

A Comparative Analysis of the English Translation of Sichuan Cuisine Dish Names in *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *SICHUAN (CHINA) CUISINE* Under the Guidance of Skopos Theory

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Abstract: As one of the Eight Great Cuisines of China, Sichuan cuisine is renowned in international culinary culture for its unique flavors, diverse seasoning techniques, and varied naming conventions. However, the distinctive cultural background and intricate naming methods of Sichuan dishes pose significant challenges to their English translation. Currently, *Enjoy Culinary Delights: The English Translation of Chinese Menus* and *SICHUAN (CHINA) CUISINE IN BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH* are two authoritative works on the English translation of Sichuan dish names, yet they exhibit considerable differences in translation strategies. Guided by Hans Vermeer's Skopos Theory, this paper conducts a comparative analysis of the English translations of Sichuan dish names in these two works, examining the effectiveness of their methods in terms of cultural transmission and functional realization. The findings reveal that translation strategies aligned with Skopos Theory contribute to improving the standardization of Sichuan dish name translations and provide theoretical support for the global dissemination of Sichuan cuisine and its culture.

Keywords: Skopos Theory; Sichuan Dish Names; English Translation; Comparative Analysis

1. Introduction

As one of the Eight Great Cuisines of China, Sichuan cuisine is renowned both domestically and internationally for its unique flavors, rich seasoning techniques, and creative dish names, playing a vital role in Sino-Western cultural exchange. In 2010, Chengdu was designated a

“City of Gastronomy” by UNESCO, solidifying Sichuan cuisine's international stature. However, its global dissemination relies not only on its rich culinary appeal but also on accurate and appropriate English translations of its dish names, which serve as critical vehicles for conveying cultural essence. Despite its significance, the intricate cultural background, diverse flavors, and varied naming styles of Sichuan cuisine present considerable challenges for translation.

Currently, two authoritative works—*Enjoy Culinary Delights: The English Translation of Chinese Menus* (2011, hereafter referred to as *Enjoy Culinary Delights*) and *Sichuan (China) Cuisine in Both Chinese and English* (2010, hereafter referred to as *Sichuan Cuisine*)—have contributed to standardizing Sichuan dish name translations. However, these works adopt distinct translation strategies, often yielding divergent results for the same dish. While *Enjoy Culinary Delights* emphasizes principles aimed at promoting Chinese culinary culture and standardizing dish name translation, *Sichuan Cuisine* focuses on providing standardized English translations to support Sichuan cuisine's international promotion. Given the deep cultural connotations of Sichuan dish names, it is challenging to find precise equivalents in English, making a comparative analysis of the translation strategies employed in these two works, from the perspective of Skopos Theory, particularly meaningful.

As cross-cultural exchange deepens, dish name translation transcends linguistic conversion to become a core element of cultural dissemination. Existing studies, such as Chen [1] and Cao [2], have explored Sichuan dish name translation from perspectives like Skopos Theory and communication studies but lack systematic comparative analyses of English

translations of Sichuan dish names. This paper conducts a comparative analysis of the English translation strategies for Sichuan dish names in *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *Sichuan Cuisine* from the perspective of Skopos Theory. It aims to provide theoretical support for the standardization of Sichuan dish name translations, thereby contributing to the international dissemination of Sichuan culinary culture.

2. The Skopos Theory

In 1984, Reiss and Vermeer [3] formally introduced Skopos Theory in their co-authored work *General Foundations of Translation Theory*. The theory outlines three fundamental translation principles: the Skopos principle, the coherence principle, and the fidelity principle [4]. The Skopos principle emphasizes that “a translation should function in the target language environment and culture according to the expectations of the target audience” [5]. The coherence principle ensures that the translation is intratextually coherent, aligns with the linguistic norms of the target language, and facilitates reader comprehension. The fidelity principle mandates intertextual coherence, requiring the translation to remain faithful to the source text. Among these, the Skopos principle is paramount, with the coherence and fidelity principles serving its purpose.

Vermeer [6] posits that translation is a purposeful activity, with the primary factor influencing the translation process being the overarching purpose of the translational act. He identifies three types of purposes: the translator’s purpose, the communicative purpose of the translation, and the specific purpose achieved through certain translation strategies [7].

