The Acceptability of English Translation of Chinese Culture-Loaded Terms to English Native Speakers: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective

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Culture-loaded terms are the basic unit of culture, successful translation of which is of importance to achieve the purpose of intercultural communication. In addition, target language readers' acceptance of translation is one of the influential factors of translation quality. This study centers on the acceptability of English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms by means of a critical discourse analysis with a combination of qualitative and quantitative study. English translations of 17 Chinese culture-loaded terms are selected as the research materials and 7 participants are recruited to participate in the interview and Think-Aloud Protocols (TAPs) test. A discourse analysis approach is applied to study the TAPs verbalization in detail, intending to uncover participants' understanding towards these terms. It is found that, in general, the acceptability to the terms is relatively high and participants can accept and understand all of the high-frequency terms, most of which are material terms. As for terms in low-frequency and in other classifications, the acceptability is relatively low. Concerning the terms that the participants proclaimed to understand, a further detailed critical discourse analysis reveals statistically that most of the participants are actually uncertain about their propositions, and their understanding is at low levels. In addition, based on the results revealed, this research suggests that translators should be flexible and creative by adopting a combination of different translation methods in light of both source materials and target readers.

Keywords: Chinese culture-loaded terms, translation acceptability, Think-Aloud Protocols, discourse analysis, a mixed methods approach

Culture-loaded terms, reflecting the history, culture, and folk customs of a country and bearing the characteristics of the national culture, are "the direct and indirect reflections of national cultural in the structure of lexeme" (Hu, 1999, p. 64). As special words, phrases and idioms having typical meanings in a certain culture, culture-loaded terms reflect unique activity patterns of given nations formed in the long process of history

and are peculiar to other nations (Newmark, 2001). Since culture itself is such a big umbrella covering rich and various types of human civilization, scholars have aired different views on the classification of culture-loaded terms. According to Newmark (1988), culture includes ecological culture, material culture, social culture, social organization, gesture and habits culture so that culture-loaded terms should reflect these five categories. Nida (2004) deems that culture-related elements and units should fall into five categories as well, namely, ecological culture, material culture, social culture, religious culture and linguistic culture. Nida's classification of cultural elements is more inclusive than Newmark's, which is also the most frequently adopted classification method of culture-loaded terms home and abroad. Chinese researchers also classify culture-loaded terms into different categories based on Chinese culture-loaded terms. According to Wang (1991), there are seven types of Chinese culture-loaded terms. This version is complete yet some types overlap with each other. For example, culture-specific words

such as *bamboo* overlap with words endowed whit specific historical and cultural background such as *red bean*. Other scholars including Mei (1993), Liu (2003) and He (2013) further improve Wang's version. However, there still lacks distinct discrimination between certain categories. For example, Mei's division of idiomatic expressions related with Chinese history, culture, tradition overlaps with that of words with symbolic and associative meaning.

This research, based on Nida's classification and those of Chinese researchers, divide Chinese culture-loaded terms into six categories, namely, ecological terms, material terms, social terms, religious terms, linguistic terms and history-related and literary allusion terms. This division keeps Nida's five categories, and add history-related and literary allusion which can include other Chinese-specific culture elements in history and literary works.

As Hall (1977) pointed out, culture has its own characteristics in different culture groups. Intercultural communication depends on the understanding and acceptance of other cultures by both parties breaking through cultural differences. Thus, the uniqueness of culture-loaded terms is not only of particular importance to record and mirror the culture of a given nation for their abundant and unique denotative and connotative meanings, but also poses challenges to transform the meaning of culture-loaded terms for the purpose of intercultural communication. To this end, translation, as a communicative activity between languages and cultures as well as a process of linguistic transferring and cultural exchange, plays a critical role.

In the field of translatology, culture-loaded terms are regarded as being endowed with concepts totally unknown in the target culture. The concepts in question may be abstract or concrete, which may relate to religious beliefs, social customs and linguistic terms or allusions (Baker, 2000; Gambier & Stolze, 2004), and these concepts are also known as "non-equivalent terms in which the cultural meanings carried by the words in source language do not usually have corresponding expressions in target language" (Bao & Bao, 2004, p. 10) and they have both denotative meanings and connotative meanings (Jin, 2003). In addition, connotations of culture-loaded terms may change along with social development embracing epochal characters, implications, polysemy and bearing the features of uniqueness, contemporaneity, conciseness and variability (He, 2013).

However, culture-loaded terms demand accurate and idiomatic translation in order to achieve successful cultural communication between different cultures. How target readers understand and accept culture-loaded terms exerts direct impact on the effectiveness of intercultural and international communication, and the effectiveness of translation is crucial to the success of intercultural communication. Previous research on English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms has mainly focused on translatability of culture-loaded terms, translation strategies, methods as well as translation acceptability. The issue of translatability is obviously related to the uniqueness of culture-loaded terms, and the understanding of cultural diversity and the recognition of translatability are the necessary premise of successful translation and intercultural communication. Research has concluded that there exists universality of human cognition and languages, thus languages are translatable, which lays a foundation for the translation of culture-loaded terms (He, 2009). Meanwhile, cultures and languages are diverse with each other. Therefore, translators ought to take a dialectical view in that there is commonness between source language and target language, so it is possible to transfer the meaning of culture-loaded terms from one language to another. Meanwhile, translators ought to be fully aware of the difficulty in the process of translation (Peng & Zeng, 2004).

