

# **A Comparative Study of Cultural References between the Spanish and Chinese Versions of Seville's Travel Guidebook as a case study**

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## *Abstract*

*This study aimed to analyse cultural references (CRs) of Seville's travel guidebook and its Chinese translation. This general aim was broken down into two specific aims: to identify the CRs from which writer derives the source text, and to determine which techniques prevail in the translation of these CRs. To fulfill the specified aims, we established categories to classify the CRs, and selected translation techniques to identify how the translator deals with them when facing peculiarities of the terminology and culture of Spanish tourism. We studied the current situation in the publishing market regarding the translations of travel guidebooks about Spain in Taiwan.*

*Keywords: travel guidebook, cultural reference, proper name, translation technique, Spanish-Chinese translation*

## **1. Introduction: current situation in the publishing market regarding the translations of Spain's travel guidebook in Taiwan**

We wished to study the translation of Seville's travel guidebook primarily because Taiwan's current publishing market has no Spanish tourist guidebook that has been translated directly from Spanish into Chinese. We collected information on translated travel guidebooks relating to Spain for two decades (from 1997 to 2020) and found a total of 25 copies that have been translated from 6 foreign languages in Taiwan.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the data shows that twelve travel guidebooks have been translated from English and another seven from Japanese. Additionally, two copies of travel literature have been translated from French and Korean, respectively; one has been from Italian and another from German. The data, shown in Table 1, reveals a striking phenomenon in the publishing market of Taiwan regarding the translation of guidebooks related to Spain, which is that both English and Japanese are dominant languages compared to Spanish. This means that, regarding the translation of travel literature related to Spain, not even one of the versions has been translated directly from Spanish during these two decades in Taiwan.

SL/TL	1997~2007	2008~2020	Number of books	Percentage
English- Chinese	5	7	12	48%
Japanese-Chinese	3	4	7	28%
French- Chinese	1	1	2	8%
Korean- Chinese	0	2	2	8%
Italian- Chinese	1	0	1	4%
German- Chinese	1	0	1	4%
Total	11	14	25	100%

Table 1 *Numbers of translated travel guidebooks related to Spain that were published in Taiwan from 1997 to 2020*

## 2. The translation of CRs<sup>2</sup> in Spanish-Chinese travel guidebooks

### 2.1 Definition of cultural references

The term ‘culture’ could be defined from different perspectives: social, antropologic, linguistic, literary and so on. Regarding translation studies, ‘culture’ is defined by Newmark (1988a: 94~95) to refer to ‘the way of life and its manifestations peculiar to one speech community’, whereas he uses the term ‘cultural words’ to denominate that ‘they are associated with a particular language and cannot be literally translated’. In opinion of Franco Aixelá (1996: 58) ‘cultural-specific item’ is defined as the items ‘whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text’. The translation problem could occur in the term of nonexistence or the distinct intertextual status. For the limitation of above mentioned constraints Kelly (1997: 35-36) suggested that the best solution could be to “produce specific texts for each target culture” and the technique of adaptation seems to be the suitable way to reach reader expectations regarding the difference of content and style between ST and TT. The primary interest of this study lies in detecting which techniques of translation prevail in the TT to find out if the Chinese translator tends to maintain *literalist fidelity*<sup>3</sup> rather than others when facing the cultural gap.

## 2.2 Classification of cultural categories

Based on theories proposed by Newmark (1988a: 94-103), Rovira (2007: 25-27; 2014: 140), and Santamaria (2010: 522), we established a pattern to facilitate classification of the CRs we detected from our corpus. The parameters used to classify the CRs in our corpus are shown in Table 2.

Main category	Subcategories
1. History	Place names
	Historical figures
2. Social culture	Social class
3. Cultural Institution	Fine arts
	Literature

Table 2 *Classification of cultural categories for the analysis of a travel guidebook*

## 2.3 Translation techniques for cultural references

Regarding the translation techniques, we established a paradigm that was suitable for the analysis of the translation of CRs from the travel guidebook, focusing especially on Spanish to Chinese. Our proposal, related to the parameters of the translation techniques, was primarily based on suggestions by Newmark (1988a), Olk (2013), Marco (2004, 2018), Franco Aixelá (1996), Davies (2003) and Liang (2007, 2016). We focused on nine translation techniques ‘naturalisation’, ‘modulation’, ‘functional equivalent’, ‘literal translation’, ‘recognised translation’, ‘omission’, ‘intercultural adaptation’, ‘amplification’, and ‘couplet or triplet’. We defined each CR treatment technique contained in the travel guidebook and its most representative example. These were as follows:

### 2.3.1 Naturalisation

Based on Newmark (1988a: 82) naturalisation is a technique that involves using the source language (henceforward SL) word to the normal pronunciation, then using the normal morphology of the target language (TL). However, Chinese and Spanish are two languages that do not come from the same language family. That is to say, the normal morphology could not be obtained in the current study because there is no alphabetic transliteration between Spanish and Chinese, instead there is a phonemic transfer through the official transcription system for Chinese called *pinyin*. Liang (2017: 45-46) described this kind of phonetic translation as ‘transliteration’. Two examples of naturalisation in our case study are translating ‘Sevilla’ by

‘塞維亞’ [Saiweiya, Seville] as well as ‘doña María de Padilla’ by ‘唐娜·瑪麗亞·德·帕迪亞’ [Tangna·Maliya·De·Padiya, Dona Maria De Padilla].

