

Differences of Strategies Applied in English-Portuguese and English-Chinese Translations: From a Cultural Translation Perspective

Yuxiong Zhang

Translation studies often discuss the challenges posed by the lack of equivalents between cultures. It is widely believed that translation is frequently hindered by culture-specific items (CSIs) that exist between languages of different origins. This study analyzes 105 sets of translations of furniture-related terms from IKEA's websites using a corpus-based approach and a triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods. The aim is to identify differences in translation strategies between English to European Portuguese and English to Chinese. CSI translation strategies, including foreignization, neutralization, and domestication, proposed by different authors, are used in the analysis. The data indicates that foreignization is more commonly utilized in translations from English to Chinese, while neutralization strategies are more frequently employed in Portuguese translations. While it may be possible to retain certain words with specific cultural references when translating between languages that share a similar culture background, such as English and Portuguese, this approach cannot be accepted in Chinese translations. Due to the distinctive grammatical structure of the Chinese language, it may be necessary to provide supplementary semantic information or even create new words in order to accurately translate certain CSIs in English into Chinese. This study illustrates how different writing systems can affect translation strategies and procedures for translating cultural references.

Keywords: cultural translation, culture-specific item, foreignization, neutralization

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英葡與英漢翻譯策略的差異： 基於文化翻譯視角的分析

張宇雄

不同文化之間所存在的不對等性是翻譯研究中常討論的問題。普遍認為，不同語源間存在的文化特定詞（culture-specific items, CSIs）是翻譯中存在的一大難題。本研究以語料分析為基礎，通過質性和量性的方法分析了在「宜家家居」（IKEA）網頁上所擷取的 105 組英文—歐洲葡萄牙語及英文—中文的對應翻譯。研究目的係分析英葡及英中翻譯策略上所存在的差異。本研究在分析過程中採用了不同作者提出的，包括異化、中立化和歸化三個方面的 CSI 翻譯策略。研究結果表明，異化策略在英譯中時更為常用，而在英譯葡方面，中立化策略則使用得更多。在相似文化背景下的語言之間，某些具有特定文化資訊的詞語可以被完整保留，例如英語和葡萄牙語，但這並不適用於英譯中的情況。由於中文獨特的語法結構，可能需要透過補充額外的語義資訊，甚至創造新詞，才能將英文文化特定詞彙準確地翻譯成中文。本研究說明了在翻譯文化特定詞的過程中，不同的書寫系統透過不同的方式影響翻譯方法和翻譯策略。

關鍵詞：文化翻譯、文化特定詞、異化、中立化

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Introduction

In the context of contemporary globalization, translation undoubtedly builds a bridge between disparate languages, providing a channel of communication for different people from distinct cultural and geographic backgrounds. Despite the remarkable advancements in technology and the incremental improvements in machine translation, language barriers persist in certain circumstances, particularly regarding the translation of culture-related items. Such issues emerge due to the lack of equivalence, information loss or additions, and disparate grammatical constructions between different languages (Amenador & Wang, 2023). Indeed, globalization happens with its concurrent phenomena—localization and translation play an indispensable role in promoting both globalization and localization by recognizing the value of other cultures and the limits of local culture. Rather than leading to the destruction of local culture, the process of globalization enables a local culture to link to outside cultures, enhancing its growth. Consequently, cultural unacceptance can result in cultural inaccessibility. It is therefore evident that indigenous or local knowledge is crucial to successful cultural translation through negotiating an acceptable cultural discourse in the target language background (Sun, 2009).

In the field of translation, the translatability of culture into a language of other cultural roots has always been discussed. Nida and Taber (1982) defined such kind of translation “in which the content of the message is changed to conform to the receptor culture in some way, and/or in which information is introduced which is not linguistically implicit in the original” (p. 199) as “cultural translation.” During the process of cultural translation, it is widely acknowledged that the barriers of non-equivalences of culture-specific items (CSIs) are unavoidable (Baker, 1992). In other words, translation has been consistently challenged by cultural differences,

which have resulted in the modification of concepts over time as a consequence of globalization (Sun, 2009).

A CSI does not merely refer to an object, but also carries a distinctive concept and meaning related to a specific culture. However, the determination of which word or expression should be considered as a CSI is not always explicit. When the community of the target language shares a similar cultural background or the specific cultural phenomenon has already been assimilated into the target culture, the word or expression may not be perceived as a CSI by the target recipients (Amenador & Wang, 2023; Terestyényi, 2011). According to Aixelá (1996), CSIs possess an intuitively recognizable concept themselves and can only be identified in “a source text which, when transferred to a target language, poses a translation problem due to the nonexistence or to the different value (whether determined by ideology, usage, frequency, etc.) of the given item in the target language culture” (p. 57). Thus, the author elected to eschew the definition of the concept in question and stated, “authors avoid any definition, attributing the meaning of the notion to a sort of collective intuition” (Aixelá, 1996, p. 57). While posteriorly Newmark (2010) proposed a theory of six categories of CSIs, namely “ecology,” “public life,” “social life,” “personal life,” “customs and pursuits” and “private passions” (pp. 174-177). Aixelá (1996) simply divided CSIs into two main categories, namely, “proper nouns” and “common expressions” (p. 59).

