding how much of the source text should be preserved. Skopos theory views translation as a purposeful human action, with the objectives of the translation determining the strategies to be employed. This theory presents a new perspective on literary translation, framing it as a goal-oriented process rather than one that rigidly adheres to the source text.

In essence, since the target text is intended for target readers, the primary aim of translating a novel is to faithfully convey as much of the plot and scenes as possible, while maintaining the vividness and readability of the original. This ensures that the translation provides an optimal reading experience. To achieve this, translators must adapt their strategies according to specific contexts and requirements.

Previous research on motion events has demonstrated that languages with different typological structures express motion events in varying ways. In the previous part, this article highlights differences in the expressions of motion event components between the original English text and its Chinese translations. Based on the findings, this part will explore the translation strategies applied during the process, analyzed through the lens of Skopos theory.



## 5.1. Manner translation

### 5.1.1. Manner verb translation

As previously discussed, manner verbs are motion verbs that convey the manner of movement and are prominently featured in satellite-framed languages<sup>[5]</sup>. Slobin highlighted that satellite-framed languages have a more extensive and nuanced lexicon of manner verbs compared to verb-framed languages, which allows for richer and more detailed expressions of motion events.

The typological classification of Chinese remains debated within linguistic circles. This article identifies that manner verbs in the English novel *The Call of the Wild* are rendered differently in its Chinese translations, a finding consistent with earlier research by Li and Bai<sup>[18]</sup>.

In this section, the focus will be on analyzing the translation strategies used for manner verbs during the E-C translation process. These strategies will be discussed by using Slobin's manner verb categorization as a framework, while applying Skopos theory to illustrate how goal-oriented translation decisions are made to adapt manner expressions effectively in Chinese translations.

#### (1) First-tier manner verbs translation

##### i. Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb → Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb

Slobin categorized manner verbs into two tiers. The first-tier verbs are those that describe basic and general motions encountered in everyday life, such as *run* (“跑”), *fly* (“飞”), *climb* (“爬”), *jump* (“跳”), and *walk* (“走”). These verbs often have direct equivalents in both Chinese and English, likely due to the fundamental nature of human cognition at this level. Lakoff<sup>[33]</sup> argued in *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Theories: A Critique of Lakoff's Theory of Categorization* that people from diverse cultural backgrounds generally share basic-level categorizations because of universal cognitive capacities. This shared categorization explains why first-tier manner verbs in Chinese and English align closely and have nearly identical counterparts.

As a result, during the translation process, when manner information is expressed using first-tier manner verbs, translators often opt for a literal translation. They employ the equivalent Chinese manner verbs to create a faithful rendition of the source text. This approach maintains the clarity and fidelity of the original content. Below is an example illustrating this translation strategy.

#### Example 2

- a. He walked to the center of the open space and listened.
- b. 它走到空旷地中间听着。Text (Liu)
- c. 它走到平野的中央处听着。Text (L & Z)

It is widely recognized that the movement “walk” represents a common type of motion in everyday experiences and does not carry complex manner information. It serves as a quintessential first-tier manner verb with an exact equivalent in Chinese, “走.” Since both “walk” and “走” convey the same manner and motion, both translators of the selected versions opted for a literal translation. This approach aligns with Skopos theory and the fidelity rule: the source text's meaning is preserved as closely as possible, ensuring that readers are provided with the necessary motion information to fully comprehend the narrative.

##### ii. Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb + Adverbial → Adverbial + Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb

Furthermore, when first-tier manner verbs are accompanied by manner adverbials (words or phrases) to convey additional manner information, translators often adopt a similar approach by translating both the adverbials and the manner verb literally. This strategy ensures that the vividness of the source text is retained in the target text, preserving both the motion and the descriptive richness for the reader. Below is an example illustrating this translation approach.