### 2.3.2 Modulation

This refers to changing the point of view or the category of thought as well as restructuring the statement. For Newmark (1988a: 89), modulation can be ‘part for the whole’ or ‘abstract for concrete’. In our study, modulation consists of changing the viewpoint, using a distinct perspective to transfer the culture-specific item of source text (ST) into another cultural image of the target text (TT). This can be a form of particularisation or generalisation. An example is: Tabla → 畫像 [huaxiang, portrait]

### 2.3.3 Literal translation

This involves preserving the formal peculiarities of ST with the purpose of producing a grammatically correct TT and accordingly maintaining the uses of the TL. The examples we detected in the TT were as follows: Rey Sabio → 博學國王 [boxue guowang, King the Wise]; cuadro de la Virgen de los Mareantes → 畫作《航海人的聖母》 [huazuo Hanghairende Shengmu, Painting of *The Virgin of the Navigators*]. In our study, the application of literal translation may have reflected a certain degree of faithfulness to the linguistic peculiarity of the original work; as such, it is a technique that leans towards the meaning intended by the original author.

### 2.3.4 Functional equivalent

This technique refers to instance where the TL word is the same as the SL word, but the grammatical structure or cultural image of the TL word may differ from that of the SL word. Newmark (1988a: 83) states that a functional equivalent ‘neutralises or generalises the SL word’ and ‘is the most accurate way of translating and deculturalising a cultural word’. In Chinese, translating ‘cenador’ by 涼亭 [liangting, pavilion] is an example of the functional equivalent.

### 2.3.5 Recognised translation

Based on the definition provided by Newmark (1988a: 89), recognised translation is a

technique whereby ‘the official and generally accepted translation of any institutional term’ is transferred into the TT. Furthermore, Liang (2016: 47) suggests that this technique ‘is often used in translating particular historical or literary characters and geographical names’. For our purposes, adopting the conventional term into the TT is a neutral technique that neither leans to the original author nor to the receptors of TL. Examples of recognised translation in our study are translating both ‘Colón’ and ‘Magallanes’ by 哥倫布 [*Gelunbu*, Columbus] as well as 麥哲倫 [*Maizhelun*, Magellan], respectively.

### 2.3.6 Omission

Omission involves eliminating the cultural elements of the ST that may not be needed either in legibility or in understanding. The same term for this technique has been adopted by translation theorists such as Davies (2003: 79), Olk (2013: 350), Liang (2016: 50) and Marco (2018: 4); whereas Newmark (1988a: 90) used the term reduction and Franco Aixelá (1996: 64) referred to it as deletion. Both Marco and Liang have claimed that omission is a domesticating technique. Regarding the translation of the travel guidebook, translating ‘una fuente de mármol de Carrara’ by 大理石噴泉 [*dalishi penquan*, marble fountain] can be regarded as omission because the translator deleted the source of culture specificity ‘de Carrara’ [from Carrara].<sup>4</sup>

### 2.3.7 Amplification

To facilitate readability and understanding among target readers, this involves adding linguistic or cultural words that were missing in the source text. This technique implies a certain degree of intervention by the translator, as he/she had to decide what information to add and how to expand it. Marco (2018: 4) uses the same term to imply that ‘a certain amount of information is added in the TT’. However, other theorists employ a different denomination; for example, Newmark (1988a: 91) and Davies (2003: 77) use ‘addition’, Franco Aixelá (1996: 62) uses ‘intratextual gloss’ and Liang (2016: 48) uses ‘intratextual addition’. All these suggestions refer to the same idea; namely, that this procedure involves making the ambiguity of the CR more explicit. For instance, ‘Rey Sabio’ is translated to ‘博學國王阿爾方索十世’ [*boxue guowang A'erfangsuo shishi*, King the Wise, Alfonso X] which the translator chose to add the connotative meaning of the CR ‘Alfonso X’ to make the cultural ambiguity explicit.

### 2.3.8 Intercultural adaptation

The technique involves a formally or semantically unrelated name being substituted in the TT. The technique is employed when the designated reality does not exist in the culture of the TL; therefore, the translator must create a new appropriate situation so that the effect on the reader is the same as in the SL. Marco (2018: 4) proposes this term as a target cultural item that is substituted for the ST item, whereas Liang (2016: 47) terms this procedure ‘substitution’. Translating ‘retablo’ by ‘裝飾屏’ [*zhuangshiping*, decorative folding screen] is an example of intercultural adaptation in our study. This technique implies a high degree of intervention by the translator and brings ‘the text closer to the target reader’ (Marco, 2018: 4).

### 2.3.9 Couplet or triplet

Couplet and triplet refer to the combination of two and three techniques for one unit, respectively. In our case study, translating ‘naves del Apeadero’ by ‘阿貝阿德羅倉庫’ [*Abel’adeluo cangku*, Apeadero naves] is a couplet because it combines the literal translation with naturalisation.

## 3. Aims and methods

### 3.1 Aims

Due to limitations of space, this study focused on analysing the CRs contained in Real Alcazar and its corresponding Chinese translation. The main aim was divided into two objectives. The first was to identify the CRs contained in the ST. We established a model of classification of cultural categories to rank all the culture-specific items identified from the ST. Attempts were also made to analyse all the selected CRs, especially in onomastic words that contain geographical terms as well as person’s name. We strongly believe that these two intratextual factors play an important role from the perspective of the idiosyncratic features of the original author. The second objective was to determine which techniques prevail in the translation of these culture-specific items. To conduct a qualitative as well as a quantitative analysis, we also developed an analytical model of the techniques the translator used to deal with these Spanish cultural elements.

### 3.2 Methods of analysis

The main analytical model established for this study consisted of two parts: the categorisation of the cultural references and the framework for the translation techniques used for the CRs of the travel guidebook. We focus on the analysis of CRs in the chapter on Real Alcazar, which forms one part of the sections that contain Seville's travel guidebook, the capital of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia. We chose the chapter of *Real Alcazar* as our ST because it is one of the most visited sightseeing spots in the city of Seville.