Translation Strategies

Two fundamental approaches to translating CSI were proposed by Venuti (1995), who introduced the strategies of “foreignization” and “domestication.” The term “foreignization” is employed to preserve the cultural distinctiveness of the source text, namely, the foreign text, which may impede comprehension by the

target-language reader (Olk, 2013). According to Sun (2009), “foreignization” with minimal localization in many third-world countries can be viewed as Westernization and/or globalization. In such a situation, cultural translation is situated in a global context, aiming to extend external references and prompt cross-cultural communication. As for “domestication,” this translation strategy emphasizes the proximity to the target culture with the minimization of foreign characters in source text through the replacement of these elements with items that are familiar to the target readers (Olk, 2013). Additionally, a proclivity towards greater explicitness in translation can be “a sign of localization rather than domestication” (Sun, 2009, p. 100), since localization entails a transformation that incorporates local customs, particularities, and details. Nevertheless, it is also believed that these two approaches represent two extremes of strategies that can be applied in cultural translation and intermediate alternatives between “foreignization” and “domestication” are advised (Hervey & Higgins, 1992).

For decades, scholars have proposed a multitude of strategies based on different starting points, cultural backgrounds, and translation theories. Some of the representative examples from recent times include Amenador and Wang (2023), Davies (2003), Marco (2019) and Olk (2013). In analyzing the translation solutions of the world-renowned book series *Harry Potter*, Davies (2003) identified seven strategies employed to address CSIs in the narrative, which were constructed upon authentic British cultural references: preservation, addition, omission, globalization, location, transformations, and creation. Similar to the procedure designated as “repetition” by Aixelá (1996) and “cultural borrowing” by Hervey and Higgins (1992), “preservation” is a strategy based on the process of lexical borrowing. However, simple preservation may result in obscurity, and the addition of short attributes and modifiers can be a solution to maintain the original item, which is defined by Davies (2003) as “addition.” In contrast,

“omission” is the procedure to omit ambiguous CSIs in the target language. The term “transformations” is used by the author to indicate subjective modifications that were determined by the translator, editor, or even the target audience. With regard to the concepts of “globalization,” “localization,” and “creation,” they correspond effectively to “universalization,” “naturalization,” and “autonomous recreation” proposed by Aixelá (1996).

From Aixelá’s (1996) procedure of “limited universalization,” which transfers a CSI from the source text into the target text with the maximized maintenance of source-culture identity was named by Olk (2013) as “transference.” By adding supplementary information and denotative explanations to the transference, arise two other strategies, namely “transference explicitation” and “transference explanation.” In accordance with Olk (2013), when a CSI is not transferred but replaced by a word or phrase in the target language with the emphasis on its source culture, the procedure corresponds to “target-language (TL) expression referring to the source culture” (p. 349). Other potential translation strategies that can be used to translate CSIs are “neutral explanation,” which entails removal of the text’s foreignness, “omission,” and “cultural substitution,” which involves the replacement of a target-language word or phrase with a culturally specific term.

To translate food-related CSIs, Marco (2019) adopted another approach that involved seven translation strategies, for instance, “borrowing of the ST item” in a pure or naturalized way, “literal translation,” “neutralization” with the deletion of the culture-related item, “amplification/compression,” “intracultural adaptation” with the replacement of “another item also belonging to the source culture but more familiar to target text readers” (p. 23), “intercultural adaptation” and “omission.” In addition, the author posited that “intracultural adaptation” could be linked to “foreignizing,” but he held the opinion that the procedure involved translator’s intervention with the objective of aligning the text with the expectations of the target readers.

By absorbing and integrating different translation methods and strategies theories, Amenador and Wang (2023) proposed another group of translation procedures to translate the names of Chinese dishes, which demonstrate certain parallels to the aforementioned strategies. For instance, “retention” corresponds to “transference” (Olk, 2013) and “borrowing” (Marco, 2019). In addition, the authors retained Marco’s (2019) procedure of word-for-word translation based on the lexical items—“literal translation.” According to Amenador and Wang (2023), “description,” “generalization,” and “particularization” are three possible forms of “neutralization.” While “description” indicates a non-cultural word to replace a CSI, “generalization” and “particularization” involve non-correspondences between languages and cultures due to the (in)existence of hyponym or hypernym, implying different degrees of granularity among different cultures (Marco, 2019). Furthermore, the concept of “amplification/condensation” was introduced to eliminate the ambiguity of the CSI in the target texts. As for domestication, the authors proposed the terms “intracultural adaptation,” “substitution,” and “omission.”

Different procedures can be used in translations between languages belonging to different language families. The differences between logographic and alphabetic languages are not barely limited to writing systems but also arise from different coding and memory mechanisms. Whereas logographic characters convey a greater quantity of visual information, alphabetic words encompass phonological and semantic elements (Chen & Juola, 1982). With regard to Chinese, its writing system is distinct from other writing systems, which is regarded as morphemic writing. In most instances, each morpheme transmits its own meaning (Gîță et al., 2017). In fact, over 70% of words in Chinese are compound words, and the morphemes that compose compounds are usually words by themselves (Zhou et al., 1999). Thus, the difference between Chinese and other languages determines the

so-called “whole translation tradition” of the Chinese language (Davies, 2003). Gîță et al. (2017) also corroborated the greater support for the foreignization of the Westernization strategy of translation in China. Nevertheless, due to the restriction of the combination of Chinese phonemes, the loan words resulting from transference, retention or pure transliteration, possess fixed written forms that adhere to phonotactic rules as other Chinese words (Gîță et al., 2017; Zhou et al., 1999).

As early as the 50s of last century, a Chinese professor Loh (1958) proposed five translation methods that are still widely used today in translation CSI between English and Chinese, namely, “pure transliteration,” “pure semantic translation,” “combination of transliteration and semantic translation,” “transliteration with semantic translation at the beginning or the end” and “symbolic translation with a semantic explanation at the end.” Although the strategies put forth by Loh (1958) demonstrate certain similarities compared with the procedures outlined by Amenador and Wang (2023), Marco (2019) and Olk (2013), with respect to “transference/borrowing/retention,” “literal translation,” and “transference explicitation,” these also reflect the differences between English, which is an alphabetic language, and Chinese language, which is characterized by its morphemic writing system. Given to the disparate writing systems, the preservation procedure of the source text cannot be realized simply by transferring, borrowing, or retaining the original alphabetic words. A comprehensive transcription process is necessary to convert English words into Chinese characters, either through phonetic translation or semantics-based approaches, which are viewed more as foreignization strategies. However, Loh (1958) also proposed a symbolic translation approach, which differs from localization/cultural substitution, intracultural adaptation, or omission but is quite similar to the concept of “autonomous recreation” referred to by Aixelá (1996), who also suggested it is an infrequent translation procedure (Table 1).