In terms of strategies, methods and techniques of English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms, generally speaking, research mainly focuses on the application of some translation theories in translated texts (Liu, 2014; Shao, 2019; Yang, 2012) and the effectiveness of certain translation methods, concluding that free translation is more effective than other methods (Liao, 2008; Kong, 2008; Yu, 2010). Other researchers further explore this issue from cognitive perspective. Instead of simply discussing translation strategies and methods, these researchers try to study the schema based on which culture-loaded terms are formed and how it can be conducive for successful C-E translation (Tao, 2012; Wang, 2009; Xue, 2014; Yang, 2015).

Translation acceptability, identified as the degree to which translations are understandable and acceptable by target language readers (Fan, 1994), is obviously of great significance. If translation is incomprehensible, intercultural communication would be blocked and translation itself turns to be a failure. Hence, more and more scholars have paid due attention to the issue of translation acceptability and target language readers' anticipations (Chen, 2013; Chen & Yang, 2002; Zhang, 2013). These studies are devoted to the raise of translators' audience awareness and the concern of cultural differences and tolerance of diverse values in different cultures (Fei, 2007) as well as the readability and understandability of translated texts (Li & Jia, 2012). Among the studies on translation acceptability, few researchers study the translation acceptability of Chinese culture-loaded terms. In the meantime, the studies on the C-E translation acceptability of Chinese culture-loaded terms mainly focus on culture-loaded terms with high frequency, and it shows that terms with high frequency are more understandable (He, 2010; Liu & Wang, 2015; Zhang, 2011). All of these studies adopt a corpus-base method, either to analyze the development

and characteristics of high-frequency Chinese culture-loaded terms in the Corpus of Contemporary American English, or to perceive translation of high-frequency Chinese culture-loaded terms in C-E Parallel Corpus and interpret source texts and translations from the aspect of cultural psychology.

This research employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to study the acceptance of English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms from the target language readers' perspective. English native speakers' verbalizations concerning their understanding towards both high-frequency and low-frequency Chinese culture-loaded terms are collected by means of Think-Aloud Protocols (TAPs) test and are analyzed in a critical discourse analysis approach.

Analytical Framework

As has been mentioned above, the present research aims to study English natives' acceptance and attitudes toward English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms. To this end, the research adopts Halliday's systemic functional grammar by particularly exploring the interpersonal function. Interpersonal function is one of the three functions of systemic functional grammar (Halliday, 2000), focusing on the interaction between listeners and speakers in the discourse situation and the speakers' attitudes toward what they speak or write about.

In interpersonal function of language, Polarity and Modality systems are the most significant constituents. Polarity is the choice between positive and negative, namely an opinion of either "yes" or "no". In English, Polarity realizes its functions in the Finite element; each Finite verbal operator has two forms, one positive, namely *is*, *was*, *has* etc., the other negative, namely *isn't*, *wasn't*, *hasn't*, etc. (Halliday, 2000). Modality refers to the intermediate degrees, reflecting possibilities that are not limited to a choice between "yes" and "no". The Modality system is responsible for construing the position of uncertainty that lies in Polarity, which can reflect speakers' implicit or explicit attitudes, judgments and commitments of probabilities and obligations, either positive or negative, on the status of what is being said (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2008). Many modal expressions are used to express Modality. The following modal expressions are examined in this research, including Finite Modal Operator, Modal Adjunct and Metaphors of Modality.

Finite Modal Operator

In Modality system, Finite Modal Operator plays the leading role in expressing speakers' attitudes and verifying propositions, which is ascribable to modal auxiliary verbs, such as *may*, *can*, *must*, *shall*, *will*, *could*, *might*, *should*, *would*, *need*, *dare*, *ought*

to, etc. Halliday (2000) set scales on Modality, namely, high, median and low, which is called Modality value. Modality value realized by the Finite Modal Operator is summarized by Halliday (2000, p. 362) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Modality Value Realized by Finite Modal Operators

Modality Value	Finite Modal Operators
High	must, ought to, need, has to, is to
Median	will, would, shall, should
Low	may, might, can, could

With the help of Finite Modal Operator, the modal auxiliary verbs used by participants can be analyzed so as to perceive how they understand and accept the translations of the selected Chinese culture-loaded terms.

Modal Adjunct

In English, Modal Adjunct is the interpersonal basis used to express the possibility and temporality of speakers' proposition, which is listed in two groups: Mood Adjuncts and Comment Adjuncts. Mood Adjuncts are closely connected with the meanings realized by the Mood system, which mainly consists of Polarity, Modality, Temporality and Mood (Halliday, 2000). In terms of Comment Adjuncts, "they are less closely tied to the grammar of Mood and they express the speakers' attitudes either to the proposition as a whole or to the particular speech function" (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2008, p. 129). Halliday covered four subsets of Mood Adjunct as are shown in Table 2 (Halliday, 2000, pp. 82−83).

Table 2

The Principal Items Functioning as Mood Adjunct

Adjuncts of Polarity	
not, yes, no, so	
Adjuncts of Modality	
Probability	probably, possibly, certainly, perhaps, maybe
Usuality	usually, sometimes, always, never, ever, seldom, rarely
Readiness	willingly, readily, gladly, certainly, easily
Obligation	definitely, absolutely, possibly, at all cross, by all means
Adjuncts of Temporality	
Time	yet, still, already, once, soon, just
Typicality	occasionally, generally, regularly, mainly, for the most part
Adjuncts of Mood	
Obviousness	of course, surely, obviously, clearly
Intensity	just, simply, merely, only, even, actually, really, in fact
Degree	quite, almost, nearly, scarcely, hardly, absolutely, totally, utterly, entirely, completely

The utilization of Modal Adjuncts is instrumental for the researchers in this study to analyze adverbs in the discourse made by the participants, which could display the participants' judgment, attitudes and understanding regarding the English translation of the tested terms.

