

Food Culture and Translation

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Abstract: This paper examines the challenges and strategies in translating Chinese food culture into English within cross-cultural contexts. Food culture, encompassing culinary traditions, social values, and historical influences, reflects a society's identity, necessitating translations that transcend linguistic accuracy to address cultural nuances. Current issues include overreliance on literal translation, neglect of cultural differences, excessive conciseness eroding cultural context, and grammatical inconsistencies. Effective translation requires balancing cultural commonalities and disparities to mitigate communication barriers and foster mutual understanding. Translators must integrate socio-cultural awareness, linguistic proficiency, and audience sensitivity, moving beyond mere technical skills to preserve authenticity.

Keywords: Food culture; Linguistic accuracy; Cultural communication

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1. Background of the Study / Research

Food culture refers to the cultural phenomena and manifestations of food selection, cooking style, eating customs and eating etiquette formed by certain social groups in the long-term production and living practice. Because food culture is deeply rooted in its cultural soil, it is not only about food, but also about history, social structure, values and world views. Therefore, the translation of food culture not only needs to deal with the transformation at the language level, but also must consider the understanding and adaptation in the cross-cultural context.

Under the current background of deepening cultural exchanges, it is an important part of cross-cultural communication and communication to accurately present and convey Chinese food culture and the cultural implications behind it through English translation. The basic premise of English translation of food culture is that the translator can have a full understanding and cognition of Chinese food culture, so as to avoid cultural misunderstanding and prejudice in the translation process.

From a cross-cultural perspective, the ultimate goal of two-way communication is to enable both parties to cross cultural backgrounds and establish a cooperative development relationship of mutual trust and mutual benefit. During the process, communication barriers and cultural conflicts between different cultures should be taken into account. Therefore, translation should not only pay attention to the cultural commonalities of both sides but also understand the cultural differences of both sides. From this perspective, there are some problems in the current translation of Chinese food culture, such as the lack of accuracy due to the indiscriminate use of literal translation, the neglect of the cultural differences between China and the west in the selection of translation strategies, the over-emphasis on conciseness, which leads to the lack of cultural information in the translation, and the non-standard use of grammar. In this situation, the English translation of Chinese food culture has more stringent standards. Translators can no longer cope with the diversified cultural translation needs only with translation skills, but also consider the social customs, cultural background, language forms and sentence patterns of each country.

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2. Statements of the Problem (Thesis Statements)

(1) Linguistics and semantics: the literal and free translation of food names and culinary terms, and the equivalence of these terms in different cultures.

(2) Intercultural communication: Differences in food customs and etiquette, and how to convey these sociocultural messages in translation.

(3) Translatology: translation strategies, methodologies and how to deal with culture-specific elements.

3. Research Objectives (RO)

(1) To use machine learning and artificial intelligence technologies to improve the accuracy of translation of dietary terms and habits.

(2) To combine text, pictures, sound and other information, to provide a more rich and accurate translation of food culture.

(3) To create a special database of food culture terms and online translation resources for translators' reference.

4. Research Questions (RQ) or Hypothesis:

(1) How to be true to the original word in literal translation?

(2) How to fit the pronunciation in transliteration?

(3) How to fit semantics in free translation?

(4) How to fit the connotation in thick translation?

5. Scope of Studies (Limitations & Delimitations)

(1) Limitations

Limitations are influences that the researcher cannot control. They are the shortcomings, conditions or influences that cannot be controlled by the researcher that place restrictions on your methodology and conclusions. Any limitations that might influence the results should be mentioned.

Differences in eating habits and preferences: There are significant differences in eating habits and preferences between different cultures, which may lead to certain foods or cooking methods that do not have a direct counterpart in the target language and culture or that are poorly understood. Differences in ingredients and cooking techniques: Some specific ingredients or cooking techniques may not exist in the target language culture, making it difficult to find exact equivalents in translation. Differences in language expression: languages have their own characteristics in the description of food, and direct translation may not be able to convey the artistic conception and emotion of the original text. Food and cultural identity: Food is often closely associated with specific cultural identities and emotions, and if this connection is not properly conveyed in translation, it may lead to the distortion of information.

At present, there are still some outstanding practical problems in the English translation of Chinese food culture. For example, due to the lack of a unified dish translation system, a dish often has multiple translated names on different occasions, which will have a negative impact on the external communication of Chinese food culture in the long run. In addition, in the actual catering translation scene, some translators prefer literal translation, which

often produces some ironic pictures. A literal translation of Braised Lion Head, for example, would raise the blood of foreigners.