Given this, it is postulated that translation strategies applied in different languages may exhibit variability. A comparative study between translations of languages from different families was deemed necessary.

Table 1

Translation Strategies for Culture-Specific Items (CSIs)

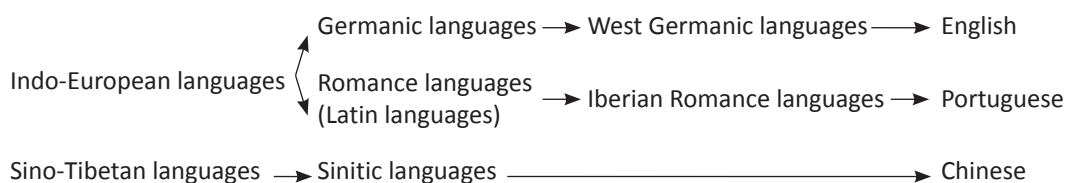
	Foreignization	Neutralization	Domestication
Davies (2003)	preservation; addition; omission	globalization	localization; transformations; creation
Olk (2013)	transference; transference explicitation; transference explanation; target language expression referring to the source culture	neutral explanation	omission; cultural substitution
Marco (2019)	borrowing of the source text item; literal translation;	neutralization; amplification/ compression	intracultural adaptation; intercultural adaptation; omission
Amenador and Wang (2023)	retention; literal translation	neutralization (description, generalization, and particularization); amplification/ condensation	intracultural adaptation; substitution; omission
Loh (1958)	pure transliteration; pure semantic translation; combination of transliteration and semantic translation; transliteration with semantic translation at the beginning or at the end		symbolic translation with a semantic explanation at the end

To perceive the potential differences in strategies between the translation from an alphabetic language to a morphemic language, such as Chinese, and the translation to another alphabetic language. (European) Portuguese is selected due to its genetic proximity to English, the most widely spoken language in the world.

Despite its affiliation with Germanic family, the English language exhibits a notable number of loanwords of Latin origin. As indicated by García and Souza (2014), the lexical similarity between English and Portuguese is as high as 20.4% (Figure 1). Therefore, the research question of the present study is “What are the differences between English-Portuguese and English-Chinese translation strategies?”

Figure 1

Relations Between English, Portuguese, and Chinese



Methodology

Nevertheless, as Davies (2003) and Olk (2013) have observed, there is a paucity of studies that are concerned about cultural translation from a quantitative perspective. Also, the identification of CSIs in a text is regarded as subjective, as it is not always clear which reference should be considered CSI. According to Aixelá (1996), any concept or expression in the source language that does not exist in the language of the recipients, can be viewed as a CSI. CSIs are a group of words and expressions that signify culture-related concepts. Both the similarity to culture and the lack of familiarity can result in the incorrect identification of a CSI (Amenador & Wang, 2023). Normally, studies focus on specific lexical items or subfields to avoid subjectivity in identifying CSIs (Olk, 2013). In view of this, this study adopts the translations of the names of IKEA’s products classified under the “furniture”

category to Portuguese and Chinese as the corpus of research to identify what differences that may arise when translating from English to these two languages, with the aim of avoiding the subjective preselection of research objects.

The standardized approach of IKEA distinguishes it from other global retailers. There is a notable absence of adaptation in construction and portrayal of market offers; for example, IKEA's Swedish headquarters produces basic English text for the catalog with the objective of processing "all covert translations" into 38 languages (House & Kádár, 2020, p. 4). Such a standardized approach is also reflected in the supply of identical products and overall information with minimal country and/or region adjustments (Burt et al., 2011). This can be verified based on the information available on the official websites of IKEA.¹ However, it should be noted that a number of products within specific categories, including "divan beds," "bed legs" and "bed & headboard covers" are not currently available on the Chinese market. Only two notable differences were found between the websites for customers of different countries. The category "footstools & pouffes" in the Portuguese version was extended to "ottomans, footstools & pouffes" in the Chinese version and "cots & bassinets" category in the Portuguese version was condensed to "cots" in the Chinese version.

Due to the inherent cultural differences between China and the Western world, the objects people use in everyday life may be seen as representative of the specificity of their own culture. Nevertheless, a reference may be considered intercultural when it is a common element in several cultures. In the absence of an identifiable linguistic or cultural provenance, the reference is then regarded as acultural (Davies, 2003). A representative example is "chair"; while "sofa" is transliterated to *shafa* 沙發 and is regarded as a loan word in Chinese, "chair" has

¹ See <https://www.ikea.cn/cn/en/> and <https://www.ikea.com/pt/en/>

existed for a long time in the history of China, indicating its intercultural or even acultural nature. Over time, references from other cultures can be incorporated into in the target culture. Thus, CSI may become unidentifiable. The present study focuses specifically on the subcategories of IKEA's furniture products with more specific characteristics and advanced classification, for instance, "armchairs and chaise longues," "dining chairs," and "step stools & step ladders" in place of a simple category of "chair" with the intention of avoiding general and less specific acultural references.