Metaphor of Modality

Metaphor of Modality is a very typical example of interpersonal metaphor, based on the semantic relationship of projection (Halliday, 2000). It can be recognized as speakers' attitudes and stances towards some clauses by uttering other clauses. In another word, speakers explicitly and implicitly voice their views concerning possibilities of propositions through projecting clause, which can also be called metaphorized Modality such as *I believe*, *I think*, *it seems that*, etc. It can turn the one-way mental process into the projecting clauses with Modality meanings (Eggins, 1994, p. 116).

By analyzing the metaphorized Modality elements in the discourse made by the participants, the authors can grab their real opinions. If the metaphors of Modality in the discourse are mostly subjective, it suggests that the speakers expressed their opinions standing metaphors of Modality are objective, the opinions they conveyed seem to be more concordant with the quality of the events themselves, without being influenced by other things and people.

Methodology

To achieve the research goal, the following questions are raised:

1. What is English natives' general acceptability to the English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms?

2. What is their acceptability to the English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms in different frequencies and different classifications?

3. How do native speakers accept and understand the positively-accepted term as revealed in a critical discourse analysis approach?

Research Materials

The research took Chinese-English version of the journal sponsored by Center for Language Education and Cooperation as a case. Now, the journal is one of the most important carriers of both Chinese language and culture for the purpose of cross-culture communication (Zhang, 2016).

Based on the principle of methodological triangulation and classification of culture-loaded terms mentioned above, the authors, together with other two researchers, centered on 509 English translations of Chinese culture-loaded terms extracted from the four culture columns of the journal from 2009 to 2017. The research finally came down to 16 ecological terms, 277 material terms, 119 social terms, 53 religious terms, 14 the TAPs test (Table 3). The selection of these 17 translations is based on the criteria of term frequency and topic frequency at the same time. Term frequency includes both high-frequency and low-frequency terms calculated by AntConc, and the issue of topic frequency is coped with by means of BP neutral network model. This modal not only considers the frequency of terms but also their distributions in relation to topics and issues in the original materials. Table 4 shows the results of the calculation of the tested terms. The criterion to define high frequency and low frequency is 0.5, the closer to 1, the higher the frequency is; and the closer to 0, the lower. There are 8 high-frequency terms and 9 low-frequency terms.

Table 3

The 17 Selected Culture-loaded Terms in 6 Categories and With Both High and Low Frequency

Classification	Number	Selected Terms
Ecological terms	1	灵芝草(felicitous plant)
Material terms	11	旗袍(qipao)，胡同(hutong)，兵马俑(bingmayong)，水墨画(shuimohua)，四合院(siheyuan)，景泰蓝(jingtailan)，点心(dim sum)，宣纸(rice paper)，篆刻(zhuanke)，弄堂(longtang)，客家土楼(the Hakka Tulou)
Social terms	2	春节(chunjie)，留白(leaving blank spaces)
Religious terms	1	生肖属相(shengxiaoshuxiang)
Linguistic terms	1	吴带当风(Wu's billowing dresses)
History-related and literary allusion terms	1	贵妃醉酒(drunken beauty)

Note. The terms in bold are high-frequency terms and the underlined terms are those with diverse translations; terms with only one translation version are provided with the translation while those with diverse translations are provided with Chinese *pinyin*.

Table 4

The Output Result of the Tested Terms by Means of BP Neutral Network Model

The Tested Terms	Number	Distribution	Output Result
chunjie(春节)	84	14	1
qipao(旗袍)	76	5	1
hutong(胡同)	67	4	1
dim sum(点心)	34	3	0.9996
rice paper(宣纸)	18	5	0.9988
bingmayong(兵马俑)	30	2	0.895
shuimohua(水墨画)	25	3	0.6597
siheyuan(四合院)	15	3	0.5965
zhuanke(篆刻)	30	1	0.2201
Shengxiaoshuxiang (生肖属相)	22	2	0.0045
leaving blank spaces (留白)	8	1	0.0039
jingtailan(景泰蓝)	25	1	0.0031
felicitous plant(灵芝)	13	6	0.0003
longtang(弄堂)	8	3	0.0002
the Hakka Tulou (客家土楼)	7	1	0.0018
Wu's billowing dresses (吴带当风)	5	2	0.0001
drunken beauty (贵妃醉酒)	5	2	0.0001

The BP (back propagation) neural network model is a multi-layer feedforward neural network model, which is based on back propagation arithmetic training. It is the most widely used neural network model at present, which can effectively increase the accuracy of software reliability (Zhu, 2006). As can be seen from Table 4, "zhuanke" appears only in one article but for 30 times while "longtang" only appears 8 times but in 3 different articles. In this case, it is hard to determine whether the frequency is high or low by simply calculating the number of terms. BP model can help cope with this difficulty by considering both the indicator of number and distribution so as to have a more accurate result. The output result of frequency in Table 4 shows the more accurate result by BP model.

Instruments

The instruments in this research include a background information interview and an acceptability analysis think-aloud protocols task (Appendix A and Appendix B). The interview was administered in advance to check participants' background information and to ensure that all of the participants were suitable for the TAPs test.

