

**Chinese to English Video Game Linguists and Culture Specific Items in the
Translation of a Wuxia RPG: a controlled partial-localisation case study**

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Abstract

Despite the size of the video game industry and the growing demand for localisation, there remains a lack of research into the socio-cultural factors that impact the translation of culture specific items (CSIs) in video game localisation. This is particularly the case for Chinese wuxia role playing games combining elements from Chinese history with fictional elements of wuxia literature, which present considerable localisation challenges. As such, this thesis aims to investigate the Chinese to English translation of CSIs in the partial localisation of a wuxia role playing video game (RPG). This involves addressing the research questions of do how linguists translate CSIs, why do they use certain approaches, and what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context.

A case-study design was adopted, that involved professional localisation teams translating CSIs in a wuxia RPG text within a localisation agency. The translations were analysed using the theory of norms in translation (Gideon Toury 1995) to reveal how linguists translated CSIs, and the concept of habitus (Pierre Bourdieu 1977), was utilised to learn why the linguists used certain approaches. Research into video game localisation has been limited by industry restrictions, in terms of access to translation materials, and the linguists, who must sign non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) concerning all completed work. Thus, a video game text was professionally created to authentically simulate the culture specific features of existing games, and thereby grant full access to both translation materials, and the linguists.

The results demonstrated that CSIs in wuxia RPGs were translated using three normative cultural approaches based on four types of socio-cultural reasoning. Furthermore, two main synergies between the four types of socio-cultural reasoning resulted in a dichotomy of cultural translation outcomes with strong normative behaviour. Hence, source culture centric and industry centric reasoning led to more source culture adequate approaches, governed by the power of intermediality, a manifestation of established dominant normative translation action connecting text, audio-visual, and interactive elements across various media formats. Conversely, target culture centric and game centric reasoning led to more target culture acceptable approaches, guided by the power of interactivity. These findings contribute crucial knowledge to the study of translating CSIs in highly culturally specific video games, such as Chinese wuxia RPGs, and the theoretical understanding of how and why socio-cultural factors can govern and guide linguists in video game translation. This thesis therefore represents the inception of the socio-cultural turn in the research of video game localisation.

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List of Abbreviations

ANT – actor network theory

AVT – audio visual translation

CAT – computer assisted translation

CRPG – computer role playing game

CSI – culture specific item

DTS – descriptive translation studies

NPC – non-playable character

ROI – return on investment

RPG – role playing game

ST – source text

TCM – Traditional Chinese Medicine

TMIES – translation of multimedia interactive entertainment software (otherwise known as the translation of video games)

UCT – user-centred translation

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The video game industry embodies the rapid development and change of the digital revolution. Multimedia interactive entertainment software, commonly known as video games, became popular in Japan and the US in the 1970s, and then spread to European nations such as France, Germany, Spain, and the UK in the following decade. They have since become a global phenomenon and are now played by people of all ages and almost all socio-cultural backgrounds. This includes casual gamers, playing on smart phones; more dedicated players, gaming on the latest consoles and home computers; professional gamers, who compete internationally for real cash prizes; and even professionals in various sectors using video games for training, education, or even therapy. Indeed, Zhang Xiaochun (2022, 369) explains that ‘Video games are ubiquitous in digital life today, not only as a mainstream form of global entertainment but also a medium of significant influence over culture, politics, education, healthcare, and many other aspects of contemporary society.’ Furthermore, Miguel Á. Bernal-Merino (2015, 30-32) observes that the interactive entertainment elements of video games are now also commonly used in *serious games*, which are designed as educational tools for students of all ages, for the training of various professionals, including medical surgeons, trainee pilots, soldiers, and even as a form of therapy for sufferers of trauma, as such, the impact of video games on our lives is ever increasing. Thus, as argued by Daniel Muriel and Garry Crawford (2018, 2-3) video games have become fully fledged cultural products, which have not only permeated our societies, but have also shaped many aspects of how we live through the power of video game culture, which Muriel and Crawford (ibid., 188) refer to as videoludification, ‘the process by which everyday life is permeated by the logic of video games, including, among others, the fields of economy, work, leisure, education, health, and consumption’.

Aside from drawing talent from the fields of design, and programming, many actors, writers, recording artists and visual artists, as well as professionals involved in education and training are now contributing to this growing field. The size and resources available to the video game industry are reflected by its worth which was \$196.8 bn in 2022 (NewZoo 2022). This figure eclipses that of most other entertainment industries including the film industry, worth \$76.7 bn in 2022 (Statista, 2023), the video streaming industry, comprised of Subscription-based Video-on-Demand services (SVoD), such as Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and Netflix is estimated to be worth \$98.86 bn in 2023 (Statista 2023), and the music industry, worth \$25.9bn (IFPI 2022). Consequently, Bernal-Merino (2015, 10-11) indicates, around two thirds

of the total revenue of the video game industry is generated from the industrial process of *localisation*, as this enables products created in one locale to reach several others. Localisation, as defined by the Localization Industry Standard Association (LISA), (2003, 13), ‘involves taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold’. Thus, from an economic perspective, it is easy to understand why there is a demand for video game localisation, and the work performed by linguists such as translators and reviewers. However, while localisation is a complex industrial process, it also includes a translation stage. Regarding where translation fits into video game localisation, Heather Maxwell Chandler and Stephanie O’Malley Deming (2012, 11-12), observe three phases in localisation: (a) a planning phase, which involves the game developers and publishers working with the sales and marketing departments when the game is still in the planning and production stage, (b) *a production stage*, which involves translating the assets, and having them integrated and tested, and (c) a post-production stage, which involves the release of the game code, and the completion of other related localisation items, such as the manuals, packaging, and demos. As such, translation is part of the production stage, and therefore, does not represent the entire localisation process.

Since the 2010s, there has been an upsurge in academic interest in video game localisation, where scholars have broken ground in seminal works. Mangiron and O’Hagan (2013) have explored topics on the way in which game localisation would benefit from the application of theoretical concepts and frameworks from translation studies. Furthermore, Bernal-Merino (2015, 98) brings critical context to this new field, which he conceptualises as the Translation of Multimedia Interactive Entertainment Software (TMIES). This highlights the fact that *translation* is the academic focus of this discipline, *multimedia* refers to the multichannel nature of video games, *interactivity* separates the passivity of viewing, as in audio visual translation (AVT), which is concerned with the study of translation in subtitling and dubbing, from the activity of playing and interacting with the virtual world, *entertainment* as the primary aim of games is to entertain, and *software* as it is both enables interactivity and governs the way in which games are created and translated. While TMIES presents an exciting new frontier for researchers of translation studies, localisation, and video games, with an abundance of rich pickings, it is also fraught with considerable challenges and barriers, which have hindered many forms of research, including deeper socio-cultural explorations.

1.2 Research Gap

There has long been two main barriers to the study of TMIES, one academic, and the other born from industry restrictions. Though video games have been popularised since the 1970s, it was only in the 2010s that key scholars were able to create seminal work in this area. This is partly due to the same three reasons Bernal-Merino (2015, 45) provides for the delay in academic interest in AVT (newness, a traditional focus of translation studies on literary texts, and the stigma attached to pop-culture in academia). While academic barriers have been partly overcome, which has resulted in more research into TMIES, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 32) provide other reasons why many gaps still exist, both relating to industry restrictions, and academic knowledge of TMIES. Thus, the authors (*ibid*) state that those best equipped for conducting research into the video game localisation are practitioners of video game localisation who move into the field of academia, as while they would be unable to reveal specific details due to industry restrictions, they would still have first-hand experience of the related phenomena. As such, the rate of progress into these more hidden regions of practice is relative to the number of researchers with deeper first-hand industry knowledge, but at present, research in TMIES has been primarily led by researchers who have not clarified whether they have any professional video game translation or localisation experience. These remaining barriers have stymied progress, as O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 32) observe that 'the game industry remains sensitive regarding the disclosure of information, making it difficult for external parties to obtain access to certain localization related data', moreover Bernal-Merino (2015, 3) similarly reflects that 'the game development, publishing, and localisation industries are still somewhat reluctant to allow academics into their circles due to time pressures and fear of a confidentiality breach, or simply a lack of understanding of how collaborations might help them streamline processes to enhance overall best practice.'

Even the linguists involved in video game translation are typically bound by the non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) they sign before starting a project (O'Hagan and Mangiron, 2013,32). An NDA, as stated by Alexandra Twin (2023), is a 'legally binding contract that establishes a confidential relationship', and that 'the party or parties signing the agreement agree that sensitive information they may obtain will not be made available to others.' In essence, the relative information cannot legally be disclosed by the signee. While Twin (*ibid*) observes NDAs typically have a term of validity, in video game localisation projects this can last for several years. For example, Gengo (2017), who provide a video game localisation service, posted an online NDA with a variable term that spans from two-years up until the point

that the materials are no longer considered by the client to be covered by the NDA. As such, video game linguists are not permitted to disclose information for a span of years after completing projects, and then still need to seek permission after the term from both the developer, and the agency. This means seeking permission from multiple sources to disclose information is difficult, and the quality of such information, even if it did become available years later would be unreliable. Additionally, if it was possible to track down full teams of linguists several years after a project ended, it is not reasonable to expect them to remember the detailed socio-cultural reasoning behind translation decisions. As such, to date, there is no detailed socio-cultural analysis of the reasoning utilised by linguists in relation to specific translation approaches used in any video game localisation project. For these reasons, not only is it challenging to gain access to any authentic materials used in localisation projects such as the localisation kits or project details, but it has also thus far been impossible to engage with the linguists who work on such projects. This is why most research in this area has depended on the interpretations researchers have made of video games that have been translated and are publicly available.

Thus, due to the rapidly increasing size and diversity of the video game market, as well as the restrictions explained above, developments in the study of TMIES have expanded more into some areas, while less into others. Chandler and Deming (2012, 8-10) identify four different levels of localisation, which include (i) No localisation, (ii) Packaging and manual localisation, (iii) Partial localisation, and (iv) Full localisation. Moreover, Silvia Pettini (2022, 23) remarks that partial localisations, which often involve lower budgets, are text only with no voiceovers, along with full localisation, which have higher budgets, can include text, as well as voiceovers, are of most interest to researchers of TMIES, as both involve the translation of in game text, while packaging and manual translation only involves limited translation, and no localisation involves no official translation. Furthermore, of the four levels, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 142) report that 'Most developers opt for either partial or full localization on the basis of the different target markets and the resources allocated to the project', and this was echoed by Pettini (2022, 2) who stated that 'publishers usually opt for either partial or full localization on the basis of the target locale significance and the possible return on investment'. Regarding these two levels, however, researchers have gravitated more towards the discussion and contextualisation of full localisations of more popular video game titles with larger localisation budgets, and this has led to significant breakthroughs in the development of TMIES.

For instance, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013) utilise observations of the localisation of many popular video game titles, such as *Animal Crossing: New Leaf* (Nintendo 2012), *Final Fantasy VII* (Square 1997), and *World of Warcraft* (Blizzard 2004-), to rigorously locate video translation within the translation studies framework. Bernal-Merino (2015) draws from an extensive multidisciplinary range of areas, including audio-visual translation, software localisation, computer assisted translation, comparative literature, and video game production when analysing the localisation of renowned titles, such as *Diablo III* (Blizzard 2012), *Dragon Age II* (BioWare 2011: Electronic Arts), and *The Witcher 2* (CD Projekt 2011, Atari) to contextualise video games as multimedia interactive entertainment software with multichannel considerations, and the addition of interactivity, which is not present in other forms of translation. Furthermore, Pettini (2023) explores the links between translation strategies and cultural specificity in the localisation of hugely popular recent titles such as *Medal of Honor Warfighter* (Electronic Arts, 2012), *Battlefield 4* (Electronic Arts, 2013), and *Mass Effect 3* (Electronic Arts, 2021).

While there is no fixed rule stating highly popular video game with big budgets can only undergo full localisations, benefitting from a greater range of resources and the inclusion of dubbing considerations, researchers such as Chandler and Deming (2012), O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), and Pettini (2022), all link the localisation of big budget games to full localisations. Thus, Pettini (ibid), remarks how the video games selected in her research would have undergone full localisations 'Indeed, full localization is mainly reserved for flagship titles, known as "AAA games", like the games in the corpus that this book examines'. Therefore, despite its utilisation, recognition by researchers, and industry importance, there is a gap in knowledge of partial localisation, what it entails, and how the translators and reviewers who work on such projects are expected to translate the text of video games, which, when played by the target audience, are fully realised multimedia interactive entertainment software, despite only working with the game text, and having limited or no access to the video games in question, or any audio or visual materials. As such, this increases the value of research that explores the translations, occurring in the production stage of partial localisations.

One area of TMIES however that is gaining more attention from researchers is the translation of culture specific items (CSIs), which have also been referred to as culture specific references, as well as realia, which have been an important focus of study for research stemming from descriptive translation studies (DTS), which is concerned with the product, function, and process of translation. Javier Franco Aixelá (1996, 58) explains that CSIs are source cultural

text items, which are problematic to translate as they may not exist in the target culture or result in a different intertextual status between source and target cultures. Pettini (2022), as mentioned above, has conducted research on CSIs in games sharing military themes that are from the real world, *realia*, and from fiction, *irrealia*, as translated between European languages. This involved the application of Lawrence Venuti's (1995) theory of domestication and foreignization, which saw the translation strategies used for *realia* and *irrealia* being categorised in accordance with the culturally dichotic concepts of domestication and foreignization, in which domestication reduces the foreign elements to bring the readers home, and foreignization conveys these elements, to take the reader abroad' (ibid, 15). While this represented a rigorous application of DTS theory in relation to the translation of CSIs, there has been a lack of research using other theories, which may reveal different socio-cultural phenomena of significance. Accordingly, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 191-196) have speculated how the theory of norms in translation (Gideon Toury 1995), which can account for wider socio-cultural factors and be utilised to detect the presence, and strength of patterns of culture specific translation behaviour could be useful in such studies. However, they reflected (ibid) that industry restrictions prevented research aimed at revealing both how and why game translators make specific decisions, and that 'there is no research available to answer the question of how different norms are operating in the context of game localization.' Essentially, a rigorous investigation of normative cultural behaviour, regarding the translation of CSIs, and a better contextualisation of how and why CSIs are translated, would break ground in TMIES.

Aside from gaps in theoretical knowledge, there has been little, if any, research in TMIES that has explored how socio-cultural factors influence how CSIs are translated in Chinese video games. It is important that such research be conducted as not only does China have the biggest video game market in the world, worth \$45.8 bn (Newzoo 2023), with more games being localised both into Chinese, and out of Chinese, such as *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo 2020), a Chinese RPG, that won the Players Voice award at The Game Awards in 2022, an international event (Taylor Lyles 2022), Chinese video games can also be highly culturally specific. The reason for this cultural specificity however can be attributed as much to creative decisions as it can political intervention, as He Bike (2014) states that the Chinese Communist Party have encouraged the production of video games that feature themes related to Chinese culture and history, with educational value, that encourage a sense of patriotism amongst the players. As such, this high level of cultural specificity can be observed in several genres of games that draw inspiration from classical Chinese novels, literature, and history. This is

particularly the case with *Chinese wuxia RPGs*. Anthony Fung (2014, 66) explains that wuxia can literally be translated as ‘martial hero’, and ‘is a genre of literature where the stories are often based on modified history with dramatic characters that demonstrate the Chinese ideal of hero’ which has been adapted into a range of forms including opera, comics, and video games (ibid.).

Moreover, computer role playing games (CRPGs), which can be abbreviated to RPGs, are a wider genre of video games, which ‘Allow players to interact with a game world in a wider variety of ways than most other genres do, and to play a richer role than many games allow’ (Ernest Adams, 2014). This richer gaming experience typically results in more onscreen text, due to complex narratives, and lengthy dialogues. Hence, Mangiron (2004) observes ‘RPGs, such as Legend of Zelda and the FF series, are the most interesting from a translator’s point of view since they contain large amounts of onscreen text’. However, there remains a critical gap in research of the translation of CSIs in Chinese wuxia RPGs, which Fung (ibid., 58) states are highly culturally specific ‘often based on Chinese folklore, legends, wuxia fiction and historical stories’, and are therefore of critical importance to the study of cultural specificity in TMIES. In addition to the highly culturally specific nature of wuxia RPGs, the wuxia RPG genre has grown in popularity among anglophone locales in recent years, and this has resulted in a higher demand for the localisation of Chinese wuxia RPGs into English. This includes, the wuxia RPG *Gujian 3* (Wangyuan Shengtang 2018), *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo 2020), which is inspired by wuxia themes, and won the Players Voice award at The Game Awards in 2022, *Wandering Sword* (The Swordman Studio, Xiameng Studio 2023), *Xuan Yuan Sword 7* (Softstar 2024), and *Where Winds Meet* (Everstone Studio, NetEase Inc 2024) which was featured in *Edge* (2024), a UK-based video game magazine with an international following, where it was covered by a 14-page article by Simon Parkin and was also featured on the cover. This illustrates the growing industry importance, and impact of this genre, and thereby increases its importance in terms of academic research.

For transparency, however, it should be declared that this researcher has spent a decade working on Chinese to English video game localisation projects as a translator and then eventually reviewer for various localisation agencies, in both a freelance, and in-house capacity. This includes working on projects with more resources, as typically provided with full localisations and AAA games, as well as partial localisations, with fewer resources. This also includes working on a range of different genres on over eighty localisation projects. However, most of these projects were RPGs, highly culturally specific, and based on classical Chinese

literature, or Chinese wuxia fiction. Furthermore, most of the RPGs were wuxia themed, which is further indicative of the demand for the localisation of this genre in anglophone locales. As observed at the beginning of this section, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 32) argue that those with first-hand experiences of working within the industry are better placed to conduct research into this growing field. As such, this researcher endeavours to utilise professional experience, and industry connections to explore this research topic with greater insight than that of a researcher without such experience and provide a new voice for the linguists involved in such work, who are typically restricted by NDAs, while striving for academic objectivity, and strictly respecting the boundaries of industry.

While recent studies have approached the translation of cultural aspects in relation to Chinese video games, including the work of Dong Luo and Mangiron (2018), Hsu Hao (2020), Wu Zhiwei and Chen Zuojia (2020), who all touch upon domestication and foreignization in a more general sense, they did not conduct more detailed examinations of how specific CSIs were translated by strategies which aligned with either domesticating or foreignizing strategies, as present in the work of Pettini (2022) in relation to Eurocentric language pairs. Additionally, Zhang and O'Hagan (2019) also look at CSIs, but more from the general perspective of transcreation, and the concept of *skopos*. As such, these studies did not categorise the individual strategic approaches used in Chinese video games or underpin deeper socio-cultural factors at play in the translation of CSIs. It is therefore vital to address these gaps in research, and this can be done by exploring the translation of CSIs in the localisation of Chinese wuxia RPGs.

1.3 Research Aim and Questions

Considering these gaps, the aim of this thesis is to investigate the translation of CSIs in the English localisation of a Chinese wuxia RPG, and this comprises three research questions:

- Research Question 1: how do linguists translate CSIs, and are there any patterns?
- Research Question 2: why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?
- Research Question 3: what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?

The first question concerns how linguists translate various CSIs in a Chinese wuxia RPG, and furthermore, are there any observable wider pattern of cultural translation behaviour. As such, this question will be investigated utilising the theory of norms in translation, which was created by Toury (1995). It originates from the field of DTS, can categorise the cultural

approaches used in the translation of CSIs, and account for the presence, as well as strength, of patterns of culture specific translation behaviour, as governed by norms, which Toury (ibid, 55) describes as shared societal values or ideas, which determine what is acceptable and unacceptable in translation. This theory can therefore address the main elements of this research question and represents the first step in this study of socio-cultural phenomena in translation.

The second question seeks to explore why linguists use certain approaches in the translation of the CSIs, and if any socio-cultural factors influence this practice. While the theory of norms in translation provides a socio-cultural context for translation, it does not explain the socio-cultural reasoning of a linguist in relation to the translation of a CSI. It is therefore necessary to look beyond the field of DTS, for a framework that can explain the reasons behind translation action. Accordingly, the concept of *habitus*, from Bourdieu's (1977) *theory of practice*, originating from the field of sociology, can provide the required theoretical context. Habitus represents the preferences and dispositions held by people, that determine the way in which individuals and groups formulate strategies, operate, and therefore structure society (Bourdieu 1990a, 1990b). In other words, it is a mechanism that can account for the formulation of strategies, which can be used to theoretically underpin the socio-cultural reasoning of linguists in relation to the utilisation of translation strategies.

Addressing the third question involves integrating the data generated from questions one and two, which means tracing and contextualising the links between translation behaviour and the underlying reasons to reveal and frame the deeper socio-cultural phenomena at the heart of practice. This will be approached in two ways, but primarily via a multidisciplinary framework, comprising elements from DTS and the field of sociology, known as the translatorial habitus (Daniel Simeoni, 1998). This theoretical framework has already been successfully utilised in studies exploring socio-cultural phenomena in text-based translation (Kung Szu-Wen 2010, Liang Wen-chun 2010) and AVT (He Zhengguo 2017), where the synergy of norms and habitus reveal more than the sum of their parts. Moreover, functionalist translation theories, which focus on the function of a translation, will be used to further contextualise links between cultural approaches and reasoning, but from a functional perspective. These include skopos theory (Vermeer 1978), which is concerned with the initial purpose of a translation, as presented in the original commission, and user centred translation (UCT) as developed by Suojanen, Koskinen, and Tuominen (2015), which focuses more on the needs of the users of the translation.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 provides a review of the emergence of research into cultural specificity and the concept of CSIs in TMIES (2.1), and the nature of CSIs in Chinese wuxia RPGs (2.2). It covers literature on the theory of norms in translation (2.3), Bourdieusian theory, with a focus on the concept of habitus (2.4), and studies that utilise both norms and habitus, as part of a multidisciplinary theoretical framework, which can be used to investigate socio-cultural phenomena in the practice of translation (2.5). This is followed by a section on functionalist theories, which can be used to contextualise practice in relation to the role of commission, and how the needs of the users are interpreted (2.6). Finally, there is a section that focuses on the literature of video game translation practices within the process of localisation (2.7).