#### **4. Sociocultural Context of *Seville's* Travel Guidebook and its Chinese translation**

Our ST was written by Fernando Olmedo Granados who has been classified as a geohistorian and architect. He has had more than 10 books published that have circulated in the travel book market related to Andalusia.<sup>5</sup> The first edition of our ST came out in 2004 and its second impression appeared ten years later, in 2014. The book has been translated into seven foreign languages: French, German, Italian, Russian, English, Japanese, and Chinese.

The translator of our ST is Tang Liying [唐丽颖]. She grew up in Beijing and from 1999 has lived in Valencia, one of the autonomous communities of Spain, teaching Mandarin with a particular emphasis on Chinese calligraphy. Apart from Seville's travel guidebook, Tan Liying has also carried out two other translations into Chinese: one related to Barcelona, and the other to the architecture of Antoni Gaudí.<sup>6</sup> It is especially worth noting that Daniel Ibáñez Gómez is the co-translator of our TT. The Chinese version of our ST was published in 2006 by the publishing house 'Ediciones Aldeasa' and was targeted at the readers who speak Chinese and are interested in visiting Seville.<sup>7</sup>

#### **5. A Case Study of the CRs of a travel guidebook from Spanish to Chinese**

Following the pattern of the cultural categories we established, we divided our qualitative analysis into four parameters: name of scenic spots, person's name, social culture, and cultural institution.

##### *5.1 Name of scenic spots*

In the 'Real Alcazar' chapter we detected 26 cultural references. The translator adopted three kinds of translation techniques to transmit the cultural-specific items with regard to place names. These were studied by analysing the preferred techniques adopted by the translator.

### 5.1.1 Literal translation

Literal translation was the most commonly adopted technique, occurring 19 times in 26 CRs, a percentage of 73%. This shows that the translator preferred to directly transfer the meaning of these place names for her readers. For instance, in the example of ‘patio Banderas’, the translator preferred to translate the words literally rather than transliterate the sound. It is worth noting that there is a Hispanic actor whose name is Antonio Banderas. Both in China and in Taiwan we opted to transliterate his surname as ‘班德拉斯’ [*Bandelasi*, Banderas]. Thus, in the world of sinology, it is possible to either transliterate the phonetic sound or literally translate the meaning of the word. In our analysis, the translator tended to translate the meaning of the word with regard to the place name.

### 5.1.2 Functional equivalent

In Spanish, ‘Cenador’ is a fenced space, normally round, that can be found in gardens; it is commonly dressed with climbing plants, vines or trees.<sup>8</sup> The CR refers to the Pavilion of Charles V which is a rectangular Arab construction with a double-roof and embossed with ceramic tiles. The translator chose to use a technique similar to the literal translation in order to transfer the meaning of *cenador* directly into TT. Nevertheless, when her readers see the word 涼亭 [*liangting*, cooling kiosk] the image that emerges in their mind may be a traditional Chinese style pavilion that contains columns to support the roof but no walls. Chinese pavilions are built ‘on slopes to command the panorama or on a lakeside to create intriguing images in the water’. They also ‘provide weary wayfarers with a place for a rest and a shelter in summer from the sun’.<sup>9</sup> In our opinion, the image of TT related to the Chinese style pavilion is different from the one the original author wanted to transfer. Therefore, we think this is an example of what Newmark (1988a: 91) called a *functional equivalent* instead of literal translation.

### 5.1.3 Couplets

#### *I. naturalisation + literal translation*

The translator also drew on a variety of techniques to resolve the *cultural lacuna* in TT that Newmark (1988a: 91) called *couplets*. She translated ‘palacio del Rey don Pedro’ as ‘唐·彼得王宮’ [*tang Bider wanggong*, Don Peter Palace], combining the naturalisation by transliterating ‘don Pedro’ with the literal translation by transferring the meaning of ‘palacio



del Rey' into *Palace*. The same happened in the cases of 'baños de doña María de Padilla', 'galería de los Grutescos' and 'naves del Apeadero'.

The translator chose to transliterate the word 'Grutescos', which in the Spanish dictionary means a kind of construction with ornaments of bugs, vermin, chimeras, or foliages.<sup>10</sup> The same occurs in the case of 'Apeadero', which refers to 'a place where travelers can get off from the vehicle and feel comfortable to rest'.<sup>11</sup> Both 'Grutescos' and 'Apeadero' are common nouns rather than proper names. These are two exceptions where the translator adopted naturalisation, instead of literal translation, to transliterate these two geographic names.

## *II. Modulation (particularisation) + amplification*

The place name 'casa de la contratación', has also been named *House of Trade of the Indies* in English. The House of Trade was established in 1503 in the port of Seville as a crown agency for the Spanish Empire; historically, it had broad powers over overseas matters (Serrera Contreras, 2008: 134). The translator chose to change the perspective simply translating House of Trade by '美洲交易所' [*Meizhou jiaoyisuo*, House of Trade of America]. We tried to input 美洲交易所 [House of Trade of America] as a keyword into the internet search engine; nevertheless, we could not find any usage of this place name in Chinese. Normally '西印度交易所' [*Xiyindu jiaoyisuo*, House of Trade of the Occidental Indies] is used in mainland China as the translation of 'Casa de la contratación'. The translator preferred to use a special geographical name rather than the conventional place name because the institution was created as a response to the increase in naval traffic to the New World (León Guerrero, 2003), which referred to the territory of America. This suggests the translator intended to vary the viewpoint by adopting the word 'America' instead of 'Occidental Indies' to avoid any potential confusion among her readers.

### *5.1.4 Triplets (literal translation+ naturalisation+ amplification)*

In the case of 'Real Alcázar', the translator combined three techniques to transfer the image of the Muslim Palace, which was built during fourteen century. It is characterised by a mixture of Muslim and Christian stylistic construction, resulting in a unique design in Seville. In our example the translator uses '皇家' [*huangjia*, royal] to translate the Spanish word 'real' which, is ostensibly a literal translation. With respect to 'Alcázar', the translator opted to

combine the naturalisation with the amplification. Thus, she transliterated the phonetic of ‘Alcázar’ while expanding information on the place name adding the Chinese word ‘城堡’ [*chengbao*, castle] to explain that Alcazar is a fortress. This makes the cultural reference more explicit in the TT.