Therefore, the present study is based on a corpus of translations of IKEA's standardized subcategories from English to European Portuguese and Chinese. As quantitative data in a corpus can be employed to inform both qualitative and quantitative methods (Hunston, 2007), a corpus-based approach allows for the triangulation of different research methods. This study employs quantitative analysis to ascertain whether there are any discernible differences in the translation strategies adopted for furniture-specific glossaries between English-Portuguese and English-Chinese. Qualitative analyses are applied to compare the translation strategies between Portuguese, which shares a vocabulary similar to English, with those employed in Chinese. The quantitative method is applied to enhance the reliability of qualitative analysis (Olk, 2013), and, in turn, qualitative analysis elucidates the quantitative results.

Results

Quantitative Results

In total, 135 subcategories were retrieved from IKEA's websites.² After eliminating the repeated items, 105 subcategories subjected to detailed analysis in accordance with the translation strategies outlined in the theoretical framework. A total of 11 translation procedures were identified, including amplification, condensation, creation, description, generalization, intracultural adaptation, literal translation, omission, retention, substitution, and transference explication. The frequency of occurrence of each procedure ranged from 0 to 47, as illustrated in Table 2. Moreover, it was discovered that 12 types of combinations of different methods were employed in translations (Table 3).

Table 2

Frequency of the Use of Different Translation Strategies

	English - Portuguese	English - Chinese
Amplification	5	3
Condensation	11	11
Creation	0	2
Description	40	31
Generalization	5	7
Intracultural adaptation	1	0
Literal translation	37	48
Omission	1	0
Retention	5	0
Substitution	16	16
Transference explication	0	8

² Accessed on January 24, 2024.

Table 3*Frequency of Combination of Different Translation Strategies*

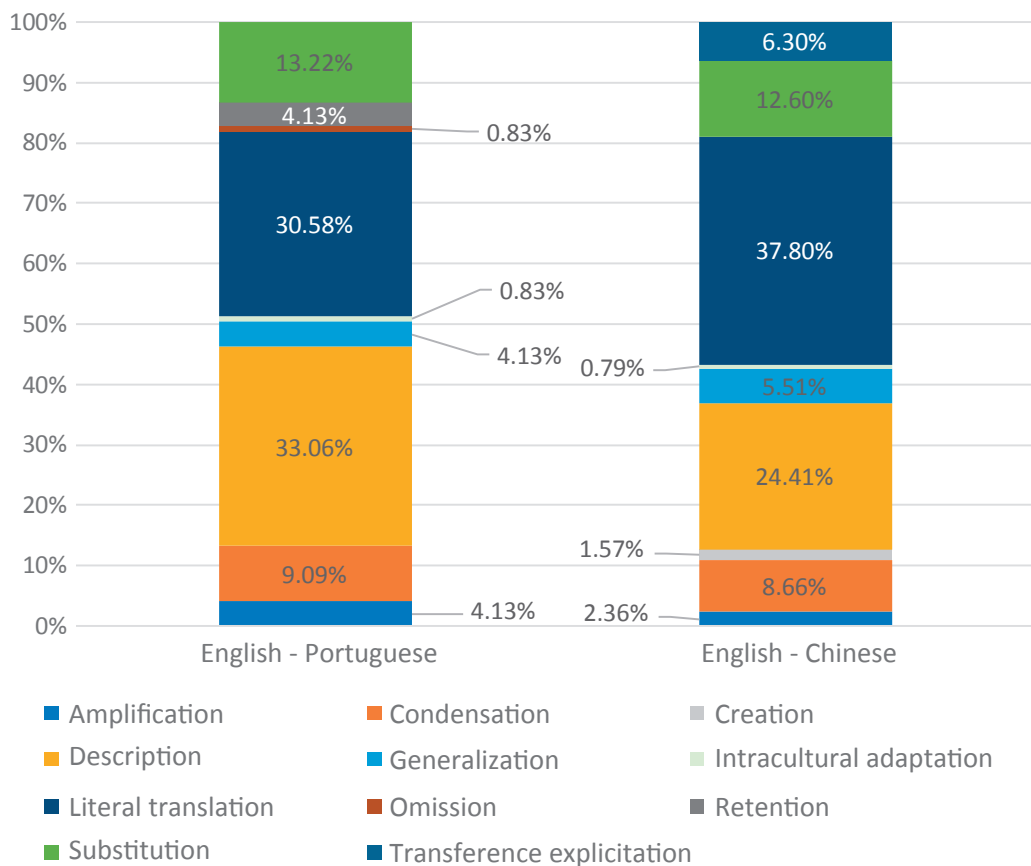
	English - Portuguese	English - Chinese
Description + amplification	1	1
Description + condensation	3	5
Description + generalization	4	0
Description + intracultural adaptation	1	0
Description + literal translation	0	1
Description + retention	1	0
Description + substitution	2	1
Literal translation + amplification	0	1
Literal translation + generalization	0	1
Literal translation + retention	4	0
Literal translation + substitution	3	2
Substitution + creation	0	1

As indicated in Table 2, description and literal translation were the two most frequently applied translation strategies. While literal translation was the most frequently employed strategy in translating furniture-related English words to Chinese, the frequency from description to literal translation remained relatively consistent. The least frequently utilized translation strategies were intracultural adaptation and omission, with a frequency of one or less in both languages, demonstrating its occasionality. Additionally, observed that certain translation strategies were used exclusively in translations to a specific language. For instance, intracultural adaptation, omission, and retention were utilized solely in translating English to Portuguese, while creation and transference explicitation were not observed (Figure 2). Moreover, 34 words were identified as having been translated using the same strategy in Portuguese and Chinese, namely, literal translation (19 words), description (seven words), condensation (three words), substitution (two words), the combination of condensation and description (two words), and the

combination of literal translation and substitution (one word), which collectively accounted for 32.38% of the total number of subcategory items.