### Example 3

- a. A moisture came into his eyes, and, as the whipping continued, he arose and walked irresolutely up and down.  
b. 他眼睛湿润了，鞭子还在抽着，他起身犹豫不决地走来走去。Text (Liu)  
c. 他的两眼已带着泪花，当哈尔的鞭子，继续地打在巴克的身上时，他站了起来，踌躇不决地走来走去。

Text (L & Z)

In this example, the manner information is conveyed through a combination of a first-tier manner verb and an adverbial: *walked irresolutely*. The verb *walk* has an exact equivalent in Chinese, “走,” which is why it is translated literally in the example. The adverb *irresolutely*, which describes a state of hesitancy or uncertainty, has similar meanings to certain Chinese adverbs, such as “犹豫不决地” and “踌躇不决地,” both used in this context. This demonstrates that when first-tier manner expressions and their accompanying adverbials in the source text have corresponding expressions in Chinese, translators often choose a literal translation. This approach ensures that the manner and descriptive quality of the English text are fully conveyed, achieving the same communicative intent as the original.

#### iii. Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb → Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb

In addition to translating literally, a less common approach of first-tier manner verb translation is found from the samples collected, which is rendering the first-tier manner verb into second-tier manner verb, as shown in example 4.

### Example 4

a. ...and with a ferocious snarl he bounded straight up into the blinding day, the snow flying about him in a flashing cloud.

b. .... 发出一声凶猛的嚎叫，纵身跃入眼花缭乱的白昼，此时正大雪纷飞。Text (Liu)

c. .... 他发出极其凶猛的咆哮，一跃就跳到那昏眩的白日中，雪就像闪光的云彩似的，在他的周围飞舞。

Text (L & Z)

As a domesticated dog raised in an affluent household, Buck had never encountered a hostile environment prior to his abduction. The scene depicted in this sentence takes place shortly after Buck's capture, set in the frozen Alaskan Klondike. The source text uses the first-tier manner verb *fly* to describe the motion of heavy snow. While *fly* has a direct equivalent in Chinese, “飞” translated literally would result in expressions like “大雪飞” or “在他的周围飞,” which sounds unnatural to Chinese readers.

To maintain the vividness and readability of the narrative, both Chinese translations employ a different strategy. Rather than using the first-tier manner verb “飞,” the translators use second-tier manner verbs such as “纷飞” (describing snow or other light objects floating wildly in the air) and “飞舞” (implying movement like dancing through the air). This choice enhances the description, making the snow scene more picturesque and aligning with the Skopos theory's principle of adapting translation to achieve the intended effect on the target audience.

Additionally, in example 4a, the phrase “大雪纷飞” can be seen as a four-character idiom in Chinese. In this context, the translator combines the figure “snow” and the manner verb “fly” into a widely used and familiar expression in Chinese. This approach aligns with typical Chinese linguistic conventions, enhancing the readability of the translation. Thus, it adheres to the principle of coherence, ensuring that the target text is sufficiently comprehensible and culturally appropriate for its intended readers.

#### (2) Second-tier manner verbs translation

As previously mentioned, the classification of Chinese as a satellite-framed language remains a topic of debate. Satellite-framed languages are characterized by a more extensive and varied manner verb lexicon compared to other language types. Beyond the basic, first-tier manner verbs, the source text of *The Call of the Wild* employs many second-tier manner verbs that convey more nuanced and detailed motion information, a categorization proposed by

Slobin.

As indicated by the results above, the original English novel showcases a more extensive collection of second-tier manner verbs compared to its Chinese translations. This lexical disparity can create significant challenges in the E-C translation process. To address these challenges and ensure that the target readers' experience is preserved while maintaining the original essence of this adventure story—central objectives in translating this novel—the following translation patterns and strategies are implemented from the perspective of Skopos theory:

iv. Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb → Adverbial + Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb

As demonstrated by the results above, English possesses a larger lexicon of second-tier manner verbs compared to Chinese. Consequently, in the translations of *The Call of the Wild*, it is evident that when dealing with second-tier manner verb expressions, translators often avoid literal translation, unlike the approach taken with first-tier manner verbs. Instead, they opt to convey specific and detailed meanings by compensating with additional words, such as adverbials, to preserve the richness of the original text. An example of this translation strategy is presented below.