## 5.2 *Person’s names*

In respect of person’s names, we detected seven CRs. The translator used four kinds of technique to treat the cultural-specific elements.

### 5.2.1 *Naturalisation*

The first CR is Abderramán III (912-961), who was the Emir and Caliph of Córdoba of the Umayyad dynasty in al-Andalus. The second CR is Alejo Fernandez, who was a Spanish painter in the 16th century. His paintings belong to the period of the Renaissance. One of his most representative paintings is ‘The Virgin of the Navigators’, which will be referred to later in the study. The third CR is ‘Carlos V’, who was a Holy Roman Emperor and King of Spain. It is especially worth noting that while he was King of Spain, from 1516 to 1556, he was named ‘Carlos I’; whereas when he was named as the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire from 1520 to 1558, he was given the name of ‘Charles V’. This suggests that in the ancient occidental history there was no emperor who was named ‘Carlos V’. Our CR therefore refers to King Carlos I of the Kingdom of Spain as well as emperor Charles V of Holy Roman Empire. The translator chose to transliterate the Spanish phonetic into ‘卡洛斯五世’ [*Kaluosi wushi*, Carlos V] instead of the English pronunciation ‘查理五世’ [*Chali wushi*, Charles V] which is the conventional use of the emperor’s title in Chinese.

### 5.2.2 *Recognised translation*

Regarding people’s names, we found another two examples that were considered recognised translation. The first was the great explorer, navigator and colonist ‘Cristóbal Colón’, who finished four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered a viable sailing route to the Americas. With regard to the second CR, we detected the great Portuguese explorer and navigator ‘Fernando de Magallanes’, who organised the Spanish expedition to the East Indies in the 16th century. Compared with the previous example relating to the Holy Roman

Emperor, the translator adopted recognised translation to transfer the names of these two historical figures. The Spanish name of Christopher Columbus is Cristóbal Colón whose transliteration would not be ‘哥倫布’ [*Gelunbu*, Columbus]; similarly, the pronunciation of Magallanes would not be ‘麥哲倫’ [*Maizhelun*, Magellan]. It is reasonable to conclude that the translator adopted conventional names rather than naturalisation because she did not want to confuse her readers.

### 5.2.3 Couplets

Among the examples of people’s names, the translator also opted to use couplets, combining two techniques to make the cultural ambiguity more explicit.

#### *I. Literal translation+ amplification*

In the first example, the translator adopted literal translation to transfer the meaning of ‘Rey Sabio’ into 博學國王 [*boxue guowang*, King of the Wise]; at the same time, she took advantage of the amplification to convey in detail the identity of the Spanish King Alfonso X of Castile to her readers.

#### *II. Naturalisation + amplification*

In the second example, we detected a reference to ‘Isabella of Portugal’, who was not only the eldest daughter of King Manuel I of Portugal, she was also the Queen of Spain and the Holy Roman Empress because of her marriage to Emperor Charles V. The translator first transliterated the Spanish phonetic of the Queen’s name as 伊莎貝爾 [*Yishabei'er*, Isabella] and the place name 葡萄牙 [*Putaoaya*, Portugal], while adding information related to the title of the royal family 公主 [*gongzhu*, princess] to clarify the identity of Isabel de Portugal as a princess from Portugal.

### 5.3 Social Culture (Social Conditions)

With regard to the category of social culture, we detected four CRs relating to the subcategory of social conditions. The translator adopted two kinds of translation technique to

deal with these culture-specific elements.

### 5.3.1 Naturalisation

For nouns related to the Arabic culture, the translator preferred to adopt naturalisation to transliterate the Spanish phonetic of the corresponding CRs. For instance, there was the example of ‘emir’ which means ‘Arabic prince or leader’ in English.<sup>12</sup> The translator opted to transliterate the word ‘emir’ by 埃米爾 [*aimier*, emir] instead of transferring the meaning of the word into 酋長 [*qiuzhang*, emirate] which attracted our attention because, through transliteration of the Spanish word emir, the readers of TT definitely cannot understand what the original author wanted to convey. In summary, it is difficult for readers to associate the Chinese word 埃米爾 *aimier* with the real meaning of the Spanish word. Regarding the second CR, Cordova is a city located in Andalusia, south of Spain. In the 10th and 11th centuries during the apogee of the caliphate, Cordova was one of the most advanced cities in the world and could boast a great cultural, political, financial, and economic center. The translator opted to adopt naturalisation to transliterate the adjective of Cordova ‘cordobés’ into 科爾多瓦 [*Ke’erduowa*, Cordova]. Compared with the previous example ‘emir’, the transliteration of Cordova is more comprehensible, inasmuch as the readers of TT would be likely to know the three largest cities of Andalusia: Seville, Cordova and Granada. Concerning the third CR, the translation of ‘sultan’ is an example of naturalisation instead of the recognised translation because according to 《明史》 [*Mingshi, History of Ming*], there are miscellaneous translations in Chinese such as 蘇丹 [*sudan*, Sultan], 素檀 [*sutan*, Sultan], 速檀 [*sutan*, Sultan], 速魯檀 [*sulutan*, Sultan], 鎖魯檀 [*suolutan*, Sultan] and so on, even though the first one is more popular and acceptable than the others. Because there is no conventional translation of this word, we classified this example under the category of naturalisation.