Due to the difficulties of context, custom and history, many food culture-loaded words are produced in specific context, custom and historical background. For example, the meaning and use of words such as "banquet" and "banquet" may be difficult for foreigners to intuitively understand. Secondly, the understanding barrier of non-Chinese speaking cultural groups. Due to differences in cultural background and living customs, NCS cultural groups may not be able to accurately understand and accept the deep meaning of some Chinese food culture-loaded words. In addition, due to the influence of cultural customs and ideologies, some words deeply related to dietary customs and religious beliefs, such as "fasting meal" and "vegetarian banquet", may not be accurately translated in Chinese culture.

There are problems with visual and gustatory descriptions in translation. Due to the subjectivity of perception and cross-cultural differences, how to accurately convey the visual and taste experience of food in translation becomes a major challenge. On the other hand, there is the challenge of intercultural perception differences. How to cross cultural differences and let people from other cultures understand and appreciate the aesthetic value of Chinese food is an important task.

(2) Delimitations

Delimitations are choices made by the researcher which should be mentioned. They describe the boundaries that you have set for the study.

Diet plays an important role in People's Daily life. Diet is not only the guarantee of human survival, but also directly related to people's health and life safety. Food culture has a close relationship with the region and social production mode where people live. For example, the barbecue that ethnic minorities in Xinjiang like to eat is related to the way people hunted and lived in ancient times. In agricultural societies, people grew grain, rice, and started eating pasta. Therefore, the improvement of social production mode has prompted people's lifestyle to change, and the methods and techniques of cooking food have become increasingly complex from simple to complex.

As for the definition of diet words, diet words refer to the words and phrases related to People's Daily diet." Therefore, the so-called diet words refer to the general term of words related to diet in People's Daily life, and also includes phrases related to diet and words related to people's taste and cooking. For example, food, drinks, spices, ingredients, cooking methods and so on.

6. Significance of the Study

The research background of food culture and translation is mainly concerned with how food, as a part of culture, is transmitted between different languages and cultures in the context of cross-cultural communication and globalization. Research in this area emphasizes that language is not only a tool for communicating information, but also reflects and transmits cultural values. Therefore, the translation of food culture is not only the conversion of words, but also the accurate transmission of cultural significance.

China is a traditional planting country with abundant food cooking techniques. Food raw materials are mainly grains and supplemented by meat. China is good at cooking and uses a variety of ingredients to stimulate the flavor of food. In Chinese food culture, chefs first consider the color, aroma and taste of food. It will destroy the original nutritional structure of the food and cause the loss of nutritional components, so the nutrition problem is the deficiency of the diet culture in our country; while western countries have developed animal husbandry, mainly beef and mutton, milk and dairy products, with unique food preparation techniques. They do not have too many

requirements on the taste of food, and are based on reasonable, balanced, green and healthy eating concepts. Western chefs do not think too much about the taste of food during cooking, they believe that eating is only the instinct of human survival, and the highest standard of cooking is nutrition. When food collocation will take into account whether protein, fat, vitamins and other reasonable collocation, Western diet concept is more mechanical.

These differences in food culture enrich the content and form of world food culture, but increase the difficulty of food English translation. In addition to systematically learning and understanding food English and translation skills, translators also need to have a systematic understanding of Chinese and western food culture. In the process of food English translation, word habits and language skills of Chinese and Western countries should be analyzed. Try to make their translated works meet the target readers' reading habits, so as to make the translated content more smooth and reasonable.

Diet is indispensable in human life, it reflects all aspects of life. With the improvement of human living standards, it has been continuously enriched and developed. From this we can see the importance of diet, so it is necessary to study diet words.

7. Ethical Considerations

All the information especially involving the data or information from this study / research are meant for this research only. It is strictly confidential which based on some of these criteria: quest for truth, voluntary participation and informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, integrity, and many to mention.

When conducting research on the translation of food cultures, a range of ethical considerations need to be addressed to ensure research integrity, accountability and respect for cultural diversity. Here are some important ethical considerations:

When conducting research on the translation of food cultures, a range of ethical considerations need to be addressed to ensure research integrity, accountability and respect for cultural diversity. The following are some important ethical considerations: Respect for the source culture: When translating and analyzing the food culture of the source culture, researchers must treat its traditions and customs with the utmost respect. Any misunderstanding or disrespect of the source culture can lead to inaccurate translations and cultural distortions. Researchers should deeply understand the historical and social background of the source culture and the significance of the food culture.

Accuracy and authenticity: The researcher is responsible for ensuring the accuracy and authenticity of the translation. This means that translation work should be as faithful as possible to the original text, while maintaining transparency and avoiding misleading readers. In cases where direct translation is not possible, the researcher should look for the closest equivalent and clearly explain any changes and explanations made.

Avoid cultural appropriation: When studying and translating food cultures, researchers should be wary of falling into the trap of cultural appropriation, that is, improperly borrowing or using elements from another culture. Researchers should respect the ownership and use rights of the source culture, including recipes, food names, cooking methods, etc., and, where appropriate, seek permission from the original author or cultural representative.