Think-aloud protocols is a method to identify cognitive and meta cognitive processes as participants are asked to talk aloud while thinking, solving problems, or learning (Ericsson & Simon, 1993; Gibson, 1995). Compared to retrospective measures such as questionnaire, think-aloud protocol is regarded as more accurate for capturing participants' acceptability and cognitive process while they are working on a particular task (Veenman & Spaans, 2005). In this study, the TAPs materials contained two parts. Part one was Q & A. This part includes seven terms with one translation version. The purpose of this task is to ask if the participants can understand the translation of each term with the help of contexts extracted from the journal. Each context was attached the question of "From this sentence, can you understand the term?" Part two took the form of multiple choice and it consisted of ten terms with diverse translation versions, which were edited as options. In this part, participants were asked to tell the researchers which translation version was the most appropriate and understandable one according to the context. If there was no applicable choice, the participants can voice their own suggestions according to their understanding. The questions in Part one and multiple choices in Part two are listed in Appendix A and B.

Participants

The participants are seven Americans, five males and two females. Five of them were college students from The University of Tennessee who took part in the Summer Immersion in Southeast University. The reason why the author invited them to join the TAPs is that they performed positively and expressed actively in the penal discussion. The other two participants were the teaching assistants in Southeast University, who were sensitive to language and willing to share ideas with others. All of the seven participants perfectly come with the ideal candidates for Think-aloud protocols, who "ought to be sensitive to language, articulate, talkative, extroverted and cooperative" (Guo, 2007, pp. 6–7). The overall participants are all Americans and were interviewed before the experiment to ensure that all the participants were suitable candidates and were willing to participate in the test.

Data Collection

Prior to the day of formal TAPs test, participants were required to complete a video-based TAPs training exercise which was sent to all of the seven participants three days prior to the task. This includes three different TAPs tasks to ensure that they could adequately engage themselves in the TAPs (Ericsson & Simon, 1993): an alphabet exercise, counting the number of dots

on a page, and verbal recall. In order to check their mastery of TAPs, all of the seven participants were required to think aloud while taking the warming up Chinese culture-loaded terms tests. Such a training not only gave the participants an opportunity to practice and familiarize themselves with TAPs, but also enabled the researchers to train the participants to verbalize and relax.

When all the preparatory work was ready, data collection was conducted individually in Southeast University meeting room. All of the participants were instructed to think aloud and try to speak out loud anything that came into their mind throughout the test. The whole process was recorded. The participants were provided with as much time as they needed. However, they were not provided with reference materials of any kind. In the whole process, the participants' performance was not influenced in any way and possible interference caused by the researchers was avoided. Any change in the participants' normal testing environment was reduced to a minimum.

Directly after the think-aloud task, a retrospective method was applied. All of these seven participants were additionally questioned about their approach to understanding individual culture-loaded terms in the task. And then the researchers checked with the participants about the authenticity of the data, which gave the participants opportunities to verify whether the protocols compiled for them veritably reflected their understanding or whether the interpretation of each culture-loaded terms was what they truly wanted to express.

The participants' verbalization was recorded and transcribed. When all the transcribing work was finished, the corresponding participants were invited to listen to the recording once more to make sure that each transcription was complete, accurate and intelligible. Besides, the participants' think-aloud task results were also checked to make sure that all the participants' task results were collected. What's more, the unintelligible verbalization was selected and presented to the corresponding participants to repeat.

Data Analysis

The analysis was done in the following three steps:

Step 1: Use Polarity system to judge qualitatively whether the participants understood the translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms or not in general and according to frequency and category of the culture-loaded terms.

Step 2: Leave out the discourses indicating that the participants did not understand the terms and keep the discourses indicating that they understood the terms. These discourses then were to be analyzed in detail in a quantitative method, for the researchers could not tell whether the participants really understood the terms or just based on the speculations.

Step 3: Identify distribution of the three modal expressions of Modality system in the seven participants' discourses. In this step, the quantitative statistics was utilized. The number and ratio demonstrating the subsets of Modality system were reported. Then, qualitative descriptions with illustrative examples were used to demonstrate the genuine acceptability and understanding towards the seemingly accepted discourses of tested English translation of Chinese culture-loaded terms.

Results and Discussion

This part presents and discusses the results from the seven participants' TAPs verbalizations in accordance with the research questions.

General Acceptability

With the help of Polarity system, the researchers examined how Polarity system including *yes*, *so*, *no* or *not* was used by the participants in their discourses when they answered the questions in Part one. It can be clearly found that all of the participants frequently adopted positive Polarity system to express their understanding towards the tested terms.

Example 1
RN: <u>Yeah</u>. Rice paper. I can understand that.

Example 2
S: And I <u>understand</u> leaving blank spaces. My mom is an artist. So I know about blank spaces.

In these two examples, both of the participants clearly expressed their positive stand toward the tested terms by using positive Polarity system.

Acceptability of Terms in Different Frequencies and Classifications

Similarly, how the participants used Polarity system was analyzed according to frequency and category of the tested culture-loaded terms respectively. According to the classification of culture-loaded terms in this research, 7 out of 8 high-frequency terms belong to material terms, which shares a large proportion. The rest five classifications are evenly distributed by the culture-loaded terms in low-frequency. The qualitative analysis shows that all of the high-frequency terms can be accepted and understood. In comparison with high-frequency terms, only 2 out of 9 low-frequency terms were accepted by all

the participants while another 2 low-frequency terms were misunderstood by all participants. It indicates that participants showed a high degree of acceptability to the high-frequency terms, most of which are material terms. In terms of the low frequency terms, participants have diverse attitudes. To a certain degree, it can be concluded that a large part of the low-frequency terms could not be accepted and understood by the participants.