Chapter 3 explains the methodological approaches used for this study and how they address the research aims, which includes an overview of the research design (3.1), the preliminary stage, which involves the creation of the ST (3.2), and the main stage, which focuses on the organisation and implementation of the translation of the ST, the collection and coding of data, and the generation of categories (3.3).

Chapter 4 features the results obtained from this research and accompanying analyses. Sections 4.1-4.4 present an analysis of results which address the first question of ‘how do linguists translate CSIs and are there any patterns?’. This includes a framework of translation strategies and approaches, as well as norm data derived from the completed translations that measure patterns of cultural approaches used in the translation of CSIs. Moreover, sections 4.5-4.8 focus on the second question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’. This entails a framework of categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning as derived from the interviews, as well as an analysis of the combinations of categories socio-cultural reasoning used in connection with different CSIs. This chapter is concluded with a summary of the results and analysis (4.9).

Chapter 5 involves the structuring of a narrative which addresses the third research question of ‘what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?’ In this, three main trends of socio-cultural reasoning and resulting translation behaviour were revealed and investigated using key examples, and theoretical underpinning. This involves the discussion of socio-cultural reasoning that leads to stronger source culture adequate approaches (5.1), socio-cultural reasoning that leads to

stronger target culture acceptable approaches (5.2), and socio-cultural reasoning that leads to stronger source and target culture mixed approaches (5.3). This chapter is concluded with a section that integrates the three trends and explores the deeper theoretical implications (5.4).

Chapter 6 concludes this thesis by addressing the research aim, and respective research questions in a summary (6.1), it raises the main contributions of the research (6.2), considers the main limiting factors of the study (6.3), draws attention to avenues for future research (6.4) and ends with a final remark (6.5).

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter seeks to define and contextualise concepts and theoretical frameworks integral to this research. Initially, attention is placed on how cultural specificity, via the concept of CSIs, has recently emerged within the field of TMIES (2.1), and the nature of CSIs in Chinese wuxia RPGs (2.2). The theory of norms in translation in TMIES is reviewed considering its ability to detect patterns of translation behaviour among groups of linguists (2.3). Bourdieu's sociological framework which includes the concept of habitus is also covered for its capacity to reveal the socio-cultural reasons why linguists utilise certain translation strategies (2.4). Furthermore, this chapter has also reviewed studies that have integrated elements from both the theory of norms in translation, and Bourdieu's sociology, which have led to the development of the translatorial habitus, a socio-cultural theoretical framework that has the potential to reveal deeper socio-cultural phenomena (2.5). While the focus of this research is of a socio-cultural nature, functionalist theories have also been included, to account for how cultural approaches can be influenced by the purpose of the work, as prescribed in the original commission (2.6). The final section of this chapter has covered literature on the practice of video game translation to better contextualise these socio-cultural phenomena within the process of localisation (2.7).

2.1 Studies of Cultural Specificity in TMIES

Research focusing on the translation of CSIs has recently emerged in the field of TMIES; however, cultural specificity has long been of interest to scholars within the DTS branch of translation studies in which related concepts have been shaped by theories relating to both cultural and social phenomena (2.1.1). Moreover, studies in cultural specificity in the field of AVT (2.1.2) resulted in the evolution of the concept of CSIs, in relation to additional audio-visual channels, which raises questions of how its recent entry into TMIES (2.1.3) which has audio-visual, as well as interactive elements, might result in further developments.

2.1.1 *The Emergence of Cultural Specificity in DTS*

DTS, according to James Holmes (1988/2004, 184-90), is concerned with the phenomena of translation in relation to three possible foci, (1) the product, (2) the function, and (3) the process. After the focus has been established there are six branches, which look to describe specific restrictions, including (i) medium-restricted theories (e.g. human translation, CAT tool translation, or machine translation), (ii) area-restricted theories (restricted to specific languages or cultures), (iii) rank-restricted theories (related to text linguistic analysis), (iv) text-type restricted theories (focuses on specific types of discourse or genres, such as literary, marketing, technical translation), (v) time restricted (focusing on theories or translations from specific

periods), and (vi) problem-restricted theories (focusing on notions such as equivalence). While Holmes points out that several of these restrictions can apply to the same study, it is the second branch of *area restricted theories*, that relates to languages or cultures, which engages with the cultural dimension.

In recent decades, there have been two major movements in the field of translation studies, which have impacted DTS – the cultural turn, and the social turn. In the introduction to the collection of essays *Translation, History and Culture*, Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevere (1990, 4) criticise previous linguistic approaches to translation, which entail exhaustive comparisons between source texts and translations, while failing to consider the cultural environment. They encourage an approach which goes beyond linguistic examination and focuses on the interactions between translation and culture, of how culture can impact and constrain translation, as well as ‘the larger issues of context, history and convention’ (ibid., 11). This line of thought ushered in the movement known as the *cultural turn*, which symbolised a shift of focus from language to culture, and from the source text, author, and source culture to the target text, translator, and target culture, with translation facilitating a connection between two cultures. One influential framework that emerged from this is Lawrence Venuti’s (1995) theory of domestication and foreignization, which shall be covered below in relation to TMIES studies (2.1.3).

Following the cultural turn there has been a *social turn*, in which translation scholars have sought to explore socio-cultural phenomena in translation in greater depth and have been drawn by the explanatory power of theories from the field of sociology, and much of this attention has been placed on Bourdieu’s social theory. Moreover, Toury’s theory of norms in translation, which belongs to DTS, has also contributed to the development of the social turn, and raises the significance of socio-cultural phenomena in translation. Literature connecting this theory to TMIES will also be reviewed below, in section 2.3.

Over the last two decades, the meteoric rise of the importance of digital technology in society, and new ways in which it intersects with the academic and industrial aspects of translation, have led to the application of DTS as well as Bourdieusian theory in studies on cultural specificity in the field of AVT. More recently, however, scholars have looked at ways of applying DTS theories to better understand cultural specificity in TMIES, which in some respects has more in common with AVT than traditional translation.

2.1.1.1 CSIs

In translation studies CSIs are terms, phrases, and references specific to certain cultures, and have been referred to in a variety of ways. Over time, scholars have categorised these based on traditional text-based media and have then adapted the parameters of what can be culturally specific to fit the research of AVT, which involves the translation of multimedia products. However, while TMIES is different from both traditional text-based translation, and AVT, as not only does it explore the audio-visual channel, but also an interactive channel, the parameters of CSIs in TMIES do not seem to have been developed far beyond the AVT framework. Furthermore, the interactive channel has far-reaching implications, as it relates to how players interact with in-game navigation menus, how they navigate and play in these virtual worlds, which can both be culturally specific in general design, as well as containing a wide variety of CSIs. Thus, by addressing the research questions of this study, it will be possible to observe how CSIs fit within the framework of TMIES.

However, before reviewing how CSIs have evolved in relation to different channels, it is important to observe the most intrinsic qualities of this concept. Thus, while scholars have applied different frameworks to delineate items which are culturally specific, they are typically seen as being a problematic aspect of translation. For instance, Aixelá (1996, 58) refers to these CSIs and provides the following description:

those textually actualized items whose function and connotations in a source text involve a translation problem in their transference to a target text, whenever this problem is a product of the non-existence of the referred item or of its different intertextual status in the cultural system of the readers of the target text.

Thus, Aixelá identifies two problems with CSIs. Firstly, when there is an absence of the referred item in the target culture, and secondly, when there is a different intertextual status between the source culture and the target culture. The second problem is relative, as the intertextual status between two cultures is dynamic, as Aixelá states ‘no two elements retain the same relationship over a sufficient period of time’ (ibid., 57). Essentially, when translating CSIs, translators may need to employ strategies to overcome the possibility of no direct or partial equivalent and be aware of how accepted translations may change due to temporal factors.

Jean-Pierre Mailhac (1996, 133-134) however refers to these items as ‘cultural references’, and states: ‘by cultural reference we mean any reference to a cultural entity, which, due to its distance from the target culture, is characterized by a sufficient degree of opacity to

the target reader to constitute a problem'. In this, Mailhac explicitly refers to the problem of how the target audience, will struggle, by varying degrees, to relate to CSIs, in comparison with the intended source audience. His concept is slightly more nuanced, in that it accounts for a varying degree of cultural specificity, or to borrow Mailhac's term – cultural opacity. Moreover, other scholars use alternative definitions for this concept, for example Jorge Díaz-Cintas and Aline Ramael (2007) observe that these culture-bound terms are also referred to as *realia* and extralinguistic culture bound references. Despite the numerous definitions used to label this concept, this study will utilise the term CSI, as it is established within academia, self-explanatory and has a recognisable abbreviation.

A difficulty with categorising CSIs is, as Aixelá (*ibid.*, 56) observes, separating the cultural components from that which are linguistic or pragmatic, as, within a language, everything is culturally produced, and is therefore, to a degree, culturally specific, including the language itself. Despite this, scholars have still categorised CSIs using different taxonomies, which have been created as analytical tools for specific research purposes in text-based studies, AVT studies, and now TMIES as examined below.

2.1.1.2 Text-based CSIs

One of the most influential taxonomies for CSIs was created by Peter Newmark (1988, 94), who defines culture 'as the way of life and its manifestations that are particular to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression'. Newmark distinguishes *cultural* words, specific to certain cultures, from *universal* words, such as breakfast, embrace, and pile, and ubiquitous artefacts such as mirror and table. Newmark (*ibid.*) states:

Most 'cultural' words are easy to detect, since they are associated with a particular language and cannot be literally translated, but many cultural customs are described in ordinary language ('topping out a building', 'time, gentlemen, please', 'mud in your eye'), where literal translations would distort the meaning and a translation may include an appropriate descriptive-functional equivalent.

In his description, Newmark mentions both *words* and in reference to customs, *phrases*; however, his cultural categories (*ibid.*, 95) which were adapted from Eugene Nida (1945), are composed of lexical fields, and mainly contain single words, and not so many phrases, or broader references. These cultural categories included 1. *Ecology* (flora and fauna), 2. *Material culture* (physical items), 3. *Societal culture* (work and leisure), 4. *Organisations customs*,

activities, and procedures (relating to political and administrative, religious, historical, or artistic concepts), and 5. *Gestures and habits*.

While Nathalie Ramière (2007, 49), a scholar focusing on cultural transfer in AVT observes that it can be useful to categorise these items in such a system, Irene Ranzato (2016, 59) also a scholar of AVT, observes that this method of classification can be limited by its rigidity and lack of contextualisation. Indeed, having only a few main categories can make such a taxonomy appear less unwieldy; conversely however, oversimplification may result in a system that is too general. For instance, it is unusual that the concepts of religion, history, and art have been included in the category of 4. *Organisations, customs, activities, and procedures*, but not in the category of 2. *Material culture*, in which works of art, or historic and religious artefacts could have been included. Furthermore, Newmark's system primarily accounts for individual cultural words, and in some cases phrases, but it does not account for broader items, such as quotations, allusions, or references to other works of literature. It was primarily when the concept of cultural specificity was applied in the study of AVT, that these elements were considered within culture specific taxonomies. This begs the question, would research into cultural specificity in TMIES lead to similar findings? To better understand how cultural specificity may manifest within TMIES, it is first important to consider how cultural specificity and CSIs have evolved in the field of AVT.

2.1.2 The Evolution of CSIs in AVT

As the concept of what makes a CSI, or a similarly named element of cultural specificity, has been studied in relation to AVT, it has evolved in several ways. Scholars, such as Díaz-Cintas and Ramael (2007, 52), and Pérez-González (2009, 13) have observed how AVT involves the translation of multimedia content, in that it contains a combination of text, audio, images, animations, and video, and that these can convey different semiotic or modes of meaning, such as language, image, and music, and is therefore multimodal in nature, which can exacerbate challenges in the translation of CSIs. This section will therefore review how key scholars have contributed to the development of this concept of CSIs within an AVT context, which is intrinsically multimedial and multimodal, as this will provide clues of how it may be further adapted for TMIES.

One of the most significant developments of what can be considered culturally specific in AVT emerged in the work of Díaz-Cintas and Ramael (2007, 201) who created a detailed taxonomy of CSIs, which they name culture-bound terms, which are 'Extra-linguistic

references to items that are tied with a country's culture, history, or geography, and tend therefore to pose serious translation challenges' (ibid., 200). These culture-bound terms fit in three main categories. Thus 1. *Geographic References* includes objects from physical geography, as well flora and fauna. 2. *Ethnographic References* such as objects from daily life, references to work (as in a profession), and references to art and culture (such as the blues, Thanksgiving, and *Romeo and Juliette*). 3. *Socio-Political References*, includes various socio-political units, functions, and objects. These three categories include more sub-categories; however, it is one of the subcategories linked to 2. *Ethnographic References*, that is of particular interest, as it expands the scope of what constitutes a CSI. Hence, where Newmark focused primarily upon cultural words and phrases, Díaz-Cintas and Remael included *Romeo and Juliette* (William Shakespeare, 1597) in the field of art and culture. This inclusion implies that quotations and allusions to larger works of art and literature, which are more than individual words, notions, or concepts, could be also classified as CSIs. This was part of a trend in which AVT scholars began to create intertextual culture specific links that connected the text in subtitles to the text of other works.

Unlike text-only translation, not only does AVT include textual elements, but also audio, and other visual elements. As such, Delia Chiaro (2008, 156) refers to CSIs, as culture-specific references (CSRs), and links them to both subtitling and dubbing:

CSRs are entries that are typical of one particular culture, and that culture alone, and they can be either exclusively or predominantly visual (an image of a local or national figure, a local dance, pet funerals, baby showers), exclusively verbal or else both visual and verbal in nature.

Chiaro is one of the first scholars to address the importance of visual elements, and not just verbal or textual elements of CSIs. This is proof that the concept of what can be culturally specific can evolve and be applied to other areas in translation, such as TMIES, which also includes audio and visual content.

Moreover, Chiaro and Rachele Antonini (2005, 214) use the metaphor of a wavering supply of electricity, where CSRs result in 'lingua-cultural drops in translational voltage' and devised a detailed taxonomy of ten main categories of CSRs. While most of these relate to individual terms, it also includes the category of *Books, films, and TV programmes*. This not only echoes the inclusion of works such as plays that originate from a textual form, as included in the taxonomy of Díaz-Cintas and Remael, which forges connections between the text of

subtitles to work originating in text-bound formats, but further creates links between both the text of subtitling, and the verbal content of dubbing with both the text of books, as well as other audio visual content in other films and TV programmes. This however is not simply an intertextual connection, but rather a connection, linking audio-visual products with both textual and audio-visual products in a range of media formats, and thus broadens the scope of what constitutes a CSI, which could be text based, or of an audio-visual nature, and forges a wider network of intermedial culture specific connections. This concept of *intermediality* highlights how the translation of CSIs, which can be textual, audio, or visual, is governed by established translations of the same CSIs that exist in different media formats and will be further utilised in the discussion section (5.2.2.4).

Several critical developments regarding the conceptual nature of CSIs in AVT emerged from the work of Jan Pedersen (2005, 2), who also adapts the parameters of CSIs in AVT, which he refers to as Extralinguistic Culture-Bound References (ECRs). While Pedersen develops his own taxonomy, with several categories, which he refers to as domains, he writes that his list of categories is not exhaustive, that it merely reflects what was in the original corpus and is by no means an attempt to create a comprehensive taxonomy of domains. However, his discussion of *influencing parameters*, provides new and more conceptual perspectives vital for a better understanding of how CSIs can influence translators. Thus, Pedersen (2005, 10-15), introduces several parameters, including, *transculturality*, which refers to how elements that were once specific to a single culture, have become accessible on a global scale, and hence, are no longer so culture bound, as well as *extratextuality*, which indicates whether an ECR exists outside of the ST in the real world and would be categorised as *text external*. However, if an element has been created specifically for the text in which it exists, it would be categorised as *text internal*, and would not exist outside of the ST. Another key parameter is *centrality of reference*, and it indicates how relevant an individual reference is to the subject matter, or central to the theme of the text. These parameters indicate some of the different ways in which CSIs can influence translators, and are of interest to this study, which intends to explore the influence of socio-cultural factors on the translation process.

The concepts of transculturality, extratextuality, and centrality of reference influenced the way in which Ranzato (2016) categorised elements of cultural specificity. Ranzato (ibid., 3) uses the term culture specific references (CSRs) to encompass what this study refers to as CSIs, and observes:

such elements are used by authors to give colour and substance to their scripts and to provide the text with features which are often intimately embedded in the source culture (SC) and to which the audience, or parts of the audience, can relate. They stimulate the mnemonic associations as they can evoke images and feelings that are familiar to the source audience (SA).

Moreover, Ranzato (*ibid.*, 64) creates a taxonomy that uses conceptual rather than lexical groupings, which were more prevalent in the systems and taxonomies of other AVT scholars mentioned above. It was designed to avoid the overlapping of categories and consider the viewpoint of the TA in its relationship with the ST. Ranzato, classifies CSRs into two groupings based on Pedersen's concept of extratextuality, as group 1 covers *real-world references*, which runs parallel to Pedersen's concept of text external, and group 2 covers *intertextual references*, which mirrors the concept of text internal. Furthermore, each of these groups further integrates Pedersen's concepts of transculturality and centrality of reference. Thus, transculturality is utilised in group 1. *Real-world References*, which includes *source culture references* (belong to the ST), *intercultural references* (forges a dialogue between SC and TC), *third culture references* (belonging neither to SC or TC), and *target culture references* (belong to the TC). Additionally, Ranzato considers the way in which the TA relates to a ST, in varying degrees of opacity, which embraces Pedersen's parameter of centrality of reference. This has been integrated in group 2, *Intertextual References*, which includes *overt intertextual allusions* (overt references to other fictional text or work), *covert intertextual allusions* (covert references to other fictional text or work), and (vii) *intertextual macroallusions* (an allusion to an entire piece of work). Ranzato elaborates that all the above can be verbal or non-verbal cultural references, or synchronous or asynchronous cultural references.

Like Pedersen, Ranzato admits that this taxonomy is subject to certain limitations, as it was designed for a specific purpose, and based on a set corpus. While this argument rings true for any tool designed for a specific task, this conceptual approach to creating a taxonomy still conveys certain advantages, as it considers the factors of transculturality, intertextuality, centrality of reference, and time, which other scholars have discussed, but not fully integrated within their own taxonomies, on a conceptual level. Furthermore, by not including lexical fields, Ranzato's system achieves a higher degree of elegance, as it avoids the problematic overlapping of categories. While no taxonomy is without its limitations, this conceptual approach appears more systematic and comprehensive than taxonomies based purely upon lexical categories. However, unlike scholars of TMIES, Ranzato had the benefit of being able to reference a larger

body of AVT related CSI studies from which to draw upon, which may have made aided the formulation of these conceptual categories.

It can be observed that the concept of cultural specificity has been utilised in a wide range of AVT studies, focusing on audio-visual products, which were both multimedial and multimodal. This has jointly resulted in the development of different systems of categorisation, shaped by the audio-visual products around which they are structured, and new conceptual parameters which have developed as research in AVT matures. Moreover, this indicates that the transition of cultural specificity from AVT to TMIES may result in similarly new developments, due to key differences in these products, and especially the inclusion of the interactive channel, which is not typically present in AV products.

2.1.3 CSIs in TMIES

While taxonomies of CSIs in the purely textual domain, focused on lexical fields, with the shift to AVT, scholars uncovered the limitations of such systems and have gradually attempted to account for factors such as time, transculturality, and extratextuality. This indicates that the extra sensory channels (audio-visual) may have acted as a catalyst for the evolution of the concept of CSIs, or what can be considered culturally specific in translation, forcing new multichannel perspectives. Just as AVT scholars made observations about the multimedia nature and multimodal qualities of audio-visual products, scholars of TMIES, including O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), and Pettini (2022), have similarly raised the challenges and implications of translating multimodal and multimedia content in TMIES. However, it was Bernal-Merino (2015, 53) who broke ground on emphasising how video game translation is as different from AVT, as AVT is from traditional text only, or text and illustration translation. Bernal-Merino (2020, 229) thus observes that video games can contain millions of words, bring together hardware and software that can generate a rich polysemiotic virtual experience for the players, and therefore, in a similar sense to AVT, involve more considerations beyond the text alone. However, not only does this include the audio-visual channel, but video games also engage what Bernal-Merino (2015, 53) identifies as the *interactive* channel, which can result in three translational challenges: interactivity through menus and hyperlinked texts, playability (user-centred options that facilitate story-building logic), and culture, image, sound, text cohesion, which go beyond the scope of AVT. Furthermore, Bernal-Merino (2018, 119-120) explains that playability is an essential aspect of interactivity in video games, and an essential concept in measuring the quality of any localisation. This suggests that the addition of the interactive

channel, and how it relates to playability may see the concept of CSIs evolve further within the realm of TMIES.

While various scholars including Dong and Mangiron (2018), Zhang and O'Hagan (2019), Hsu (2020), Wu and Chen (2020), and Pettini (2022) are exploring cultural specificity in video games, the development of taxonomies and redefinition of CSIs in video games is still in the early stages. These studies primarily link cultural specificity with Venuti's (1995) theory of domestication and foreignization, or the concept of Skopos, which is derived from Vermeer's (1978) skopos theory. However, in-depth studies using DTS frameworks are scarce. As such, this area still possesses great research potential. The following sections will focus on studies that have investigated the translation of CSIs in relation to Chinese video games, as well as studies that have further developed the concept of CSIs in TMIES via the application of DTS frameworks.

