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Communication Strategies for the Overseas Distribution of Chinese Animated Films: An Interaction Ritual Chain Perspective (Postprint)

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Abstract

[Purpose]In recent years, domestic animated films have achieved remarkable success in the domestic market; however, their performance in overseas distribution remains relatively underwhelming. Analyzing the challenges faced by domestic animated films in overseas dissemination can inform the development of effective response strategies. **[Method]** This study employs interactive ritual chain theory to examine the current state of domestic animated films “going overseas.” **[Results]** The research reveals that domestic animated films encounter several issues during their “going overseas” process, including insufficient construction of core fan communities, difficulties in establishing cross-cultural common values, and inadequate interactive ritual fields. **[Conclusion]** Accordingly, this paper proposes three potential breakthrough points: first, leveraging internet platforms for precision marketing to identify overseas core audiences; second, establishing agenda focal points tailored to export market cultures to initiate cross-cultural interactive rituals; third, maintaining group symbols and interactive ritual venues. By optimizing the interactive ritual chain, domestic animated films can potentially achieve broader dissemination and recognition in overseas markets.

Full Text

Preamble

A Study on the Communication Strategies of Domestic Animated Films’ Overseas Distribution from the Perspective of Interaction Ritual Chain Theory

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Abstract

Purpose: In recent years, domestic animated films have achieved remarkable success in the Chinese market, yet their overseas distribution performance remains relatively weak. Analyzing the dilemmas of Chinese animation's overseas dissemination can help develop effective response strategies. **Method:** This paper examines the current state of Chinese animation's "going overseas" based on Interaction Ritual Chain theory. **Results:** The study finds that Chinese animated films face several problems in their overseas expansion, including insufficient construction of core fan communities, difficulties in building cross-cultural shared values, and incomplete interaction ritual fields. **Conclusion:** To address these issues, this paper proposes three potential breakthroughs: first, leveraging internet platforms for precision marketing to identify overseas core audiences; second, designing agenda focal points tailored to target market cultures to initiate cross-cultural interaction rituals; and third, maintaining group symbols and interaction ritual venues. By optimizing the interaction ritual chain, Chinese animated films can achieve broader dissemination and recognition in overseas markets.

Keywords: Chinese animation; animated film; overseas communication; interaction ritual chain; cross-cultural

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In recent years, Chinese animated films have gradually garnered widespread attention from the entire film industry and mass media domestically. From 2015's *Monkey King: Hero is Back* achieving nearly 1 billion RMB in box office revenue to 2020's *Ne Zha: The Devil's Birth* securing a milestone 5 billion RMB in summer box office, ranking among the top five in Chinese film history, domestic animated films have repeatedly set box office records, sparking continuous discussion about the "rise of Chinese animation." Today, there are already six domestic animated films with box office revenues exceeding 10 billion RMB. In early 2025, *Ne Zha: The Devil's Birth 2* (hereinafter referred to as *Ne Zha 2*) shattered dozens of records in a short period, topping Chinese film history. As of March 26, 2025, *Ne Zha 2* has grossed 15 billion RMB domestically, an undeniably impressive achievement.

However, what cannot be ignored is that while domestic animation has achieved remarkable results in a single market, its overall "going overseas" performance has been mediocre, with less-than-ideal communication effects. According to

Maoyan Professional, as of the end of March 2025, *Ne Zha 2*, the new global box office champion for animated films, has earned only about 300 million RMB overseas, still not entering the top ten of Chinese-language films' overseas box office rankings.

This discrepancy reveals a misalignment between the domestic popularity and overseas penetration power of Chinese animated films. Therefore, this study attempts to use Interaction Ritual Chain theory to examine and reflect on the current state and problems of Chinese animated films' overseas communication.

1. Interaction Ritual Chain: Contextual Transition from Physical Space to Cyberspace

Interaction Ritual Chain Theory, proposed by American sociologist Randall Collins, creatively connects micro-level interactions with macro-level structures, integrating emotions, individual actions, and social relationships into a unified theoretical framework. Collins puts forward the core proposition that “ritual is the basic unit of social relationship reproduction,” providing a dynamic analytical framework for understanding ritual mechanisms in society from a micro perspective.