**Example 5**

a. Only Spitz quivered and bristled as he staggered back and forth, snarling with horrible menace, as though to frighten off impending death.

b. 只有斯皮茨颤抖着，毛发竖立，摇晃着走来走去，威胁地发出可怕的嗥叫，好像要把降临的死神吓跑似的。Text (Liu)

c. 只有司披资前后摇摇欲跌地震动着走着，倒竖着毛，好像要驱逐这迫切的死似地，发出可怕的威胁的咆哮。Text (L & Z)

The situation depicted in example 5 happens during the battle between Buck and Spitz. Buck is cleverer and stronger than Spitz, and Spitz is wounded in the fight. The second-tier verb “stagger” describes the motion of “walking or moving unsteadily, as if about to fall.” It is explained as “蹒跚” in Oxford Advanced Learner’s English-Chinese Dictionary. However, the Chinese word “蹒跚” is usually used to describe an elder’s behaviors, so it is rarely used to describe the motions of animals because it sounds strange in a literal sense. Under this situation, the manner verb “stagger” is translated into the first-tier manner verb “走” (walk) in both translation versions. Manner information is encoded in manner adverbials “摇晃着” (wobbling) and “摇摇欲跌地震动着” (shaking, as if to fall) before the first-tier verb “走” in order to produce an acceptable and fidelity text.

v. Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb + Adverbial → Adverbial + Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb

When second-tier manner verb and manner adverbial are combined to describe manner information, the complex manner information and adverbial could be translated together to modify a first-tier motion to deliver rich meaning.

**Example 6**

a. At daybreak they limped warily back to camp, to find the marauders gone and the two men in bad tempers.

b. 黎明时它们一颠一跛、小心翼翼地走回营地，发现抢劫者们已走了，两个男人心情不好。Text (Liu)

c. 天明的时候，它们都谨慎小心地，跛着脚地走回那帐篷里去，知道那些掠夺者已经退去，那两位主人现着不高兴的样子。Text (L & Z)

In the source text, the author uses the second-tier manner verb “limp” along with the adverbial “warily” to create a vivid portrayal of the wounded dogs returning to camp after a fierce battle with marauders. Unlike the basic motion of “walk,” the manner verb “limp” implies a state in which the dogs move slowly and with difficulty due to an injured leg. However, Chinese lacks an exact equivalent for this manner verb. To maintain the target text’s fidelity and vividness, both translators choose to convey this additional manner information by incorporating adverbials such as “一颠一跛地” and “跛着脚地.” These adverbials indicate that the figures are moving with difficulty due to leg

injuries, effectively mirroring the manner conveyed by the original English term.

For the adverbial “warily,” which adds an extra layer of caution in the original, the translators use Chinese adverbials with similar meanings, such as “小心翼翼地” (with caution) and “谨慎小心地” (with caution). They then combine these adverbials with the first-tier manner verb “走,” resulting in phrases like “一颠一跛、小心翼翼地走” and “谨慎小心地，跛着脚地走。” This approach effectively conveys the complete manner information of the motion event from the source text, vividly depicting the characters’ movement and adhering to the fidelity and Skopos principles of Skopos theory.

vi. Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb → Adverbial Phrase + Manner<sub>(first-tier)</sub> Verb

In addition to adding adverbials and combining them with first-tier manner verbs, adverbial phrases can also be used to translate complex second-tier manner verbs. This strategy ensures that the detailed motion information in the source text is preserved and conveyed effectively in the target language. Example 7 illustrates this approach.

#### Example 7

a. Buck staggered over against the sleds, exhausted, sobbing for breath, helpless.

b. 巴克摇摇晃晃走过去靠在雪橇上，精疲力竭，呜呜地喘气，不知所措。Text (Liu)

c. 巴克走上前靠着橇车，摇摇欲跌地站不住脚。精疲力竭地呻吟着喘着气。Text (L & Z)

In this example, the verb “stagger” is used to depict another type of walking in motion events, indicating movement that is unsteady, as if the individual is about to fall. To convey this nuanced manner in translation, the first version employs the adverbial “摇摇晃晃” to modify the motion verb and provide additional context, effectively capturing the essence of the original movement.

The second translation takes a different approach, using the adverbial phrase “摇摇欲跌地站不住脚” to convey the same manner message. This phrase elaborates on Buck’s weakened state and the appearance of being on the verge of falling as he moves toward the sleds. This method not only describes the unsteady motion but also emphasizes Buck’s vulnerability, aligning with both the fidelity and Skopos principles. By employing these strategies, the translators ensure that the manner message from the source text is fully preserved, offering a vivid and faithful depiction that maintains the original’s communicative intent.

vii. Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb → Manner<sub>(second-tier)</sub> Verb

Although previous examples illustrate significant differences between English and Chinese in terms of second-tier manner verbs, there are still instances where overlaps exist between the two languages. The following example demonstrates this overlap.