2.1.3.1 The Transcreation of CSIs in Chinese Video Games and the Concept of Skopos

The work of Zhang and O'Hagan (2019) represents the most in-depth study of CSIs in Chinese to English video game translation prior to this research. It explores the transcreation of terms in the Chinese RPG *Perfect World* (Beijing Perfect World 2005), which belongs to the fantasy genre. While the game includes fantasy races and magic, it is based on Chinese mythology, and could share similar features to wuxia RPGs, which may draw inspiration from Chinese mythology. Instead of analysing specific translation strategies, the focus of the study is placed on the usage of creativity in the process of translation. Moreover, it provides several examples of CSIs that have been transcreated, and these tend to be of a more functional nature, representing moves that can be performed, or items, such as medicinal potions that can be consumed. While player interaction was not the focus of the study, most of the items were inherently of an interactive nature and can be used as a point of reference for the translation of similar CSIs which appear in this study.

Moreover, the transcreations of these CSIs were linked to the general concept of skopos, which belongs to skopos theory (Vermeer 1978). As covered in 2.6.2, skopos is the main rule (of three rules) belonging to skopos theory, and refers to the purpose of a translation, as designated by the commission as per the translation brief. The study was conducted based on the observations of the English transcreations as present in the published game in comparison to the original Chinese terms, and relied on the interpretations of the researchers, as there was no connected commission, or inclusion of input from the linguists who were involved in the

translation. However, it was surmised that the transcreations were carried out to avoid the utilisation of pinyin, which may sound alien to westerners, and to make the terms more familiar to non-Chinese players of all cultures (ibid., 196-197). In this sense, it appears that transcreation was consistently used to generate translations more acceptable to the target cultures, and this may have been due to the client brief, or it may have been based more on the decisions of the linguists involved. Perhaps the results of this study can provide more context.

2.1.3.2 Linking CSIs in Chinese Video Game Localisation with the Theory of Domestication and Foreignization

In recent years, there have been three studies which have touched on cultural specificity, the theory of foreignization and domestication, and have been related to translation involving the Chinese language in video games, and these were by Dong and Mangiron (2018), Hsu (2020), and Wu and Chen (2020). Domestication and foreignization represent two dichotomous cultural approaches to translation and can be achieved through the application of various translation strategies. According to Venuti (2018, 15), domestication involves ‘an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to receiving cultural values, bringing the author back home’, and foreignization places ‘an ethnodeviant pressure on those values to register the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad’. Mark Shuttleworth and Moria Cowie (1997, 59) explain that domestication involves translations which result in a transparent, fluent style to minimize the strangeness of the foreign text for target language readers, whereas foreignization involves producing translations which deliberately break target conventions by retaining foreign elements of the original. As such, scholars can link the translation of CSIs to these general translation approaches.

This connection of cultural specificity and Venuti’s theory was observed in a study conducted by Dong and Mangiron (2018) on the cultural adaptation of video games into the Chinese market, and ways to maximise a return on investment (ROI) for the translation of video games into Chinese. Despite focusing on the opposite language direction to this study, they make several findings which can inform this research. Moreover, they primarily utilise O’Hagan and Mangiron’s (2013, 215) model of cultural adaptation, which divides cultural adaptation challenges into two levels:

At macro level it can affect the overall design of the game, such as the game mechanics, graphics, character design, and the story line. Adaptation at micro level

refers to textual changes made to the in-game text, the script and dialogues, the text in graphics, and printed materials.

In doing so, they identify several categories of CSIs as being significant cultural challenges. These took the form of several short examples, which came from a variety of different video games, and included the culture specific categories of *number format*, *food-related terminology*, *myths and legends*, and *songs*. However, as the focus of the study was on cultural adaptation and financial considerations of the Chinese market, it does not attempt to create a systematic or conceptual taxonomy for CSIs. Nor does it link individual CSIs with the general approaches of domestication and foreignization, or the translation strategies that are linked to these approaches. While it does conclude that ‘When localising a game for the Chinese market, a domestication approach is often taken’ (Dong and Mangiron 2018, 162), and that ‘domestication and cultural adaptation can contribute to the success of a video game in the Chinese market’ (ibid.), it does not delve into the details of individual translation strategies, how these link with the main approaches, nor does it probe the socio-cultural factors and reasoning behind these translations. However, it does raise the point that translation of cultural content into Chinese, from languages including English, involves engagement with a complex series of socio-political factors and censorship challenges (ibid., 151), which reinforces the argument that video game translation involving both Chinese and English can entail more than just bridging a large linguistic gap.

Part of Venuti’s framework also appeared in a study by Hsu (2020) focusing on the Chinese to English localisation of the point-and-click horror-adventure game *Detention* (Red Candle 2017), which is set during the 1960s in Taiwan, with a focus on the culturalization of historical references. As with the study conducted by Dong and Mangiron (2018), this also utilised O’Hagan and Mangiron’s (2013, 215) model of cultural adaptation. Furthermore, what this current study refers to as CSIs were once again touched upon in a section on the micro level of culturalization. However, this time fewer categories were discussed, which were for *names of characters*, and *terms of address*. Only a few examples were provided for each category, and they were described in detail with a focus on pronunciation and spelling, but they were not underpinned with translation studies theories. While not utilised in the discussion of individual categories of CSIs, the approach of domestication was mentioned, as Hsu (2020, 35) observes ‘in a culturally-specific game like *Detention*, a domestication approach might not be the best choice in terms of translation strategies’, and Hsu (ibid.) explained that this was because the game was highly culturally specific, and related to certain historical events. However, aside

from the utilisation of the model of cultural adaptation, and focus on other areas, there was no attempt to systematically organise CSIs, or connect individual categories of CSIs with a framework of domestication and foreignization strategies.

The concepts of both domestication and foreignization were referenced in research conducted by Wu and Chen (2020) on the localisation of Chinese games for the Southeast Asian market. This included a survey with questions for Indonesian gamers relating to whether they prefer Chinese video games being translated into English, or Indonesian; whether the translations should retain original Chinese CSIs, such as the names of characters, or whether these CSIs should be rendered to feel more natural to Indonesian gamers. The general conclusion was that Indonesian players seemed to prefer a more foreignizing approach (ibid., 64). While this engaged with Venuti's theory in a broad sense, the only category of CSI that was referenced was *foreign names of characters*, and there were no specific links between the broader approaches of domestication and foreignization, and relative translation strategies. On this basis, more could have been done to contextualise what translation strategies can be considered as part of the domesticating or foreignizing approaches.

Nevertheless, these studies all indicate a growing interest in cultural specificity in games involving the translation into and out of Chinese. Furthermore, they have laid the theoretical groundwork for deeper socio-cultural investigations by engaging with the theory of domestication and foreignization in a more general sense, which revealed a trend in which foreignizing approaches are viewed as preferential among linguists, and players. Yet, there is still much potential for a more rigorous mapping of translation approaches used in the translation of CSIs in Chinese video games, and a deeper exploration of related socio-cultural phenomena. However, to understand how the translation of CSIs can be systematically linked to a DTS framework, much can be learned from the recent work of Pettini (2022), as featured below.

2.1.3.3 A Deeper Integration of a CSIs and DTS Theory in TMIES

Having established the concept of CSIs, and how it has been linked to the DTS theory of domestication and foreignization in the field of TMIES, with a focus on Chinese video game localisation, it is necessary to outline how scholars in the fields of translation, including AVT, and TMIES have more systematically linked cultural specificity to taxonomies of translation strategies, as well as DTS theory, to better lay the theoretical foundation of this research.

One of the most influential taxonomies of translation strategies in this field belongs to Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet (1958/2002, 128-137). While this was not based on CSIs, it has been influential in shaping the taxonomies of translation scholars interested in cultural specificity, and its influence can be seen in key taxonomies by Pedersen (2005) in AVT, and Pettini (2022) in TMIES. Vinay and Darbelnet identify two cultural approaches, which are *direct* and *oblique* translation. *Direct translation* can be likened to the concept of a foreignizing approach, and *oblique*, with a domesticating approach. Each approach is subdivided into several strategies, which the authors refer to as methods and procedures, indicating that the general cultural effect of each approach can be achieved by various strategies.

The notion of being able to place translation strategies into culture specific categories would be useful for this research, as it would indicate how linguists prioritise either conveying the elements of the source culture or adapting more to the target culture. However, each taxonomy is constructed for a specific purpose, and may be restricted by its original design. Thus, Pedersen (2007, 113), notes that Vinay and Darbelnet's taxonomy is primarily based on syntax while overlooking the importance of translation strategies that relate more to semantics, and Ranzato (2016, 93) observes that this taxonomy was not applied to any study on culture specific references and may not have all the tools required to analyse cultural specificity.

In Pedersen's (2005) work on extralinguistic culture-bound references (ECRs), which this study refers to as CSIs, he includes a translation taxonomy that links translation strategies applicable for subtitle translation to cultural approaches, labelled as *Taxonomy of ECR transfer strategies* (ibid., 4). As the taxonomy is not based on one study, and rather attempts to cover all strategies a subtitle translator may employ when translating culturally specific content, it is both extensive, and provides a high degree of granularity. The reason that this AVT specific taxonomy is of interest to this study is not because of the range of translation strategies, but rather the way in which it is structured around cultural concepts. As such, there is a scale which integrates two broad cultural approaches labelled as *SL Oriented*, and *TL Oriented*. Pedersen refers to his taxonomy as adopting a Venutian scale, as it mirrors Venuti's (2018, 15) concepts of domestication and foreignization. Moreover, beneath each of these approaches, is a list of strategies, and in most cases, the strategies have various sub-strategies.

While it does not involve the translation of Chinese video games, the most comprehensive categorisation of CSIs in TMIES, and the only one to systematically connect CSIs to both a taxonomy of translation strategies, and a DTS theory has been created by Pettini

(2022). In terms of cultural specificity, Pettini has utilised the dichotomous concepts of realia and irrealia in her taxonomy, which focuses on translation of English into Italian, and English into Spanish. Pettini (ibid., 7) explains ‘realia represent references to real cultures while irrealia represent references to fictional cultures.’ The resulting categories of realia and irrealia were then linked to a taxonomy of translation strategies that exhibits the dichotomous cultural relationship established in the taxonomy of Vinay and Darbelnet, which was then developed further in taxonomies such as the one created by Pedersen. Indeed, Pettini (ibid., 94) states that her taxonomy has been adapted from Pedersen’s. As such, it features a Venutian scale, with more SL-oriented (foreignizing approaches) at one end, and more TL-oriented (domesticating approaches) at the other.

These dichotomous concepts were used to categorise a range of CSIs from a corpus of three video games: *Medal of Honor Warfighter* (Electronic Arts, 2012), a first-person shooter which presents a modern, but fictional campaign. *Battlefield 4* (Electronic Arts, 2013), another first-person shooter which takes place during the fictional *War of 2020*, in which tensions escalate between the US, Russia, and China. Lastly, there is *Mass Effect 3* (Electronic Arts, 2021), which is a science fiction inspired action role-playing game (ARPG), set in the Milky Way galaxy during the 22nd century. While these three games share a common theme of war, it should be noted that they belong to different genres, with the first two being first-person shooters placing more emphasis on shooting and action, whereas the third being an ARPG, involves more role-playing elements. This has the benefit of providing a multi-genre perspective, but at the same time could overlook some of the features that make these genres more unique. As such, this thesis will endeavour to focus on a singular genre.

The approach used by Pettini resulted in the categorisation of several types of culture specific terms, which were placed in three groups linked to the concept of irrealia, realia, or both. The first group contains three categories linked only to irrealia: *Individual References*, which includes proper names for individual fictional entities within the game world, such as characters, and NPCs. *Collective References*, which include proper names for collective fictional entities within the game world, such as teams, task forces, or organisations. The second group, however, focuses on how the text within games relates to other texts, and has one category linked to irrealia: *Intratextual Metaludic References*, which comprise references made within one game to another game in the same series, such as a prequel. The other category in this group is related to realia, and is known as *Intertextual references*, which covers references within the game text that are linked to texts outside of the game, and its series, such as works

of fiction, or non-fiction, in textual or spoken formats. Lastly, the third group includes four categories that can be linked to realia or irrealia, depending on how they are used in the game, and includes: *Geographical References*, *Ethnic References*, *Sociopolitical References*, and *Artifactual References* (which refer to items that are created or used by characters within the video games).

Hence, key concepts that have developed in the research of AVT, and DTS have been integrated within Pettini's system of taxonomy. Indeed, the concepts of *realia* and *irrealia* closely mirror Ranzato's concepts of *real-world references* and *intertextual references*. Furthermore, the categories in Pettini's second grouping, *Intratextual Metaludic References*, and *Intertextual references*, relate to some aspects of what Zhang (2022, 372) refers to as the 'transmedial' quality of video games, in which stories and films are adapted into video games, and therefore share similar elements that can guide or restrict the actions of translators. Moreover, while Pettini's *Intertextual references* mirror how Chiaro's taxonomy accounts for both cultural references in the speech and text in dubbing and subtitling, and the way in which they can refer to speech and text in other forms of media, the concept of *Intratextual Metaludic References* provides a new perspective engineered specifically for cultural references between different video games belonging to the same fictional world or franchise. In this respect, the shift in focus from AVT to TMIES has started to develop existing concepts.

Pettini has contributed to the categorisation of cultural specificity in TMIES, identifying a dichotomy between realia and irrealia, as well as the utilisation of translation strategies which align with the foreignizing or domesticating approaches. However, the nature of the research design, focusing on the corpus of translated games did not enable engagement with the linguists responsible for the translations or the socio-cultural motivations behind the translations. As such, the reasons for the adherence to more foreignizing or domesticating remain unknown. This statement also rings true for the other studies covered in 2.1.3.1, and 2.1.3.2, which did not include engagement with the linguists involved, access to client briefs, or other components of localisation kits, and therefore rely entirely on the interpretations of the researchers, who may have limited experience of working in the industry or may not have worked in the industry at all. This is because, as stated by Hu Kaibao (2016, 228) 'a corpus can offer abundant translation examples and relevant data, but it cannot provide explanations for the nature of translation'. Moreover, any research should address such questions as 'what?', 'how?', and 'why?', with the question of 'why?' being the most important. However, corpus design alone cannot address 'why?' (Hu, *ibid.*). As such, this study will not rely on corpus design, and solely researcher-

based interpretation. It will engage with the linguists involved in the process of game localisation, as well as considering the client brief, and other components included in the given localisation kit. Furthermore, the results and findings will be interpreted by this researcher, who also has extensive first-hand industry experience.

It was insightful that Pettini (2022, 44) notes the importance of interactivity and playability; however, her taxonomy does not fully integrate these elements or cover the *interactive channel*. Nor was it able to explore larger patterns of cultural translation behaviour present in a group of linguists, which may reflect broader aspects of industry practice. It is therefore important that this research, concerned with the exploration of the socio-cultural factors that guide linguists in the translation of CSIs, records any phenomena related to how interactivity influences the translation of CSIs. While the DTS framework of domestication and foreignization can enable a cultural engagement, this research seeks a deeper socio-cultural understanding of the reasons why linguists use certain translation strategies, reflecting a larger body of practice, and will therefore look to the theory of norms in translation, which shall be reviewed in relation to TMIES research in section 2.3.

Encouragingly, Pettini has created a taxonomy for the translation of culture specific items found in a corpus of game texts which share a military theme, in the language pairs of English-Italian, and English-Spanish, and has linked this with DTS theory. However, there has been no similar attempt to systematically explore cultural specificity, or create a wider taxonomy of CSIs, in the translation of Chinese wuxia RPGs into English, let alone any genre of Chinese video game that has been translated into English. As such, a deeper study of socio-cultural phenomena in this language pair would result in new knowledge, and it is essential to do so, since China is now a massive player in the video game market.

2.2 CSIs in Chinese Video Games

To explore the nature of CSIs in Chinese video games, and specifically the characteristics of wuxia RPGs, it is necessary to provide an outline of the socio-political factors behind the development of Chinese video games (2.2.1), as well the influence of Chinese history and literature on Chinese video games (2.2.2). Once these aspects have been covered, focus will move to wuxia RPGs and how they integrate elements from both Chinese history and fiction (2.2.3), as well as how culture specific ideology manifests in Chinese wuxia RPGs (2.2.4).

2.1.1 The Culturally Specific Development of Chinese Video Games

O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 16) explain that French, Italian, German, and Spanish, are standard localisation target languages (TLs) for English, which often serves as a bridging language for video games created in Japanese, and two of these (English-Italian, and English-Spanish) were analysed in Pettini's research. Moreover, while these language pairs, all connected to English, are different, they still share linguistic commonalities. Furthermore, these European languages have more linguistic similarities with English than Chinese, which 'belongs to the syntactic branch of the Sino-Tibetan family' (Jeffery Gil 2021, 2), and therefore translations from Chinese to English would entail the bridging of greater linguistic differences.

Aside from linguistic differences, European languages have developed within closer geographic proximity to each other, than English has from Chinese. As a result, European and Chinese societies have experienced different historical, sociological, ideological, and cultural developments, and consequently there is an increased likelihood that translation between European languages and Chinese will result in more culture specific challenges. Even within the game localisation industry, Chinese is considered as one of the most challenging languages from which to translate, and this is especially the case for Chinese RPGs, which includes the wuxia genre (Felipe Pepe 2022, 604). However, before delving into the specifics of what makes Chinese RPGs, or indeed wuxia RPGs, so culturally specific, even among other genres of Chinese video games, it is important to observe the culture specific development of Chinese video games.

As of 2015, China's video game industry became the largest in the world, when it generated 24.6 Bn USD, just exceeding the US's 24.1 Bn (Nate Lanxon 2017). This gap has continued to grow, and China's video game industry now has a revenue of (45.8 Bn USD) with 744.1 million gamers, followed by the US (45 Bn USD) with 209.8 million gamers, Japan (20 Bn USD) with 77.1 million gamers, South Korea (7.9 Bn USD) with 34.1 million gamers, and Germany (6.6 Bn USD) with 49.5 million gamers (Newzoo 2022). Apart from generating more revenue than other nations, and having a greater number of gamers, there is another difference between China's video game industry and that of the other leading nations, which is how video games in China have been developed.

The other nations mentioned above have democratic societies, in which a higher degree of creative freedom is permissible. However, China has an authoritarian political system, under which, creative industries, such as the video game industry, are often controlled, and in which

political censorship reinforces the state's hegemonic influence nationally (Fung 2014, 53). Ross Tanchan (2015) states that China did not open its market to foreign investment until 1978, and that game consoles did not appear on the Chinese market until the 1990s. However, as consoles were so expensive, gamers initially preferred to play arcade games, until the effects of internationalisation set in towards the end of that decade, which resulted in an increase in the sales of game consoles and games, both official and pirated. As the government became increasingly aware of how rapidly this market was expanding, in 2000, China's Ministry of Culture placed an official ban on foreign consoles and games, including industry giants such as Nintendo, Sony, and Sega, as it was decided that playing foreign console games was harmful to young people, threatened state security, and disturbed social order (Tanchan, *ibid.*). Yet, despite the console ban, China experienced an online gaming revolution, which coincided with the increasing availability of broadband. Accordingly, there were many opportunities for domestic developers to expand and fill the void. He (2014) remarks that this expansion was heavily influenced by the Chinese Communist Party, who encouraged the development of games that focused on Chinese historical themes and traditional culture, which are integral to the wuxia RPG genre, and that in 2005, the China Communist Youth League (CCYL) encouraged the development of Chinese video games that would encourage patriotism within the gaming community.

2.2.2 History and Literature in Chinese Video Games

Influenced by socio-political factors, Chinese video games developers embraced these themes of Chinese culture and history, and as Fung (2014) describes in his essay on 'Online Games and Chinese National Identities', Chinese video games came to exhibit a high degree of Chinese cultural specificity, and thus, became dense with Chinese CSIs. Many Chinese video games have since been closely tied to Chinese history, literature, or both. For example, two of the four most famous Chinese classical novels: *Journey to the West* (Wu Cheng'en 1592) and *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Luo Guanzhong 14th century) have been adapted into various video games. *Journey to the West* is set in the Tang Dynasty (619-907 CE) and tells the tale of a Buddhist monk who sought to travel westward to Central Asia and India to obtain sūtras, which were sacred Buddhist texts, but required the help of three antiheroes, supernatural monsters seeking Buddhist redemption, including the iconic Monkey King. The tale is rich with Chinese folklore, as well as Buddhist, Taoist, and Confucian ideology, and has been adapted into numerous Chinese video game titles including *Fantasy Westward Journey* (NetEase 2001), *Westward Journey II* (NetEase 2005) and *Ether Saga Odyssey* (Perfect World 2009).

Furthermore, *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* is arguably the most famous of the four classical Chinese novels and is based on a collection of historic battles and legends set between the Han (202 BCE-220 CE) and Jin Dynasties (265-420 CE). To date, it has the most video game adaptations of any classic Chinese novel, including titles such as *The Legends of Three Kingdoms* (Odinsoft 1998), which became a series with eleven entries, with later games from 2006 onwards being published by UserJoy Technology, *Heroes of the Three Kingdoms* (Perfect World 2009), and *Ode to Heroes* (DH-Games 2019). In fact, this Chinese classic is so famous, that it has even been adapted into games by Japanese developers, who are responsible for the renowned *Dynasty Warriors* series (Koei 1997-2010, Koei Tecmo 2010–), and *Wo Long: Fallen Dynasty* (Koei Tecmo 2023) a ‘AAA title’, which is a term used for the most successful big budget video games, or as Bernal-Merino (2015, 286) defines, blockbuster games with the biggest of budgets (often in excess of £10 million), and attracting the greatest of talent, and subject to more aggressive marketing campaigns.