Figure 2

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Translation Strategies

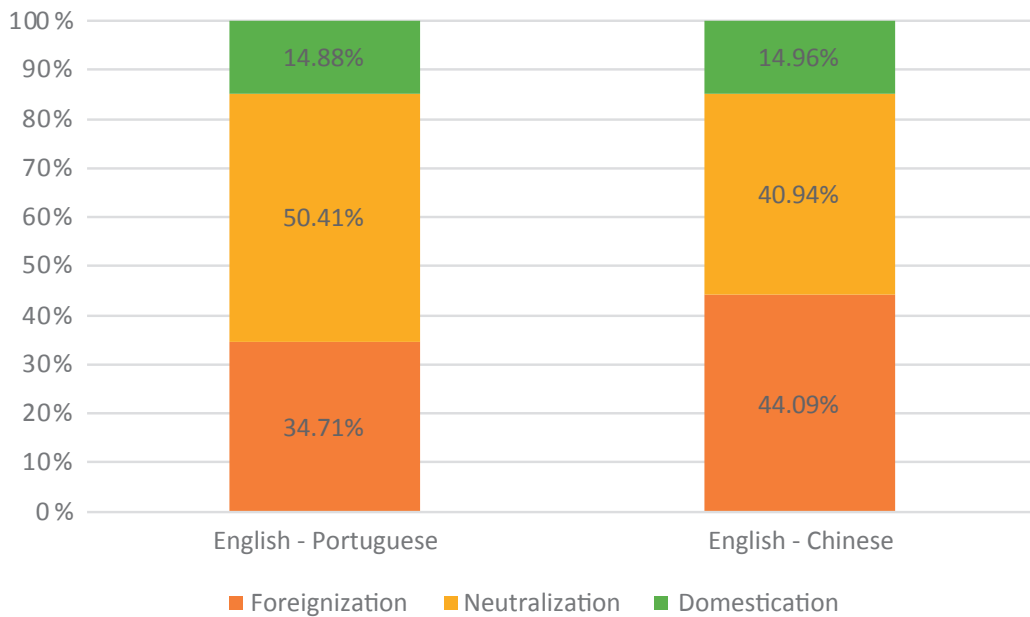


If we categorize the translation strategies applied to the subcategories according to the three main approaches, namely, foreignization, neutralization, and domestication, the differences between the two languages will be more notable. In the translation of furniture-related items from English to Portuguese, which share a certain lexical similarity, the most frequently utilized strategies were those of a

neutralized nature. This result aligns with the findings of Amenador and Wang (2023) and Marco (2019), which indicated neutralization techniques were more often employed in the translation of CSIs. Nevertheless, the translations from English to Chinese yielded a markedly different result. Although the utilization of neutralizing strategies is quite significant, the predominant orientation for translation in this case was foreignization. This demonstrates the “whole translation tradition” and a totally distinct reality in the Chinese language, as previously mentioned (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Percentage Frequency Distribution of Translation Strategies by Foreignization, Neutralization, and Domestication



Qualitative Results

Literal Translation

According to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995), “literal translation” is “the direct transfer of a source-language text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate target-language text,” (p. 33) and in this context, the translator is limited to “observing the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the target-language” (p. 33). In this study, the application of literal translation was observed to be a common practice in both situations, for instance, “outdoor seat cushions” into “almofadas de assento para exterior” (literally “cushions of seat for outdoor”) in Portuguese and *huwai yidian* 戶外椅墊 (literally “house outside seat cushions”) in Chinese, “children’s beds” into “camas de criança” (literally “beds of child”) and *ertong chuang* 兒童床 (literally “child(ren) beds”) and “corner wardrobes” into “roupeiros de canto” (literally “wardrobes of corner”) and *zhuanjiao yigui* 轉角衣櫃 (literally “corner clothing cabinets”).

All the literal translation procedures were observed in the English compound word translations. Since all the translations were retrieved directly from IKEA’s website, it can be reasonably assumed that the translation solutions should pragmatically exist and be widely understood and recognized by native customers. Given this, on the one hand, the practicality of literal translation may reveal certain similarities in idiomatic expressions, particularly in the case of the 18 terms that were translated word-to-word to Portuguese and Chinese. On the other hand, it is also possible that these furniture-related words were characterized by their acultural nature.

Description

As a neutralizing technique for translation, description is a strategy that uses “a non-cultural word to clarify a cultural term, phrase or rhetorical expression” (Amenador & Wang, 2023, p. 7). One illustrative example is the translation of “solitaire wardrobes;” in the light of the Cambridge Dictionary, “solitaire” is a noun in English that means “a single jewel” or “a game played with cards by one person” (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.-d). The term lacks any functional significance or physical characteristics that would be pertinent to the object in question. Thus, the term was translated to “roupeiros completos” (literally “complete wardrobes”) in Portuguese and *duli yigui* 獨立衣櫃 (literally “independent cloth cabinets”) in Chinese to convey the main feature of the wardrobes intuitively.

Another similar example is the translation of “nursery furniture sets” as “quarto para bebé completo” (literally “complete room for baby”) in Portuguese and *yinger jiaju zuhe* 嬰兒家具組合 (literally “baby furniture sets”) in Chinese. In both translation solutions, the term “nursery” was not directly translated, but the word “baby” was used to transmit explicitly the feature and function of this subcategory of furniture. In Portuguese, the translation was even more descriptive without mentioning any reference to the concept of “furniture sets.”