Although scholars such as Émile Durkheim have offered in-depth discussions on the concept and social functions of rituals, the operational mechanisms of rituals remained a black box for most people. Questions such as how rituals transform individual behavior into social order, and through what pathways individual emotions coalesce into group identity, could not be explained by existing theories. To address these questions, Collins built upon Durkheim' s descriptions of rituals and incorporated symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology to present a model for analyzing social practices, explaining how rituals operate to both maintain existing relationships and symbols while generating new social relationships and symbols.

Based on interaction rituals, the chain relationship formed by the interconnection and interactive development of micro-situations constitutes the Interaction Ritual Chain—different interaction rituals interlocking with one another, continuously initiating new rituals across temporal and spatial dimensions, thus extending into an entire social-structural chain.

Individuals who participate in successful interaction rituals acquire a certain reserve of symbols, and due to changes in emotional energy, develop greater preferences for seeking solidarity with similar others, motivating them to repeat interaction rituals. As individuals complete one encounter and interaction after another, they develop their own interaction structures and communication patterns, forming personal social networks, power status, reputation evaluations, and cognitive frameworks and value orientations toward the lifeworld [3]. Throughout this process, individuals continuously accumulate their symbolic capital (such as identity, cultural knowledge, professional skills, social reputation, etc.) and bring this capital into new social interactions. Macro-level social

structure is essentially woven from countless micro-interactions conducted by individuals in specific situations—forming the Interaction Ritual Chain (Figure 2 [Figure 2: see original paper]).

Collins conceptualizes Interaction Ritual (IR) as a mechanism of mutual emotional and attentional focus. The key to ritual lies in forming high levels of mutual attention among participants and their emotional entrainment in a shared rhythmic experience. Interaction rituals constitute a set of causally linked and feedback-loop processes that can succeed or fail, depending on whether the combination of various elements is sufficiently compatible.

In Collins' interaction ritual model, interaction rituals consist of four main initial conditions: (1) two or more people are physically co-present; (2) outsiders are excluded; (3) attention is focused on a common object or activity; and (4) participants communicate their mutual focus and share a common mood or emotional state.

These elements form feedback loops with one another. The interaction between focus of attention and emotional state is particularly crucial, as they continuously reinforce each other in rhythmic entrainment feedback until group effervescence emerges, such as the euphoria experienced by religious ritual participants.

Correspondingly, when these elements are effectively integrated and accumulate to a high degree of mutual focus and emotional sharing, participants typically experience: a sense of group solidarity, individual acquisition of Emotional Energy (EE), generation of shared symbols representing the group, and a sense of moral guardianship of the group.

Figure 1 [Figure 1: see original paper] illustrates Collins' Interaction Ritual Model [1]. The model presents individual interaction rituals as the minimal units of social interaction. The rituals Collins discusses are not merely the “formal ceremonies” described by Durkheim; to a large extent, he draws upon Erving Goffman' s insights into everyday social interactions, noting that the mechanisms operating in small-scale, brief social encounters (i.e., situations) in daily life—what he calls “natural rituals” —function in the same way, although participants in these natural rituals may not even consciously attend to certain foci [2].

Notably, Collins' model emphasizes “shared reality,” meaning that interaction rituals are based on physical co-presence. In his work, he specifically explores the necessity of bodily presence, arguing that while remote communication can provide some sense of ritual participation in large-scale ceremonies, it is almost unworkable for natural rituals in daily communication. Collins maintains that in formal rituals, “without physical presence, it is difficult to demonstrate participation in the group or to establish identity, lacking the experience of micro-level details” [5]. Direct visual cues (such as pained postures and tearful faces at funerals, or cheering) and other more intense on-site sensations constitute important components of rituals. Although remote communication can generate a certain degree of intersubjectivity and shared emotion, it cannot match

face-to-face encounters [6].

While perhaps in the less-developed internet era, online “non-physical” experiences could not truly replace bodily co-presence, with the continuous development of internet media, particularly the rise of Web 2.0 social media platforms, people have already accumulated considerable shared symbolic capital through various forms of non-physical interaction. Some mechanisms initially emerged precisely as compensation for the inability to be physically present, such as the danmaku (bullet comment) system. These symbols are continuously reinforced and accumulated through online interactions, and as the internet has expanded, media have produced a set of interaction ritual rules independent of physical co-presence. People can achieve mutual recognition through shared symbols on platforms, such as emojis with similar elements or specific forms of address among community members, thereby completing interaction rituals as minimal units.