### 5.3.2 Recognised translation

Compared with the last example ‘sultan’, the translator who transferred the Islamic ruler ‘califa’ into 哈里發 [*halifa*, caliph] adopted the technique of recognised translation. The

reason is that neither the Spanish pronunciation of *califa* nor the English pronunciation *caliph* (/kalifa/ and /keɪlɪf/, respectively) are the same as the Arabic pronunciation (/hailifa/). If the translator had adopted naturalisation, the translation of the word *califa* would have been 卡里發[kalifa]. 哈里發[halifa, caliph] is a conventional and popular usage in Chinese that refers to humans as God's executive in a Muslim community. They transliterated directly from the Arabic خَلِيفَة *khalīfah* into the Chinese word.

#### 5.4 Cultural Institution (Fine Arts)

Regarding cultural institution, we discovered four CRs where the translator opted to employ various techniques to deal with cross-cultural differences.

##### 5.4.1 Literal translation & intercultural adaptation

Regarding *The Virgin of the Navigators*, which was painted by Spanish artist Alejo Fernández, the translator chose to translate the name of the painting literally. The word 'retablo' refers to the retablo which is normally placed above the altar of a church and painted with religious images such as Christy or the Virgin Mother. A retablo that incorporates sculptures or paintings is often referred to as an altarpiece (Chisholm, 1990: 201). The Chinese translation captured our attention because the translator transferred the word 'retablo' into 裝飾屏 [*zhuangshiping*, decorative folding screen]. However, in Chinese culture a folding screen is often decorated with art and encompasses a variety of themes, including mythology, scenes of palace life, and nature (Handler, 2007: 268-271). Compared with the retablo painted with religious images, a Chinese folding screen always embodies themes of legendary tales, heroic merits and natural life. This means that the image of a decorative folding screen captured by the readers of TT could be totally different from the retablo that the original author wanted to convey. The translator adopted the intercultural adaptation to make the TT more legible and comprehensible.

##### 5.4.2 Couplets (Naturalisation+ literal translation) & modulation

The connotation of 'Virgen de la Antigua' is Virgin Maria. Unlike the example of 'la Virgen de los Mareantes', the translator opted to use naturalisation to transliterate the phonetic of the words 'de la Antigua' and also translate the denotative meaning of the Virgin. Readers who are familiar with the catholic religion would easily associate the 'Virgin de la Antigua'

with the Virgin Maria. Nevertheless, for most Chinese readers, who have little acquaintance with the occidental religious culture, it would be hard to establish the connection between ‘Virgin de la Antigua’ and the Virgin Maria.

Concerning the second CR, the translator translated the word ‘tabla’ to ‘畫像’ (*huaxiang*, painting). This is a kind of modulation because the Spanish word ‘tabla’ originally referred to a kind of painting made on a flat panel of wood. Nevertheless, ‘畫像’ (*huaxiang*, painting) is a generalised Chinese word that refers to a painting of the figures or an object on any kinds of material, rather than specialising in a certain kind of flat panel.

### 5.5 Cultural Institutions (Literature)

Regarding the cultural institution, we detected one CR belonging to the subcategory of literature.

#### 5.5.1 Functional equivalent

The final example of CR consists of a well-known work of Spanish Literature, the so-called *Cantigas de Santa María* [Canticles of Holy Mary] which contains 420 poems with musical notation, written during the reign of Alfonso X of Castile. It is one of the largest collections of monophonic songs and is characterized by the mention of the Virgin Mary in every song; furthermore, every tenth song is a hymn (Katz & Keller, 1987). This CR has been translated as ‘詩歌集《聖母瑪麗亞之歌》’ [*Shigeji Shengmu Maliyazhige, Collection of Poetry. Songs of Holy Mary*] that reminds us of the Chinese classical Literature 《詩經》 [*Shijing, Classic of Poetry*.] which was also known as *Three Hundred Songs* (Hawkes, 2011: 25). The themes of *Classic of Poetry* not only consist of ancient folk songs related to the topics of love or courtship, they also contain ritual songs in the forms of courtly panegyric and dynastic hymns (Kern, 2010: 20).

The difference between ‘poetry’ and ‘canticle’ lies in the religious issue. It is clear that poetry is in the form of metrical writing; whereas a canticle consists of several liturgical songs taken from the *Bible*.<sup>13</sup> The translator therefore intended to neutralise the SL word, thus reducing the religious connotation, an example of ‘deculturalising a cultural word’ (Newmark, 1988a: 83).

## 6. Results and discussion

Following the qualitative analysis of all the CRs we detected in the travel guidebook of Real Alcazar, we then counted the results extracted from the data regarding the translation techniques adopted by the translator. First, according to each cultural category in our TT, we analysed the number of occurrences displayed in Table 3. Second, we studied the translation techniques by analysing the percentage of each technique adopted by the translator, the results of which are shown in Table 4. Third, we determined the frequency of techniques used in the TT according to the categories of cultural references in Real Alcazar's travel guidebook, the data for which are displayed in Table 5. Finally, we discussed the correlation between four cultural categories and translation techniques.

Cultural category	Number of occurrences
Place name	26
Person's name	7
Social culture- social class	4
Cultural institution- Fine Arts	4
Cultural institution- Literature	1
Total	42

Table 3 *Number of occurrences of CRs by cultural category*

We detected 42 cultural-specific items that are the most representative and significant in the travel guidebook of Real Alcazar to compare the CRs in our corpus. Among these CRs, we found 26 instances that belong to the category of place name; while another seven instances are personal names. Another four CRs were classified as being in the social culture category. We also found five examples of the cultural institution: four related to fine arts, and the final one to ancient Spanish literature.

