A Chinese Bite of Translation: A Translational Approach to Chineseness and Culinary Identity

Description

Title: A Chinese Bite of Translation: A Translational Approach to Chineseness and Culinary Identity
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Abstract: Cuisine is a topic worthy of interest because it is often associated with a specific national culture. Among the various national cuisines, Chinese cuisine is probably one of the most fascinating, all the more so because the culture-specific characteristics of Chinese cuisine have resulted in its typical diversity. Furthermore, Chinese cuisine can be considered diasporic and capable of breaking cultural boundaries as Chinese overseas communities have introduced their cuisine to various parts of the world over the past two centuries. In translation studies, culinary identity is viewed by scholars as an extension of translation activity. However, Chinese culinary identity hasn't received the same attention that other areas of research in translation studies have, probably because of its culture-specific traits. My thesis will focus on one example of this important phenomenon: the "translation" of Chinese culinary culture in Canadian food discourse. Renowned for its multiculturalism, Canada—perhaps more than any other country—has embraced "Chinese food" as one of its mainstream international cuisines, and Chinese cuisine, on the other hand, has adopted Canadian cultural values and has become practically inseparable from contemporary Canadian culture. In this respect, the question becomes to what extent has "Chineseness," which refers here to Chinese cultural identity, been constructed within the Canadian culinary sphere? My thesis involves an analysis of the translation of Chineseness by Chinese-Canadians in food discourse from a cultural perspective. In the first chapter, I will introduce the discussion of Chineseness in sociology and in translation studies. The second chapter deals with culinary identity in both food studies and translation studies. In the final chapter, I analyze Chineseness, as it is represented by culinary identity in the Canadian context, by observing HeartSmart Chinese Cooking, a cookbook written by a Chinese-Canadian chef in English for a Canadian readership.
A Chinese Bite of Translation: A Translational Approach to Chineseness and Culinary Identity. Authors: Xue, Jingnan. However, Chinese culinary identity has't received the same attention that other areas of research in translation studies have, probably because of its culture-specific traits. My thesis will focus on one example of this important phenomenon: the "translation" of Chinese culinary culture in Canadian food discourse. Renowned for its multiculturalism, Canada—perhaps more than any other country—has embraced "Chinese food" as one of its mainstream international cuisines, and Chinese cuisine, on the other hand, has adopted Canadian cultural values and has become practically identity construction. Their self-portraits, however influenced by Western representations of China and Chinese culture, negotiate and renegotiate the notion of 'Chineseness' in a contemporary multicultural society. Beginning with a brief survey of Western representations of Chineseness, Zhang Jing argues that Chinese English literature on the whole is concerned with deconstructing Western stereotypes of China and reshaping 'Chineseness' in today's world of globalisation. She examines the representation of traditional Chinese culture in these works and highlight their...