It is understandable why *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* makes such an ideal work to adapt into a video game, especially for Chinese developers, as it is partly based on Chinese history, and features exciting battles, heroic characters, and tales centred on the Confucian virtues of loyalty, wisdom, and courage. In fact, three of the greatest heroes in the novel, are paragons of Confucianism, and as Fung (2014, 59) states, live their lives by Confucian virtues, where Guan Yu is the embodiment of loyalty, Zhuge Liang – wisdom, and Zhang Fei – courage, and all three worked for the state of Shu with faith and courage. In this sense, it is firmly linked to Chinese history and literature, as well as embodying the ideals of the current Chinese Communist Party. Furthermore, while the protagonists in *Journey to the West* still embody the Confucian ideals of loyalty, faith, and courage, the story is very much fictional. Regardless, it is not difficult to comprehend that video games set within such a culturally specific literary worlds, with historical references, would be highly culturally specific. While video games based on these novels, can be more bound by the original narratives and subject to a more predictable range of CSIs, based on the greater accumulation of established existing translations, there is another popular Chinese literary genre, less bound by the source writing, but still embraces Chinese history, fiction, as well as ideology, which has inspired the narratives of many video games, and that is the wuxia genre.

2.2.3 Chinese Wuxia RPGs: An Integration of Chinese History and Fiction

Stephen Teo (2009, 2) writes that ‘Wuxia is derived from the Chinese words *wu* denoting militaristic or martial qualities, and *xia* denoting chivalry, gallantry, qualities of knighthood and

heroism.’ Wuxia fiction has been adapted into a growing body of Chinese video games, and Fung (2014, 61) writes that in 2011, there were more than 30 online video games for this genre, and in the past decade there have been many more, with several releases by Chinese publishers such as Tencent and NetEase each year. While this genre presents fictional stories, they tend to be set within historical Chinese dynasties, and are therefore culturally specific in terms of both fictional and real-world historical references.

Elsewhere (Robertson 2018, 16), I reflect that many RPGs are based on wuxia novels, which are set within ancient or pre-modern China, and involve martial arts heroes, who also exhibit Confucian virtues, working with the law to deliver justice and eradicate corruption throughout the land. Such themes are present in the games, which are often based on existing works of wuxia fiction. For instance, *Jianwang 3* (Tencent 2019) was loosely based on the wuxia novel written by Louis Cha, *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* (1967-69), and *Justice Online* (NetEase 2019) was loosely based on a series of wuxia novels *The Four Great Constables*, written by Wen Rui-An (1980). While in many cases it is the literature that predates the games, in *The Legend of Sword and Fairy* (Softstar 1995) which is part of a series with numerous other sequels, prequels and spin-offs, the video game came first, and was followed by a TV adaptation, which indicates how video games can influence the creation of content in other forms of media. However, Pepe (2022, 604) observes until more recent years, barely any of these Chinese RPGs in general were ever translated into English, officially or by fans, as they are extremely difficult and expensive to translate, as they are ‘wordy, focusing heavily on dialog, with several games having heroes recite poetry and Buddhist teachings, or reference events from China’s extensive history’. As such, they are highly culturally specific.

While video games based on Chinese classical novels and wuxia fiction are both numerous when looking at the Chinese industry from the nineties onwards, and highly culturally specific, there remain differences which make wuxia RPGs more suited to this research. These are primarily that not every game based on classic novels belongs to the text heavy genre of RPGs, meaning they might not contain as many categories of CSIs, and that at the time of this study, there were many highly popular wuxia RPGs in the market, with a growing international following, and can therefore be considered more ubiquitous and generalisable. Indeed, more wuxia RPGs have been successfully localised in recent years into English, with growing level of popularity. One of the more successful entries was the action RPG *Gujian 3* (Wangyuan Shengtang 2018), which is estimated (SteamDB 2023) to be owned by 1.09 to 2.62 million gamers, internationally. Moreover, there is the hugely successful *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo

2020), a AAA Chinese action RPG, that won the Players' Voice award, at The Game Awards in 2022, an international event (Lyles 2022). While *Genshin Impact* draws inspiration from some elements of wuxia fiction, including Chinese traditions, architecture, and Chinese heroes, it is not purely a wuxia RPG, as it also combines these with Japanese anime aesthetics (Alan Wen 2020). Furthermore, recent wuxia RPG titles such as *Wandering Sword* (The Swordman Studio, Xiameng Studio 2023), *Xuan Yuan Sword 7* (Softstar 2024), and *Where Winds Meet* (Everstone Studio, NetEase Inc 2024), as mentioned in 1.2, are also making a positive impact with anglophone audiences around the world. This still demonstrates how Chinese wuxia RPGs, or games that share wuxia elements, are becoming increasingly popular on a global scale, and consequently of growing cultural and industry importance. Accordingly, this study will focus on Chinese wuxia RPGs, which feature CSIs related to Chinese fiction, and history, which can better facilitate an investigation of the research questions.

2.2.4 Culture Specific Ideology in Chinese Wuxia RPGs

As explained, Chinese wuxia RPGs are both highly culturally specific due to the real-world historical timeframes in which they are set, as well as the way they draw from the wuxia literary genre, which is filled with a vast array of Chinese characters, organisations, martial arts, locations, and artefacts (both real and fictional). This already encompasses the concepts of real-world references, or realia, and intertextual references, or irrealia. These features alone make Chinese wuxia RPGs a worthy site for research into cultural specificity in video games. However, these games are permeated with other CSIs, of an ideological order, which can shape the nature of each interaction within the games. Teo (2009, 3) observes that a wuxia hero is typically a 'sword-wielding, swordfighting, horse-riding, or gallivanting warrior figure who stands for honor, chivalry, and righteousness', and draws several parallels to the European tradition of knight errantry; however, there remain fundamental differences in both the historical and ideological sense.

Teo (ibid., 17-18) states that while the characteristics of *xia*, which he refers to as *knights errant*, may be traced back as far as the Spring and Autumn Period (722-481 BCE), its conception was not fully realised until the Han Dynasty (206 BC-220 CE). Moreover, it was in *Records of the Grand Historian* that Chinese historian Sima Qian (C 145-86 BCE), described *xia* as hailing from the plebian class, typically consisting of robbers, brigands, soldiers, and freethinkers who were referred to as *private swords*. Teo (ibid.) writes these chivalrous heroes 'flouted authority, were loyal to friends and helped the poor and oppressed'. The ethics upheld by the *xia* can be linked to many ideological and religious principals, hence Han Jiangua (2021,

10) describes wuxia principals as ‘a fusion of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism’. Moreover, Teo (2009, 17-18) observes xia upheld a code of professional ethics primarily tied to Confucianism, in which the guiding principle of xia is known as *yi* (righteousness), and the two characters are often placed together to create *xiaoyi* (chivalry and righteousness). Xu Si Nian (1995, 22-23) further explains that xia act in accordance with the principle of *yi*, against the notion of *li*, which means self-profit. As these Confucian principles are core elements of what it means to be a xia, any wuxia fiction, or video game adaptations will therefore contain some of these ideological principles, which are indeed culturally specific.

While the players of wuxia games can step into the role of chivalrous heroes, works of wuxia fiction, and wuxia video games by extension, are not simply inhabited by chivalrous heroes, but also villains, who perform acts of corruption, and outlaws who function on the fringes of society. Fung (2014, 65) remarks that players of these wuxia games are placed within virtual worlds filled with chaos and corruption and are required to play the role of martial heroes who are expected to deliver justice, ‘and each gamer is expected to win and demonstrate the spirit of a *martial hero*’. Fung speculates that wuxia games have been used to mitigate the social impact and frustration felt by younger generations due to corruption within China, which he links with its economic rise. Moreover, he argues that by winning, the ‘gamers’ hope for justice is realized in the virtual world, and such satisfaction might reduce their grievance about society’ (ibid.). Therefore, these games may serve several purposes, not only celebrating Chinese literature and history, but also facilitating the therapeutic act of eradicating corruption, albeit from a virtual world. In terms of this research, it would mean that a suitable source text would need to replicate the expected fictional and historical CSIs, as well as the culturally specific martial hero narratives which are permeated with CSIs relating to variable terms of address, used by characters in relation to one another, which reflect the ideological nature of Confucian social hierarchies.

In wuxia fiction, and therefore RPGs, ideology shapes societal hierarchy. Thus, every echelon of society, from beggars to monks, farmers to merchants, all the way up to the political and ruling classes is founded upon Confucian principals that can shape the very way in which individuals interact, resulting in CSIs for general terms of address. This entails a strict adherence to structures of power, which reflect the principles of the *Five Relations (wu lun)*. Anna Sun (2013, 138) notes that these principles:

Normalise the structure of the power in the five dominant social relations in Chinese society – the power the emperor or ruler has over his ministers, the power fathers have over their sons, the power older brothers have over younger brothers, the power husbands have over their wives, the equal relation between friends.

It can be observed that the system prioritises power, as well as seniority, and promotes a patriarchal society. These Confucian elements have a bearing on the way in which the characters communicate in such video games, within a historical and ideological context, and this can manifest in different levels of formality used by speakers who belong to the different social groups, which to some degree can still be observed in modern Chinese society. Thus, Yang Chunli (2010, 739-740) notes that Chinese people attach greater importance to hierarchical positions in society, by obeying a prescribed sense of order, and this involves the use of honorific terms for those higher than themselves, and self-deprecating terms for themselves, and this level of formality is not typically observed in English. This indicates that the translation of a Chinese wuxia RPG would involve the translation of CSIs relating to variable terms of address, which vary depending on the hierarchical relationship of the speakers.

This does not guarantee that every wuxia game will strictly adhere to or include all five Confucian social relations, and have corresponding CSIs, as with the modernisation of society, patriarchal elements have been strongly opposed in both the real world, as well as the virtual. While the stories of the games are framed within a historic context that may still retain some patriarchal interactions, recent wuxia video games, including most titles featured in the categorical sampling of the methodology (see 3.2.1.1), enable gamers to play as equally heroic women or men. Consequently, Chinese wuxia RPGs not only contain an abundance of historical and fictional CSIs, but even the way in which characters interact is also highly culturally specific, due to ideological influence, and this, along with the increasing demand for knowledge and expertise in localisation of Chinese video games, elevates the significance of this genre in terms of the research of CSIs in video games.

2.3 The Theory of Norms in Translation and Its Application in TMIES

It is vital to explore the socio-cultural phenomena surrounding the translation of CSIs in Chinese video games. However, before this can be done, it is necessary to first investigate how CSIs have been translated, and this requires a translation theory with the power to explain culture specific translation output, and furthermore, patterns of behaviour in translation as part of a larger industry practice. As such, this section will review literature on the application of the

theory of norms in translation (2.3.1), the way in which this theory has evolved (2.3.2), and its scope for application in TMIES (2.3.3).

2.3.1 The Theory of Norms in Translation

One of the most influential contributors to the field of DTS was Toury, who argued that a translation can be ‘any target language utterance which is presented or regarded as such within the target culture, on whatever grounds.’ (1980, 30). Toury developed the theory of norms in translation, stating that norms are translation behaviour typically occurring under specific socio-cultural or textual situations (1995, 54-5). These norms are TT-oriented, and not only factor in translation strategy, but also address how a TT can fit into the literary and social culture of the target system (Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday 2004, 95). Toury’s theory has been a catalyst, stimulating various other norm-based studies, most notably, Andrew Chesterman’s (1997) work on *expectancy norms* (governed by the target audience’s expectations) and *professional norms* (governed by the translator’s notions of professionalism). These developments are a significant part of a trend in which DTS frees translation scholars from the limits of a linguistic perspective and enables an interdisciplinary perspective of translation, and a greater focus on socio-cultural factors.

Toury’s theory of norms in translation (1980, 1995), as well as its evolutionary offshoots, professional and expectancy norms, as developed by Chesterman (1993, 1998) have been designed to explain the role of culture, and cultural specificity in translation studies. Norms can account for how translation is governed by cultural factors, which can result in observable normative patterns, and may be able to shed light on the ways in which CSIs in video game texts are translated.

The theory of norms in translation relates to how translators work between the norms, the ‘sociocultural constraints specific to a culture, society and time’ (Munday 2010, 112) of the source text, which influence the *adequacy* of a translation, and the norms of the target culture, which influence the *acceptability* of a translation. Indeed, parallels can be drawn between Toury’s concepts of source culture adequacy, and target culture acceptability, with Venuti’s concepts of domestication and foreignization, as each theory concerns culture, and places the approaches within a culturally dichotomous framework. However, Toury’s interest in norms was inspired by Levy’s (1967/2000, 148) postulation that translation is an activity that involves decision-making. This provided the impetus for the development of Toury’s approach to translation, which does not aim to prescribe the form or content of a translation, but seeks to

identify and describe observable patterns, the social norms, which can regulate and constrain the behaviours of translators, and is therefore of a descriptive nature. While Toury's concept of norms exists within the field of translation studies, it has also borrowed from the fields of sociology and social psychology. Toury (1995, 55), defined norms as follows:

The translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what is right and wrong, adequate and inadequate – into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioural dimension [...].

Thus, Toury began to explore the concept that norms can govern decision-making in the process of translation. This was part of a trend that changed the course of DTS by initiating a shift of focus from the linguistic equivalence of source text and target text to the cultural and social explication of translation behaviour and strategies (Díaz Cintas 2004).

The concept of norms in translation has since been utilised by numerous scholars to understand how socio-cultural factors can govern translations, notably Theo Hermans (1991, 1995, 1996, 1999) and Chesterman (1993, 1998). Hermans (1985, 11), argues that translation implies 'a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose', and employs the concept of norms to explore the decision-making involved in the process of translation. Furthermore, Hermans (1996, 25), argues that Toury viewed norms primarily as constraints on translation behaviour, but only briefly alludes to the wider social function of norms. Through his research, Hermans (1999, 80) has developed his own definition of norms:

The term 'norm' refers to both a regularity in behaviour, i.e. a recurring pattern, and to the underlying mechanism which accounts for this regularity. The mechanism is a psychological and social entity. It mediates between the individual and the collective, between the individual's intentions, choices and actions, and collectively held beliefs, values and preferences.

While Toury also discussed how norms can account for regularities and the development of patterns in translation, Hermans expands the social range of norms, and further visualises norms as entities that connect and influence individuals and groups, as well as mediate between intentions and actions.

Moreover, Chesterman (1998, 91), observes how the development of norms has offered two solutions to theoretical problems faced by translation scholars. The first being that they enable a departure from the older prescriptive approaches to translation studies, where translators prescribe the form and content of translations, into a more descriptive approach, where norms can be described by researchers. Secondly, Chesterman, also states that norms can provide the cultural and historic context to explain why a translation may take a certain form. Chesterman argues that these factors have led to an expansion of the very concept of translation. Thus, as established by Toury, and developed by Hermans, and Chesterman, normative research can enable scholars to observe how the mechanism of socio-cultural factors can govern decision-making in translation, which result in normative patterns or behaviours. This indicates that the notion of norms in translation could be a useful tool in determining how socio-cultural factors influences translation networks in a video game localisation project.

2.3.1.1 The Potency and Fluidity of Toury's Norms in Translation

However, it is first necessary to outline how scholars have measured the potency of norms, as this research will also utilise a framework that can measure the potency of individual CSIs in terms of cultural approach. Toury (1995, 55), viewed the act of translation as being subject to multiple types and varying degrees of socio-cultural constraints, which can be described along a scale that lies between two extremes, one being general, relatively absolute *rules*, and the other, pure *idiosyncrasies*. Norms are the intersubjective factors that occupy the vast middle ground between these two extremes. Toury envisions these norms existing on a scale, where stronger norms are more like rules, and weaker norms, more like idiosyncrasies. However, Toury stated that with time, the potency of norms can change, as 'mere whims may catch on and become more normative, and norms can gain so much validity that, for all practical purposes, they become as binding as rules; or the other way around, of course' (ibid.). Furthermore, different groups of translators may be governed by certain norms to a greater or lesser extent than other groups, and what can be a more favoured behaviour in a heterogenous group of translators, may acquire a more binding force within a more homogenous group of translators.

Hermans (1996, 28-29), contributes to this notion of a scale of norms, by differentiating between norms and conventions, which he defines as being a 'social phenomenon with a regulatory function'. Hermans (ibid.), states that conventions are:

[...] regularities in behaviour which have emerged as arbitrary but effective solutions to recurrent problems of interpersonal coordination. Because they have proved effective, these solutions become the preferred course of action for individuals in a given type of situation. Conventions grow out of precedent and social habit, and they presuppose common knowledge and acceptance.

This sounds very similar to a description of norms, in that they also involve regularities, or patterns of behaviour, and like norms, they involve the social dimension, and can grow, gaining more potency. However, Hermans (*ibid.*), argues that conventions ‘imply a set of mutual expectations’, that could influence the decisions of a translator to make a certain decision, based on regularities and shared preferences. Therefore, the key difference between norms and conventions, as posited by Hermans (*ibid.*), is that where norms are more prescriptive and have more power to govern the decisions of a translator, conventions are based more on social expectations, or the convergent mutual expectations of all involved. In relation to norms, conventions, at best, could be considered as implicit norms, and based on the observations of He (2017, 32), would fall between norms and idiosyncrasies on Toury’s scale.

Hermans (*ibid.*), also discusses how conventions can become so ingrained, that they transition from governing expected behaviour, into norms that govern how a translator ought to behave, and consequently exert a higher degree of social and psychological pressure on translators, in terms of viable translation approaches. Chesterman (1998, 94), shares a similar view in terms of how norms and conventions differ, stating ‘Unlike the case with conventions, norm-breaking can lead to sanctions (or indeed rewards), evidenced in the reactions of readers and/or clients.’ As such, this notion of a scale, upon which norms can be plotted, can also be subject to change. While the boundaries between the definitions of norms and conventions, can appear blurred, the differentiation between prescribed behaviour (norms) and expected behaviour (conventions) can be a valid addition to any scale that seeks to measure the strength of norms.

However, the addition of conventions to a normative scale could bring its own challenges, as it would involve devising a method to identify precisely when a convention can be classified as a norm, and when a norm becomes a convention, which is partly based on how likely a norm-breaking approach is likely to be sanctioned, where a convention breaking norm may be treated more leniently. Such intangible qualities may resist quantitative measurements, and therefore could be challenging to record or analyse. As such, this research will focus solely

on the concept of norms, as conventions, as defined by Hermans, are beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the notion of a scale for plotting the norm governed behaviour behind the translation of CSIs will be utilised in this research, as it entails the measurement and comparison of the strengths of norms in relation to Toury's concepts of source culture adequate and target culture acceptable translations, which have been covered in section 2.3.1.2 below. However, as Toury stated, the borderline along which the varying grades of norms exist is diffuse, and that the concepts and attributed gradings of these norms are relative, which means that identifying the point at which a norm becomes a rule, or an idiosyncrasy will require careful consideration.

2.3.1.2 Three Categories of Norms and the Concepts of Source Culture Adequate and Target Culture Acceptable

In addition to the normative scale, which can measure the potency of norms, Toury (ibid.) also viewed translations as adhering to one of two sets of cultural norms, which are described as being *adequate* to the source culture, or *acceptable* to the target culture. These culture specific concepts, however, are tied to Toury's three categories of norms: *preliminary norms*, *the initial norm*, and *operational norms*.

Preliminary norms include the concepts of *Translation* policy, which refers to the factors that govern the selection of source texts to be translated into a particular culture/language, and *directness of translation*. *The initial norm* determines whether a translator will subscribe more to the norms of the source culture and therefore be more *source culture adequate*, or to the norms of the target culture and accordingly be more *target culture acceptable*. Moreover, *operational norms* can direct the decisions made during the process of translation and include *matricial norms*, which govern the extent to which certain translation strategies are applied to translations, such as omissions, additions, and other textual manipulations.

Not only do these three types of norms fit together within a framework, but they also function in a chronological order. Thus, Toury envisioned that the preliminary and initial norms 'have both logical and chronological precedence over the operational ones' (ibid.). Hence, the preliminary norms, which may be contained with the instructions of a client brief, can influence the initial norm in terms of the selection of general cultural approaches which can be *source culture adequate*, or *target culture acceptable*, and these can influence the matricial norms, which govern the selection of certain translation strategies, which align with these general cultural approaches.

2.3.2 *The Evolution of Expectancy Norms and Professional Norms*

Chesterman (1993, 9) proposes two new norms: *expectancy norms*, and *professional norms*. Expectancy norms 'are established by the expectations of readers of a translation (of a given type) concerning what a translation (of this type) should be like' (Chesterman 1997, 64). Thus, like Hermans, Chesterman is also interested in the role that expectations play in the grand scheme of norms. However, Chesterman also introduces professional norms which are considered subordinate to the expectancy norms, and regulate the translation process (ibid, 67). The term 'professional' is used by Chesterman to indicate how the main authorities in the genesis of norms in translation are translators who are recognised as being professionally competent, and 'are largely responsible for the original establishment of expectancy norms, in fact, for their work naturally becomes a yardstick by which subsequent translations are assessed by the receiving society' (ibid.). Chesterman further breaks professional norms into three subcategories, the *accountability norm*, which concerns ethics, and professional standards of integrity and thoroughness in relation to the original writer of the translation, or the commissioner. The *communication norm*, which concerns the social domain, and relates to how translators should work to optimise communication between all parties involved in related work. Furthermore, there is a *relations norm*, which focuses on linguistic aspects, and the pursuit of translations that appropriately navigate the relationships between source and target cultures (ibid., 68-69).