Techniques	Number of occurrences	Frequency
Literal translation	20	47.6%
Naturalisation	6	14.2%
Recognised translation	3	7.1%
Functional equivalent	2	4.8%
Couplets	naturalisation+literal translation	5 11.9%
	modulation+amplification	1 2.4%

	literal translation +amplification	1	2.4%
	naturalisation+amplification	1	2.4%
Modulation		1	2.4%
Intercultural adaptation		1	2.4%
Triplets	literal translation + naturalisation +amplification	1	2.4%
<b>Total</b>		<b>42</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4 *Adoption of translation techniques in the TT*

As shown in Table 4, the most frequently adopted translation technique is literal translation, which was used on 20 occasions and accounts for 47.6% of all adopted techniques in our TT. The second most frequently adopted technique is naturalisation (14.2%) followed couplets (11.9%), among which the combination of literal translation with naturalisation appears most frequently. Foreignising techniques, such as naturalisation and literal translation, account for 74% of the cases under critical examination, almost three quarters of all occurrences. The data we obtained suggests that the translator tended to foreignise the TT, retaining the exotic characteristics of the culture-specific items of the source language. The fourth and the fifth most employed techniques were recognised translation and functional equivalent, accounting for 7.1% and 4.8%, respectively. The rest of the techniques were employed only marginally or not at all, such as omission.

Both the qualitative and quantitative analysis will now be compared and we will determine the correlation between the four cultural categories and translation techniques.

Category of the CR	techniques	Frequency of adoption in the TT	Number of occurrences in the TT	Relative frequency
Place name	Literal translation	19	26	73.1%
	Couplet	4		15.4%
Person's name	Naturalisation	3	7	42.8%
	Recognised translation	2		28.6%
	Couplet	2		28.6%
Social culture	Naturalisation	3	4	75%
Cultural	Literal	1		25%



Institution (Fine Arts)	translation		4	
	Intercultural Adaptation	1		25%
	Modulación	1		25%
	Couplet	1		25%
Cultural Institution (Literature)	Functional equivalent	1	1	100%

Table 5 *Frequency of techniques in the TT according to the categories of CRs*

### 6.1. Geographical names

Literal translation was the most frequently employed technique by the translator and was used in particular to translate geographical names. This happened on 19 occasions, almost three quarters of the total (73.1%). This implies that the translator of our corpus tended to keep close to the peculiar expressions of the author of the SL. The second most commonly used technique for the translation of place name was the couplet, which was used on four occasions and accounted for fifteen percent (15.4%) of the total. The translator preferred to combine the literal translation with naturalisation to transfer the Spanish geographical names into Chinese. Based on the data obtained, we address three issues relating to the treatment of the geographical name adopted by the translator.

#### 6.1.1 *Literal translation was the most frequently employed technique regarding the translation of place names*

The first observation demonstrates that when encountering a non-equivalent cultural reference, the translator of the travel guidebook tends to use literal translation to solve the difficulties related to geographical names. This differs from the suggestions of other translation theorists regarding the translation of place name. For instance, Newmark (1988a: 216) recommended transliteration while Franco Aixelá (1996: 75) proposed the strategy of naturalisation of proper names. Liang (2016: 52), however, suggested that both transliteration and rendition could be appropriate procedures for dealing with English-Chinese proper names. For Marcos (2018: 17) the strong correlation between intracultural adaptation and proper noun was one of his findings regarding Catalan-English food terminology.

It is widely known that both Spanish and English belong to the Indo-European language family; while Chinese pertains to the Sino-Tibetan language family. Among both societies the heterogeneity exists in both linguistic aspects and cultural criteria (Wong & Shen, 1999: 82-

84). For instance, for ‘patio de Banderas’, the most frequent translation in Chinese would be 旗園 [*qiyuan*, Flags Courtyard]. Translated literally, the place name reminds us of a square with thousands of flags flying in the air. Instead, transliterating the phonetics of Banderas into 班德拉斯園 [*Bandelasiyuan*, Banderas Courtyard] loses linguistic and cultural value of SL because the readers of TT cannot associate the transliteration of word with the flags.

Another example is that of ‘salón de Embajadores’ [Hall of Ambassador], the translation to Chinese of which is 大使廳 [*Dashiting*, Hall of Ambassador]. The translator of the TT (as others have opted to transfer not only the denotation of the word but also its connotation) reminds us of the place where the royal family received ambassadors from foreign countries and the public court ceremonial also took place. It is rare that a translator would choose to transliterate this CR as 恩巴哈多勒斯廳 [*Enbahaduolesiting*, Embajadores Hall] because the receptors of the TT could neither catch the denotative nor the connotative meaning of the word ‘Embajadores’.

Regarding the translation of the geographical name from Spanish to Chinese, in the case of common nouns such as ‘banderas’, ‘embajadores’, ‘estanque’, and ‘danza’, the translator tends to adopt the literal translation to transfer the denotative and connotative meanings of the word.

#### *6.1.2 Combination of literal translation with naturalisation as a secondary technique adopted by the translator*

There were four examples of the combination of two techniques, naturalisation and literal translation. These four can be divided into two aspects: the proper name of the historic figure and the common noun. The previous example was ‘palacio del Rey don Pedro’, where the translator chose to transliterate ‘don Pedro’ [don Peter] by mixing it with the literal translation of ‘palacio’ [palace]. The second example was ‘baños de doña María de Padilla’, where the translator opted to transliterate ‘doña María de Padilla’ [dona Maria de Padilla] by mixing it with the literal translation of ‘baño’ [bath]. The translator preferred to transliterate the words ‘don’ [sir] as well as ‘doña’ [maiden]. These differ from titles such as ‘señor’ [Mr.] or ‘señora’ [Mrs.] because ‘don’ and ‘doña’ are normally used in reference to noblemen or the upper class persons. Without any knowledge of the Spanish culture, the receptors of the TT would not capture the idea that both ‘don’ and ‘doña’ are not part of the given name but social titles with respect awarded by Spanish communities.

Regarding the examples of common nouns, ‘galería de los Grutescos’ and ‘naves del Apeadero’ are two exceptions where the translator did not literally translate both the noun ‘grutescos’ and ‘apeadero’. This incongruence of the technique denotes that, when it involves a non-equivalent cultural word in TL, or it is too difficult to transmit the connotative meaning of ST, the translator prefers to transliterate the common nouns to avoid misleading the receptors of TL.