Cultural sensitivity and appropriateness: The study of food culture translation should demonstrate sensitivity to different cultural characteristics. Researchers need to understand and respect the different attitudes and values of the target culture towards food. For example, certain foods may be taboo in some cultures, and special care needs to be taken when translating and discussing these foods.

Intellectual property and copyright issues: Intellectual property and copyright issues may be involved in the translation and research process. When using any source materials, recipes, images and texts, researchers should

ensure that the necessary permission has been obtained and that appropriate attribution and citations are given in the research results.

Privacy and confidentiality: If a food culture study involves the participation of individuals or communities, researchers should protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants. This means that the consent of the participants must be obtained before the results of the study are made public and, if necessary, anonymized.

Interdisciplinary ethics: Food culture translation is often a part of interdisciplinary research, involving sociology, anthropology, history and other disciplines. Therefore, researchers should adhere to the ethical norms of these subject areas and maintain professional integrity and respect in interdisciplinary collaboration.

In conclusion, ethical considerations in translation research of food culture are key to ensuring the quality of research, respecting cultural diversity, and protecting the rights and interests of participants. Researchers should continuously reflect on their own research practices to ensure that their research is consistent with ethical norms and moral principles while enhancing cross-cultural understanding and communication.

8. Definition of Terms

(1) Cultural Specific Item is the smallest definable unit of a cultural component. This minimum unit can also be analysed into smaller units which may be called "items".

(2) Cultural adaptation: On the basis of maintaining the original meaning, the expression mode is adjusted appropriately to fit the cultural habits of the target language, so as to make the translated text more natural and authentic.

(3) Cross-cultural: To have a full and correct understanding of cultural phenomena, customs and habits that differ from or conflict with the national culture, and to accept and adapt to them with an inclusive attitude on this basis.

9. Literature Search and Review

My advice is you should refer to the Key Terms or Keywords that you have outlined for literature search and review which reflects to the TITLE or TOPIC of your research. (Minimum of 2000 words).

In order to improve the accuracy and beauty of food culture translation and achieve the translation standards of "faithfulness", "elegance", the following strategies can be adopted:

In-depth knowledge of source and target cultures: Translators need to have a deep understanding of both cultures involved, including the preparation of food, the origin of ingredients, and the relationship between food and festivals.

Use annotations or annotations: For culture-specific items (Csis) that are difficult to translate, annotations can be used to provide the reader with necessary cultural context information.

Cultural adaptation: On the basis of maintaining the original meaning, the expression mode is adjusted appropriately to fit the cultural habits of the target language, so as to make the translated text more natural and authentic.

Creative transformation: In cases where direct equivalents cannot be found, translators can creatively transform food names or descriptions in the original text to maintain the same flavor and feel.

Aesthetic representation: Translation should not only convey information, but also convey the style and beauty of the original text, which requires the translator to have a good sense of language and literary accomplishment.

The differences between Chinese and western food cultures have influenced the translation of catering English.

Therefore, translators should aim at cultural exchange, dissemination and sharing, have a deep understanding of the specific content of Chinese and western catering culture, master the relevant content and skills of catering English translation, and constantly improve their English literacy and translation ability in combination with the development of The Times. The new situation of social development and the new standards of the catering industry are combined with the translation of catering English to ensure that the translated works are in line with the language habits of the target language readers, so that they have a deep understanding of different food cultures, so that the words are accurate, the collocation is reasonable, and the difficulty is appropriate, so as to translate more and better translation works for people, which can be started from the following three aspects.

First, improve translation ability and English literacy, and improve the readability of translated works. Language and culture are closely related, and language is not only an indispensable part of culture, but also the carrier of culture. Language exchange can promote the development of culture, close the ties between various nationalities, build a good communication channel for economic cooperation, social progress and cultural development of various nationalities, and realize the harmonious coexistence of different nationalities. Culture is formed and developed in a specific natural, historical, social and economic environment, and the culture of different nations has its own characteristics. Therefore, translation is very important. Translators should stand in the perspective of cultural communication, clearly recognize the differences between different cultures, strengthen learning, improve themselves, and improve their bilingual translation ability. Translators need to use a variety of translation skills, consider the differences between Chinese and Western food cultures, adhere to the translation principles of the original text, and build a bridge between Chinese and Western cultures for readers. In the face of simple dishes, translators can use literal translation to make readers clearly understand the information in the article, such as Beijing roast duck, spicy chicken, boiled chicken and other dishes can use word-for-word translation; For dishes made by boiling, stewing and braising, the translation method of "raw materials + cooking method" can be adopted. For example, the translation method of stewed chicken with chestnuts and green pepper can be translated into Stewed chicken with chestnuts and green pepper. Translated as stewed carp head with brown sauce. However, for dishes with cultural connotations, translators need to combine literal translation and free translation to translate dishes. Take Huizhou dish "Family Portrait" as an example. It has many ingredients, complex workmanship, perfect color, flavor, rich nutrition, and beautiful meaning. It occupies the position of "first dish" in middle and high-end banquets. If the translator simply translates "happiness to the whole family" literally, it may cause misunderstandings among foreign friends. Therefore, the translator can attach the contents of making materials and cooking techniques after the dishes.