#### Example 8

a. Again he wandered about through the great camp, looking for them, and again he returned.

b. 它又穿过大营地徘徊着，再回到原处。难道在这里？不，那不可能，否则它就不会被赶出来了。Text (Liu)

c. 它又在那个大的帐篷之间徘徊着，寻找它们，于是又回了转来。Text (L & Z)

The second-tier manner verb “wander” suggests a movement that is leisurely or aimless, and it is rendered in Chinese as “徘徊。” According to the *Modern Chinese Dictionary*, “徘徊” means “往返回旋，来回走动” (walking back and forth) and “彷徨，游移不定的样子” (being uncertain about which way to go). This indicates that “wander” and “徘徊” carry nearly identical semantic meanings, with both words encoding a similar sense of manner. Consequently, “wander” is translated literally in both Chinese versions, faithfully preserving the original manner and meaning. This approach ensures that the translation remains accurate while conveying the nuanced sense of the original term effectively in the target language.

### 5.1.2. Manner description translation

In addition to manner verbs, adverbials, and adverbial phrases, it can also be noted that manner information is sometimes conveyed through descriptive passages. Özçalışkan and Slobin<sup>[31]</sup> refer to these as descriptions of the “internal state or physical condition of a moving entity” or as “features of the physical setting that could influence the manner of motion.” Although such manner descriptions are not as commonly employed as manner verbs or adverbials, they do appear in English texts in certain instances.

#### Example 9

At another time Spitz went through, dragging the whole team after him up to Buck, who strained backward with all his strength, his fore paws on the slippery edge and the ice quivering and snapping all around.

#### Example 10

在这时候, 那一组惊慌失措的拖车的狗子, 都从它们的巢穴里跑了出来, 却被这凶猛的入侵者包围攻击。  
Text (L & Z)

In example 9, the phrase “dragging the whole team after him up to Buck” provides a physical setting that allows readers to infer the manner of motion, emphasizing the forceful and strenuous nature of the movement. Similarly, in example 10, the internal state of the moving entity is described as “那一组惊慌失措的拖车的狗子” (the group of panicky sled dogs), which gives readers insight into the manner of movement by depicting the dogs’ distressed state.

The findings from the previous part reveal that these descriptions are typically retained during the translation process. The collected data indicates that such descriptions often consist of nouns, adjectives, and phrases. However, the translation strategies for these phrases can vary depending on the context. This section will explore how manner description phrases are rendered during the E-C translation process, discussing the methods translators use to maintain the narrative’s descriptive quality and ensure the target text aligns with the source’s intended effect.

viii. Manner Description<sub>(adverbial phrase)</sub> → Manner Description<sub>(adverbial)</sub>

#### Example 11

- a. One wolf, long and lean and gray, advanced cautiously, in a friendly manner.
- b. 有一只又长又瘦的灰狼小心而友好地走上前来。(Text Liu)
- c. 内中有一匹长瘦灰色的狼, 很小心地走进前来, 现出亲和的样子。(Text L & Z)

This sentence describes Buck’s encounter with a wolf in the wild. The adverbial phrase “in a friendly manner” is used as a description to help readers infer how the wolf approaches Buck, supplemented by the manner adverbial “cautiously.” In translating this manner description, the translators adopted different strategies.

In Text (L & Z), the adverbial phrase is translated into “很小心地走进前来, 现出亲和的样子,” which effectively conveys the manner information but results in a phrase that may not flow smoothly in modern Chinese. Conversely, in Text (Liu), the manner description in the original English sentence is rendered as an adverb “友好地,” combined with the manner adverbial “cautiously.” This approach translates the complete manner information in a more concise and fluent way, producing an expression that feels more natural in Chinese and aligns with the coherence rule of Skopos theory.

A similar translation strategy is observed in example 11, where both translators use a shift in the form of description phrases to create more fluid and acceptable target texts. This strategic adaptation ensures that the meaning is preserved while producing a translation that resonates better with target readers.