This development adds another layer of complexity to how norms may govern the outcome of a translation, as there are not only source and target culture factors at play, but also the professional norms of the translators, and the expectancy norms of the *receivers*, who would be the players. This demonstrates that the classification of norms can be subject to modification and further diversification. While Toury's concept of three determining norms already lays a solid theoretical foundation for a norm related analysis of how linguists translate CSIs in video games, it would be an oversight to not consider how, as outlined in section 2.5, professional game translators are also typically gamers. This creates something of a paradox with these two separate concepts of professional and expectancy norms, as experienced professional game translators would be intimately aware of both. It will therefore be interesting to explore how this normative relationship manifests in the results of this research, as this can shed light on how expectancy and professional norms influence linguists in relation to range of CSIs, and if one type of norm takes precedence over the other.

2.3.3 The Application of the Theory of Norms in Translation in TMIES

There have, to date, been no in-depth studies in TMIES that analyse how norms function in relation to the translation of CSIs. However, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 191-196), lay the important groundwork for such research, by discussing how norms may function in this specified field. Of particular interest, they speculate about the complexities of professional and expectancy norms and of the various parties involved in the entire localisation process, which could involve 'not only the user side such as the gamers and third parties such as game reviewers, but also the production side, including the developers and publishers as well as the platform holders.' (ibid., 193). They further identify that likely sites of contention are where the *professional norms* of game translators conflict with the *expectancy norms* of the game developer, publisher, or gamers, or where there is a discrepancy in the *expectation norms* of the gamers and the interests of the game developer or publisher. However, they do not provide conclusive detailed data regarding how norms govern video game translators, and state (ibid., 193-194), 'there is currently no research available to answer the question of how different norms are operating in the context of game localization'. This research will therefore be able to contribute to this new area of translation studies by exploring some of these potential sites of conflicting professional and expectancy norms, and thus shed light on the complexities of how norms operate in the context of video game translation.

However, the influence of norms in translation has been applied and discussed in key AVT research projects, notably Díaz Cintas (1997), Fotios Karamitroglou (2000), Ranzato (2016), and He (2017). This is promising, as between purely text-based translation, and TMIES, there sits the midway point of AVT, which is concerned with both the audio (dialogue, music, sound effects) and visual (images and text on the screen) channels simultaneously, and therefore entails the translation of multichannel texts (the audio-visual channel). As such, it should be possible to also utilise a normative approach within TMIES; however, unlike AVT, TMIES is also concerned with interaction, as video games are interactive products, and this may result in the generation of new knowledge.

It will be useful to employ framework that utilises a scale which can measure the normative strength of a source culture adequate or target culture acceptable translation, and further indicate whether norm-governing forces behind an individual translation were stronger and more like rules, or weaker and more like idiosyncrasies, or somewhere in between. Furthermore, by accounting for the influence of professional norms and expectancy norms, this research should be able to build a comprehensive picture of the complex sociocultural

undercurrents that guide and constrain the participants involved in such a translation network. However, the identification of patterns in the target text alone cannot fully reveal the motivational forces governing translation behaviour. Toury (1995, 65) understood this limitation and suggested that the motivational force behind these translation decisions can be observed using paratextual and metatextual materials, such as prefaces written by translators, editors, publishers, and any other person involved in the translation process, or the related documents. Accordingly, researchers have become aware of both the strengths of the theory of norms in translation, as well as its weaknesses, and this has led them to Bourdieusian theory within the field of sociology.

2.4 Bourdieusian Theory

To facilitate a more comprehensive analysis of how norms in translation can influence linguists, and ultimately explore the reasoning behind practice, it would be beneficial to expand the scope of this research from the theory of norms in translation that can explain the textual and cultural domain, while providing some social context, to sociological theory that can enable a more rigorous investigation of the socio-cultural domain. As such, this section will review literature on Bourdieu's sociology (2.4.1), Bourdieu's theory of practice (2.4.2), as well as criticism of Bourdieu's sociology (2.4.3).

2.4.1 Bourdieu's Sociology

Theories from the cultural turn and social turn move translation from the field of linguistics to the cultural domain, but they do not account for the agents involved in translation, or the way in which translations are produced. Furthermore, while the theory of norms in translation concerns normative patterns with socio-cultural implications, it does not explain the formation of norms, and reduces the agency of translators, rendering them subject to governing norms and rules. Due to these limitations, translation scholars have looked to sociological theories to further explain the agency of translators and the socio-cultural phenomena that influences the production of translation. Bourdieu's sociology has since gained the interest of many translation scholars, as it highlights the agency of the individual. Thus, it can account for not only how socio-cultural factors influence individuals and groups, but also how individuals and groups influence socio-cultural factors. Hence, various aspects of Bourdieu's sociology have been utilised by translation scholars including Andre Lefevre (1998), who focused on poetry translation, Sameh Hanna (2005), who investigated drama translation and Rakefet Sela-Sheffy (2005), who examined the choices made by translators as a cultural and professional group. Furthermore, there have been several studies that incorporate both the theory of norms in

translation and concepts from Bourdieu's sociology, including Simeoni (1995), Jean-Marc Gouanvic (1997, 2005), Moira Inghilleri (2003, 2005), Kung Szu-Wen (2010), Liang Wen-chun (2010) and He (2017). These studies indicate a movement in which Bourdieusian sociology has been developed as a conceptual tool that situates translation as a social, as well as cultural activity.

The following sections will outline the relevance of Bourdieusian sociology to translation studies, and specific concepts that translation scholars have utilised in norms-based research, which also apply to this research. In the social sciences, traditional theories tend to analyse the world through a *subjectivist approach* or *objectivist approach*. For the subjectivist approach, the beliefs and judgements of individuals are the main underlying factors that govern behaviour, whereas for the objectivist approach, it is the socio-cultural structures that can explain or govern social behaviour (Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma and Moishe Postone 1993, 3). Bourdieu, however, viewed the division between the subjectivist approach and objectivist approach as problematic, as the subjectivist approach ignores the external constraints placed on agents by social facts and the social formation of subjects, whereas the objectivist approach fails to understand the objectivity of the subjective, as it does not recognise that the experience individuals have, in and of social reality, and the conceptions they form of it, also structure that reality (Rogers Brubaker 2005, 34). Bourdieu challenged the dichotomy between the subject and the object, or in other words, between the individual and the external world, as for him, there was no internal dimension or external dimension, only the concurrence of both (Gouanvic 2005, 148).

Bourdieu's sociology bridges the division by viewing social reality not merely as the result of individual actions or objective social structures, but as a collection of social practices that encompass both (Calhoun, LiPuma and Postone 1993, 3). For Bourdieu, an analysis of social reality should focus on social practice, not on the independent actions of individuals. Bourdieu rejected the idea that social reality is governed by the aggregation of individuals or by society alone, but rather through the relationship individuals have with society within a collective history (Bourdieu 1977, 86). This relationship formed the backbone of Bourdieu's sociology (Bourdieu 1990a, 14):

The analysis of objective structures – those of different fields – is inseparable from the analysis of the genesis, within biological individuals, of the mental structures which are to some extent the product of the incorporation of social structures;

inseparable, too, from the analysis of the genesis of these social structures; the social space, and the groups that occupy it, are the product of historical struggles (in which agents participate in accordance with their position in social space and with the mental structures through which they apprehend this space).

Thus, to understand social reality, to which norms belong, Bourdieu suggested that researchers observe how social structures shape individuals, who occupy, participate, and struggle within, and ultimately shape these social structures within a given time frame. Such an approach has the potential to provide this research with a more comprehensive explanation of socio-cultural phenomena occurring within video game localisation than the theory of translation norms alone.

2.4.2 Bourdieu's Theory of Practice

Bourdieu's sociology is comprised of many concepts; however, this thesis is concerned with concepts of Bourdieu's sociology which have been applied to norms-based studies, namely the concept of *habitus*. The concept of *habitus* does not exist within a vacuum and belongs to the sociological framework known as the theory of practice, which includes the concepts of *capital*, *habitus*, and *field*. To utilise the concept of *habitus*, it is necessary to explain the theoretical framework from which it is derived.

Capital refers to the social power and resources acquired by individuals through the process of socialization (Bourdieu 1983). Bourdieu (1997) identified three forms of capital: economic capital, which is readily convertible into other forms of capital; social capital, which consists of social obligations and connections; and cultural capital, which can be embodied (and thus intangible), objectified (through cultural products), and institutionalised (accredited by official bodies). Bourdieu (1997) viewed capital as being dynamic and transformative, as economic capital can be invested in the time and resources required to develop an individual's cultural capital. This cultural capital, in its various forms, is linked with educational and professional success, which further contributes to the accumulation of economic capital. This accumulation of economic capital is also linked with greater social capital, where an individual's social network grows in both size and influence. In such conditions, an individual has more opportunities to further enhance their reserves of both cultural and economic capital. Therefore, video game translators possess embodied cultural capital in terms of translation skills gained from within the industry, and as they are also gamers, they have exchanged economic capital, money, for video games, and the activity of video gaming, which also leads

to the accumulation of knowledge and experience of games, which can also be viewed as a form of cultural capital.

Habitus is a set of acquired preferences and dispositions which develop from specific forms of social experience within specific social conditions (Bourdieu 1990a, 1990b). It is through this set of preferences and dispositions by which a person navigates the social world. Bourdieu referred to habitus as subjectivity conditioned by structural circumstances and envisions it as a system of ‘schemata or structures of perception, conception and action’ (2002, 27). As such, the habitus can be considered both *structured* by the social conditioning of the individual, and *structuring* as it can determine behaviour of the individual, therefore habitus shapes the parameters of an individual’s sense of agency and determines which courses of actions are possible in accordance with an individual’s position in society. In other words, the habitus of the video game translator will have a significant socio-cultural bearing on how they translate CSIs in video game texts, and this would directly influence the selection of translation strategies, and wider cultural approaches used in the localisation of video games.

Field is a space in which occupants, agents, or institutions, strive in a network of relations between positions to maintain or change the power of relations (Bourdieu and Waquant (1992, 97). It refers to a particular social sphere of activity, such as family, education, media, industry, or politics, in which individuals interact and compete for resources, referred to as capital. Thompson (2008, 69), states that the various forms of capital ‘are both the process within, and product, of a field’, and that some fields tend to have stronger links to specific forms of capital, whereas others can be linked to various forms of capital. For example, where the field of economics has a direct link to economic capital, the field of art can involve various forms of capital, as an individual may purchase a desirable piece of art, and thus exchange economic capital for cultural capital. Jason D. Edgerton and Lance W. Roberts (2014, 195) state that fields are relational and are governed by their own specific regulative principles, which are subject to power struggles among the different interests competing for capital in each field. Edgerton and Roberts further state that ‘individuals’ positions within a particular field derive from the interrelation of their habitus and the capital they can mobilize in that field.’, and that the interaction of habitus and capital results in the behavioural repertoire of an individual (ibid.). In terms of game translators, there are several fields of socialisation to consider, including the field of education, video gaming, and the field of the translation industry, or more immediately, the localisation agency, in which the linguists work to create translations.

A socio-cultural analysis utilising the *theory of practice* requires the construction of the specific field, as well as the habitus of the agents involved, and a consideration of the types of capital at work. Bourdieu (1986, cited in Paddy Scannell, Philip Schlesinger, and Colin Sparks, 1992, 101) thus provides the following equation for the analysis of practice:

$$[(\text{habitus}) (\text{capital})] + \text{field} = \text{practice}$$

The theory of practice can be understood as an overarching system, within which the concepts of *capital*, *habitus*, and *field* can interact to explain various phenomena occurring in social spheres. Indeed, Bourdieu specified that in the theory of practice, *field* is structured by the state of the power relations between individuals or institutions engaged in a struggle, or, similarly, that it is a ‘state of the distribution of specific capital which has been accumulated in the course of previous struggles and orients subsequent strategies’ (1993b, 73), where the mechanism responsible for generating such strategies is referred to as habitus. What makes this theory, and specifically the concept of habitus valuable to this study is that it provides a socio-cultural context and explanatory power for the reasoning behind the generation of strategic approaches that occur within a practice and illustrates how the habitus is like a strategy formulating mechanism, a concept that is missing from the theory of norms in translation. Thus, translation scholars interested in norms-based research, as mentioned in 2.4.1, have turned to Bourdieu’s theory of practice, as it has the potential to recognise the dualistic relationship between norms and habitus in translation, in which the habitus functions as a strategy formulating device, which is both structured by norms, but also with the power to structure norms.

2.4.3 Criticism of Bourdieu’s Sociology

Due to the prominence of Bourdieu’s sociology in the social sciences, it has received much attention and criticism. One argument focuses on whether Bourdieu’s sociology forces a deterministic view of social reality, in which human action is determined by genetic or environmental factors, that are very difficult if not impossible to change. For Jenkins (1982, 272-3) the relationship Bourdieu drew between objective structures, the habitus, and social practice is essentially deterministic, as ‘structures produce the habitus, which generates practice, which reproduces the structures, and so on.’ Other critics, such as Brubaker (1985), agree, arguing that the concept of habitus may convey a deterministic view of human action. This label of determinism is however refuted by Bourdieu (1990c, 95), who argued that the habitus functions by setting limitations, but not through determinism, ‘Through the habitus, the

structure of which it is the product governs practice, not along the paths of a mechanical determinism, but within the constraints and limits initially set on its inventions.’ Thus, Bourdieu suggested that habitus does define the parameters, the social structures, in which the socio-cultural phenomena of thought, perceptions, and actions can occur, can be shaped, and can in turn, shape the social structures in which they exist.

This suggests that the habitus does not reinforce a deterministic view of reality, as determinism would suggest that all outcomes are fixed, and that change is not possible. While this link between the notion of determinism and habitus stems from the social sciences, it becomes an important argument of various translation scholars who utilise the concept of habitus, as some frame translation with a deterministic perspective, whereas other scholars react strongly to this supposition.

In relation to the analysis of the habitus of individuals and groups Brubaker (2005, 27) warns that an analysis of a shared habitus can be epistemologically ambivalent, as an approach that draws conclusions based on a general shared practice, may overlook a closer analysis of individual interactions, and miss important details. Furthermore, Brubaker (*ibid.*, 28-29), argues that Bourdieu’s system, which predisposes the researcher towards the formation of ‘highly systemic sociological accounts, structured around correspondences, symmetries, homologies, and fundamental binary oppositions’, can result in a systematic portrayal of tensions, conflict, and transformation which in unsystematic reality are in fact messy and unruly. While it is hard to deny that such a system may render meaning from the more chaotic nature of reality, without such a system the researcher may struggle to glean anything meaningful from reality in its truest sense.

To better understand how Bourdieu’s habitus may be utilised in this research, it is necessary to explore these potential advantages and limitation in more detail. Hence, the following sections will observe how scholars have applied Bourdieu’s theory of practice to DTS, with a focus on norms-based research. This should indicate whether Bourdieu’s theory of practice, or the individual concepts of capital, field, and habitus can reveal the socio-cultural factors that influence how linguists approach CSIs in the translation of video game texts.

2.5 The Application of Bourdieu’s Sociology in Norms-Based Research

Bourdieu’s sociology has proved to be useful for a wide range of studies in the field of DTS, including norms-based research. Some scholars have looked at concepts from Bourdieu’s sociology in relative isolation. Thus, Lefevre (1998), observed the circulation of *cultural capital*

in translations of the Latin poem *Aeneid*, and how the pursuit of cultural capital can influence the patrons of a translation, the translators, and the target audience. Additionally, Hanna (2005) studied the formation of the *field* in drama translation in Egypt, which investigates how socio-cultural factors shape the field and influence practices of translators. However, while scholars who have taken interest in Toury's norms in translation have taken interest in various concepts from Bourdieu's sociology, there is a tendency to be drawn more to the concept of habitus. This can be linked to the way in which it connects with the other concepts which make up of the theory of practice, as stated by Gisella M. Vorderobermeier (2014, 12), the habitus holds a key role of mediating between 'objective facts and subjective characteristics' and contextualises both concepts of field and capital. Two of the most influential scholars who have focused on habitus are Gouanvic (1997) and Simeoni (1998). As such the following sections will cover Gouanvic's concepts of translator's habitus and special habitus (2.5.1), the genesis of the theoretical framework known as the translatorial habitus (2.5.2), and utilisation of the translatorial habitus for video game linguists (2.5.3).

2.5.1 The Translator's Habitus and the Special Habitus

Gouanvic (1997, 126) argues that while Toury provided a theory of how the patterned behaviour of a target system within a historical period can reflect norms in practice, the theory does not truly account for social phenomena, and that Bourdieu's sociology can remedy this shortcoming. In his research, Gouanvic turns to Bourdieu's theory of habitus to explore the mediation and social trajectory of agents involved in the production of a translation. Social trajectory refers to how linguists have spent time in different social spheres, gaining different forms of capital, and represents the conditions under which linguists gain skills (Sapiro, 2013, 61). Furthermore, He (2017, 160) explains that the construction of social trajectories is a vital stage in the contextualisation of the habitus and involves gathering information about the linguists including social environment, education, age, group identity, and motivations. Thus, Gouanvic uses social trajectories to identify the habitus of the various agents that take part in a translation process undertaken by a particular institution (translators, publishers, critics, publishing houses etc.) and concludes that translation is a highly legitimised social practice, which involves a power play that is continually negotiated between different social spaces (ibid., 146).

In a later paper, Gouanvic (2005, 157-161) identifies the *habitus* of several translators by reconstructing the experience and history of the translators, which includes considering the concepts of both *capital* and *field* and concludes that 'it is always the habitus of a translator that influences the way translation is practised' (ibid., 164). This indicates that to provide an analysis

of socio-cultural phenomena occurring in a video game localisation project, this study will also need to reconstruct the habitus of the participants, and this will involve considering various socio-cultural factors such as education, professional experience, and video gaming experience. To better determine the habitus, these factors will need to be contextualised in relation to the concepts of capital and field. It can be observed that while Gouanvic emphasises the importance of habitus, the other two components of Bourdieu's theory of practice, capital, and field, are also required for the reconstruction of a linguist's habitus.

Moreover, Gouanvic relegates the influential power of norms in comparison to Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field, stating that translation has little to do with conforming to norms through the deliberate application of specific strategies, that norms cannot explain the random or subjective choices of translators, and that it is the translator's specific habitus, which is acquired in the target literary field that guides translation (ibid., 157-158). Indeed, translation scholars belonging to the social turn mostly agree that norms do not have explanatory power; however, it is significant that Gouanvic differentiates between *translator's habitus*, which is acquired through practice, and *specific habitus*, which is acquired in the target literary field. While other scholars link the notions of habitus and norms (as will be covered in following sections), Gouanvic does not seem to attach great importance to norms. Yet, there do seem to be some connections between Gouanvic's notions of the *translator's habitus* and *specific habitus* with Chesterman's norms (see section 2.3.2). It could be argued that parallels exist between the translator's habitus and professional norms, and the specific habitus with expectancy norms. However, as written in section 2.3.2, and presented in 2.6.2.1.1, video game translators tend to also be gamers, and as with the potential blurring of professional and expectancy norms, if this parallel between Gouanvic's habitus and Chesterman's norms is followed, there may be a similar blurring between a video game translator's habitus and specific habitus, which would relate to games played in the first language of a linguist.

2.5.2 Genesis of the Translatorial Habitus

While Gouanvic seems more invested in the concepts of habitus, and field, Simeoni (1998) views norms as being important, and intrinsically linked to habitus. In his seminal paper on 'The Pivotal Status of the Translator's Habitus' (ibid.), Simeoni links Bourdieu's concept of habitus with Toury's theory of norms in translation, and states that the 'habitus is the true pivot around which systems of social order revolve' (ibid., 24), and that while translational norms may govern the translator's behaviour, the habitus can reveal 'the extent to which translators themselves play a role in the maintenance and perhaps creation of norms.' (ibid., 26).

This led Simeoni to develop his concept of *translatorial habitus*, a mechanism that he views as both *structured*, consisting of dispositions shaped by socialisation, the acquisition of skills, and influenced by norms and conventions; and *structuring*, in that these dispositions then ‘contribute to the elaboration of norms and conventions, thereby reinforcing their scope and power’ (ibid., 21-22). However, it is also important to observe that Simeoni’s *translatorial habitus* differs from Gouanvic’s notion of the translator’s habitus and special habitus, as it does not invalidate the influence of translation norms, but rather incorporates it into a co-dependent system, as Simeoni (ibid., 33) states, ‘norms without a habitus to instantiate them make no more sense than a habitus without norms.’ Simeoni posits that the translatorial habitus, which incorporates the interaction of norms and habitus should also provide a better understanding of the tension behind the individual choices during the translation process, and that habitus-led studies ‘will force finer-grain analyses of the social-cognitive emergence of translation skills and their outcome, in particular at the micro-level of stylistic variation.’ (ibid., 33).

Thus, Simeoni’s paper indicates that the translatorial habitus would enable a *fine-grain* analysis of stylistic variation of the translation of CSIs by the linguists of a video game localisation project. Accordingly, by following the translatorial habitus of video game translators and reviewers, this study could potentially reveal both the patterns of cultural translation approaches via norms, as well as the socio-cultural factors which have shaped these behaviours via the concept of habitus.

2.5.2.1 Translatorial Habitus and Subservience in Translation

Simeoni (ibid., 12) however also argues that translators are like servants who are ‘efficient, punctual, hardworking, silent and yes, invisible’, and that they are subservient ‘to the client, to the public, to the author, to the text, to language itself or even, in certain situations of close contact, to the culture or subculture within which the task is required to make sense.’ Furthermore, he states that while there may be conflicts of authority between these masters, in the end, ‘the highest bidder carries the day’.

Some of these claims may ring true for translators or reviewers in the video game industry, but it has also been established that video game translators are expected to have in-depth knowledge and experience of video games, in other words, the video game translators need to be gamers, and this, at the very least changes the dynamic Simeoni describes, where translators are subservient to the audience. As from one vantage point, the translators are almost translating for themselves, or at least fellow gamers, which ties in with the previously

mentioned potential conflict between Chesterman's professional and expectancy norms. The natures of these dynamics, that may exist for video game translators and reviewers, are directly relevant to the research questions, and will need to be investigated.