Nevertheless, the adoption of a description strategy can be relative, which depends on the cultural similarity between the source language and the target language. In other words, a term can be viewed as an acultural concept by people who speak a lexically similar language but have no correspondence in another language belonging to a different linguistic family. The present study observed several examples of this phenomenon. For the purposes of this discussion, we take the translation solutions of “upholstered beds” as an example. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, “upholstered” means “(of a chair or other seat) covered with

cloth and filled with a soft substance” (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.-e). On the Portuguese website, this term was translated to “camas estofadas.” The adjective “estofadas” is derivated from the noun “estofo,” which means “thick, full-bodied fabric, generally used to cover sofas, chairs, etc. and for curtains” or “cotton, wool or other materials used to cushion chairs, sofas, etc.,”³ demonstrating the same cultural background of the furniture. However, the corresponding subcategory on the Chinese website is *ruanbao chuangjia* 軟包床架 and its literal translation back to English is “soft-packing bed frame.” It is also important to note that the concept of “sofa” did not exist in Chinese culture, and the term “upholstered beds” may be less familiar to customers in China. With the character *jia* 架, this subcategory is totally distinguished from other types of beds, which were all simply translated to “beds” in Chinese, emphasizing its feature as a bedstead covered with soft materials.

Substitution

The procedure applies a target culture word, expression, or phrase that is “substantially equivalent” to the CSI of the source text and is defined by Amenador and Wang (2023) as “substitution.” In this study, when a term in English was translated to a simple word in the target language. To illustrate, the correspondent translation for “trolleys” in Portuguese is “carrinhos” which is the diminutive form of the word “carro,” which means “car.” With regard to its translation in Chinese, “trolleys” was translated to *tuiche* 推車, which literally translates as “pushing car,” elucidating the mechanism and function of the object. Nevertheless, 推車 is also used to indicate “barrow” or “dolly” in the Chinese language since all these three objects possess wheels and handles for pushing, leading to ambiguity due to the

³ Original words in Portuguese was “tecido grosso, encorpado, geralmente utilizado para forrar sofás, cadeiras, etc. e para reposteiros” and “algodão, lã ou outros materiais que se utiliza para acolchoar cadeiras, sofás, etc.” (Porto Editora, n.d.-d).

different etymological origins of words in different languages. Another example is the translation of “dressing tables” in Portuguese—“*toucador*,” which is composed of the base word “*touca(r)*” and the nominal suffix “-*dor*.” In Portuguese, “*toucar*” denotes the act of combing hair (Porto Editora, n.d.-g) while “-*dor*” derives from Latin and is normally used to convey the notion of an agent (Porto Editora, n.d.-c). Thus, both words may be used to indicate the mirrored furniture, but the cultural connotations cannot be viewed as equivalent. Similar to the Portuguese translation, “dressing table” was translated to *shuzhuangtai* 梳妝台 in Chinese, which literally means “combing makeup table.”

Also, the different translations of “cabinets” in disparate contexts to Chinese demonstrate that there can be a partial correspondence between “equivalent terms” in different languages. On the IKEA’s websites, exist several subcategories related to “cabinets,” such as “cabinets” and “storage units & cabinets.” In both cases, the term was equally translated to “*armário*” in Portuguese. However, different translation solutions were applied in the Chinese website. The term “storage units & cabinets” was condensed to *chuwu wenjiangui* 儲物文件櫃 (literally “storage objects document cabinet”) but the subcategory entitled “cabinets” was translated to *chugui* 櫥櫃. According to Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Language Research Institute Dictionary Editorial Office (2016), namely, Dictionary of Current Chinese, the word 櫥櫃 in Chinese is used to indicate a cabinet or set of cabinets that are specifically designed for the storage of tableware (p. 195). Therefore, when selecting translation strategies, it is essential to consider not only the correspondence between languages should be considered but also the pragmatic use and cultural significance of the word in question.

Condensation and Amplification

When removing certain information to make the translation shorter than the

source text to eliminate ambiguity, the translation strategy is referred to as “condensation” (Marco, 2019). In this study, condensation occurred in subcategories composed of more than one term. Some examples of this translation strategies included the conversion of “sideboards & buffets” to “aparador,” “step stools & step ladders” to “escadotes,” and “children’s stools & benches” to “bancos para crianças” (literally “benches for children”) in Portuguese translations and “ottomans, footstools & pouffes” to *shafa jiaodeng* 沙發腳凳 (literally “sofa foot bench”) and “sideboards & buffets” to *canbiangui* 餐邊櫃 (literally “meal side cabinet”) in Chinese translations. In this case, several words in one language correspond to a single term in another language. As observed by Marco (2019), this phenomenon results from the degree of granularity. Certain concepts may be more developed in a specific language and culture. Thus, there will be more distinctions, and the words can be more finely grained.

When the target languages exhibit a higher degree of granularity, amplification is applied, which indicates the incorporation of supplementary information in the translations. In the present study, amplification is not effectively a frequently applied procedure, which was only utilized five times on the Portuguese website and three times on the Chinese website.

Generalization

Different degrees of granularity may also lead to the replacement of a specific term in the source language with a hypernym with a more general concept in the target language, and this procedure is named generalization (Amenador & Wang, 2023). For instance, the subcategory “dining set” was translated to “conjuntos de móveis de refeição” (literally “set of furniture of meal”) in Portuguese and *canzhuo yi zuhe* 餐桌椅組合 (literally “meal table chair set”) in Chinese. In both languages, the table and chairs used in the dining room is related to the concept of “meal,”

however, the most common idiomatic expression in English is “dining,” derivate from the verb “dine,” meaning “to eat the main meal of the day, usually in the evening” (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.-c). Futhermore, in both translation solutions, the concept of “set” was augmented with specific details. In Portuguese translation, the word “móveis” was used to clarify the category to which it belongs, namely, furniture, while this information was more specified in Chinese by utilizing “table” and “chair” in its translation.