According to Skopos Theory, the purpose of a translation determines the approach and methods employed. It transcends traditional notions of “equivalence” and “equivalency”, shifting the focus to the target culture. The source text is regarded merely as one of many “sources of information” for the translator. In this framework, translation is not about achieving exact equivalence with the source text but about its “adequacy” — whether it fulfills the intended function and purpose of the target text. Vermeer also uses related terms such as “aim”, “purpose”, “intention”, and

“function”, treating them as interchangeable within the broader concept of Skopos. Ultimately, all forms of translation are guided by their intended purpose, which determines the means employed to achieve it.

3. *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *SICHUAN (CHINA) CUISINE*

In the practice of translating Sichuan cuisine dish names, scholars and experts have made significant efforts, including issuing relevant guidelines aimed at standardizing the English translation of these names. Currently, two authoritative works dominate the field: *Enjoy Culinary Delights: The English Translation of Chinese Menus* (referred to as *Enjoy Culinary Delights*), published by World Affairs Press in 2011 under the auspices of the Beijing Municipal Foreign Affairs Office and the Organizing Committee of Beijing Speaks Foreign Languages Program [8]; and *SICHUAN (CHINA) CUISINE IN BOTH CHINESE AND ENGLISH* (referred to as *Sichuan Cuisine*), edited by Lu and Du and published by Sichuan Science and Technology Press in 2010 [9].

Enjoy Culinary Delights emerged in the context of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo, presenting principles for translating Chinese menus into English for the first time. It offers English translations for over 2,000 dish names, including those of Sichuan cuisine, based on classifications of China’s eight major cuisines and Western culinary categories. The book aims to promote Chinese culinary culture, standardize menu translations, and enhance cities’ international competitiveness and service quality. In contrast, *Sichuan Cuisine* focuses on standardizing the translation of classic Sichuan dishes. It provides English translations and preparation methods for 180 dishes across four categories — cold dishes, hot dishes, hotpots, and snacks — seeking to promote Sichuan culinary culture and support Sichuan’s international development.

4. Comparative Analysis of *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *Sichuan Cuisine* from the Skopos Theory Perspective

4.1 Literal Dish Names

Literal dish names refer to those that directly describe the main ingredients, cooking

methods, or visual characteristics of a dish. These names often convey the actual content or preparation process of the dish through their literal meaning, allowing diners to immediately grasp key details such as ingredients, flavors, or cooking techniques. Examples include “Paojiao Fengzhua” (Soaked Chicken Feet), “Shuizhu Roupian” (Boiled Sliced Pork), and “Guaiwei Jisi” (Strange Flavor Shredded Chicken). These names lack cultural or emotional symbolism, focusing instead on providing straightforward and accurate descriptions of the dish.

From the perspective of Skopos Theory, the translation of literal dish names must strike a balance between faithfully conveying the core information and achieving functional effectiveness. This ensures that the dish’s ingredients, preparation methods, and flavor profiles are communicated clearly to the target audience. According to Hans Vermeer’s Skopos Theory, translation activities should meet specific communicative purposes. Therefore, the translation strategies for literal dish names should prioritize accuracy and clarity, enabling foreign readers to quickly understand the content of the dish while promoting the culinary culture effectively.

4.1.1 Ingredient-based dish names

(1) Paojiao Fengzhua

Chicken Feet with Pickled Peppers [8]

Pickled-Chili-Flavored Chicken Feet [9]

The former adopts a literal translation strategy, which aligns with the Skopos theory’s emphasis on “conveying the information of the original text”. In terms of translation structure, it uses the combination of main ingredients plus auxiliary ingredients, presenting the components of the dish in a simple and clear manner. This translation is more suitable for situations that require concise and direct expression of the dish’s content, such as menus or restaurant orders, in accordance with the principles of functional translation. Through this approach, the main information of the dish, namely the chicken feet and pickled peppers, is directly conveyed, making it easy for foreign customers to understand and accept. However, this translation lacks in cultural conveyance as it does not highlight the unique spiciness of the “pickled peppers”, potentially failing to fully represent the flavor characteristics of this Sichuan dish.