While video game translators and reviewers need to mediate between themselves, the client, the localisation agency, project manager, and the expectations of the target culture gamers, Simeoni's *subservience* may be too strong a word. Perhaps there is more a sense of responsibility to both the client, localisation agency, and the gaming community, of which they are a part, and a weighing of factors, which is more than mere subservience. It is this aspect of Simeoni's argument that has been questioned by scholars including Inghilleri (2003, 2005) and Sela-Sheffy (2005), as it takes a more deterministic view of the role of a translator, and in this sense appears to contradict his notion of a translatorial habitus being both structured and structuring.

Inghilleri (2003) constructs a framework for the analysis of community interpreting as a norm-driven activity, which utilises Bourdieu's concepts of field and habitus. In the study, Inghilleri questions the alleged notions Simeoni holds regarding subservience; however, while more focus is placed on interpreters, the theoretical implications of habitus and norms may also be true for other linguists working in translation, and potentially TMIES. By reconstructing the habitus of interpreters, Inghilleri claims to reveal the constructivist nature of norms, in that they have structuring power, and argues that the habitus of interpreters is not subservient to norms. Inghilleri does however observe the conflictual and contradictory nature of the habitus of participating interpreters and concludes that the habitus has the potential to change the existing social relationships and practices. In a later paper, also exploring the role of habitus, Inghilleri (2005) reflects that while translators and interpreters are agents involved in forms of practice in which they operate, they can also transform these practices through the mechanism of habitus (*ibid.*, 143). These findings oppose Simeoni's argument about the subservience of translators.

Sela-Sheffy also takes a critical view of Simeoni's arguments on the relatedness of habitus and norms, in its deterministic view of translators being submissive, and argues that it does not allow room for the understanding of choice and variability in their actions (2005, 3). Furthermore, Sela-Sheffy attaches more importance to Bourdieu's concept of field and observes that it is a space regulated by its own internal repertoires and competitions between translation agents. While Sela-Sheffy draws upon the notion of habitus, her work emphasises the importance of examining the field dynamics and indicates that such an approach can provide

insight into the tension between the predictability and versatility of translators' preferences and choices, which in turn are influenced by their group affiliation. This indicates that a more comprehensive application of Bourdieu's sociology, beyond habitus alone, may reveal more about the driving socio-cultural factors in a video game localisations project.

Indeed, if a translator was purely subservient, how would they then be able to change or shape norms through what Simeoni describes as the structuring aspect of the translatorial habitus? The findings of scholars such as Inghilleri and Sela-Sheffy provide strong evidence to counter claims regarding the subservience of translators to norms. However, Simeoni appears to change positions on his claim, and later states 'norms do prevail, but translators govern norms as much as their behaviour is governed by them' (1998, 23-24). Furthermore, it is worth noting that Simeoni's original argument was partly based on observations of a study conducted by Marja Janis (1996) featuring translators specialising in drama translation, in which a small collection of translators seemed to play a more passive role in the translation process and is therefore more of a generalisation. It is possible that translators in different fields can experience different levels of subservience or the ability to effect change, and where some norms may govern the habitus, others may provide guidance.

2.5.2.2 The Utilisation of Norms and Habitus

Stemming from developments above, researchers have been drawn to frameworks utilising both norms and habitus. However, these concepts have been integrated in different ways and have focused more on specific concepts. For instance, Liang (2010) constructs the role of human agents in Translation Studies utilising Bourdieu's sociology, to understand the translation of fantasy fiction in Taiwan. This was achieved by a parallel corpus study contextualised by interviews with editors and translators who worked at publishing houses responsible for the translations of the related works of fiction. The findings were linked with norms, but more underpinned with Bourdieusian theory. Thus, while Liang's study touches on norms, a greater emphasis is placed on the importance of habitus, as Liang views norms as being a limited, structured mechanism that does not provide the structured and structuring power of the habitus. Moreover, Liang does not explore Simeoni's notion of how norms and habitus can shape each other. However, with the utilisation of Bourdieusian theory, Liang was able to reveal that the translation of fantasy fiction in the literary field of Taiwan was governed by the logic of the market, with a trend toward prioritising profitability. Furthermore, one of the focal points of Liang's study is how CSIs in fantasy fiction are translated, which indicates that Bourdieusian theory can be used in conjunction with the concept of cultural specificity.

However, in a thesis based on agents and networks in Taiwan, more focused on the formation of translation networks, Kung (2010) regards norms as being an important factor in the production of a translation and demonstrates it is possible to utilise both the concepts of expectancy norms and habitus in a textual analysis to underpin the influence of the target culture in translation production. Kung utilised the application of norms and habitus as well as Bruno Latour's (1996) Actor Network Theory (ANT), which is also from the field of sociology, and concerns social networks and practice. The integration of these theoretical frameworks enabled the observation that translators are not passively subject to target culture norms, but function more as mediators that understand and accommodate for the target culture expectations, which echoes the arguments made by Inghilleri and Sela-Sheffy. Kung concludes that while sociological approaches can reveal the temporal, institutional and cultural complexities of translation, researchers should not overlook the cultural conditions that can govern translation, such as socio-cultural norms. This indicates that both concepts can be integrated into a functional framework, and potentially utilised in this study.

2.5.2.3 The Integration of Norms and Habitus

Despite the discourse generated by Simeoni's concept of the translatorial habitus, there have only been a few attempts to integrate both the theory of norms in translation and Bourdieu's concept of habitus. One such study focused on interpreting (Inghilleri 2003), rather than translation, as mentioned previously. However, it has recently been applied in the field of AVT, by He (2017). To establish the translatorial habitus, He constructs the norms of both fansubbers and professional subtitle translators by examining the relevant meta-texts (e.g., the statements of translators, online postings, interviews, and fansub published guidelines), observing the patterns of translation behaviour present in a translation corpus, and directly comparing the behaviours of the fansubbers and the professionals.

To identify the translatorial habitus of the participants, He reconstructs social trajectories by gathering information pertaining the participants' social environment, age, internet usage, group identity, motivations, and attitudes towards dealing with taboo words. However, to piece together the translatorial habitus, He also utilised the concepts of capital and field. Crucially, He takes this further, by integrating Siobhan Brownlie's (2003) model of multiple causality to provide more explanatory power. This model was created by Brownlie to rationalise translational phenomena observed in her corpus data in relation to the English translations of works written by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard. Brownlie's model utilises a qualitative approach and proposes that multiple causality can be used to explain

translational phenomena, and that this comprises of the following four categories. *Individual situations* concerns context of translation production observed in the corpus and the attitudes of individual translators. *Textuality* refers to the text upon which the translator works and is a factor that can constrain or initiate the creativity of the translator. *The translator's own norms* reflect a shared approved translation behaviour which regulates translation approaches. There is also the *target culture context*, which accounts for how the beliefs and expectations of the target culture can shape the translations.

However, Brownlie (2003, 112) states that these categories were generated based on observations of corpora and can only be considered 'probabilistic rather than deterministic' (2003, 112). This model was based on the belief advocated by Pym (2008, 311) that a single cause is not a sufficient reason for the production of a practice and more complex combinations of causes can more convincingly provide explanations for translation behaviour. Nevertheless, He applied these categories of causality to statements made by interviewees, and not just corpora, which therefore involved less speculation, and more objective observation and analysis. Thus, by drawing upon this framework of translation norms, Bourdieu's sociology, and Brownlie's model, He makes new discoveries regarding the norms of fansubbers and professional subtitle translators in China. Furthermore, the explanatory power of Bourdieu's sociology was able to reveal the complex socio-cultural factors that account for power struggles in the film translation industry of China. One central observation of He's findings is that proofreaders hold more power than the fansubbers doing the translations, in that they shape the norms, 'admonishing fansubbers if they deviate from group norms' (ibid., 180).

This paradoxically echoes Simeoni's argument that translators are subservient, and that translation has a deterministic nature, while at the same time, indicates that the proofreaders, who are also part of the translation process, do shape and change norms, and thus play an active role in translation, which also contradicts Simeoni's argument that translation is a deterministic act. Moreover, it establishes that the translatorial habitus can be utilised in the research of work with more than just textual features, such as AVT, which is of an audio-visual nature, and this is further indicative that it could also be applied in TMIES, which concerns audio-visual, as well interactive elements.

2.5.3 Utilising the Translatorial Habitus for Video Game Linguists

Thus, researchers have utilised frameworks that draw both upon translation norms as well as Bourdieu's sociology to explore cultural specificity in DTS and AVT research; however, as featured in the section above, this tends to include the categorisation of norms, which are

contextualised with concepts from Bourdieu's theory of practice. As such, there is a lack of a more balanced integration of both norms and habitus, where both components have been given more equal weighting in the construction of the translatorial habitus. Despite this, scholars who have attempted to combine norms and habitus have made significant socio-cultural findings. Moreover, as this review has illustrated, many concepts and frameworks have been ported from DTS, and successfully applied in AVT, resulting in new and important findings.

Consequently, it should be possible to utilise the translatorial habitus framework in TMIES, in this exploration of how socio-cultural factors govern linguists in the translation of a Chinese wuxia RPG into English, within the framework of a localisation project. Moreover, such a study could expand existing knowledge of TMIES, in relation to CSIs in wuxia Chinese RPGs, the impact of the interactive channel on the translation of CSIs, and break ground in terms of how socio-cultural factors influence translators and reviewers who are both professionals, and thus subject to professional norms, and video gamers, and thereby influenced by expectancy norms.

While the translatorial habitus can account for both how the linguists approach a translation, as well as the reasons why they utilise certain approaches from a socio-cultural perspective, there are also other useful theoretical frameworks that can link reasoning and actions, but from different perspectives. Thus, instead of focusing on the cultural or social aspects of translation, functionalist translation theories place more emphasis on the power of commission, and the way in which the recipients interpret the purpose of a project and may further contextualise the industrial factors that may influence socio-cultural phenomena. As such, two functionalist theories, which can provide additional explanatory power will be reviewed in the section below.

2.6 The Application of Functionalist Translation Theories in Video Game Localisation

Christiane Nord states that functionalist 'means focusing on the function or functions of the texts and translations' (1997, 1). The function of a translation can be conveyed via a set of instructions which the linguists must decode, and put into practice (2.6.1). Moreover, just as the theory of norms has evolved to accommodate for both professional norms of translators, and the expectancy norms of the recipients, functionalist theories also have different frameworks that can explain aspects of such phenomena. Thus, a stricter adherence to the official commission of a translation can be explained by skopos theory (2.6.2), which places more emphasis on the importance of the relationship between the original commission of a project,

and how the recipients pursue the intended aim. However, the user-centred translation model (2.6.3), places more emphasis on how the practitioners interpret the needs of the target audience, referred to as the users of the translation. As such, one framework leans towards the official commission, and the other, the way in which the linguists interpret the needs of the users.

2.6.1 Commission and Instructions

In the production stage of a localisation project, as outlined in section 2.7.3, the commissioner of the project, the client or developer, will provide the localisation team with a set of instructions, as part of a localisation kit, which can be referred to as the translation brief, a client brief, or a style guide. Nord (1997) states that a translation brief contains the specifications for a translation provided by the translation commissioner, and that it dictates the application of approaches and strategies. More recently, Daniela McVicker (2021) writes that a translation brief ‘is a set of instructions and points of guidance that will ensure that the translator has all the information required to fulfil the needs of the client.’ As such, it has become more common to include more specific translation instructions within the localisation kit.

Thus, Robertson (2018, 17) observes that around the time a project begins, the linguists will normally be given a localisation kit, including screen shots, information and possibly a style guide, which provide helpful context and guidance. Moreover, Alexander Murauski (2021) provides more details regarding the contents of a style guide, stating ‘Style guides define the tone of the translation, the usage of specific slang, brand voice, acronyms, correct forms, etc. It is basically a set of guidelines that helps translators adhere to the brand and its message and keep all the brand’s content consistent.’ Furthermore, Anastasia Dimitriadou (2023) identifies the style guide as being something separate from the localisation kit, which needs to be created at an early stage ‘First, you must create a style guide, which goes over the style of communication you’d like the translators to use, and a glossary of common terminology that are of important to your game; that’ll ensure those terms are translated correctly and consistently.’ As such, any research conducted on video game translation output would be incomplete without addressing the specifics of the commission, as contained in the localisation kit, and would therefore need to rely on the interpretation of researchers.

Having established that the professionals who work on localisation projects receive instructions, conveyed by the commissioner of the translation, and that these materials determine how the work is conducted, it is important to review skopos theory, which places the greatest importance on adherence to the purpose of a project, as determined by the commission.

2.6.2 *Skopos Theory*

The instructions and information of a translation brief can be considered to contain the aim of the translation. One functionalist theory, known as *skopos theory*, has been formulated by Vermeer (1989/2002) to account for this very concept of aim, which Vermeer refers to as the *skopos*, as set out by the clients who commission the work. In the words of Vermeer (2002, 227) ‘the word *skopos*, then, is a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation’. Furthermore, Vermeer (ibid., 235) also defines *the translation commission* as ‘the instruction, given by oneself or by someone else to carry out a given action – here: to translate.’, and that it should include as much information as possible on (1) the goal, and (2) the conditions under which the goal should be attained. In the case of video game localisation, this would be contained in the localisation kit, as well as any provisional translation brief, or style guide.

In addition to the broader concept of *skopos* (as the goal) and *the translation commission* (containing the conditions under which the goal should be attained), which could be applied in a general sense to explain how any translation is approached, *skopos theory* comprises a hierarchical framework, which provides a systematic explanation of how translators pursue the purpose of a translation. Initially, Katharina Reiss and Vermeer (1994, 119) formulated six rules for this theory, which are that (1) A Translatum (or TT) is determined by its *skopos*. (2) A TT is an offer of information in a target culture and TL concerning an offer of information in a source culture and SL. (3) A TT does not initiate an offer of information in a clearly reversible way. (4) A TT must be internally coherent. (5) A TT must be coherent with the ST. (6) The five rules above stand in hierarchical order, with the *skopos* rule predominating. In a sense, there are some parallels with Toury’s framework of norms, where the preliminary norms, which determines the directness of translation, and therefore the cultural approaches, has a similar function to the *skopos* rule, which can also determine the utilisation of translation strategies. However, where the theory of norms in translation is more concerned with socio-cultural phenomena, *skopos theory* observes practice from the perspective of function, and therefore, each provides different explanatory power.

While there are six rules, translation scholars applying this *theory* primarily refer to the interplay of three rules in the hierarchical order of, the *skopos* rule, the coherence rule, and the fidelity rule. Thus, the first rule, referred to as the *skopos rule* determines the purpose or aim of the translation. Subordinate to the *skopos* rule, is the *coherence rule*, which states that the translation needs to be coherent for the receivers of the TT, though not at the cost of the *skopos*. Finally, subordinate to the coherence rule, is the *fidelity rule*, which states there needs to be

coherence between the translation and the ST. Hence, translators may strive to preserve all rules, but when needed, fidelity can be sacrificed for coherence, and both fidelity and coherence can be sacrificed for the *skopos*.

TMIES scholars however have referred to the general *concept* of *skopos*, as in being the aim of video game translation, but have not utilised the full theoretical framework. Thus, O'Hagan and Mangiron (ibid., 150) argue that 'game translation is primarily driven by its purpose (*skopos*), which is ultimately to entertain the end user of the translated product'. While this may seem like an over-generalisation of the many variables that game translation can entail, as well as what is made available in a localisation kit, it does reflect part of the acronym Bernal-Merino (2015, 98) created in TMIES, as in the translation of multimedia interactive entertainment software, with the 'E' representing entertainment. Moreover, Pettini (2022, 44) notes that interactivity in translation is an important factor for translators 'whose objective it is to maintain players' suspension of disbelief', as this can create a more immersive experience, and enhance playability. Furthermore, Pettini (ibid.) also considers playability to be the *skopos* of game translation, and this directly corresponds with 'I', the interactive component of TMIES.

However, in the same article, in which they declare entertainment to be central to the *skopos* of game translation, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 154), also observe that a translation brief contains the translation guidelines, which can shape the approaches and strategies employed by translators, and this also echoes Vermeer's concept of *translation commission* from *skopos* theory, indicating two potentially different sources of the *skopos*, one based on individual perception, and the other contained within the localisation kit. Intriguingly, Vermeer's (2002, 235) wording, that the *skopos* should come from the instructions given by *oneself or someone else*, creates something of a grey area.

Hence, while it is logical to argue that the *skopos* of a video game translation is the element of entertainment, or interactivity, or perhaps, as the acronym TMIES suggests, a combination of these elements, what would happen if there was conflict between these greater concepts of *skopos* held by scholars, and the more specific guidelines provided in a style guide? For instance, what if a style guide encouraged a more foreignizing approach, whereas the greater notions of entertainment and interactivity would be better served by more domesticating strategies? This is in fact one of the questions that has inspired this study, which is firmly based on a decade of observations within the industry, made by this researcher, regarding the localisation of Chinese wuxia RPGs into English. Therefore, an exploration of how linguists

react to such a dilemma would facilitate a better understanding of which is the true superordinate skopos.

2.6.3 User-Centred Translation

There is another translation model that resonates with skopos theory but provides a different perspective that could better accommodate for the two different forms of skopos identified in the previous section, as in the perceived skopos that game translation should prioritise entertainment or interactivity, and the written skopos, which exists in the localisation kits and accompanying materials such as style guides. This model is known as *user-centred translation* (UCT), and as proposed by Tytti Soujanen, Kaisa Koskinen, and Tiina Tuominen (2015, 1), was designed to ‘operationalize the ideas of translation as a purposeful and skopos-oriented action’. However, where in skopos theory the skopos is derived from *the translation commission*, in UCT, emphasis is placed on ‘the central role of the user, or reader, in the translation process’. Furthermore, the authors (ibid.) clarify that:

UCT means that we gather as much information about our future users as we can through various methods during the translation process, and that we design and revise the translation based on this information.

As such, while this shares similar functionalist concepts with skopos theory, it clearly divides the written skopos, as contained in the localisation kit, from the perceived skopos, which scholars have linked to interactivity and entertainment for the benefit of the players. In doing so, it elevates the agency of the translator in how the concept of the skopos is pursued. It can therefore be viewed as a complimentary concept to functionalist approaches utilising skopos, where not only the skopos, and the translation commission need to be considered, but also the way in which the translators interpret this information, and act. Consequently, this could be a useful analytical tool for scholars observing how practitioners prioritise the various instructions contained within localisation kits, client briefs, and styles guides.

Thus far, only O’Hagan (2018, 153) has speculated about the utilisation of UCT in TMIES and observes that ‘UCT can make a significant contribution to the study of modern video games as immersive digital environments’, as it embraces the notion that translators are familiar with the potential users of the translation. Indeed, in section 2.5.2.1.1, it has been established that professional game translators are not just familiar with the potential users, as they are in fact also the users of video games. Moreover, as a localisation kit is typically included in the practice of video game translation, and the nature of the translation approaches

may be determined from both these explicit instructions, and the perceptions of the linguists, the concepts of skopos, and the model of UCT may also be used to explain how the linguists are influenced by various socio-cultural factors, but from a functionalist perspective. This is especially important considering the dual nature of these linguists, who are both professional translators, and passionate video gamers. As such, while this research primarily relies on the construction of the translatorial habitus, it will also consider perspectives offered by these functionalist theories.

Having established that these functionalist theories can accommodate for the role played by commission, its interpretation, and the perceived needs of the users in the translation of CSIs, and potentially further contextualise the translatorial habitus, the next section will review literature relating to the practice of video game localisation, to better support the approaches covered in the methodology.

2.7 The Practice of Video Game Translation within the Process of Localisation

While this project is concerned with the translation of CSIs and related socio-cultural phenomena, it is important to contextualise this in relation to the practice of translation, which is part of a larger process of localisation, as well as delineate the roles of linguists who engage with the CSIs. Accordingly, this section will address how the practice of translation fits into the industrial process of localisation (2.7.1), the socio-cultural implications of team translation (2.7.2), the impact level of localisation and resources (2.7.3), and different localisation models (2.7.4).

2.7.1 A Component of the Localisation Industry

Translation scholars started taking an interest in localisation at around the turn of the millennium (Anthony Pym 1999; Sue Ellen Wright and Gerhard Budin 2001; Daniel Gouadec 2007), and it gradually gained importance in mainstream translation studies, as seen in translation studies handbooks (Munday 2008, Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer 2010), and in more comprehensive monographs (Yuste Rodrigo 2008, Pym 2010). However, most of this work has focused on the localisation of software programs and websites, which do not fit into the TMIES framework. It is true that both software and websites can result in products with interactive properties; however, they are not tied as closely to both elements of interactivity and entertainment, as games are designed to be both playable and entertaining, furthermore, they must challenge players to win or lose. However, interest in TMIES within localisation has been delayed until recently, as discussed in section 1.3, due to both the academic perception of video

games as being part of popular culture, and consequently less important, as well as various industry restrictions.

Localisation can occur to varying degrees. Thus, Chandler and Deming (2012, 8-10) differentiate between four levels of localisation which are (i) No localisation, in which ‘the publisher ships the original language version in the original packaging directly to the international markets’ (ibid.), and as such, have not been altered according to any cultural preferences. (ii) Packaging and manual localisation, also known as *box and docs*, which means ‘The game code and language are unchanged from the original version, but the manual, packaging, and other supporting documentation are localised for the target language’ (ibid.). Chandler and Deming explain this method may be utilised where some video games that sell well in bigger European markets in France or Germany, are then sold on to secondary markets, such as Sweden or Denmark. (iii) Partial localisation, a cost-effective method that involves only the translation of in-game text, but not the voiceover (ibid.) (iv) Full localisation, which is reserved for games with a bigger budget, and includes the translation of text, voiceover, manual, and packaging (ibid.). As this study will only entail a translation of in-game text, as there is no audio content, manual, or packaging, it is considered a partial localisation. Furthermore, these levels of localisation, with a focus on full and partial localisations, have been recognised in the work of other researchers including O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013), Ehsan Jooyaeian, and Masood Khoshsaligheh (2022), Osama Al-Ajarmeh and Amar Al-Adwan (2022), and Pettini (2022).