### *6.1.3 Pure naturalisation rarely exists in the translation of toponym from Spanish to Chinese*

With respect to our case study, the translator did not adopt simple naturalisation to transliterate the geographic name. This might be because most of our place names contained denominator or modifier such as ‘patio’ [courtyard] or ‘jardín’ [garden] and it was not appropriate to simply transliterate their phonetics. Unlike the translation from Spanish to English, using loan word or naturalisation is a common technique because both share the same language root. Nevertheless, it is odd that the translator opts to transliterate from Spanish to Chinese the geographic name that contains the common noun, because in so doing this will surely cause confusion or misunderstanding among the receptors of TT. Pure naturalisation may not completely transfer the information on place name in our case study.

## *6. 2 Anthroponym*

The translator of the TT adopted three types of techniques to transmit a person’s name: naturalisation, recognised translation and couplet.

### *6.2.1 Naturalisation is the technique that occurred most often in the translation of a person’s name*

Unlike geographical names, the translator of TT employed pure naturalization three times to deal with a person’s name, accounting for 42% of all anthroponyms. These three historic figures were not closely acquainted with the society of TL, therefore the translator opted to transliterate the name of Abderramán III, Alejo Fernández, and Carlos V. This observation coincides with the suggestions proposed by Newmark (1988a: 215), Liang (2016: 52), and Franco Aixelá (1996: 75).

### *6.2.2 Recognised translation was the second most adopted technique for the translation of a person’s name*

Compared with naturalisation, we found that, when encountering the name of a well-known person, the translator tended to adopt the recognised translation using the institutional

form of the person rather than transliterating it. The instances we detected are ‘Colón’ and ‘Magallanes’. If the translator had followed the Spanish pronunciation, it could be 柯隆 [Kelong] as well as 馬嘎雅內斯 [Magayaneisi]. Nevertheless, seeing these two personal names the readers of TT might not only associate them with two well-known historical navigators, they could also be misled into thinking about two different historical figures.

### *6.2.3 Amplification within the text was adopted for the translation of appellation*

The translator also adopted the couplet to translate the person’s name. We found two instances, ‘Rey Sabio’ and ‘Isabel de Portugal’. She combined literal translation with amplification for the translation of previous CRs and employed naturalisation alone with the amplification for the second one. We noticed that, compared with the naturalisation for the personal name, she usually adopted the literal translation for the appellation, such as the example of ‘King the Wise’ to explicitly transmit the meaning of ‘Rey Sabio’. Conversely, in the translation of the travel guidebook, it was common to use an additional supplement to amplify the information on the anthroponym within the text instead of using notes or a glossary.

## *6.3 Social culture*

With regard to the category of social culture, we detected four cultural references in relation to the subcategory of social conditions. The translator adopted both naturalisation and recognised translation to handle these culture specific elements.

### *6.3.1 Naturalisation was the predominant technique for the translation of the appellation*

The translator of our TT preferred to transliterate the social conditions such as ‘emir cordobés’ as well as ‘sultan’. As mentioned previously, the Spanish word ‘emir’ is a common noun; therefore, it seems natural to translate the meaning as Arabic prince or leader rather than, like the translator of the TT, transliterating the phonetics of the word. With regard to Cordova, the city located in Andalusia, it is by no means strange that naturalisation has been used to transfer this proper name. We also consider the translation of Sultan by 蘇丹 [sultan] to be naturalisation.

### *6.3.2 Recognised translation was the secondary technique for the translation of social conditions*

On one occasion the translator also adopted recognised translation to transfer the Spanish word ‘califa’ by 哈里發 [*halifa*, caliph]. We do not classify this under the category of naturalisation because this is a conventional and popular name in Chinese society. Furthermore, the Chinese translation did not follow the rule of pronunciation of Spanish phonetics.

#### *6.4 Cultural Institution*

In the category of cultural institution we detected five CRs which we divided into two subcategories: four for the fine arts and one for the literature. For these, the translator preferred to adopt a variety of techniques to deal with the non-equivalent cultural words in the TT.

##### *6.4.1 Adoption of a variety of translation technique to treat the ‘lacuna’ of cultural specific items*

The translator adopted four different techniques to handle the cultural elements that lacked equivalent words in the TL: literal translation for ‘cuadro de la *Virgen de los Mareantes*’, intercultural adaptation for ‘retablo’, couplet of both literal translation and naturalisation for ‘*Virgen de la Antigua*’ and finally, modulation for ‘tabla’. With regard to the masterpieces of fine arts, there is a cultural lacuna between the SL and TL. The translator needs to employ various techniques to resolve these non-equivalent cultural elements to make the TT more readable and comprehensible.

##### *6.4.2 Literal translation was the technique most commonly adopted by the translator to resolve the difficulty of the non-equivalent cultural element*

In the category of social institution we detected five CRs. In our study, literal translation was the technique most commonly adopted by the translator to resolve the difficulty of the non-equivalent cultural lexicon. For instance, for ‘cuadro de la *Virgen de los Mareantes*’ and ‘tabla de la *Virgen de la Antigua*’, there is a lack of equivalence between SL and TL. In terms of translating the travel guidebook, literal translation was the most acceptable and common way to treat the lacuna in the culture of TL.

## **7. Conclusion**

The objective of this research was to analyse the cultural references in Seville’s travel guidebook as well as its Chinese translation. To fulfill the aims, we first studied the current

situation in the publishing market regarding the translations of travel guidebooks about Spain in Taiwan. Moreover, through identification of the CRs, we conducted both quantitative and qualitative analysis of the techniques adopted by the translator to deal with these culture-specific items. The contribution of our study is twofold: first, we established frameworks suitable for analysing the CRs extracted from a travel guidebook from Spanish to Chinese. Second, through quantitative analysis of the data obtained from the qualitative study, we determined the techniques used when the translator of the travel guidebook encountered CRs, especially proper names.