The latter, on the other hand, places more

emphasis on the function of the translation and cultural transmission, highlighting the spicy characteristic of the “pickled peppers” and modifying the main ingredient “Chicken Feet” with “pickled chili” as a flavor. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this translation aligns with the goal of “cross-cultural communication”, especially when aiming to help foreign diners understand and experience the unique flavors of Sichuan cuisine. It effectively conveys the distinct taste of Sichuan cuisine, adhering to the “functionality-first” principle of translation. This translation not only focuses on the components of the dish but also specifically emphasizes the taste of the pickled chili, helping foreign consumers understand the “mala” culture in Sichuan cuisine. In particular, the use of the word “chili” better conveys the characteristics of chili peppers, aligning with the flavor profile of Sichuan cuisine.

(2) Tangu Paigu

Sweet and Sour Spare Ribs [8]

Sweet-and-Sour Spareribs [9]

Both adopt the “flavor plus main ingredient” translation method, translating the name directly. The difference lies in the form of the flavor and main ingredient. The former uses the common “flavor plus main ingredient” structure, directly translating the relationship between “sweet and sour” and “spare ribs”. In the framework of Skopos theory, this translation aligns with the goal of “conveying the original information”, expressing the main content of the dish in a simple and clear manner. For readers, this translation structure is easy to understand, especially in international communication, as it accurately conveys the basic information about the dish. However, this translation may have potential ambiguity, especially in conveying “flavor”, as it does not fully emphasize the characteristics of the “sweet and sour” complex flavor profile. For diners in some English-speaking countries, “sweet” and “sour” might be understood separately, without recognizing this as a special seasoning style.

The latter, however, uses a hyphenated “Sweet-and-Sour” to express it as a whole, highlighting “sweet and sour” as a complex flavor and avoiding possible ambiguity. By connecting the flavor component with the main ingredient “spareribs”, it prevents the potential misinterpretation of “sweet” and “sour” as

separate elements, thereby reinforcing the unique seasoning characteristics of Sichuan cuisine. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this translation pays more attention to “functional transfer”, especially in cross-cultural communication, where it helps foreign diners better understand the unique flavor profile and seasoning style of Sichuan cuisine. Through this translation, foreign diners can quickly identify and understand “sweet and sour” as a typical flavor combination, rather than misunderstanding it as merely sweetness or sourness.

(3) Suancai Yu

Boiled Fish with Pickled Cabbage and Chili [8]
Fish with Pickled Mustard [9]

The former translation adds “Boiled” to indicate the cooking method of the dish and follows the “main ingredient plus secondary ingredient” structure, directly translating the main and secondary ingredients. “Suan Cai” is translated as “Pickled Cabbage” and “Chili” is also included as an ingredient. This translation approach elaborates on the cooking method and ingredients, helping foreign diners understand the overall preparation and flavor profile of the dish. In the framework of Skopos theory, this addition aligns with the “purpose-oriented” principle as it caters to the target audience’s need for background information, particularly emphasizing that “Suan Cai Fish” is a boiled dish with pickled cabbage and chili as the main ingredients. This translation strategy aids in enhancing cultural adaptability, enabling readers in the target language to understand the dish’s components and flavor even without sufficient background knowledge. However, this expansion may seem overly long and might not meet the need for conciseness in some contexts, especially in menu translations, where too much description could confuse diners. Nevertheless, from the Skopos perspective, adding “Boiled” helps achieve the “functional transfer” goal in cross-cultural communication, particularly in highlighting the unique flavors and cooking techniques of Sichuan cuisine.

The latter translation omits the mention of the cooking method, simply conveying the main and secondary ingredients, “Fish” and “Pickled Mustard”. From the Skopos perspective, this simplified translation emphasizes the core components of the dish, better suited for quick understanding and direct communication. This

translation highlights the importance of “Pickled Mustard” as a secondary ingredient while avoiding lengthy descriptions, which is useful for fast information transmission, especially in menus or similar contexts, where concise expressions improve readability and convenience. However, omitting the “Boiled” method may leave foreign diners unaware of the cooking process, potentially losing some cultural background information. This translation strategy focuses more on “functionality” and “conciseness”, but in some contexts, it may fail to fully convey the complex flavor and culinary techniques of Sichuan cuisine.