#### Example 12

- a. John Thornton was eating dinner when Buck dashed into camp and sprang upon him in a frenzy of affection, overturning him, scrambling upon him, licking his face, biting his hand.
- b. 约翰·桑顿正在吃饭, 这时巴克突然冲进营地, 满怀爱意发狂地向他扑去, 把他推倒, 爬在他身上,

舔他的脸，咬他的手。Text (Liu)

c. 巴克跳进天幕来时，蒋沙登正在用膳。它感情并发地一直扑上沙登的身上，把他扑翻在地，爬在他身上舔他的脸咬他的手。Text (L & Z)

In the source text, the manner message is conveyed through the adverbial phrase “in a frenzy of affection,” vividly illustrating Buck’s emotion when he reunites with his owner, John, and depicting how Buck throws himself on John with fervor. In the target text, translators use similar descriptive expressions in Chinese, such as “满怀爱意发狂地” (with affection, crazily) and “感情并发” (with many emotions). These translations effectively capture Buck’s emotional reaction at the reunion after a long separation, allowing readers to infer Buck’s posture and movement as he throws himself on his owner, just as the source text does. This approach aligns with the Skopos rule by achieving the intended purpose of the original description.

When descriptions are expressed as attributive phrases, translators similarly adopt strategies that maintain naturalness and fluency in the target language. This method ensures that the translated text resonates with the target audience while preserving the meaning and vividness of the original.

ix. Manner Description (attribute phrase) → Manner Description (adverbial)

### Example 13

a. Straight away he raced, with Dolly, panting and frothing, one leap behind.

b. 它速度很快，多利气喘吁吁、口吐白沫紧跟其后。Text (Liu)

c. 他冲出去，杜利只后它一步，喘着气流着口沫地追逐着。Text (L & Z)

Example 13 describes a chase scene that occurs when the dog Dolly goes mad. The attribute phrase “panting and frothing” serves as a descriptive element, illustrating the physical condition of the character to help readers infer the manner and state in which it chases Buck. Instead of translating the phrase “panting and frothing” directly as an attributive phrase, both translators choose to shift its form. Liu translates it as an adverbial phrase modifying the motion verb “紧跟” (to follow closely), and the other translators employ a similar approach.

This shift in translation strategy ensures that the description is rendered in a form that reads smoothly and naturally in Chinese. Such adjustments align with the Skopos theory’s coherence rule, which emphasizes that the target text must be coherent and accessible to the reader, maintaining the intended effect and purpose of the original narrative.

## 5.2. Path translation

### 5.2.1. Path verb translation

When path information is integrated into a motion verb, that verb is known as a path verb. While English is generally recognized as a satellite-framed language and, according to Talmy, tends to combine manner or cause components in motion events, it also contains numerous path verbs that incorporate path and motion components. This characteristic aligns English partially with verb-framed languages such as French and other Romance languages, from which many English path verbs are derived.

Chinese, too, uses path verbs in motion event descriptions, and there is some overlap between English and Chinese regarding the meaning conveyed by certain path verbs. For instance, the English path verb *follow* has a counterpart in the Chinese verb “跟,” and *exit* corresponds to the Chinese verb “出.”

Therefore, when translating common English path verbs, translators can often use the equivalent Chinese path verbs to convey the meaning concisely and effectively, as shown in the following example:

x. Path Verb → Path Verb

#### Example 14

a. But Spitz, cold and calculating even in his supreme moods, left the pack and cut across a narrow neck of land where the creek made a long bend around.

b. 但斯皮茨即使处于最极端的情绪时，也是冷静而精明的，它离开了狗群，抄一条狭窄小路跑去，这里的支河弯度很长。Text (Liu)

c. 但是，司披资那怕就是在这极度的快活的时候，仍是冷静而有打算。它离开了那个狗群，从那小河绕了一个大湾的狭颈的地方，横切了过去。Text (L & Z)

In this example, the English path verb “left” encapsulates both motion and path information, conveying the meaning of “to go away from something.” The Chinese path verb “离开” expresses the exact same meaning as “leave,” making it an ideal equivalent. As a result, both translators choose to translate “leave” literally into “离开” in their target texts. This approach ensures that the full meaning of the path component in the source text is accurately conveyed, aligning with the principles of fidelity and the Skopos rule in Skopos theory. This method effectively preserves the intended message and ensures the translated text meets the communicative goals of the original.