Simultaneously, the interaction ritual chain is profoundly influenced by online interaction rituals. Their dissemination no longer follows the chain of physical co-presence; instead, online and offline interaction rituals form a conjugate relationship, further complicating social interaction. In some cases, certain online interaction rituals even become the dominant link in social interaction. For example, fans of an animated film often first engage extensively online through communities—such as collectively focusing on video content and using exclusive memes—forming shared group symbols and accumulating emotional energy before they can organize offline screenings (where physical co-presence deepens symbolic identification), creating an “online-offline” cyclical ritual chain.

Therefore, adapting this theory to the contemporary era is necessary. Beyond interaction rituals based on physical co-presence, there exist “virtual co-presence” interaction rituals. In these rituals, the elements of interaction rituals undergo certain changes: virtual co-presence replaces physical co-presence, primarily realized through live-streaming bullet comments, comments, and other means; the focus of attention is driven by algorithms and platform mechanisms, such as trending topics and like mechanisms under recommendation systems [7].

Consequently, physical co-presence is no longer a basic condition for initiating rituals. In this context, the role of symbolic capital accumulated through shared symbols becomes more important in constructing the interaction ritual chain than in rituals based on physical co-presence. This is because, in the highly tagged community society of the internet, people who enter the same field often already share certain symbolic capital. Meanwhile, their emotional energy becomes more fragmented. Although people struggle to maintain high emotional energy over long periods, the recording and storage nature of the internet provides emotional traceability. Humans construct social relationships through repeated, emotionally charged interaction rituals, while the internet era reshapes the temporal-spatial conditions and energy distribution patterns of rituals through technological mediation (such as live streaming and algorithms).

2. Common Problems in Chinese Animation' s Overseas Communication

2.1 Insufficient Co-presence Field Construction

As the most fundamental link in initiating interaction rituals, current overseas communication of Chinese animated films is insufficient in constructing interaction fields—whether virtual or physical co-presence.

In terms of physical co-presence interaction rituals, the primary issue is the limited scale of offline spatial coverage, mainly reflected in the most basic aspect of overseas film distribution. Despite deepening globalization and repeated domestic box office successes, Chinese animated films have consistently underperformed overseas. *Monkey King: Hero is Back* recorded dismal box office results in multiple countries; *Big Fish & Begonia*, which received considerable domestic attention, earned only \$534,000 overseas; and *Ne Zha: The Devil' s Birth* grossed just over \$7 million overseas. Behind these pessimistic overseas box office figures lies a significant reason: Chinese animated films often lack large-scale theatrical releases after “going overseas.” This stems from multiple factors:

First, Chinese animated films generally lack awareness of pre-planning overseas distribution routes. For a long time, most Chinese animation productions have not considered overseas markets during production [8], while also lacking sufficient understanding of existing distribution regulations, rating systems, and relevant laws in overseas regions. This results in films that may not even be able to screen overseas after completion. The lack of emphasis on overseas distribution also leads to insufficient publicity time in overseas markets. The North American distribution deal for *Ne Zha 2* was signed only two weeks before the release date, leaving a short preparation cycle and limited time for partnership negotiations, inevitably affecting the number of theaters and screening schedules.

Second, the nature of Chinese animated films themselves determines their lack of competitiveness in overseas markets. Chinese animated films are often treated as niche films in overseas markets [9], with weak influence compared to other established film types and Hollywood animation systems, facing greater distribution pressure. Chinese animation' s overseas distribution struggles to partner with major companies. Consequently, overseas distribution is primarily handled by Chinese distribution companies or smaller overseas firms specializing in Chinese-language films. These companies often encounter problems with large-scale distribution. Taking the North American market as an example, theatrical screening operates on a contract system requiring distribution companies to sign agreements with theaters, and this mature overseas market has formed a relatively closed distribution loop. Local major film companies such as Warner Bros., MGM, and Columbia Pictures possess strong market control over film distribution, leaving Chinese animation distribution companies at a disadvantage in theater negotiations and securing screening resources. On the second day of

Ne Zha 2's North American release, it screened in only 770 theaters, while the 同期 *Captain America 4* opened in 4,105 theaters across North America .