Example 3

MG: I <u>understand</u> the word rice paper. I <u>mean</u>, I feel like <u>it's</u> a uh, paper substance used to write on but is created out of rice. It's actually like rice(s) is the stable food for Chinese culture. It only makes sense being economic, using crafts they have in versatile ways."

In this example, the participant used positive Polarity system several times to express that he could understand the term and was certain about his statement.

Example 4

RN: Um, I <u>would say</u> Qipao dresses. Um, hum, in America, like typically a dress is something that goes like maybe five inches below the waist, um, and down to like the ankles, or sometimes it even further than that. <u>So</u> being the Qipao's meaning, um, dress <u>to be</u> the most appropriate to add behind that for at least my understanding.

In this example, the participant used positive Polarity system to show his certainty about one of the translation versions for *Qipao*.

Example 5

K: Drunken beauty, I have <u>no</u> idea. I think properly it is maybe a person who's pretty in drunk.

Example 6

RW: Um, so I understand the purpose of the Hakka Tulou. Yeah, um, but I like <u>don't</u> know what it is. You know what it is. I mean like it says to prevent us and things, but, um, I <u>don't</u> know what they look like. Yeah.

In these two examples, the participants talked about their understanding toward *drunken beauty* and *the Hakka Tulou*, both of which are low frequency terms while the former belong to history and literary allusion term and latter material term. Clearly the participants used negative Polarity system to express their attitude.

Acceptability to Culture-Loaded Terms in a Critical Discourse Analysis Approach

The qualitative analysis reveals the general understanding of all the tested Chinese culture-loaded terms both as a whole and according to frequency and classification. This section further explores the acceptance in detail by adopting a quantitative method. Based on the transcriptions of the participants' discourses from TAPs test, the distributions of Finite Modal Operators, Modal Adjuncts and Metaphors of Modality in Modality System were calculated as shown in Tables 5–7.

Acceptability Revealed by the Finite Modal Operators

According to Table 5, there are altogether 133 modal verbs in the 7 transcriptions of TAPs verbalization, of which 0.8% modal verbs are high value modal operators, taking up the lowest proportion while the median value modal operators are much more than the low value modal operators, the percentage of which, respectively, are 75.2 and 24. For the employment of median value modal operator, there are 65 *would*, covering the largest part. In terms of the low value modal operator, *can* (21) takes up the largest proportion.

Finite modal operators with different modal values reflect the degree of certainty about the statements proposed by speakers. The distribution manifests that the median and low value modal operators are more preferred in the TAPs verbalization. The propositions using median value modal operators indicate that the participants were fairly certain that their statements were true. And the propositions of low value modal operators show that participants were uncertain about their judgement, which further indicates that they didn't understand the terms totally. There is only one high value modal operator in the verbalization, which leads to the verbalization lack of affirmative tone.

For example, when one participant was asked to express his understanding of the term *hutong*, he used median value modal operator *would* several times, indicating he was not certain about what he was talking about.

Example 7

RN: Um, um, I <u>would</u> I <u>would</u> say none of these. Um, well, since it's referred. to as neighborhoods like that will make the most sense for me. So, um, the hutong (Beijing) will make the most sense of and the like, even though it says alley and being that is multiple residences like combined together, it'll make sense for it to be more so as a neighborhood. Because in America, that's like, that's what we refer to it as. I mean, it <u>wouldn't</u> be like alleyway, but

multiple, you know, courtyards in the same area <u>would</u> be a neighborhood.

Table 5

The Distribution of Finite Modal Operators

Modal Values	Modal Verbs	Number	Frequency
High	need	1	0.8%
	will	28	
Median	would	65	75.2%
	should	1	
	may	4	
	might	2	
Low	can	21	24%
	could	3	
Total	/	125	100%

Acceptability Revealed by Modal Adjuncts

Table 6 shows that Adjuncts of Polarity and Modality have the largest number among the four subsets of Modal Adjuncts, accounting for 63.2%. *Not*, *maybe* and *so* are the top three of the most frequently adopted Adjuncts of Polarity and Modality. Adjuncts of Mood rank the second, keeping the percentage of 33.18, in which *just* (29) is the most frequently used Adjunct. Only 3.62% are Adjuncts of Temporality, which accounts for the lowest part.

In the Modal Adjuncts of Modality, *maybe* takes up the largest proportion and *probably* is in second place. These two Modal Adjuncts express the meaning of probability, which indicates that participants primarily showed different degree of certainty in the experiment. *Maybe* represents the uncertain inferences and something unlikely. Then statements with *probably* were used to express something with big possibility, which is higher than that of *maybe*. In the verbalization, the Modal Adjunct *maybe* was much more frequently used than *perhaps*. It illustrates that most of the participants were unsure about their answers and judgment, and their acceptability on terms was relatively low. The following is an example of the use of *maybe* in one participant's discourse, in which the participant used *maybe* several times to show her uncertainty about the term.

Example 8

K: I choose "qipao". That is an international Chinese dress. I think, <u>maybe</u> some foreigners wearing it to specifically Chinese events. Like if um, <u>maybe</u> and it would say Mid-Autumn festival or <u>maybe</u> it's, it's like, um, what it is, "入乡随俗". So <u>maybe</u> like if it's the Chinese events, although

I think it would be inappropriate to wear, <u>maybe</u>, um, uh, the Chinese dress for a nine tenth events for a foreigner.