#### xi. Path Verb → ∅

Moreover, in some cases, path verbs can be entirely omitted when they convey less critical information, and the omission does not impact the reader’s comprehension. This strategy is often employed to streamline the translation and maintain fluency in the target text. By selectively omitting less significant path details, translators ensure that the translation remains concise and natural, aligning with the Skopos theory’s coherence rule, which emphasizes readability and the target text’s overall effectiveness. This approach allows translators to prioritize essential narrative elements while preserving the meaning and purpose of the source text.

#### Example 15

a. Guided by that instinct which came from the old hunting days of the primordial world, Buck proceeded to cut the bull out from the herd.

b. 巴克过去在原始世界捕猎中获得了一种本能，凭着这种本能它开始把雄糜鹿和鹿群断开。Text (Liu)

c. 从原始世界的狩猎时代传来的本能教巴克设法使杜鹿和他互相隔开。Text (L & Z)

In the sample source text describing Buck’s battle with the bull, the motion verb “proceeded” conveys the path information of “moving forward.” However, instead of translating this into its equivalent path verb in Chinese, “前进,” both translators opt for omission as their translation strategy. This decision is made because the path information conveyed by “proceeded” is not crucial; its absence does not impact sentence comprehension. A literal translation would make the sentence unnecessarily redundant. The omission of this path verb during the translation process aligns with the coherence rule of Skopos theory, ensuring that the target text remains clear and effective without superfluous detail.

### 5.2.2. Path satellite translation

A satellite is defined by Talmy in *Toward a Cognitive Semantics* as “the grammatical category of any constituent other than a noun-phrase or prepositional-phrase complement that is in a sister relation to the verb root.” The results indicate that, as a typical satellite-framed language, English often uses satellites to express path information in motion events rather than path verbs.

Regarding Chinese satellites, this article adopts Talmy’s perspective, which views directional complements combined with manner verbs as satellites in a motion event. According to Liu<sup>[34]</sup>, it is widely recognized that Chinese satellites primarily include words like 来 (come), 去 (go), 进 (enter), 出 (exit), 上 (up), 下 (down), 回 (return), 起 (rise), and 开 (open), forming a closed and fixed set of directional complements.

The approaches for translating path satellites are outlined as follows.

xii. Satellite → Satellite

#### Example 16

a. Pike, who had been trembling abjectly, took heart at this open mutiny, and sprang upon his overthrown leader.

b. 派克一直可怜巴巴地发抖，这时也因公开的反抗增添了勇气，向它被推倒的头儿扑去。Text (Liu)

c. 拔格最先是卑屈地震动着，可是看见巴克这么公然的叛逆，便得了勇气，就像那倒下了下去的领导者跃去。Text (L & Z)

In this example, the verb “sprang” functions as the manner verb, conveying the action of moving or jumping suddenly and rapidly upwards or forwards. The satellite “upon” indicates the direction of the motion. In both translations, although the manner verb “sprang” is translated differently, with the constructions “扑去” and “跃去” being used, both employ the combination of a manner verb and a satellite to represent the motion event.

It is noteworthy that the satellite “upon” is rendered as “去” in both translations, fitting into the aforementioned closed-set word class of Chinese satellites. This demonstrates how English motion events using satellites can be effectively translated into Chinese by maintaining the manner verb + satellite structure, ensuring that the motion’s path and direction are preserved. This strategy aligns with Skopos theory by preserving the original motion information while producing a translation that is coherent and natural for the target audience.

xiii. Path Verb + Satellite → Path Verb + Ø

Due to differences in word formation between English and Chinese, there are instances where satellites cannot be translated literally. To create a more readable and natural text, English satellites and the accompanying path verb may be shifted into a single Chinese path verb, as demonstrated in the following example.

#### Example 17

a. His transient masters since he had come into the Northland had bred in him a fear that no master could be permanent.

b. 自他进入北国以来，主人一个接一个换了不少，因此担心不会有一个永久的主人。Text (Liu)

c. 自从它到北地以来，他所从属的那些暂时的主人，已使它得到一个危机，那即是使他怕没有一个永久的主人。Text (L & Z)

In the source text, the path information is conveyed through the combination of the path verb “come” and the satellite “into,” describing a scene where the character moves from one place to another, specifically to the Northland. The satellite “into” corresponds to “进” in Chinese. However, translating the path satellite and path verb literally would result in an unnatural or awkward target text.