In terms of virtual co-presence interaction fields, there is insufficient investment in overseas paid channels and streaming platform distribution. Most Chinese animated films are released overseas through streaming platforms like Netflix and Funimation. For instance, the sequel to *White Snake: Origin*, *Green Snake: Tribulation*, launched on Netflix just over three months after its Chinese theatrical release. However, the cooperation model between film copyright holders and overseas streaming platforms often involves one-time copyright sales, leaving production companies with little control over subsequent promotion. Additionally, because Chinese animated films represent a niche circle overseas, overseas mainstream media shows little enthusiasm, with minimal coverage, and there is a lack of spaces for like-minded communities to discuss on overseas social platforms and forums such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and TikTok.

These factors collectively result in an insufficient foundation of co-presence fields as the first step of interaction rituals, let alone further expanding influence for dissemination.

2.2 Imbalanced Focus System Operation

In the interaction ritual model, shared focus is an essential element for maintaining interaction rituals and accumulating emotional energy. In overseas communication, Chinese animated films often fail to effectively construct this focus, resulting in low audience participation, weak community cohesion, and ultimately affecting “going overseas” effectiveness. This primarily occurs because distributors fail to accurately identify key ritual nodes, leading to an imbalanced focus system.

First, in the Web 2.0 era, the focus of attention is driven by recommendation algorithms and platform mechanisms, influenced by individuals with different discursive power on internet platforms. Without establishing core discussion topics and fully leveraging the voice of KOLs (Key Opinion Leaders), topic defocusing in interaction situations occurs to some extent. Chinese animated films' overseas online promotion relies heavily on commercial push notifications on platforms like TikTok and YouTube, but the targeted influencers are mostly Chinese content creators, with content largely disconnected from the films themselves. Using *Ne Zha 2* as an example, distribution content on these platforms primarily features beauty and cosplay content rather than in-depth film reviews or critical engagement. In contrast, when some Japanese animated films promote overseas, they actively collaborate with animation and film critic KOLs to ensure the film itself becomes the discussion focus rather than remaining at the level of visual derivative content. Films such as *The Boy and the Heron* and *Suzume* serve as typical examples. The overly thin overseas marketing strategies of Chinese animated films easily lead to dispersed audience attention, preventing the formation of stable interaction rituals.

Second, successful interaction rituals require clear boundaries, which in the internet era often manifest as exclusive hashtags or community terminology. However, Chinese animated films' overseas marketing often lacks systematic hashtag operation. On TikTok, content related to *Ne Zha 2* is highly fragmented, making it difficult to locate core topics at first glance. Related promotion relies more on platform algorithmic recommendations than spontaneously formed directional discussions, making it challenging to generate sustained discussion 热潮, and more likely to be overshadowed by mainstream content.

Finally, searching for “NeZha” on platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Reddit reveals that related content mostly consists of secondary creations by Chinese fans, with virtually no official guided discussion topics or participation from professional film critic bloggers. By contrast, when Japanese animated films promote overseas, they proactively collaborate with animation and film review KOLs to ensure the film itself becomes the discussion focus.

2.3 Symbolic Capital Matching Difficulties

The degree of matching between interaction structures and communication patterns of different individuals directly affects the effectiveness of interaction rituals and the ultimate outcome of events. Interaction rituals are more successful only when participants' membership symbols align and match [10]. In the practice of Chinese animation' s overseas communication, the different cultural systems and significant cultural discounts between overseas Chinese communities and overseas local audiences make identity symbol matching difficult and shared value construction challenging, thereby hindering the initiation of new interaction rituals and affecting the generation of interaction ritual chains.

Specifically, the primary target audience for Chinese animated films “going overseas” currently remains concentrated in overseas Chinese communities. Audiences with the same cultural background can more easily enter interaction rituals due to matching symbolic capital, generating strong emotional resonance and emotional energy, which in turn attracts them to participate in new interaction rituals. However, when they attempt to enter interaction rituals with non-Chinese groups, they encounter significant communication barriers.