4.1.2 Culinary method-based literal dish names

(1) Huiguo Rou

Twice Cooked Pork Slices [8]

Twice-Cooked Pork [9]

The former adopts the structure of “Cooking Method plus Main Ingredient”, with “Twice Cooked” clearly conveying the cooking process, specifically the method of “twice-cooking”, while “Pork Slices” further specifies the cutting method and shape of the main ingredient. The term “slices”, as defined by the *Oxford Advanced English-Chinese Dictionary*, refers to thin pieces, which aligns with the way the pork is cut into thin slices after being cooked. Therefore, this translation accurately reflects the dish’s actual form. This addition not only emphasizes the cooking method but also specifies the cutting form of the meat, ensuring the accuracy of the dish’s translation. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this translation fulfills the need for cross-cultural communication by helping the target audience better understand the dish’s preparation and appearance. It conveys precise cultural and culinary information, enabling foreign diners to more clearly grasp the characteristics of this Sichuan dish. As such, this translation aligns with the “function transfer” principle by effectively conveying information for successful cultural exchange.

The latter also follows the structure of “Cooking Method plus Main Ingredient”, but only translates the main ingredient as “Pork”, without specifying the cutting method or shape. Here, “Pork”, while conveying the main ingredient, fails to highlight the crucial “slicing” characteristic of the dish. Thus, this translation is simpler but somewhat vague, lacking clarity for those interested in the dish’s

specific form. From a Skopos theory perspective, this simplified translation emphasizes conveying the “core information” — the cooking method and the main ingredient — and is suited for contexts where quick and concise communication is needed, such as on menus or food labels. However, the absence of a description of the meat’s cutting method might prevent foreign diners from fully understanding the dish’s characteristics, particularly the cultural significance of the Sichuan-specific “twice-cooked” method. Therefore, this translation strategy leans towards “conciseness” and “functionality”, but may sacrifice accuracy in certain contexts.

(2) Chuanshi Hongshaorou
Braised Pork, Sichuan Style [8]
Red-Braised Pork Belly [9]

Both translations generally follow the structure of “Cooking Method plus Main Ingredient”, with the former adding “Sichuan Style” to emphasize the regional characteristics. This translation not only conveys the cooking method but also highlights the regional flavor, helping the target audience understand how this dish differs from other “Braised Pork” dishes. The translation of “Hongshao” has been a topic of debate, with simplified translations such as “braised” or more interpretive ones like “braising... with soy sauce” or “braising... with brown sauce” [10]. The verb “braise” refers to cooking meat or vegetables in a small amount of liquid over low heat, which aligns with the Chinese meaning of stewing or braising [11]. From the perspective of Skopos theory, the former translation is better suited to achieving the “cultural adaptability” translation goal, helping promote the Sichuan cuisine brand in international markets. However, by using “Pork” as a general term for pork, it fails to specify “Pork Belly” as the main ingredient, which may lead to a less precise understanding of the dish’s key component. While the translation’s semantic accuracy may be slightly lacking in detail, its strategy of emphasizing regional flavor aligns better with the “function-oriented” goal of cross-cultural communication, particularly in contexts that aim to highlight Sichuan culinary culture.

In contrast, the latter translation uses “Red-Braised” to directly translate the cooking method “Hongshao”, while specifying “Pork Belly” for the main ingredient. This translation

is more accurate in terms of semantic proximity and content precision. However, the use of “Red” in “Red-Braised” attempts to reflect the bright red appearance of the dish, but the word “Red” in English carries different connotations from its Chinese counterpart, where it often symbolizes joy, prosperity, and good fortune, whereas in English, it may evoke negative associations such as blood, violence, or debt. Therefore, the term “Red-Braised” may not align with the aesthetic and cultural expectations of the target audience [12]. From the “audience-oriented” principle of Skopos theory, “Red-Braised” may reduce the appeal of the translation to the target readers. To better suit the aesthetic preferences of the target language audience, it is recommended to translate “Hongshao” as “brown braised” [13], reflecting the color of the dish produced by soy sauce and other seasonings. Thus, the dish could be translated as “Brown-Braised Pork Belly”.

(3) Guotie
Guotie (Pan-Fried Dumplings) [8]
Deluxe Fried Dumplings [9]

The former uses the “transliteration plus annotation” method, translating “Guotie” as “Guotie” and providing an explanation in parentheses as “Pan-Fried Dumplings”. From the perspective of Skopos theory, the use of transliteration with annotation preserves the original phonetic characteristics of the dish name, helping foreign readers understand the Chinese pronunciation. At the same time, the additional explanation provides a clear description of the main features of the dish, including the cooking method and key ingredients. “Pan-fried” specifically indicates that the dish is shallow-fried, which aligns closely with the traditional preparation of “Guotie”. This translation balances cultural adaptability with information completeness, achieving both cultural and informational goals. From a translation purpose standpoint, this approach ensures a comprehensive transmission of the dish name.