To ensure readability, the path information is rendered using Chinese path verbs like “进入” and “到,” which convey similar path meanings as in the source text. These translations preserve the original path information while creating a coherent and natural target text. This shift in word choice adheres to the coherence rule of Skopos theory, ensuring that the translation is both faithful to the original meaning and accessible to the reader.

### 5.3. Ground translation

Ground refers to the reference object in a motion event, providing context for the movement described. As Talmy<sup>[5]</sup> suggests speakers of verb-framed languages often use motion verbs without explicitly including ground components in motion event clauses. However, in satellite-framed languages like English, ground information is frequently included in descriptions of motion events. This pattern is also reflected in the examples from *The Call of the Wild*.

To create smooth and readable translations while providing sufficient context for readers to understand the plot, translators employ flexible strategies when handling ground components. The following example illustrates how this



flexibility can be applied.

In this instance, ground information from the source text may be retained, adapted, or subtly incorporated to maintain the coherence and flow of the target text. This approach ensures that the translated version aligns with the Skopos theory's coherence rule, balancing fidelity to the source with readability and naturalness in the target language.

xiv. Ground<sub>(plus)</sub> → Ground<sub>(plus)</sub>

#### Example 18

a. In the meantime, the astonished team-dogs had burst out of their nests only to be set upon by the fierce invaders.

b. 与此同时，受惊的队狗也从窝里冲出来，却遭到凶残的入侵者袭击。Text (Liu)

c. 在这时候，那一组惊慌失措的拖车的狗子，都从它们的巢穴里跑了出来，却被这凶猛的入侵者包围攻击。Text (L & Z)

The ground component in a motion event can be categorized into three types: source (e.g., “from the forest” and “从树林里”), medium (e.g., “cross the forest” and “穿过树林”), and goal (e.g., “walk into the forest” and “走进树林”). In this specific example, the ground component “out of their nest” serves as the source, indicating where the astonished team-dogs emerge from during an attack. This source information provides essential background support, helping to set the scene and clarify the starting point of the action.

In translation, this type of ground component is necessary to retain to ensure that the full context of the story is conveyed. Thus, in this case, the plus-ground clause is translated literally to preserve the background information and enhance the reader's understanding. This approach aligns with the Skopos rule and the fidelity rule, ensuring that the translation remains faithful to the source text while providing coherence and readability in the target language.

xv. Ground<sub>(plus)</sub> → Ground<sub>(minus)</sub>

In some instances, translators may choose to transform a plus-ground clause into a minus-ground clause to create a sentence that flows more smoothly and is more acceptable to target readers. This involves omitting the ground component when it is not critical for understanding the action or when including it might make the sentence cumbersome or overly detailed.

#### Example 19

a. Yet he knew that here was horror, and fled away from it in a panic.

b. 但它知道可怕的事就在眼前，于是惊恐地逃去。Text (Liu)

c. 但是，它还是知道这种情形是可怕的，就狼狈地逃走了。Text (L & Z)

In this example, the pronoun “it,” referring to a place, serves as the ground component in a plus-ground clause in the English text. However, during the translation process, this ground component is omitted in both translations. This omission is necessary because rendering “it” literally as “它” would result in a sentence that does not conform to natural Chinese expression and would be awkward or unacceptable to readers. Such a literal translation would violate the intratextual coherence rule, which requires that the target text be sufficiently coherent and fluent to allow readers to comprehend it seamlessly within their cultural and linguistic context. This strategic omission ensures that the translation remains readable and consistent with typical Chinese language conventions.

xvi. Ground<sub>(minus)</sub> → Ground<sub>(plus)</sub>

To enhance the readability of the target text and aid readers' comprehension of the story, translators may choose to transform minus-ground clauses into plus-ground clauses by explicitly adding ground information. This strategy ensures that the context of the motion event is clearer and more detailed, helping readers visualize the scene more effectively. The following example demonstrates this approach:

By incorporating ground information that was implicit or absent in the original, the translator provides additional background that enriches the narrative and aligns with the reader's expectations. This method not only improves the coherence and descriptive quality of the text but also adheres to the Skopos theory's goal of creating a purposeful and effective translation that fulfills the communicative intent of the source text.