Considering the generation process of interaction ritual chains, when individuals who have accumulated certain emotional energy and identity symbols in previous interaction ritual chains encounter new situations and enter a new copresent space, if their symbolic capital does not match with others in the same field, extremely low levels of mutual focus and emotional entrainment are likely to occur, ultimately leading to ritual failure or emptiness. This not only fails to create new symbolic meaning but also risks the decline of emotional energy and the disappearance of previously accumulated symbolic significance, ultimately causing ruptures in the interaction ritual chain. When overseas Chinese audiences and overseas local audiences with different cultural backgrounds enter interaction rituals, they face precisely this dilemma.

First, when overseas Chinese communities discuss Chinese animated films in English-language communities, their focus often centers on topics with strong ethnic cultural identity colors, such as “how Chinese animated films are rising” or “how Chinese people tell Chinese stories in their own way.” In contrast, foreign audiences tend to notice the industrial progress and aesthetic uniqueness of Chinese animated films. While topics related to ethnic culture can spark heated discussions within Chinese communities, they struggle to generate resonance among audiences from other cultural backgrounds. In the internet era, where the accumulation of symbolic capital itself becomes more important in online interaction rituals, people who have accumulated different emotional energy and symbolic meanings through different pathways find it even more difficult to enter the same field to conduct interaction rituals, especially in online forums where uninterested parties can simply ignore discussions without participating, ultimately resulting in the exclusion of overseas local audiences from interactive communities.

Second, current Chinese animated films are relatively single-themed, with many works’ symbolic systems deeply bound to ancient Chinese mythology and legends. Using *Ne Zha 2* as an example, characters such as the Pagoda-Bearing Heavenly King and the Great White Planet appear familiar to Chinese audiences but remain completely foreign and lack any cognitive foundation for viewers from other cultural backgrounds, naturally making it difficult to trigger emotional resonance. Simultaneously, the Eastern concepts of collectivism and family ethics embedded in these works create significant cultural discounts in cross-cultural communication. While these elements can trigger strong resonance within Chinese communities, audiences from other cultural backgrounds often struggle to establish the same emotional connections. Additionally, due to *Ne Zha 2*’s rushed overseas release, English dubbing was not initially completed, creating another barrier to understanding for English-speaking audiences.

More critically, Chinese animation directors have frequently selected traditional mythological subjects such as *Investiture of the Gods* and *Journey to the West* for creation in recent years, yet lack systematic planning in world-building. For instance, while works like *Ne Zha 2*, *Jiang Ziya*, and *New Gods: Yang Jian* all involve discussions of the “Fengshen Universe,” character interconnectivity is weak and world-building is chaotic, making it difficult for overseas audiences to form coherent cognitive frameworks and further exacerbating the misalignment of symbolic capital. In contrast, the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) has achieved global success largely due to its clear, unified world-building architecture and symbolic system, enabling audiences from different cultural backgrounds to easily understand and accept its content.

3. Potential Breakthroughs for Chinese Animated Films’ “Going Overseas”

Despite the various problems in the overseas communication practice of Chinese animated films, pathways to solutions exist, and some distribution teams have

already begun strategic attempts.

First, distributors should address the problem of insufficient co-presence field construction by focusing on identifying core communication spaces and audiences. According to Interaction Ritual Chain theory, successful communication begins with the identification and activation of potential emotional communities. In overseas distribution, locating the core audience to be reached first and attempting to create online or offline co-presence fields for them is crucial. Film premiere ceremonies, as inherent ritual components of the film release process, provide an excellent occasion. The breakthrough of *The Legend of Luo Xiao Hei* in the Japanese market precisely achieved this by targeting the Chinese community as its core audience, selecting Tokyo's Ikebukuro—one of Japan's largest Chinese residential areas—for its premiere, arranging for a single-theater takeover at the HUMAX Cinema in Ikebukuro, and actively distributing flyers and posting posters in Chinese gathering areas during preview screenings, thereby precisely reaching the Chinese community in Japan. Luo Xiao Hei is a long-operated IP in China with certain recognition among some Chinese communities. Through precise offline placement, Chinese residents in Japan could quickly establish emotional connections with the Luo Xiao Hei IP, generating a sense of group solidarity and stimulating positive emotional energy. On this basis, core audiences generate greater communication effects. Subsequently, *The Legend of Luo Xiao Hei* achieved word-of-mouth dissemination through fans across various overseas social platforms, forming a closed loop from online discussion to offline viewing and back to online social sharing, further expanding the interaction ritual chain.