In contrast, the latter uses a free translation, rendering “Guotie” as “Deluxe Fried Dumplings”. This translation directly uses English to describe the key components of the dish, emphasizing “Dumplings” as the main ingredient and “Fried” as the cooking method, while “Deluxe” highlights the dish’s quality or specialty. From the Skopos

theory perspective, this translation is concise and clear, allowing the target audience to quickly grasp the general characteristics of the dish. This approach is more suited to situations where rapid information transmission is needed, such as in Chinese restaurant menus or promotional materials. By avoiding potential cultural barriers or misunderstandings that may arise from transliteration, this translation emphasizes the functional aspect of communication.

4.2 Figurative Dish Names

Figurative dish names refer to those in Sichuan cuisine that carry the cultural essence of Sichuan and Shu regions. These names often have unique historical backgrounds and cultural connotations. Many figurative dish names are associated with specific people, events, or places, reflecting regional culture or commemorating certain activities. For example, some dish names are linked to historical figures, such as “Dongpo Pork” and “Mapo Tofu”, while others are related to geographic locations, like “Yibin Noodle” and “Chengdu Yuanbao Chicken”. These figurative dish names not only describe the dish but also convey the rich background and historical stories of Sichuan cuisine. From the perspective of Skopos theory, Hans Vermeer emphasizes the final function of translation, that is, whether it can meet the understanding needs of the target audience. Therefore, the English translation of figurative dish names should prioritize their cultural connotation and functional realization to ensure that the translated name not only accurately conveys the basic information about the dish but also recreates the historical and regional culture behind it.

4.2.1 Symbolic figurative dish names

(1) Furong Jipian

Sauteed Sliced Chicken in Egg White [8]

Hibiscus—like Chicken [9]

The first translation adopts a strategy of literal translation with expansion, adding “Sauteed” to clarify the cooking method is stir-frying, and “Sliced Chicken” to describe the main ingredient as sliced chicken, with “in Egg White” indicating the additional ingredient of egg whites. This translation presents a detailed

depiction of the dish’s cooking method, slicing technique, and ingredients, fully reflecting the preparation process of the dish. It helps target readers form an accurate understanding of the dish. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this expansion strategy aligns with the principles of “information transfer” and “functional adaptation”, particularly suited for international dining contexts, such as restaurant menus or food promotions, where consumers require specific information about the dish’s composition and cooking details. However, this translation method focuses more on the descriptive aspects of the dish and weakly interprets the metaphorical meaning of “Furong”, failing to highlight the cultural and artistic expression inherent in Sichuan cuisine’s naming conventions. From the Skopos theory perspective, this strategy is appropriate for functional communication, but it may not fully convey the intricate naming culture of Sichuan cuisine.

The second translation adopts a free translation approach, rendering “Furong” as “Hibiscus-like”, emphasizing the metaphorical beauty of the dish’s appearance, while retaining the information of the main ingredient, “Chicken”. This translation focuses on conveying the cultural imagery of the dish name, attempting to communicate the metaphorical and artistic aspects of Sichuan cuisine’s naming conventions. Within the framework of Skopos theory, this translation is suitable for contexts where cultural transmission and aesthetic appeal are emphasized, particularly when promoting Sichuan cuisine overseas to audiences interested in Eastern culture. However, the dish itself is not directly related to “hibiscus”, and the “white and tender” appearance of the dish is merely a metaphorical reference in the name. Translating it as “Hibiscus-like Chicken” could lead to misunderstandings regarding the dish’s appearance or ingredients, which would not align with the actual flavor. From the Skopos perspective, while this translation emphasizes cultural beauty, it may fall short in terms of functional communication, especially in contexts that prioritize conveying the dish’s actual characteristics.