#### **Example 20**

a. But when he was at last unearthed, and Spitz flew at him to punish him, Buck flew, with equal rage, in between.

b. 但是它终于被发现了，斯皮茨扑过去惩罚，而巴克也同样愤怒地冲到它们之间。Text (Liu)

c. 但是，当后来拔格终于被掘了出来，司披资为处罚它，扑向它去的时候，巴克也带着同样的狂暴势子，也扑在它们之间。Text (L & Z)

In the previous context, Buck openly challenges Spitz's leadership, prompting Spitz to stir up conflicts with other dogs to assert his dominance, which sets the stage for this scene. Example 20 describes a fight involving Buck, Spitz, and Pike. In the original English text, the reference subject relative to which Buck moves is not explicitly mentioned, making it a minus-ground clause.

In the target translations, however, the translators choose to render this as a plus-ground clause by adding the pronoun “它们” (them) as the ground component. From the perspective of the Skopos rule, this translation strategy prevents the pitfalls of a literal translation. If “in between” were translated directly as a minus-ground clause, resulting in “在之间，” the target sentence would be awkward and poorly structured, violating the coherence principle. By adding “它们” to create a plus-ground clause, the translation remains smooth, coherent, and comprehensible, fulfilling the communicative purpose and readability requirements of the target text.

### **5.4. Summary**

The previous chapter shows the differences in the expression of motion event components (manner, path, and ground) between English and its translations. The reason for these differences is that the translator is flexible in choosing translation strategies rather than simply translating literally. This reflects the idea of Skopos theory: translation should not stick to the source text but should meet the purpose of it.

In this chapter, the main translation strategies of these motion event components are selected and analyzed from the perspective of Skopos theory. This chapter finds that when translating first-tier manner verbs, translators can directly convey the faithful translation by literal translation, or provide a more readable target text according to the context by adding more information. When translating second-tier manner verbs, supplementary adverbials can be compensated to modify motion verbs, in order to make up for the lack of a second-tier manner verb lexicon in Chinese. During the translation of manner descriptions, translators are very likely to retain the description and shift the form of it to produce more readable texts. Regarding path translation, Chinese translators have preferences in shifting it into path verbs according to the habit of target language expressions, in addition to literal translation. While translating the ground component, Chinese translators tend to retain it or omit it in order to make the target text more acceptable to the target readers.

## **6. Conclusion**

From the perspective of Skopos theory, this article examined how manner, path, and ground components of motion events are translated from English into Chinese using *The Call of the Wild* and its two Chinese translations as case studies.

Through locating, counting, and comparing these motion event components in both the source and target texts, the research identified several key findings: The English text features a greater number of second-tier manner verbs

than the translations when expressing manner components; The Chinese translations utilize a larger number of manner adverbials (words and phrases) compared to the English source text; The number of manner descriptions remains consistent between the source and target texts; The English source text frequently uses path satellites to express path components, while these are less common in the Chinese translations; Chinese translators often favor path verbs over satellites in path translation; The percentage of plus-ground information retained in Chinese translations is slightly lower than in the English source text.

The differences in expression between the source and target texts are attributed to the flexible translation strategies employed to meet the purpose of the source text. Due to the basic-level categorizations shared by all humans, there is significant overlap between English and Chinese in the use of first-tier manner verbs, which can often be translated literally to effectively convey the intended meaning. However, when it comes to second-tier manner verbs, Chinese, with its smaller and less varied manner verb lexicon compared to English—a prototypical satellite-framed language—compensates by using adverbials to capture the detailed meaning conveyed by English verbs. This method ensures that manner information is retained and enriched, aligning with the characteristics of satellite-framed languages.

For path information, English path verbs can often be directly translated into their Chinese equivalents. When English satellites cannot be rendered directly, translators shift to using path verbs in Chinese, aligning with the Skopos theory's goal-oriented approach. Regarding ground components, there is minimal difference between Chinese and English in retaining these elements, with reductions made only when necessary to enhance the target text's readability.

These findings suggest that the Chinese translations analyzed in this study do not fully replicate the typological features of the English source text, a strong satellite-framed language. This approach reflects the central principle of Skopos theory: translation should be purpose-oriented rather than source-oriented. Skopos theory advocates for translators to choose strategies that achieve the translation's purpose, rather than rigidly adhering to the source text's form, which can be insightful for translating motion events with components lexicalized differently across languages. A strict, source-oriented translation may conflict with the natural language habits of the target language, thus impacting the coherence and readability of the translated text.

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