With respect to the first contribution, we established a framework for the categories of CRs that was appropriate for the classification of the culture-bound elements contained in the Spanish-Chinese travel guidebook. Second, we established a paradigm of the translation technique that was suitable for an analysis of the techniques the translator used to handle culture-specific items.

We detected 42 of the most representative and significant culture-specific items in the travel guidebook of Real Alcazar to carry out a comparison of our corpus. Among all CRs, we found 26 that belonged to the category of place name; seven examples that were classified as personal names, four that belonged to the category of social culture, and five that were examples of cultural institutions, four of which were related to fine arts and the other to ancient Spanish literature.

In respect of the second contribution, from the data analysed we found that, first, literal translation was the most commonly employed technique regarding the translation of geographical names. We also found that, in the case of common nouns, the translator tended to adopt the literal translation to transfer the denotative and connotative meanings of the word. Second, for place names, the translator preferred to employ the couplet, mixing naturalisation with literal translation to handle the combination of a denominator and the proper name, as in the example of ‘palacio del Rey don Pedro’. Compared with the translation between English and Spanish, we observed that pure naturalisation was difficult to use without combining it with other techniques when the place name owned the classifier as well as the proper name. Thus, the receptors of the TT could not capture the meaning of a classifier such as ‘palacio’ or ‘baño’ if the translator had transliterated the words.

Regarding personal names, transliteration was the technique most commonly adopted in the translation from Spanish to Chinese. In contrast to the place name, literal translation was not the predominant technique for the translation of a person’s name. However, recognised translation was the second most preferred technique. We also noticed that, in the case of an appellation such as ‘Rey Sabio’, amplification within the text was the best option for the translation of the Spanish-Chinese tourist guidebook. With respect to social culture,

transliteration was the predominant technique used for translation of the appellation. Recognised translation was a secondary option for the translation of social conditions.

In respect of cultural institutions, we observed a notable phenomenon in that, where there is no equivalent in the TL culture, the methods used to resolve the ‘lacuna’ in culture can be diverse. Intercultural adaptation, modulation, literal translation, or functional equivalent could all be used. In this study literal translation was the technique most commonly adopted by the translator to transfer the name of the painting to the literary work.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The numbers are based on information extracted primarily from the websites of on-line bookstores as well as the collections of books held in the libraries of various Taiwanese universities.

<sup>2</sup> We would like to clarify the abbreviation that we adopted in the whole study: ST= source text; TT= target text; SL= source language; TL= target language; CR= cultural reference; CRs= cultural references and BT= back translation.

<sup>3</sup> In broad term, “literalist fidelity” can be defined as a person who is faithful to translate text literally. (see Kelly 1997, 2000: 158; Pym 1991: 287)

<sup>4</sup> Here the culture-specific item “mármol de Carrara” denotes a kind of precious white marble that originates from the region of Alpes mountain, situated in the province of Massa e Carrara, in Italy. “Mármol de Carrara” is distinguished from current marble stone and generally has been used in the house of noblemen or scenic spots. More information can be found on the following website: <https://www.conociendoitalia.com/conociendo-el-marmol-de-carrara-toscana-el-marmol-mas-prestigioso-del-mundo/> [Retrieved 2020/01/30]

<sup>5</sup> From 1998 to 2014, Olmedo published more than 10 books. More details about these publications can be found on the following website : <http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-no2007009389/> [Retrieved 2020/2/20]

<sup>6</sup> The author of these two travel guidebooks is Enric Balasch i Blanch. [https://www.amazon.es/s/ref=dp\\_byline\\_sr\\_book\\_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Enric+Balasch+i+Blanch&search-alias=stripbooks](https://www.amazon.es/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Enric+Balasch+i+Blanch&search-alias=stripbooks) [Retrieved 2020/2/20]

<sup>7</sup> Regarding the extratextual factors of our corpus, we wrote an article in Chinese that was published in the *Providence Forum* Vol. 11, No. 2. The complete article can be found in the on-line journal: <http://ir.lib.pu.edu.tw/cpInfo.action?xmlId=0000309048&dtdId=000063> [Retrieved 2018/2/25]

<sup>8</sup> In the dictionary of *Real Academia Española*, ‘Cenador’ is ‘Espacio, comúnmente redondo, que suele haber en los jardines, cercado y vestido de plantas trepadoras, parras o árboles’. More information can be found on: <http://dle.rae.es/?id=8C7U2aL>. [Retrieved 2020/03/05]

<sup>9</sup> In the dictionary of *Real Academia Española* ‘grutesco’ is ‘un adorno de bichos, sabandijas, quimeras y follajes’. More information can be found on <https://dle.rae.es/?id=JaxsQ82>. (Retrieved 2020/03/20)

<sup>10</sup> In the dictionary of *Real Academia Española* ‘grutesco’ is ‘un adorno de bichos, sabandijas, quimeras y follajes’. More information can be found on <https://dle.rae.es/?id=JaxsQ82>. (Retrieved 2019/05/20)

<sup>11</sup> In the dictionary of *Real Academia Española* ‘apeadero’ is ‘sitio en que los viajeros pueden apearse y es cómodo para descansar’. It takes his local name where there was a stop for the occupants of cars entering the Fortress. More information can be found on <https://dle.rae.es/?id=371HyZR>. (Retrieved 2020/03/30)

<sup>12</sup> In the dictionary *Real Academia Española*, related to ‘emir’, it says ‘príncipe o caudillo árabe’.

<sup>13</sup> The definition of the words ‘poetry’ and ‘canticle’ is mainly based on those in the Merriam-Webster dictionary. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/poetry> & <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/canticle>. (Retrieved 2020/03/30)

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