Adjuncts of Mood are usually used to show obviousness, intensity and degree of the propositions. It is found that Adjuncts expressing intensity were commonly used in the Modal Adjuncts of Mood. And the number of Adjuncts expressing degree and obviousness was much small. It indicates that in terms of positive protocols, participants showed no assurance toward their judgment and statement. As for the Modal Adjuncts expressing intensity, 7 Modal Adjuncts are identified: *simply*, *just*, *only*, *even*, *actually*, *really* and *as a matter of fact*. In addition, *just* is the most frequently adopted Modal Adjuncts expressing intensity. *Just* could be used to emphasize the propositions made by the speakers, and to a certain degree, it is equal to *exactly*.

Generally speaking, participants applied more Adjuncts of Modality than Adjuncts of Mood in TAPs. Meanwhile, in the present study, Adjuncts of Modality were adopted to show the uncertainty of the judgement, which surpassed the expressions showing affirmation. Hence it may be concluded that, by the large, participants were uncertain about their statements.

Table 6

The Distribution of Modal Adjunct

Modal Adjuncts	Examples	Number	Frequency
	Yes	4	
	No	6	
	Not	32	
	So	25	
Adjuncts of Polarity and Modality	Probably	14	63.2%
	Possibly	1	
	Maybe	30	
	Usually	2	
	Sometimes	3	
	Always	4	
	Never	12	
	Ever	1	
	Definitely	5	
	Still	3	
Adjuncts of Temporality	Already	1	3.62%
	Once	3	
	Generally	1	
	Of course	2	
	Obviously	1	
	Simply	1	
	Just	29	
Adjuncts of Mood	Only	7	33.18%
	Even	8	
	Actually	6	
	Really	11	
	As a matter of	4	
	Quite	4	

Acceptability Revealed by Metaphor of Modality

As Table 7 indicates, there are three examples of Metaphor of Modality in the seven verbalizations, namely, *I think*, *I guess* and *it seems that*. Forty-four *I think* are used in the verbalizations, accounting for about 64.7%. There are 21 *I guess* and 3 *it seems that* used in the verbalizations, respectively accounting for 30.9% and 4.4%. An example is shown as follows.

Example 9

RN: Um, I guess, I can't understand dim sum. Um, I guess since it's just a supporting role, I guess the dim meaning like in America dim means like kind of light. So it's not heavy. Um, so it's light, some of whatever the main thing is, which is the snacks. Um, so it's the lightness of the whole. I guess whatever is served, um, with the tea. So I guess that makes sense.

In Example 9, when the participant was asked how he perceived the translation of *dim sum*, he used *I guess* several times in a short discourse, indicating he was not very certain about what *dim sum* was.

As what has been mentioned previously, the subjectivity and objectivity in the propositions could be reflected by the metaphors of Modality. The distribution shows that in the protocols, the metaphors of Modality are mostly subjective, namely, *I think* and *I guess*. The objective metaphors of Modality are quite few. It indicates that the judgment was made by participants themselves, and no other objective evidence could confirm their propositions. Meanwhile, Modality values are also realized in metaphors of Modality. The Modality value of *I think* is median. The Modality value of *I guess* is low and it expresses participants' speculation (Li & Zhong, 2002).

Table 7

The Distribution of Metaphor of Modality

Examples	Number	Frequency
I think	44	64.7%
I guess	21	30.9%
It seems that	3	4.4%

In this section, the seemingly positive protocols are analyzed through Modality from the aspects of Finite Modal Operator, Modal Adjunct and Metaphor of Modality. As for Finite Modal Operators, median and low value modal operators take larger percentage than the high value modal operators. It implies that

participants' acceptance was relatively low and they cannot fully understand the terms tested. In terms of Modal Adjunct, the participants utilized the Modal Adjuncts *maybe* and *just* frequently. *Maybe* expresses the meaning of uncertainty while *just* was used to show participants' confidence in their propositions. It reflects that, although participants were confident in what they said, to a large extent, they were unsure about the answers. Metaphors of Modality in the protocols are mainly subjective, namely, *I think* and *I guess*. *I think* was largely used, which is used to describe something with median Modality value. *I guess is* endowed with low Modality value. Participants adopted subjective metaphors of Modality to express their uncertain attitudes, which indirectly uncovers that participants could not fully understand the terms tested.

Suggestions for Translation

As can be seen from Table 3, 10 out of the 17 selected culture-loaded terms have more than one translation version. It is found that participants shew their preference to some versions to others, and their suggestions would be valuable for translation practice in future. Table 8 lists all the ten culture-loaded terms together with their translations and acceptability of each version.

As can be seen from Table 8, among those well accepted terms, more free translation is adopted in comparison with other translation techniques, which further supports previous research concerning acceptability and translation strategies and methods (Liao, 2008; Kong, 2008; Xu, 2019; Yu, 2010). The examples include "hutong" (胡同), "bingmayong" (兵马俑), "shuimohua" (水墨画), "zhuanke" (篆刻), "longtang" (弄堂), "chunjie" (春节) and "shengxiaoshuxiang" (生肖属相). Take "longtang" as an example. Free translation (alleyway)is better understood than transliteration (longtang) and transliteration + explanation (longtang; shanghai). Longtan, as a type of typical city layout in southern China, carries a long history and rich culture. Without enough additional background information, it is hard for target reader to understand the concept when it is only translated with transliteration method. In this case, when translators successfully locate the equivalent concept in the target language (alleyway), the translation turns out to be more effective.