In terms of video game localisation, Chandler and Deming (ibid., 11-12), also describe the entire process as having three phases: (a) a planning phase, which involves the game developers and publishers working with the sales and marketing departments when the game is still in the planning and production stage, (b) a production stage, which involves translating the assets, and having them integrated and tested, and (c) a post-production stage, which involves the release of the game code, and the completion of other related localisation items, such as the manuals, packaging, and demos. In this study, however, focus will be primarily placed upon the production stage, which is where the video game text will be translated, and therefore the location of socio-cultural factors that can drive the translation of culturally specific terms.

One key feature of TMIES in localisation is that it typically entails team translation. Thus, the following section will discuss team translation in video game localisation, the roles

within a translation team, and how socio-cultural factors and the industry shape these individuals.

2.7.2 Team Translation

Team translation is an intrinsic part of video game localisation, taking into consideration that video games, especially of the RPG genre, can contain hundreds of thousands of words or characters of text, and that video games of all genres are subject to tight deadlines. Chandler and Deming (ibid., 111) state that due to the high demands of the video game localisation industry, team translation is an unavoidable fact. The *demands* mentioned, specifically refer to time and money. Due to fierce competition between rival developers, it is imperative that new products reach the market as soon as possible to create the biggest impact, as any delays can lead to a serious loss of revenue. Hence, from a business perspective it makes sense to use multiple translators.

While team translation is a standard feature of video game localisation, its application can be subject to various factors such as the delimitation of duties, facilitation of communication, and the experience and willingness of the participants to cooperate. Chandler and Deming (ibid.) state that:

Team translation can work smoothly if responsibilities are well defined, access to game data is readily available, and communication amongst team members in the project is streamlined so that most answers can be found instantly, without the need for e-mails or phone calls.

Furthermore, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 252), observe that when translators work in teams, 'They should be able to communicate well, using e-mail or instant messaging, and they should be flexible with a willingness to compromise on terminological and translation issues.' In both cases, the authors stress the importance of effective communication, though it is interesting that Chandler and Deming view e-mails as being problematic, while O'Hagan and Mangiron seem to advocate their usage. The usage of group e-mails for large video game localisation projects with multiple translators could be less effective, as e-mails can be more formal and therefore longer, additionally, confusion could arise when several translators attempt to send group e-mails at similar times. The usage of instant messages, however, could allow for more instantaneous communication between all participants.

Regarding the composition of a translation team, Robertson (2018, 17) observes that most translation teams typically include linguists such as translators, and reviewers. O'Hagan

and Mangiron (2013, 130-134) explain that the translator works upon the source text, and produces a translation, which is then edited by reviewers in the review stage, who focus on the unification of style and terminology. As this study involves team translations that simulate the real conditions of video game translation within the production stage of a localisation project, the following section will review literature on the professional roles of the translators, and reviewers, as they are responsible for the translation of the CSIs. There will be a focus on the industry requirements and socio-cultural backgrounds of these linguists, which is relevant to the construction of the translatorial habitus, as reviewed in section 2.4.4.1.

2.7.2.1 Video Game Linguists: Translators and Reviewers

Translators are responsible for the primary translation of the source text files, and the reviewers, who vendors may refer to as proofreaders, or language quality assurance (LQA) specialists, are responsible for the proofreading and editing of the translated text, and in some cases, the retranslation of unsuitable sections. O'Hagan and Mangiron (ibid., 253-255) extensively list the key competence areas for both types of linguists, who they collectively refer to as game localizers, which include: (1) *Personal qualities and skills*, encompassing motivation, commitment, and flexibility working hours. (2) *Translation skills*, both *general*, requiring an excellent knowledge of the source and target languages, as well as being capable of translating source language poetic, colloquial, and technical register, and having excellent cultural awareness. There are also *specific* skills, relating to AVT skills, localisation skills, and literary and technical translation. (3) *Subject specific knowledge*, also referred to as *gaming literacy*, relating to game culture, gameplay experience, game genres, branding issues, game development process, and a good knowledge of global pop culture. (4) *Transferable professional skills*, which include computing skills, being create, being able to work independently and part of team, as well problem solving and good communication skills. Indeed, while most qualities included in points (1) *Personal qualities and skills*, and (4) *Transferable professional skills* can apply to positions in many fields, the qualities mentioned in points (2) *Translation skills* and (3) *Game literacy*, are much more specific to the field of video game translation, and have socio-cultural implications which relate to this study, and its goal of exploring the socio-cultural phenomena in TMIES.

With regards to point (2) *Translation skills*, the inclusion of different text types is vital, as Bernal-Merino (2015, 2) states that these linguists 'need to be able to translate a wide variety of textual types ranging from the promotional to the technical, the creative, the didactic and the literary'. For instance, some of the text used in RPGs might require more creative translation

approaches, to convey the speech and mannerisms of fantasy inspired races or creatures, therefore translators may be required to use a higher degree of artistic license. However, the language used in a sports game, or a serious game, such as a flight simulator could be more technical, with established terminologies, and in such cases, game localizers would not be expected to deviate from the expected terminology.

While this list was not compiled specifically for Chinese video games, it is worthwhile mentioning that knowledge of poetic language, and familiarity with literary translation have been included. These would both be essential for Chinese video game translation, as covered in section 2.2 it was established that Chinese games can contain Classical Chinese, which tends to be highly condensed and poetic, as well as containing other literary and historical references. However, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 254) include the requirement of an 'excellent knowledge of SL and TL' but do not specifically mention the need for being a native speaker of the TL. This is interesting, as industry adverts tend to stipulate the requirement that applicants be native speakers. Thus, video game linguists are expected to be able to translate a wide variety of texts and possess deep cultural knowledge and linguistic expertise of their language pair.

Point (3), *Game literacy*, is an individual's knowledge and experience of video games. It is very important that a video game translator has good knowledge of various games genres, and gaming experience, as many video games share similar terminology and acronyms, for instance HP (health points), MP (magic points), EXP (experience), and so on. As mentioned by Robertson (2018, 15), when applying to register with agencies, it is standard practice for video game linguists to take translation tests of various genres of games, which do not just assess the translation skills of candidates, but also their specific knowledge of video games. As such, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 254) include global pop culture in this category, which highlights the connections between video games and pop culture products that exist in other media formats. Additionally, Bernal-Merino (2015, 51) also observes that video games take direct inspiration from books, comics, and films. Therefore, it is not sufficient for video game localizers to be linguistic experts, who are only knowledgeable of literature and poetry, they must also be familiar with global pop culture, and have an extensive game literacy.

2.7.3 Levels of Localisation and Resources

As raised in 2.7.1, there are four levels of localisation, which include no localisation, box and docs, partial localisation, and full localisation. Moreover, as stated by Pettini (2022, 23) in 1.2, partial localisation, and full localisation, are more interesting from the perspective of translation

studies, as they entail the translation of larger bodies of text, while no localisation, entails no official translation, and box and docs only involves the translation of the packaging and essential manuals and instructions. Furthermore, in terms of importance, as stated in 1.2, both O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 142), as well as Pettini (2022, 2) reflect that both partial and full localisation are most used within the industry. Thus, while full localisations, commonly linked with bigger budgets, and AAA games, have received comparatively more attention from leading scholars, less has been given to partial localisation, as well as the box and docs model, which are both still modes of localisation, and should be acknowledged as thus.

Indeed, to those unacquainted with working in this way, the very term *partial localisation* may lead to assumptions that this mode of working requires less effort or is less challenging due to the lack of having to dub any dialogue, and only needing to translate the text. For the uninitiated, such translation may seem hardly different from more traditional modes of translation, and therefore less interesting than audio visual translation, or full localisations. However, while partial localisations can be a result of a lack of budget for a full localisation, they can also occur simply because the original games contained no voiceover, and only contained non-voiced dialogue in UI boxes which is common in a range of video games with smaller and larger budgets. This includes wuxia RPGs, such as *Wandering Sword* (The Swordman Studio, Xiameng Studio 2023), and even AAA titles such as *Pokémon Scarlet and Violet* (Game Freak 2022). There are also instances where some of the dialogue of a game includes voiceover, whereas the rest does not, which is the case with the RPG *Rogue Trader* (Owlcat Games 2023). Thus, as stated by numerous industry experts and researchers, such as Chandler and Deming (2012, 9), O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 142), and Pettini (2022, 23), partial localisation only includes the translation of text with no voice over. Nevertheless, this lack of voiceover, while reducing the need for dubbing, does not change the fact that these games, especially RPGs, can contain a lot of text, which can be challenging to translate. Thus, as stated by Robertson (2018, 15-17), Chinese wuxia RPGs, can contain ‘tens – if not hundreds of thousands of characters’, that brim with many culture specific challenges relating to Chinese fiction, history, and ideology, which need to be translated into English, and ultimately integrated into the final video game products, still adhering to the parameters of multimedia interactive entertainment software, regardless of whether voiceover is included or not.

Just as the level of localisation is an important consideration, so is the level of resources available for any project, and, as observed by researchers, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, there is a link between the level of localisation, and the resources available for a

project. However, while there is very little elaboration within academic sources on what this means for specific levels of localisation, there is a general consensus that partial localisation typically involves a lower budget, and access to fewer resources, whereas full localisation, which is more common with AAA games, is more typically linked with greater access to a higher budget and a wider degree of resources, as observed by Chandler and Deming (2012, 9), O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 142), and Pettini (2022, 24). Drawing on a decade of professional experience within the field, as both a translator and reviewer, this researcher would also agree with these general observations, but would also add that within full and partial localisation projects, there can be a wide variety of variables, in terms of access to materials, textual, as well as audio and visual, including access to the original game, which may or may not have been released at the time of localisation, any existing prequels, as well as levels of support provided by developers. In some instances, it can even be possible to receive more support in a partial localisation than a full localisation; however, in general, as observed by the researchers above, full localisations benefit from larger budgets and are better supported in comparison to partial localisations, in which there can be fewer resources, and more challenges.

Researchers, such as Bernal-Merino (2015, 190), are aware of the challenges which can entail from a lack of resources, and writes that in the past, translators only had access to the text that needed to be translated, as it was understood that all or most of the required information would be present within the text. Furthermore, Frank Dietz (2006, 132-133) noted how translators traditionally received the text to be translated, but not the games, and that this lack of context regarding how the interactive elements worked, and how the text related to in-game processes resulted in 'blind localization', and despite the fact that researchers have discussed this phenomena as a relic of the early industry, it can still be linked to the practice of partial localisation, which is often subject to fewer resources owing to lower budgets. Dietz (ibid.) further proposed that when full access to the game was not possible, that game translators should be provided with 'a wealth of background information, such as screenshots, design documents and game walkthroughs' for essential context, which could mitigate the lack of direct access to the product. Over time, with the advent of multichannel creations, such as movies, comics, and video games, it became more apparent to translators that text alone could not provide sufficient context to comprehensively account for the various communicative elements in use. Hence, Bernal-Merino (2015, 190) also states that 'Translation professionals catering for this new market demanded access to more information, or even to the full product in the form that it would ultimately be received by the public', and in terms of the four levels

of localisation, this would fit more with a full localisation. However, with partial localisation, which typically involves a lower budget, professional video game linguists, such as translators, and reviewers can expect to receive some resources, depending on a wide range of variables including the developer, client, agency, but not necessarily the same level as enjoyed by professionals working on AAA game full localisations.

As a result of these demands, it is now common for developers to provide video game localisation vendors with access to a set of resources known as a localisation kit, which differs based on the level of localisation, so that the linguists working on the translation have more context to carry out the work. Scholars of video game translation have provided similar lists of what is contained in a localisation kit. O'Hagon and Mangiron (2013, 119-120) provide five categories. 1. *General information about the project and game content* (this includes specific translation instructions and may include a description of the storyline and characters, as well as a walkthrough, and cheat codes). 2. *Reference materials* (This can include glossaries of terms). 3. *Software programs and computer-aided translation (CAT) tools* (these can be standard CAT tools, or specific tools designed and provided by the developers). 4. *Code* (only provided if the localisation vendor is also responsible for integrating the game with the localised assets). Finally, 5. *Assets to translate* (the text files, graphics, scripts, and songs).

Moreover, Bernal-Merino (2015, 191) provides a similar, but more comprehensive list of the documents and assets included within a localisation kit. The list has four main categories, but each has a more extensive list of sub items. The four main categories are 1. *Assets* (includes the files and supporting reference material that need to be translated). 2. *Game documentation* (includes technical, design, product information, cheat codes, and walkthroughs) 3. *Software tools* (include tools or applications required to test the game and relevant technical documentation), and 4. *Code* (the code comprises the entire game code and other applications to test the game).

Therefore, a localisation kit can contain many documents and assets; however, it is important to note that the linguists will not receive everything above, as some tasks are only performed by localisation engineers, and project managers. Furthermore, it is important to note that linguists working on higher budget games with full localisations are more likely to have access to a wider range of resources than those working on partial localisations, with typically lower budgets. Arguably, all linguists would benefit from more general information about projects, as well as reference materials, and as such Chandler and Deming, also provide a

similarly long list of potential resources available on any project depending on the level of localisation (2012, 143-150). Furthermore, the authors also state that if translators do not have a thorough understanding of a game, they cannot provide appropriate translations (ibid, 307). However, O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 119) observe that:

In reality, the amount and quality of information that developers may pass on to the localization vendor varies, depending on their experience and awareness of the localization process.

As such, while the provision of more resources can result in a higher quality final product, some localisation vendors may not provide them due to either not fully understanding the scope of these benefits, a lack of budget, or industry related concerns. This is because providing more access could entail greater threats to security, as while leaked text or images of a new product can be damaging for a developer, if the entire game code was compromised, the effects could be catastrophic, and therefore, establishing trust and safely regulating the connections between developers, localisation agencies, and freelancers is essential. Moreover, another key factor that can determine how much access a translation team has to resources, in addition to level of localisation, is the localisation model under which they operate, and this will be covered in the section below.

2.7.4 Localisation Models

O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 116-121) identify two main localisation models in the video game industry, the outsourcing model (2.7.4.1), and the in-house model (2.7.4.2). While both models follow a similar production stage, certain key differences often exist in relation to the two variables of how team translation is facilitated, and in the level of access to resources.

2.7.4.1 Outsourcing Model

The outsourcing model is the most typical model used in the US, Europe, and China (O’Hagan and Mangiron 2013, 118). This typically involves a localisation agency hiring a team of freelancers, occupying the positions of translators, and reviewers. The foremost advantage of this model is that it is cheaper for agencies to temporarily hire teams of freelancers for project-based work. This is because it is more expensive for a localisation agency to employ professionals on a full-time bases when they may only need to work several months or even weeks per year.

The disadvantages of this model are as Robertson (2018, 17) states, it can take longer for new teams to gel and function as an effective whole, as new practices are enforced, and

individual roles are established. Inexperienced teams are more likely to run into problems, for instance Robertson (ibid.), observes ‘When multiple linguists work on the same project, they can easily modify each other’s translations accidentally’, and thus it is essential that teams comprised of freelancers are more carefully managed. The mode of communication between translators and reviewers can also vary.

For a translation team working within the outsourcing model, access to resources can vary from project to project. While it is more likely that an in-house team will have access to more resources, nowadays an outsourced team will most likely have access to some form of localisation kit, as discussed in 2.5.3, providing critical multichannel context.

2.7.4.2 In-house Model

The translation stage for the in-house model is primarily undertaken by translators and reviewers who work exclusively for the localisation agency, or developer in question. O’Hagan and Mangiron observe that this model is used by major developers, such as Nintendo, Sony, and Microsoft (ibid., 232).

This model conveys several advantages, as communication can be more direct, roles within the team are more defined, and in-house teams tend to have access to more resources, meaning a localisation kit, or access to the original game, depending on various factors. Communication can occur between individuals working in the same office, or by using instant messaging apps. As a team works together over time, clear roles can be established. Furthermore, as in-house teams either work directly for developers, or for more established localisation agencies with robust measures in place to protect against copyright infringement and the leaking of materials, they can benefit from having direct access to more, or indeed all relevant resources. It is not hard to imagine that a well-managed team with a greater access to resources, specifically the games being translated, can potentially deliver a higher quality product.

The main disadvantage of this model is that it would be more dependent on a higher demand of localisation services. Thus, a developer would need to be sufficiently productive, or an agency would need to be receiving a steady line of work to be able to afford to hire in-house translators, and reviewers. Indeed, while more localisation agencies still rely on the flexibility of the outsourcing model, in more recent years, bigger localisation agencies have been moving towards in-house models or hybrid models, in which in-house teams can be supplemented with freelancers when required. Hence, as Mia Čomić (2021) observes, most localisation is still

completed under the outsourcing model, more agencies are taking more control and are moving towards in-house localisation, or indeed hybrid models, which make use of ‘in house resources with outsourced expertise’.

As this study intends to produce more generalisable findings, it was decided that it would be beneficial to conduct the translation component of this research with a large localisation agency, as it would have a larger and more stable team of experienced in-house translators and reviewers who are permanently employed, and this would involve the in-house model. Under such conditions, socio-cultural factors, and industry norms could become more focused, and consequently observable. While the outsourcing method is still the most common, and the hybrid model is gaining traction, both can be viewed as sites for future research, this project however will focus on the in-house model.

2.8 Literature Review Conclusion

This chapter has covered the concept of cultural specificity, how it has been utilised within translation studies, developed within the research of AVT, and how it has recently been applied in the field of TMIES (2.1) in which it may need to further evolve. Additionally, it has probed the unique characteristics of CSIs in Chinese video games, as well as the highly culturally specific wuxia RPG genre (2.2), which contains CSIs relating to Chinese history, literature, and ideology. In terms of translation studies theories, it has reviewed literature on the application of the theory of norms in translation and highlighted its potential for application in TMIES (2.3). From the field of sociology, Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, capital, and field were covered in terms of how they may confer explanatory power to the practice of video game localisation (2.4). Moreover, focus was placed on the way in which translation studies scholars have combined Bourdieu’s sociology with the theory of norms in translation, to create the translatorial habitus (2.5), which has not yet been applied in TMIES, but appears to provide the explanatory power required for this socio-cultural investigation. Functionalist theories (2.6) were also reviewed and appear to be useful in terms of providing a more professional and industry centric perspective to this investigation, alongside the translatorial habitus. Finally, there was a review of literature related to the practice of video game localisation within the industry, which further informs this research, and will be integrated into the methodology. Having reviewed the literature above, and underpinning the central concepts, theories, and practices which can be utilised in this research, the focus now moves to the methodology.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Overview of Research Design

A methodological approach has been designed to address the research aim, and questions, as framed in previous chapters. As such, this research utilised a case study design, which can exemplify and enable the observation of the desired phenomena. This research has the characteristics of two types of case study, as defined by Robert K. Yin (2009, 48), which are the *representative* or *typical case*, and the *revelatory case*. It was intentionally a *typical case*, as it sought to ‘capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation’ (ibid.), in this case the Chinese to English translation of CSIs in a wuxia RPG, localised to the parameters of a partial (text only) localisation, as carried out by professional linguists within an industry setting. The rationale was that a typical case can represent a broader category of similar cases, and provide the context required to address the research aim and questions. However, this was also a *revelatory case*, as it involved observing and analysing phenomena previously inaccessible to scientific investigation (ibid.). This sounds contradictory; however, as stated in section 1.2, industry restrictions limited access researchers have to the materials used in a typical case, and NDAs prevented any access to linguists.

A mixed methods design with a qualitative focus was adopted, as this can provide a more balanced perspective in the investigation of unexplored phenomena. While this research was primarily qualitative in nature, as it was concerned with the interpretation of data generated from the case study, it also drew from quantitative methods for further contextualisation, and therefore utilised what John W. Creswell and Vicki L. Plano Clark (2011) refer to as the ‘embedded design (with qualitative focus)’. According to Bryman (2016, 640), this can have either quantitative or qualitative research as the priority but draws upon the other approach within the context of a study.

However, due to industry restrictions it was not possible to fully observe the localisation of a real wuxia RPG, as both access to translation materials, and the linguists would be limited if not prevented. As presented in 1.2, NDAs can prevent linguists from disclosing information about projects for several years. Based on the professional experience of the researcher, even when the term of an NDA is over, there can be clauses preventing linguists from disclosing information without seeking further permission, and this also applies to games released in the public domain. The typical rationale provided by authors of NDAs is that the those who have worked on a project will always have more information than is available in the public domain, and not all the information was intended for the public. This means that even when NDAs are

no longer active, which will be years later, the linguists still cannot disclose information without permission, and even if they could, the information would no longer be as fresh or reliable.

As such, this case study involved the creation of a simulated source text that could exemplify the characteristics of a real wuxia RPG, including the CSIs, and then this was translated by professional translation teams who worked in-house for the same localisation agency. This combination of simulated and authentic features granted full access to translation materials, as well as linguists, and thereby enabling unrestricted engagement with the research questions. Consequently, this project had two main stages, a preliminary stage, which involved the generation of categories of CSIs, and the creation of the source text (3.2) and a main stage, which involved the translation of the source text, and the interviewing of the participants (3.3).