In this study, an evident difference between substitution and generalization is that the selected substitute word in the target language demonstrates a “substantial equivalence” in meaning to the original word in the source language. However, generalization usually reveals the relation between hyponyms and hypernyms, and this phenomenon was more frequent in the translation of English furniture-related words into Chinese. An example is the translation of “café tables” and “café chairs,” in which “café” was translated directly into “restaurant” in the target language since there is no correspondent term for café, “where serving simple and usually quite cheap meals” (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.-b) in the target language. As for translations in Portuguese, the term “restauração,” which means “sector of activity related to the operation of restaurants and other related establishments” (Porto Editora, n.d.-f), was used to express the concept of “café” in a descriptive manner.

Transference Explicitation

In contrast to the aforementioned translation strategies, transference explication was only observed on Chinese websites. Transference explication is the process of expanding additional information to the original term, which may be redundant in the source language but necessary for the linguistic structure of the target language. This procedure does not provide a descriptive explanation of the

meaning of CSI as a description strategy. Nevertheless, in this case, the translator's intervention is more apparent than literal translation (Olk, 2013). Considering the vast differences between English and Chinese languages, the incorporation of supplementary information in translation solutions may be necessary; for instance, "headboards" was translated to *chuangtou ban* 床頭板 (bed head boards), "beds with storage" to *chuwu gongneng chuang* 儲物功能床 (literally "storage function beds"), and "sliding wardrobes" to *huamen yigui* 滑門衣櫃 (literally "sliding door clothing cabinets") to avoid equivocation. In certain instances, the character, which symbolizes "style," *shi* 式 was added to transmit the complete information in Chinese, explicating the relation between the attribute and the modified noun, such as *wanglan shi chouti kuangjia* 網籃式抽屜框架 (literally "net basket style drawer units," translation for "basket drawer units"), *burushi yigui* 步入式衣櫃 (literally "walk-in style clothing cabinet"), and *kaifangshi yigui* 開放式衣櫃 (literally "open style clothing cabinet").

It demonstrates certain similarities to the translation method proposed by Loh's (1958), namely, transliteration with semantic translation at the beginning or at the end. However, in this case, the semantic translation did not always occur at the beginning or the end of the word. The supplementary information was occasionally positioned at the end of the attributes, which resulted from the Chinese language's grammatical structure. Therefore, transference explicitation can be seen as a variant strategy when the literal translation does not align with the grammatical and idiomatic expressions of the target language.

Retention

If transference explicitation is a specific strategy used in translation of furniture-related terms into Chinese, then retention is applied exclusively to Portuguese translations. If the morphemic system of the Chinese language

determines its “whole translation tradition,” Portuguese, in comparison, is more flexible. The retention of words occurred at various levels. For instance, such as “chaise longues,” “croupiers para hall de entrada” (literally “wardrobes for the hall of entrance”), and “cadeiras para gaming” (literally “chairs for gaming”) were observed.

According to Marco (2019), SCIs that belong to a third culture are perceived as impartial with respect to both source and target texts. In the case of the French word “chaise longue,” the original form has been entirely preserved without changing a single letter. In effect, French has contributed to the third largest source of Portuguese vocabulary, and a considerable part of it is still used on a daily basis (Vázquez Diéguez, 2015). In Portuguese, numerous loanwords have not transformed to integrate its lexical inventory or lose their foreignism status, designating specific realities of other cultures (Freitas et al., 2003). When a term presents a particular background of a third culture, its original form may be retained if it belongs to the same writing system, such as “chaise longues.” Nevertheless, when there is no correspondence to the concept that a term contains in the source language, retention is also considered as a viable strategy, in addition to the description, for instance, “gaming” and “hall.”

Creation

However, when no correspondence occurs in a language with a distinctive writing system, creation may be applied to translate the exotic concept, which is regarded by Aixelá (1996) as a very rare phenomenon. Loh (1958) only proposed one translation strategy of a domestication nature, symbolic translation accompanied by a semantic explanation at the end.

In the case of “chaise longues,” the term was not translated descriptively or transcribed by its pronunciation. Instead, it was substituted with the word *guifei yi*

貴妃椅 (literally “magnificent concubine chair”), which demonstrates a lack of correspondence with the target text. The word is not included in *Xiandai Hanyu Cidian* 《現代漢語辭典》, one of China’s most authoritative reference books. Its etymological origin is also obscure and cannot be found in any source. One hypothesis is that the item in question is a recreation based on the word *guifei ta* 貴妃榻, a traditional Chinese furniture. In ancient China, *ta* 榻 served as a couch, on which people could sit and nap, but its use is not effectively common in the modern era. Both chaise longues and *guifei ta* own long and narrow platform and have a similar function for people to take a rest. That may be the reason why people associate the French-origin sofa with this ancient Chinese furniture. The word 貴妃椅 borrowed the first two characters of *guifei ta*, which literally means “magnificent concubine,” used to refer to the highest-ranking imperial concubine in the past, and combined with the character of “chair” at the end to form the name of this particular piece of furniture.

The creation can also be found in the translation of “kitchen islands” in Chinese, *daotai* 島台 (literally “island counter”), which is also not registered in *Xiandai Hanyu Cidian*. The creation may have considered the source text and/or the furniture feature, which is placed in the middle of a kitchen, and a semantic explanation at the end, in accordance with the linguistic structure of the Chinese languages.

Omission

When a specific component of the source text is deemed superfluous for the target language and omitted in the translation, the procedure is regarded as omission (Amenador & Wang, 2023; Marco, 2019). In the present study, omission is observed to be a rarely used strategy, which is observed only once in the translation of “console tables” to “consola,” which means “a small, long, narrow

table that leans against a wall and on which decorative objects are placed” (Porto Editora, n.d.-b) in Portuguese. In other words, the word “consola” in Portuguese already contains the meaning of “table.” Therefore, it is unnecessary to repeat its meaning in translation. It somehow reveals the lexical similarity between these two Indo-European languages, while also highlighting the differences between them.