For some terms such as "qipao"(旗袍), "siheyuan"(四合院) and "jingtailan"(景泰蓝), mixed method is more effective. When "qipao" is translated by means of transliteration (qipao) + explanation (dress), it is better understood and accepted in comparison with free translation or transliteration only; the combined method of free translation (courtyard) and transliteration (siheyuan) works better for the translation of "siheyuan"; and for "jingtailan", a creative method of literal translation (blue) and transliteration (jingtai) is more effective.

Table 8

The Chinese Culture-loaded Terms With Diverse Translations and Their Acceptability

Chinese Culture-loaded Terms	English Translations	Acceptability*	Translation Methods
qipao（旗袍）	banner gown	negative	Free translation
	qipao	negative	transliteration
	cheongsam	negative	Free translation
	qipao dresses	positive	Transliteration + explanation
hutong（胡同）	hutongs	negative	transliteration
	hutong(Beijing)	negative	Transliteration + explanation
	lane	negative	Free translation
	alley	positive	Free translation
bingmayong（兵马俑）	Terracotta Warriors and Horses	negative	Literal translation
	The Terracotta Army	positive	Free translation
shuimohua（水墨画）	ink and wash paintings	negative	Literal translation
	Chinese ink and wash	positive	Free translation
siheyuan（四合院）	quadrangles in Beijing	negative	Literal translation
	the courtyard houses (siheyuan)	positive	Free translation + transliteration
jingtailan（景泰蓝）	Chinese cloisonné	negative	Free translation
	cloisonné	negative	Free translation
	jingtai blue	positive	Transliteration + literal translation
zhuanke（篆刻）	zhuanke	negative	transliteration
	seal cutting	negative	Free translation
	seal engraving	positive	Free translation
longtang（弄堂）	longtang (Shanghai)	negative	Transliteration + explanation
	longtang	negative	transliteration
	alleyway	positive	Free translation
chunjie（春节）	the Spring Festival	negative	Literal translation
	Chinese New Year	negative	Free translation
	Chinese Lunar New Year	positive	Free translation
shengxiaoshuxinag（生肖属相）	Chinese zodiac signs	negative	Literal translation
	Chinese zodiac	positive	Free translation

Note. The positive and negative acceptability of each translation is based on the analysis of both Polarity system and Modality system used by the participants.

And in this research, one participant suggested that "longtang" should be translated as longtang (alleyway) by combining transliteration and free translation. All these further improve the ideas of previous research (Hao & Liu, 2019; Yu, 2021), and suggest that it is important for translators to be more flexible and creative in translation and a mixed translation method to combine free translation, literal translation, transliteration and explanation should be encouraged in light of source materials and target readers.

Conclusion

By employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative method, this research explores the issue of effectiveness of translation from target readers' aspect with three major findings: first, in terms of frequency, Chinese culture-loaded terms with high frequency are easier to be understood in comparison with low-frequency terms; second, material terms are easier to be understood compared with other categories of culture-loaded terms; third, though the overall acceptability to the translation of

the selected Chinese culture-loaded terms is high, a detailed analysis reveals that it is actually on a middle-lower level. And it turns out that TAPs are helpful to collect authentic discourse data from the participants and the quantitative analysis of the discourse guided by Halliday's systematic functional grammar further provides both systematic and statistical support to reveal speakers' true attitudes toward the translation. In addition, the comparison and contrast of different translation methods in light of the acceptability to the different translations provides empirical support to the discussion of effectiveness of translation. Future studies are suggested in terms of both research content and the choice of analytical framework. For instance, the effectiveness of translation of Chinese vogue expressions, Chinese political neologisms and metaphors from target readers' perspective could be studied. This research also suggests that Halliday's systematic functional grammar should be further supported by other critical discourse analytical frameworks. For example, Halliday (2000) scales Finite Model Operators into groups of high, median and low value and each group includes several different operators. This research has revealed that in general, more median-value operators are used than the other two groups, however, within the median-value operators, there actually exists a big difference between the use of specific operators. The number of *would* is 65 while that of *will* is 28 and that of all the rest is much lower. What does this difference suggest? Does each of the median-value operators express same attitude and how can that be proved? More evidence is needed with the support of other critical discourse analytical framework such as the Appraisal System as the latter is able to provide a more in-depth analysis.

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(Appendices follow)

Appendix A

Interview

1. Would you like to make a brief introduction about yourself?

2. Have you ever been to China? How much do you know about China and Chinese culture?

3. Would you like to join the TAPs? (TAPs is a test in which participants perform a particular task while continuously reporting whatever thoughts pass through working memory)

Appendix B

Tasks for the Think-Aloud Protocols

Dear friends,

We are from School of Foreign Languages of Southeast University. We are doing a research project on C‑E translation of Chinese Culture-loaded Terms. We would like to know if the translation of these terms can be understood or whether you can accept the translation or not, and then find out the problems and mistakes preventing you from understanding it.

We would like to invite you to complete the test. Please speak aloud whatever comes to your mind when you do the test. Your kindly help and support will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your cooperation.

Part One

Q 1: "Rice paper" (Xuan Zhi in Chinese pinyin) got its name because of its birthplace in Xuanzhou (Today's Xuancheng, Anhui Province) and comes as a unique carrier of painting and calligraphy in China. Besides, it is dubbed as "millennium paper" for its aging resistance, strong tension and invariant color.

From this sentence, can you understand "rice paper"?