(2) Long Chao Shou

Wonton Soup, Sichuan Style [8]

Long Wonton [9]

“Long Chao Shou” is a famous traditional

snack in Chengdu, where “Chao Shou” is a local term for wonton. Established in 1941 in the Yuelai Market in Chengdu, the name “Long Chao Shou” is a play on the word “Nong” (meaning rich or thick) and is also meant to convey auspicious meanings such as “Long Feng Cheng Xiang” (Dragon and Phoenix Bringing Prosperity) and “Long Teng Hu Yue” (Dragon Soaring and Tiger Leaping). The first translation uses a free translation strategy, directly translating “Chao Shou” as “Wonton” and adding “Soup” to emphasize its characteristic as a soupy dish, along with “Sichuan Style” to highlight its regional flavor. This translation approach allows the target audience to easily understand that the dish is wonton-based, served in soup, and carries Sichuan’s regional flavors. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this translation prioritizes functional transfer, making it suitable for foreign audiences unfamiliar with Sichuan culture and aiding cross-cultural communication. The translation is concise, enhancing understanding and reducing cultural barriers. However, the free translation approach overlooks the cultural imagery embedded in the name “Long Chao Shou”, missing the auspicious meanings of “Long Feng Cheng Xiang” and “Long Teng Hu Yue” inherent in the name.

The second translation adopts a transliteration strategy, keeping the original name “Long” and translating “Chao Shou” to its literal meaning, “Wonton”. This transliteration preserves the cultural symbol and uniqueness of the dish name, sparking curiosity about its origin or cultural background, thus reflecting the local culture’s distinctiveness. However, this strategy is somewhat dependent on the target audience’s cultural knowledge, as the term “Long” may not immediately convey the cultural imagery of “Dragon” or the dish’s characteristics, such as its traditional soup-based cooking method. From a Skopos perspective, transliteration works better for specific audiences already familiar with Sichuan culture or “Long Chao Shou”, highlighting its local cultural value, but it may fall short in terms of broad communicative effectiveness.

4.2.2 Symbolic-imagery-based dish names

(1) Mapo Doufu

Mapo Tofu (Sauteed Tofu in Hot and Spicy Sauce) [8]

Mapo Tofu [9]

The name “Mapo Tofu” combines both the owner’s name and the dish’s characteristics. The owner of the tofu shop was named Chen, commonly known as “Chen Dasao”, but due to her pockmarked face, she was affectionately called “Chen Mapo” (Mapo meaning pockmarked woman). Her tofu, which was distinctively spicy and flavorful, became very popular, and the business flourished. To differentiate her tofu from other tofu dishes, customers started referring to it as “Mapo Tofu”. Later, as her business grew, the shop was renamed “Chen Mapo Tofu”, and the dish eventually became a globally renowned item in Sichuan cuisine.

The first translation adopts a strategy of “transliteration plus literal translation plus annotation”. First, “Mapo” is transliterated to preserve the cultural image, reflecting the dish’s historical origins linked to its creator, “Chen Mapo”. Then, “Sauteed Tofu” is used to clearly convey the main ingredient and cooking method, with the addition of the annotation “in Hot and Spicy Sauce” to highlight the dish’s flavor profile. This translation method balances cultural transmission and information delivery, allowing readers to understand both the basic composition and taste of the dish while also appreciating the cultural significance behind the name. From the perspective of Skopos theory, this translation approach is particularly suitable in scenarios where the target audience is unfamiliar with Sichuan culture, such as promotional texts or menus for non-Sichuan cuisine enthusiasts, as it helps achieve both “cultural adaptation” and “functional transmission”.

The second translation uses pure transliteration, simply using “Mapo Tofu”. This approach emphasizes the dish’s cultural identity without delving into the specific cooking method or flavor. Transliteration retains the unique cultural marker of “Mapo”, helping “Mapo Tofu” become a globally recognized term, even appearing in English dictionaries and becoming integrated into the target language’s lexicon. This translation method is concise and directly corresponds to the original Chinese name, making it ideal for readers familiar with Sichuan cuisine or for contexts where simplicity is required (e.g., menus or cookbooks targeting those who are familiar

with Sichuan cuisine). In terms of Skopos theory, this translation meets the requirements of “clarity and ease of understanding” as well as “target culture adaptation”, making it highly effective for enhancing the international spread of “Mapo Tofu” as a brand dish.

(2) Fuqi Feipian

Sliced Beef and Ox Tongue in Chili Sauce [8]

Fuqi Feipian (Sliced Beef and Offal in Chili Sauce) [9]

This dish, known as “Fuqi Feipian”, was named after the couple Guo Zhaohua and his wife in Chengdu, who ran a restaurant serving cold sliced beef and offal, which became very popular in the 1930s. The main ingredients are beef and various offals, such as ox heart, tripe, tongue, and skin. The term “Ox Tongue” refers specifically to the tongue of the cow, while “Offal” refers to the internal parts of an animal, such as the heart, liver, and other edible organs [11].