Secondly, the rational use of Chinese and Western language habits to reduce the strangeness of food cultural exchanges. As one of the representatives of Chinese and Western cultures, Chinese and Western food cultures have habitual ways of expression, grammatical skills and word usage, etc. Translators should correctly deal with cultural differences and take corresponding measures to make up for the difficulties in understanding caused by cultural differences. However, translators should understand that it is impossible to eliminate cultural differences. Translation can only reduce the contradictions in cultural exchanges, deepen people's understanding and cognition of different national cultures, and thus reduce the estrangement in cultural exchanges and economic exchanges. Take dish feast as an example, the translator can translate it as Even the grandest feast must have an end, in which feast means a particularly grand and delicious dish, which conforms to the characteristics of Chinese food culture, and some translators also translate the feast as party. In Western culture, party is more entertainment, which means to invite people to get together and enjoy happiness with objects and entertainment. Both feast and party have the meaning of gathering and grand, but they contain two different cultures, Chinese and Western. Therefore, the translator must pay attention to the differences between Chinese and Western food cultures during the English translation of catering, and translate according to the target language audience. For example, feast is suitable for foreign friends who are familiar with Chinese food culture, so that they can have a deep understanding of the meaning of

the feast. The word "party", which conforms to Western language habits, can be used for foreign friends who do not have a deep understanding of Chinese food culture, so that they can have a basic cognition of Chinese food culture and gradually understand the deep connotation of Chinese food culture. In addition, in order to facilitate the understanding of the target readers, the translator can add notes at the end of the page during the translation process, and restore the cultural context of the other side as far as possible according to the language habits of the target readers, so as to meet the cognitive needs of the target readers and enable them to obtain a good cultural identity.

Thirdly, we should have a deep understanding of Chinese food culture and retain the central meaning of the source language. With the development of economy and the progress of society, the economic and cultural exchanges around the world have become increasingly close, and the content, form, depth and breadth of exchanges have been continuously deepened. Based on such historical background, the Chinese and western food culture has obtained the opportunity for in-depth exchanges. The western food concept has influenced the daily life of Chinese people, and China's food culture has also spread to all parts of the world. Translation is a bridge between different cultures. The translator first needs to have a deep understanding of the two cultures, so as to present the context and text of the source culture in the translation process, improve the target readers' sense of familiarity and cultural identity, and reduce people's defensive psychology in the face of different cultures, so as to properly deal with the differences between Chinese and Western food cultures and their differences in eating habits. Learn the content of health science in each other's diet culture, so as to enrich and diversify our own culture. For example, there are many idioms in Chinese food culture, such as "big fish eat small fish", "dumb people eat Huanglian", "adding fuel to the fire", "can not eat mutton, empty to provoke a bitch" and so on. For foreign friends who are familiar with Chinese food culture, these idioms draw the distance between them and Chinese food culture and add a lot of fun; But for foreign friends who are not familiar with Chinese food culture, these idioms make the translation more difficult to read. Therefore, when translating idioms, the translator should choose the corresponding translation method according to the difficulty of the idiom, and improve the readability of the translation while retaining Chinese language characteristics, so that foreign friends can understand Chinese language habits and Chinese food culture. It should be noted that the translation of some sentences is difficult to retain the original literal meaning and language habits. In this case, the translator can use the way of paraphrasing to express the source language in a simpler discourse. For example, if the translator translates according to the literal translation method, foreign friends may think that they want to pack up their own food and take it away, resulting in misunderstanding. Therefore, the translator can paraphrase this sentence, translating it as "If they were found I'd be in serious trouble."

To sum up, translation is an important medium for the transmission of knowledge and culture. It is a process that begins in one language and ends in another. In this process, in addition to the communication of words, more implied is the exchange and exchanges between the two sides in economy, politics, culture, ideas, values and so on. There are differences between Chinese and Western food cultures, and translators need to have a deep and systematic understanding of the two cultures, so as to translate more works with rich content, excellent quality and multiple levels for people, and strengthen people's cognition of different food cultures. In addition, translators should compare Chinese and Western food culture, guide people to look at the differences between Chinese and western food with a correct attitude, and promote cultural exchanges between China and the west.

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