Q 2: Once upon a time, there were two snakes, one white and the other black, who turned themselves into dazzling beauties after thousands of years of practicing magic they came across a young man called Xu Xian on the bank of the West Lake in Hangzhou. The white snake fell in love with Xu and they got married soon. A monk, called Fahai, saw through the alluring woman and warned Xu. Under Fahai's instruction, Xi plied his wife with realgar wine on the Dragon Boat Festival and the woman transformed into a giant white snake, which scared Xu to death. The white snake went through many hardships and finally brought her husband back to life with a felicitous plant.

From this context, can you understand "felicitous plant"?

Q 3: In Guangdong-style morning tea, the tea itself plays just a supporting role, the main role being the snacks, known as "dim sum", so morning tea is often known simply as "dim sum". A single pot of tea may be accompanied by over a dozen varieties of "dim sum" of all shapes, sizes and colors, held in stacks of small bamboo steamers on a cart that the server pushes around in the restaurant.

From this sentence, can you understand "dim sum"?

Q 4: Large circular houses, "the Hakka Tulou" are mainly distributed in the bordering areas of Fujian, Guangdong, and Jiangxi. These buildings date back to the Tang and Song Dynasties and thrived during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Each "Tulou" is composed of a courtyard, three halls, two side buildings, and a circle of walls. In remote mountain areas, the Hakka people built this defensive fort to prevent thefts or conflicts with the locals.

From this sentence, can you understand "The Hakka Tulou"?

Q 5: The Chinese art has extreme high regard for the idea of "leaving blank spaces". "Blanks" are often employed by Chinese artists and calligraphers to set out the intended aesthetic effect.

From this sentence, can you understand "leaving blank spaces"?

Q 6: The frescos painted by Wu Daozi, the "divine painter" of the Tang Dynasty, with his style of painting "flowing dresses of celestial beings", make viewers feel as if everything in the fresco was moving. The figures in his paintings are either standing in the wind or flying through the sky, wearing long, loose and comfortable silk dresses billowing in the wind. Their elegance and gracefulness portrayed in a variety of poses seems to create an artistic paradise. The so-called "Wu's billowing dresses" showcase exactly the ethereal feel of silk garments.

From this context, can you understand "Wu's billowing dresses"?

Q 7: The beauty of peonies comes not only from their buds but also from their variety names taken from ancient Chinese beauties. For example, a powder-like blue variety is called "Zhaojun Leaving for the Frontier"; a pink-to-red one is "Drunken Beauty".

From this context, can you understand "Drunken Beauty"?

Part Two

In this part, each Chinese culture-loaded term has several English translation versions. Please tell us which version is the most appropriate and understandable one according to the definition of the bold pinyin. If there is no applicable choice, you

can speak out loud your own suggestions according to your understanding.

Q 8: "Qí paó" is a straight, close-fitting silk dress with a high neck and slit skirt, worn by Chinese women.

A. cheongsam

B. qipao

C. banner gown

D. qipao dresses

E. Your suggestions

Q 9: "Hú tong" is an alley formed by lines of siheyuan, traditional courtyard residences. Many neighbourhoods were formed by joining one siheyuan to another to form a "Hútong", and then joining one"Hútong" to another. The word hutong is also used to refer to such neighbourhoods, mainly in Beijing.

A. hutongs

B. hutong (Beijing)

C. lane

D. alley

E. Your suggestions

Q 10: Chinese "jǐngtàilán" is made completely by hand through a complicated and sophisticated process consisting of six main steps, including making the copper body, filigreeing, colouring, firing in a kiln etc. In fact, on more detailed examination, there can be up to 108 steps.

A. Chinese cloisonné

B. cloisonné

C. jingtai blue

D. Your suggestions

Q 11: "Bīng mǎ yǒng" is a collection of terracotta sculptures depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. It is a form of funerary art buried with the emperor in 210-209 BCE and whose purpose was to protect the emperor in his afterlife.

A. The Terracotta Army

B. Terracotta Warriors and Horses

C. Your suggestions

Q 12: "Shuǐ mò huà" are works of art created with merely water and ink, in which ink is also used to make colors and varying ink density produces astonishing variations in tonality.

A. ink and wash paintings

B. Chinese ink and wash

C. Your suggestions

Q 13: "Shēng xiāo" is a classification scheme that assigns an animal and its reputed attributes to each year in a repeating 12-year cycle.

A. Chinese zodiac

B. Chinese zodiac signs

C. Your suggestions

Q 14: "Sì hé yuàn" is usually made up of a main house in the north, an opposite house in the south, and 2 side houses in the east and west. In the middle of the "sì hé yuàn" is the courtyard, which is big enough for growing flowers and water vats for goldfish. Besides, it is a place for walking, lighting and ventilation and a venue for the residents to cool down, relax, or do domestic chores. An enclosed structure, the quadrangle has only one gate the layout reveals the traditional lifestyle of ordinary people in northern China.

A. quadrangles in Beijing

B. the courtyard houses (siheyuan)

C. Your suggestions

Q 15: "Zhuàn kè" is a traditional form of art that originated in China and later spread to East Asia. It refers to cutting a design into the bottom face of the seal (the active surface used for stamping, rather than the sides or top).

A. seal engraving

B. seal cutting

C. zhuanke

D. Your suggestions

Q 16: "Lòng táng" is a lane in Shanghai and, by extension, a community centred on a lane or several interconnected lanes.

A. longtang (Shanghai)

B. alleyway

C. longtang

D. Your suggestions

Q 17: Time-honored and traditional, "chūn jié" is the most important and most festive holiday in China. In a narrow sense it means the New Year's Eve and the first day of the first lunar month.

A. The Spring Festival

B. Chinese New Year

C. Chinese Lunar New Year

D. Your suggestions