Intracultural Adaptation

Another less frequently observed translation is intracultural adaptation, which was applied once in Portuguese translation. In this instance, the term from the source language was not translated deceptively or literally but substituted by another term from the exact origin “that is comparatively familiar and accepted in the target culture” (Amenador & Wang, 2023, p. 7). The only example that we identified that may be considered to conform to this procedure is the translation of the term “open wardrobes” in Portuguese, “roupeiros para closets” (literally “wardrobes for closets”), in which the concept of “open” has been exchanged for the word “closets.” According to the Portuguese dictionary edited by Porto Editora, “closet” is seen as a loan word in Portuguese with the meaning of “a room in a dwelling used for storing shoes, clothes or household utensils” (Porto Editora, n.d.-a), contains, therefore, its own cultural reference.

Discussion

Following the quantitative and qualitative analyses, the translations to Portuguese and Chinese demonstrate several notable differences. When translating furniture-related terms from English to Portuguese, neutralization strategies were applied with greater frequency, while foreignization was most used in Chinese, although the frequency of neutralizing strategies was also significant. These

differences may relate to the distinct writing systems of the languages in question. In Portuguese, an English word that lacks a potential correspondence can be maintained and accepted as a loan word without changing its form. However, in Chinese, the word is generally substituted by a description to clarify its meaning or literally translated. Due to the specific grammar structure of Chinese language, which differs significantly from that of English, a particular or additional component is required in the translation. In some cases, a proper creation is also accepted in the Chinese language. Although English and Portuguese share several similarities in lexical structures, it does imply that a literal translation is always the optimal solution. In fact, in this study, neutralization, such as description and generalization, amplification, and condensation, were more frequently applied in practice, demonstrating the transmission of different cultural references by words with the same etymological origin.

Although a word may possess a certain correspondence in another language to indicate the same object, it does not necessarily indicate that these two terms have equal meaning in their respective cultures. Different etymological origins may result in disparate uses and definitions of the word. For example, on IKEA's Chinese website, both "stools" and "benches" were translated to *dengzi* 凳子, in other words, "stools" and "benches" may be viewed by native speakers of Chinese language as the same category, revealing distinctive degrees of granularity of related words in different languages. As previously mentioned, the English terms "trolleys," "barrow" and "dolly" may all be translated into Chinese as 推車 and no specific distinction was observed between the translations of "restaurant" and "café" into Chinese, as analyzed through the available translation solutions on IKEA's website. Another example is the translation solution adopted by IKEA for "armchairs." The term was translated literally into *fushou yi* 扶手椅 in Chinese, as "arm" is also utilized to refer to "the arm of a piece of clothing or furniture is a part

of it that you put your arm in or on” (Cambridge University Press & Assessment, n.d.-a). However, *fushou* 扶手 can also be translated also into “handrail,” since the word means *neng rang shou fuzhu de dongxi* 能讓手扶住的東西 (something that the hands can hold) (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Language Research Institute Dictionary Editorial Office, 2016, p. 399) in Chinese. Nevertheless, in Portuguese website, “armchair” corresponds to “poltrona,” a word derived from the Italian (Porto Editora, n.d.-e). Interestingly, the literal translation strategy was not employed in this case, even though the expression “cadeira de braço” (literally “chair of arm”) exists in the Portuguese language. One of the reasons why substitution strategy is preferred may relate to the assimilation of similar cultures, as evidenced by the French word “chaise longues,” which is utilized in both Portuguese and English. Cultural similarity and geographic proximity determine the compatibility of language use in certain ways.

In the case of the furniture category, it is evident that a significant proportion of the items in question may not have existed in the history of China and some of them, such as the sofa, only became a common feature of the lives of ordinary people in China no more than two centuries ago. Even in the present day, the Chinese language employs the same character to indicate “clock” and “bell.” This is because, when the clock was first introduced to the country, there was no corresponding object. In the past, the bell was used to indicate the time, which is the reason why the Chinese people ended up using the character “bell” to name this Western machine, despite the fact that their functions cannot be regarded as identical. Compared to the historical relationship between English-speaking and Portuguese-speaking countries, the linguistic and cultural communication between China and the Western world is a relatively recent. For instance, the first Chinese-English and English-Chinese dictionary was published merely in the 18th century by the missionary Robert Morrison. Therefore, it is evident that the linguistic and

cultural backgrounds of Chinese and English may diverge considerably, which can lead to challenges and difficulties in translating content that is specific to a particular culture.

Conclusion

To ascertain the differences between translation strategies applied in Portuguese and Chinese, a study was conducted on the translations of 105 terms under the “furniture” category on IKEA’s website for these two languages. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were realized, and the results indicate that foreignization was utilized more frequently in the Chinese translations. Meanwhile, neutralizing strategies were more recommended in Portuguese translations, despite the fact that Portuguese shares certain lexical similarities with English. As Davies (2003) posited, different target cultures may accept disparate translation conventions, and these discrepancies should be regarded as tendencies rather than absolute oppositions. In this study, foreignization strategies constituted a mere 3.15% more utilization than neutralizing nature strategies employed in Chinese translations. Due to the inherent difficulty in identifying CSIs, it is possible that not all of the analyzed terms contain a specific reference to the source and/or target culture(s). Nevertheless, examples illustrate disparate approaches to translating languages with distinctive writing systems. It stands to reason that the nature of translation strategies employed in practice may, at least to some degree, be influenced by the writing system of the language in question.

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