The first translation adopts a strategy of literal translation and describes the dish using the structure “method plus main ingredient plus with plus secondary ingredient plus in sauce”. This clearly conveys the dish’s core elements, including “sliced” (method of preparation), “beef and ox tongue” (main ingredients), and “in chili sauce” (sauce type). This translation focuses on describing the dish’s main components and flavor, highlighting its preparation method, which helps target readers quickly understand the dish’s content and make informed decisions. This approach is particularly effective for non-Chinese audiences who are unfamiliar with Chinese culture, making it practical and easy to understand. However, this translation does not reflect the cultural background and historical story carried by the name “Fuqi Feipian”, missing the cultural essence embedded in the name.

The second translation combines both transliteration and free translation. “Fuqi Feipian” is retained through transliteration, preserving the dish’s original name and emphasizing its cultural characteristics. Additionally, the annotation “Sliced Beef and Offal in Chili Sauce” is added to describe the main ingredients and preparation. This approach not only enhances cultural transmission but also preserves the historical and cultural background embedded in the name “Fuqi Feipian”. It helps the target

audience appreciate the unique cultural charm of Sichuan cuisine. The annotation further explains the ingredients, using “offal” to more accurately describe the various beef organs (such as heart, tripe, tongue, and skin), in line with the principle of semantic proximity, avoiding the omission of information by focusing solely on “ox tongue”. This translation method strikes a better balance between cultural retention and functional transmission, aligning with the principles of cultural communication in Skopos theory, and is more suited to cross-cultural exchanges.

Through the comparative analysis of the English translations of Sichuan dish names in *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *SICHUAN CUISINE*, we can observe that each text adopts different translation strategies. *Enjoy Culinary Delights* primarily uses a domestication strategy, focusing on the understanding and acceptance of the target language readers, often through free translation and addition to present the dish’s preparation method, ingredients, and regional characteristics, emphasizing functionality and communication. On the other hand, *SICHUAN CUISINE* tends to use a foreignization strategy, focusing more on preserving the source language’s culture and linguistic features, often through transliteration, transliteration with annotation, or creative translation, highlighting the cultural meaning and uniqueness of the dish names [14]. Furthermore, *Enjoy Culinary Delights* tends to adjust word order to accommodate English language habits, while *SICHUAN CUISINE* often follows the original word order, staying closer to the Chinese structure. These differences reflect the distinct goals of the two translations: the former prioritizes the convenience of cultural exchange, while the latter emphasizes the accuracy of cultural heritage preservation.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of translation determines the mode and means of its execution. The unique characteristics and classification of Sichuan cuisine’s names set the stage for its English translation not to adhere to a fixed pattern. From the Skopos Theory perspective, whether one adheres to the principles of “faithfulness, clarity, and elegance” or those of normalization or foreignization, in terms of translation

strategy, whether adopting direct or interpretive or phonetic approaches, all aim ultimately to fulfill the functional and expected purpose of translating Sichuan cuisine into English. From this perspective, an analysis from a teleological standpoint reveals that the title translations for both *Enjoy Culinary Delights* and *SICHUAN CUISINE* effectively convey the essence and cultural connotations of Sichuan cuisine, thus providing crucial support for the international dissemination of Sichuan cuisine. While both employ distinct approaches and specific phrasing, they exhibit divergent aspects of assimilation and alienation. *Enjoy Culinary Delights*, in its translation strategy, places emphasis on conveying concrete information regarding recipes, ingredients, and taste profiles, thereby catering more closely to the readership's accustomed knowledge. Conversely, *SICHUAN CUISINE* frequently employs an exogamic approach, highlighting the cultural heritage embedded in dish names while preserving their original form and essence. In the practice of translation, given the unique naming characteristics and historical cultural background of Sichuan cuisine, translators must accurately comprehend the ingredients, cooking techniques, flavors, and cultural connotations involved in the dish names. They should employ a flexible approach, incorporating direct and indirect translation, as well as phonetic translations with annotations, ensuring that the translated text remains faithful to the source language while achieving communicative function and cultural dissemination objectives. This not only contributes to enhancing the accuracy and acceptability of translations but also facilitates the broader dissemination of Sichuan cuisine culture, thereby supporting its internationalization efforts.

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