Second, in the internet era, the design of focus agendas strongly influences interaction content. Finding ways to transform cultural differences between groups into communication potential energy can establish shared meaning spaces among heterogeneous cultural communities. In 2021, Bushiroad and Team Joy jointly produced and distributed the Japanese version of the Chinese animated film *White Snake: Origin* in Japan (participating in Japanese dubbing, subtitles, etc.). The film achieved 38 million yen in first-day box office revenue, ranking in the top ten of the Japanese local box office chart in its first week, with a final box office of 110 million yen—representing relatively good performance for a Chinese 3D animated film distributed in Japan. Bushiroad innovatively employed popular idols from Johnny & Associates as voice actors for major roles and centered its marketing around the topic of “Johnny's artists participating in Chinese animated film dubbing.” This strategy essentially created a focused topic of interest during the initial stage of the interaction ritual chain. Even though Japanese local audiences were completely unfamiliar with the story background of *White Snake: Origin*, they could participate in online discussion rituals due to their interest in the idols, and subsequently participate in the viewing ritual. Constructing such a shared focus successfully attracted large numbers of non-core animation fan groups into theaters, completing the transformation from “peripheral attention” to “core participation”—a crucial link in emotional energy accumulation.

Additionally, attention must be paid to the difficulties in matching symbolic capital among people from different cultural backgrounds. *The Legend of Luo Xiao Hei*'s excellent performance in Japan, besides its style being close to the Japanese market and the film's high quality, also benefited from minimal cultural barriers in viewing and its exploration of universally relevant core topics, which removed cognitive obstacles for audiences to participate in interaction rituals. More noteworthy is the word-of-mouth effect the film generated among Japanese animators: after many Japanese animators watched the film following recommendations from their Chinese counterparts, they spontaneously created secondary works and promotions. This mutual recognition and endorsement among professional groups accumulated precious emotional energy and symbolic capital for the film's audience community. This interaction based on equivalent symbolic capital ultimately formed a viewing trend from professionals to senior animation enthusiasts to general audiences, opening up the accumulation and dissemination process of emotional energy and symbolic meaning within the interaction ritual chain—an important reason for *The Legend of Luo Xiao Hei*'s success in Japan.

Currently, these successful cases are mainly concentrated in culturally similar East Asian markets, reflecting the deep challenges still facing Chinese animation's "going overseas" efforts. Expanding to broader global markets requires more systematic strategies. Starting from maintaining minimal units of interaction rituals to focusing on constructing complete interaction ritual chains, each interaction in the communication process should accumulate emotional energy and symbolic capital for the next interaction. Only by increasing interaction fields, reducing interaction barriers, and through precise agenda-setting and continuous symbolic capital cultivation can better communication effects be achieved.

Conclusion

The "hot domestically, cold overseas" dilemma encountered by Chinese animated films in overseas communication reflects various problems in cultural product dissemination. When re-examining this phenomenon through Collins' Interaction Ritual Chain theory, we find that the crucial problem in Chinese animated films' "going overseas" lies in the rupture of the interaction ritual chain caused by multiple factors including missing co-presence fields, imbalanced focus systems, and misaligned symbolic capital, making it difficult for overseas audiences to construct successful interaction rituals through various channels. However, many works have already actively explored new paths in overseas communication practice, achieving relatively good "going overseas" results and reputation by constructing effective interaction fields, building shared foci, and finding matching individuals. Such cases should serve as important references for future "going overseas" practice, hopefully providing inspiration for the industry and enabling Chinese animation to shine more brilliantly on the international stage.

Ultimately, the overseas communication of Chinese animated films is not merely

content export—from Collins’ perspective, this is more importantly a process of social relationship reproduction. In the future, how to strategically use interaction rituals to stimulate audience emotional energy should become a new path for consideration in Chinese films’ “going overseas” communication practice.

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(Editor: Li Jing)

As of March 26, 2025, the six domestic works with box office revenues exceeding

10 billion RMB include *Ne Zha: The Devil's Birth 2*, *Ne Zha: The Devil's Birth*, *Boonie Bears: Time Twist*, *Chang'an*, *Jiang Ziya*, and *Boonie Bears: Guardian Code*. Data from Maoyan Professional.

Data from Box Office Mojo.

Data from Kōgyō Tsūshinsha.

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

Source: ChinaXiv – Machine translation. Verify with original.