3.2 Preliminary Stage

Part of this case study involved the translation of CSIs in a wuxia RPG text, and as stated, it was necessary to create a source text. However, this required a rigorous methodological approach to ensure that the game text was able to accurately simulate the desired culture specific CSIs and features. The preliminary stage therefore involved the initial selection of samples of video games (3.2.1), the collection of data (3.2.2), and the coding of CSI data into categories of CSIs (3.2.3). As shown in figure 3.1 below, these three steps had a cyclical relationship, due to the coding and refinement process, where black arrows indicate progression, and white arrows indicate movement between the steps. Thus, new samples (games) were continually selected, the data sampled, and then coded until the CSIs categories became saturated and no new categories emerged. This resulted in the emergence of typical categories of CSIs and contextual data (3.2.4), which were used in the creation of a Chinese video game text (3.2.5).

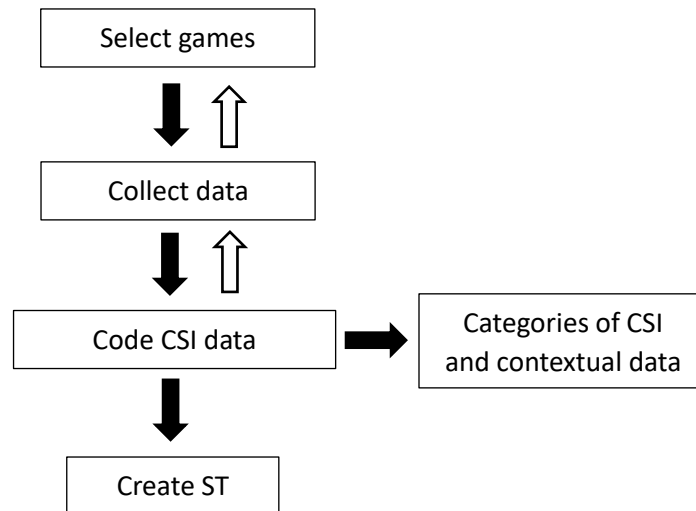


Figure 3.1 Procedures and Outcomes of Preliminary Stage

3.2.1 Selection of Wuxia Video Games to Sample

As stipulated in the introduction, with regards to gaps in research 1.2, the Chinese wuxia RPG genre has been selected as a focus of this study due to a current lack of research related to this genre of game, the fact that the Chinese video game market is the biggest internationally, and how more wuxia RPGs are making an impact on anglophone locales, with multiple popular titles being localised into English in the past several years, placing a larger demand on this direction of localisation. Moreover, the literature review has covered the ways in which this genre is highly culturally specific, drawing inspiration from Chinese wuxia fiction, and history, as covered in 2.2.2, and 2.2.3, as well as Chinese Confucian ideology 2.2.5. Furthermore, as explained in 1.2, the researcher has personally worked as a video game linguist (translator and reviewer) on multiple genres of Chinese video games that were localised into English for a span of ten years, and this included other genres also connected to Chinese literature, and history, such as strategy, and puzzle games, which were also rich with culturally specific items.

This was the case for games firmly based on classical Chinese literature, such as *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Luo Guanzhong, 14th century), and *Journey to the West* (Wu Cheng'en, 1592), which tended to closely follow the events as they occurred in the original works. However, it was also true for wuxia RPG games, which were more loosely based on wuxia fiction, meaning they may borrow ideas or inspiration from the original works of fiction, which can include the names of martial arts sects, locations, and styles of martial arts, but they feature original characters and storylines to facilitate the standard RPGs experience of enabling players to explore and play a role within a virtual world. In this sense, wuxia RPGs can entail

engagement with both established CSIs from Chinese history and the original fiction, as well as a wide range of other CSIs, which were not included in the original works. Therefore, translators and reviewers cannot solely rely as much on the original literature or fiction, as they could for those games more firmly based on classical Chinese literature, and thus from a translation perspective, the wuxia RPG genre may include extra challenges and a deeper engagement with the translation of CSIs than games more strictly based on classical literature.

While both types of games are highly culturally specific, and would be suitable for this study, due to growing popularity of wuxia RPGs in anglophone locales, as stated in 1.2, and 2.2.3, recent industry demand means that a greater share of the experience gained by this researcher was related to Chinese wuxia RPGs, both in partial localisation projects and full localisation projects. Moreover, the utilisation of this first-hand knowledge can, therefore, better ensure the authenticity and rigour of such a case study, as well facilitate the analysis of the data with a deeper understanding and professional authority than that of researchers who do not have the same level of professional experience.

The researcher however understands the risks of subjectivity, and thus care was taken create a simulated text which could be considered generalisable. It was therefore necessary to first identify the typical CSIs of wuxia RPGs, and this would require selecting suitable video games to sample, and code, in relation to culturally specific features. Accordingly, the following two criteria were used to select the video game texts for the coding of CSIs and contextual data: date of release, and number of downloads. It was important to use recent games, to explore current phenomena, and number of downloads was equally as important, as it provides a measure of how common and widespread these games are within the genre.

A total of five games were used in the sample. Each game was individually analysed in terms of CSIs and related contextual features and coded to generate categories. The purpose of generating these categories was so that they could be replicated within the simulated source text, and thus ensuring that the linguists translated categories of CSIs typical to this genre of game. This process was repeated five times until the categories became saturated, and no new categories emerged. Table 3.1 below indicates the order in which the titles were selected, along with the release dates and number of recorded downloads, at the time collection.

Game title	Publisher and release date	Number of recorded downloads
剑网3指尖江湖 (Jianwang 3, Fingertip Jianghu)	Tencent 2019	20 million (Lin 2019)
逆水寒 OL (Justice Online)	NetEase 2019	16 million (daydaynews.cc 2019)
一梦江湖 (A Dream of Jianghu)	NetEase 2019	Over 2.38 million (4399 2020).
天涯明月刀手游 (Moonlight Blade Mobile)	Tencent 2019	Over 2 million (Tencent Games 2020)
古剑3 (Gujian 3)	Wangyuan Shengtang 2018	1.3 million (Chan 2020)

Table 3.1 Release dates and number of downloads

The titles were selected in order of the number of downloads. The release dates were current at the time of collection, which was late 2019 to early 2020.

3.2.1.1 Size of Text to Sample

Regarding the length of text for an entire game, RPGs can include tens if not hundreds of thousands of characters, and as stated by Adams (2014) the story of an RPG can be as long as a big novel. Indeed, Mangiron (2004) states that RPGs ‘are the most interesting from a translator’s point of view because they contain a large amount of onscreen text’. Therefore, the full analysis and coding of several, let alone one entire game, would not be feasible in the scope of this research.

However, wuxia RPG games, like most RPGs, have an opening chapter, in which the player is either given a predefined character to play, or is required to create their own character, which involves setting attributes such as gender, hair colour, as well as the character’s race, class, and moral attributes (Adams, 2014). The opening chapter of an RPG will also include some noninteractive exposition that can set the stage and focus on the game world, such as scrolling text (ibid.). After which, the player will become acquainted with the main elements of the game, such as the plot, the controls, the environment, the non-playable characters (NPCs), and this will involve a few quests.

Thus, by the end of an opening chapter, a player will be familiar with the general environment of a game and will possess the skills and knowledge to progress to the following chapters, or as Adams (ibid.) states, the opening chapter needs to provide the right level of knowledge and exposition to induce the players to probe forward. For this reason, and for the

purpose of keeping the samples to a more manageable size, focus was placed on the creation of categories for the types of CSIs, locations, and the genre specific dialogues that exist within the first chapters of wuxia RPGs.

3.2.2 Data Collection

The data was collected via playing through Chinese wuxia RPGs which were readily accessible as well as observing online playthroughs recorded by other players who have posted videos online, for video games which were not as accessible due to factors such as region locks. This involved taking screenshots of every piece of text encountered during the playthroughs of the first chapters of these games, and then scanning the screenshots, including both text, and graphics, for CSIs – and in this respect, it can be considered a multimodal procedure. Table 3.2 below indicates whether the playthroughs were personally conducted or involved observing online playthroughs, the number of screenshots taken per game, and the resulting number of Chinese characters encountered.

While no two playthroughs are identical, and different player choices can result in alternative dialogues, and outcomes, and therefore exposure to different CSIs, the purpose of the playthroughs was not to uncover every single CSI in an individual game, but rather a collection of the most common CSIs in the first chapters of a range of highly popular games. Accordingly, the personally conducted playthroughs, were utilised in the spirit of trying to complete the first chapters as usual, following the main line quests, and not trying to uncover every side quest. This reflected the observed playthroughs, which were selected based on the same criteria.

Game title	Method of playthrough	Number of screenshots taken	Number of characters encountered in first chapter
剑网3 指尖江湖 (Jianwang 3, fingertip Jianghu)	Personally conducted (2019)	252	11,266
逆水寒 OL (Justice Online)	Observed Rae (2019)	214	14,893
一梦江湖 (A Dream of Jianghu)	Personally conducted (2019)	327	25,119
天涯明月刀手游 (Moonlight Blade Mobile)	Observed 徐 (2019)	194	8,267

古劍 3 (Gujian 3)	Observed 4K HDR Gameplay Channel (2020)	313	6,587
Totals:		1,300	66,132

Table 3.2 Number of screenshots and characters

3.2.3 Coding of Data

The process of coding was used to generate categories for the CSIs, which would be included in the created game text to be translated in the main stage. However, the resulting game text should not just reflect the types of CSIs within the sample games, but also present them within natural text settings and game narratives. Thus, coding was also used to generate contextual data to aid the creation of the game text. In addition to the coding of CSIs in the traditional sense, as in individual words and terms, which in this section will be referred to as micro-CSIs, coding was also implemented to generate two other types of CSIs that operate on a larger scale. These larger CSIs included meso-CSIs, which were genre-specific *themed dialogues* which both contained CSIs and facilitated the ludonarrative of the games, as well as macro-CSIs, which refer to the greater historical or fictional backgrounds of these video games. Furthermore, the text locations were also coded, so that the CSIs would appear in the correct text locations. This involved a stage of initial coding, where the text of the screenshots was reviewed and all data relating to CSIs, and text locations were compared and labelled with codes. This was followed by a stage of focused coding, where the most significant and frequent codes were refined and utilised to sift through more game samples, until the emerging categories became saturated.

The coding started with the game with the highest number of recorded downloads, *Jianwang 3 Fingertip Jianghu* (Tencent 2019), with 20 million downloads. Transcribing the screenshots to highlight any CSIs and contextual data would take too much time, as the first chapters of these games contain up to tens of thousands of characters of text, therefore the screenshots containing multimodal data were directly coded for CSIs, and the codes were recorded on an excel document. After the initial coding of the first chapter of the game, a set of codes relating to CSIs, and text locations of CSIs began to emerge. These were refined into focused codes. Examples of this process have been provided below in 3.2.4, with translations of the Chinese characters for context:

3.2.4 Examples of Coding CSIs and Text Locations

Below are three examples of how the various text elements were coded in the video games, including the coding of different types of CSIs, and text locations of CSIs.



Figure 3.2 Fingertip Jianghu: screenshot of character selection stage A

Initial Coding of CSIs

CSIs in Yellow boxes indicate the names of martial arts sects that can be selected. From top to bottom: 纯阳 (Chun Yang sect), 天策 (Tian Ce Sect), 万花 (Wu Hua Sect), 七秀 (Qi Xiu Sect), and 少林 (Shao Lin Sect).

CSIs in Blue boxes indicate the names of playable characters. From left to right: 李忘生 (Li Wangsheng), 祁进 (Qi Jin), and 子睿 (Zi Rui).

CSIs in Green box indicates a term of address. The CSIs comes from the name of a character, which is composed of both the name of the sect 纯阳 (Chun Yang Sect) and the word 弟子 (disciple). As Chun Yang Sect was already coded as a sect, the word disciple was coded not as a name, but as a term of address.

Focused Coding of CSIs

CSIs in Yellow boxes: referred to as *Fictional Sects*

CSIs in Blue Boxes: refined as *Fictional Characters*

CSIs in Green Box: refined as *Fixed Terms of Address*, as another similar yet distinct code appeared in this sample, and other samples, which was referred to as *Variable Terms of Address*.

Table 3.3 Example 1: Coding of Micro-CSIs

This coding process was continued with four more sample games, until the categories of CSIs became saturated, and no new categories emerged from additional samples, which occurred at the fifth sample. Different categories of CSIs, referring to individual words or phrases emerged, and are presented in section 3.2.4.1, as micro-CSIs, to differentiate them from two other types of CSIs that emerged. Thus, during the coding it was observed that there were CSIs that operated above the level of words and phrases. Macro-CSIs framed the entire games in terms of historical and fictional context, and meso-CSIs, the wuxia themed dialogues occurring within the games. Despite their size, both macro and meso-CSIs were still culturally specific, and important framing devices for the micro-CSIs and were therefore also coded:

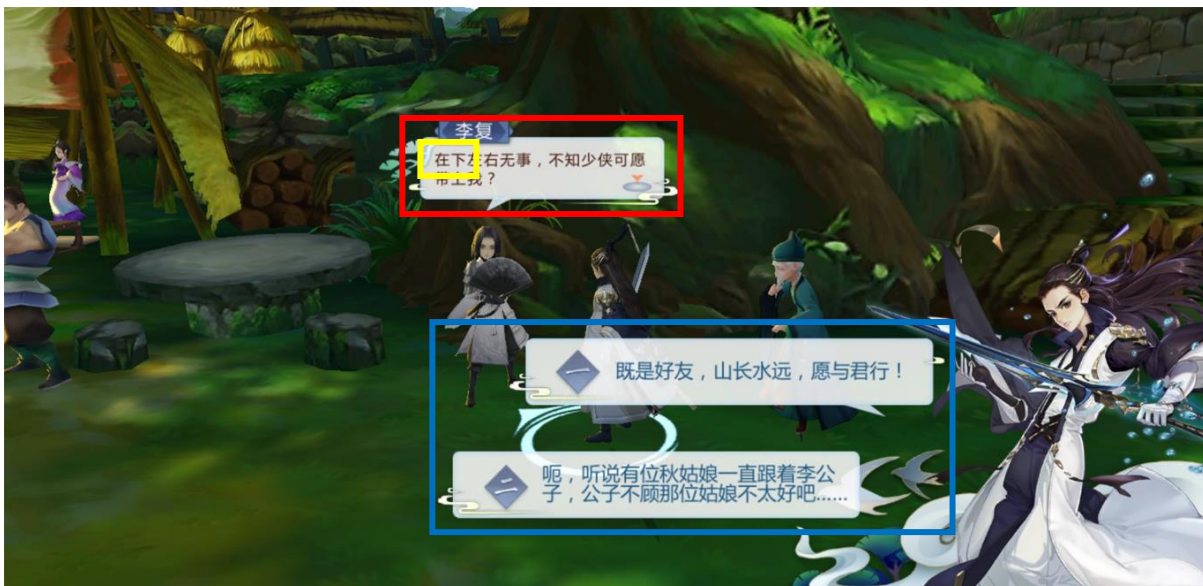


Figure 3.3 Fingertip Jianghu: Screenshot of Wuxia Themed Dialogue

Initial Coding: the red box includes dialogue from a fellow student of the same martial arts sect, in which they speak in a formal and respectful manner to the character of the player. The yellow box indicates the presence of one CSI 在下 (recorded during the CSIs coding), which literally means (I am) below (the addressee) but is used to humbly refer to oneself. The blue box indicates two possible responses the player can make, which will result in more dialogue. Due to the formality of this dialogue, this was initially coded Formal: master/elder – student.

Focused Coding: refined to the theme of *Hierarchical bond (master/elder – student)*. This category of meso-CSI was present in all five sample games.

Furthermore, this wuxia theme indicates the presence of larger categories of CSI, at the macro level, due to its links to wuxia fiction. The game *Jianwang 3 Fingertip Juanghu* was based on the wuxia novel written by Louis Cha, *笑傲江湖 (The Smiling, Proud Wanderer)* (1967-69), which was set within the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). As such, the fictional and historical elements function as macro-CSIs, contextualising the game environment.

Table 3.4 Example 2: Coding of Meso-CSIs, and Macro CSIs

Coding continued rigorously and consistently until the categories were saturated. This resulted in the emergence of 5 categories of meso-CSIs, as presented in 3.2.4.2, as well as 2 categories of macro-CSIs, as shown in 3.2.4.3. In addition to coding the CSIs of three different sizes, the text locations of CSIs, as in the types of text that contained the micro-CSIs, were also coded so that the created game text could house the micro-CSIs in the appropriate locations:



Figure 3.4 Fingertip Jianghu: screenshot of character selection stage B

Initial Coding of Text Locations: referred to as Character Selection. This screenshot depicts a menu with a roster of playable characters that belong to different martial arts sects. The player must select a character to play. During the coding of CSIs, as seen in Example 1, all fictional sects and playable characters were coded.

Focused Coding of Text Locations: refined as *Menu (character selection/character creation)*, as each of the five samples contained a menu screen, in which four of the samples allowed the player to either select from a roster of characters, or to create their own character.

Table 3.5 Example 3: Coding of Text Locations

The coding process continued until five distinct categories for text locations emerged. In the case of the screenshot above, it was coded as the *menu screen*, meaning that this is a text location in which CSIs can exist. These categories are presented in section 3.2.4.4 below.

3.2.4 Resulting Categories of CSIs and Text Locations

3.2.4.1 Micro-CSIs: Words and Phrases

This category refers to individual words or phrases that are specific to the source culture occurring in any section of game text. While they have been labelled as micro-CSIs in this section to differentiate them from the meso-CSIs, which reflect larger bodies of text, and macro-CSIs, which span the entire video game text, it is only possible to observe the individual translation approaches used for micro-CSIs. As such, they are the main translation focus of this research, and in other chapters will be referred to simply as *CSIs*. In the five games that were coded, a total 13 categories of CSIs were identified in the majority of the five games and were thereby considered representative. The individual categories that have emerged from the coding were defined as:

1. **Fictional Characters:** the names of the fictional characters within the game, including the main character (MC) and NPCs.
2. **Fictional Sects:** the names of different Chinese martial arts sects that occupy the fictional world of wuxia.
3. **Fixed Terms of Address:** the terms of address used to indicate an occupational title rather than a personal name in a wuxia setting.
4. **Variable Terms of Address:** terms used to address family members, friends, and strangers in a wuxia setting.
5. **Places:** locations that refer to geographical features such as rivers or mountains, or man-made settlements, such as villages or towns that exist in the wuxia RPG.
6. **Food:** items taking the form of food, of a culturally specific nature, that can be consumed to restore health or convey other beneficial effects.
7. **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM):** items of TCM, concocted from a variety of herbs, minerals, and animals parts. TCM is based on Chinese concepts of yin and yang energy, derived from the philosophy of Taoism. The items in games can be based on real or fictional TCM items.
8. **Currency:** any currencies used within the games to purchase items, which reflect the historical timeframe.

9. **Historical figures:** individuals recorded in the history of China, including, members of the imperial family, nobles, politicians, and generals.
10. **Historical organisations:** organisations connected to the Chinese military, government, or other ideologies.
11. **Martial arts society:** terms used to refer to the collective individuals and groups that make up Chinese martial arts society and the land in which it exists.
12. **Energies:** concepts of energy and inner power that exist within Chinese martial arts.
13. **Moves and skills:** martial arts moves and skills performed in wuxia video games.

3.2.4.2 *Meso-CSIs: Themed Dialogues of Chinese Wuxia RPGs*

RPGs are story driven and rely on dialogue to contextualise the game environment and plot. Zhang (2022 371) explains that the concept of ‘ludonarrativity’ is a crucial element of video games, which in most cases, contain both story and gameplay. Therefore, this aspect of the text creation could not be overlooked, and this required the analysis and categorisation of genre specific themes that structure the dialogues, containing the micro-CSIs, of these games. These dialogues were culturally specific, observing Confucian hierarchical bonds of the time and culture, and reflecting acts of chivalry in the face of corruption, which are culturally bound to the Confucian concepts of *yi* (linked to righteousness), and *li* (linked to self-profit) as covered in 2.2.4. Thus, these typical genre and culture specific themed dialogues were authentic plot devices. Five categories of meso-CSIs were identified in the majority of the first chapters of the games, and therefore were considered representative, and to be used in the creation of the game text. The meso-CSIs that emerged from the coding are defined as follows:

1. **Heirarchical bond (master/elder – student):** held between masters of martial arts with students. This involves a certain degree of formality and respect, reflected in the way characters address each other.
2. **Heirarchical bond (ruler – ruled):** held between individuals of different station and rank. This involves a certain degree of formality and respect, reflected in the way characters address each other.
3. **Corruption:** an act of corruption, in which those of a higher station abuse and exploit those of a lower station.
4. **Acts of chivalry:** an act of chivalry connected to an act of corruption, where a hero opposes an antagonist who is abusing or exploiting the weak and poor.

5. **Threat from outsiders (national):** connected to threats from individuals or groups who do not belong to the same community, but are from the same nation. For instance a different sect, city, or from a military or government source.

3.2.4.3 Macro-CSIs: Historical and Fictional Context

This type of CSI occurs on the macro level, functions as a contextual device that carries the meso-CSIs, and alludes to works of wuxia fiction, historical dynasties, or both. They do not take the form of a singular piece of text, like the micro-CSIs, or sections of text, like meso-CSIs, however, they are reflected by a range of the micro-CSIs, and meso-CSIs. Two categories of macro-CSIs emerged in the majority of the five games, one relating to *fiction*, as the martial arts sects, and moves and skills, are directly taken from wuxia fiction, and one relating to *history*, as the sample games often referenced historical periods in China, which were reflected via the CSI categories of historical figures, and historical organisations. These categories have been defined, and explained as such:

1. **Fiction:** the conveyance of fictional wuxia setting based on existing work. For instance, *Jianwang 3 Fingertip Jianghu* (Tencent 2019) was based on the wuxia novel written by Louis Cha, *笑傲江湖 (The Smiling, Proud Wanderer)* (1967-69), *Justice Online* (NetEase 2019) was based on a series of wuxia novels *四大名捕 (The Four Great Constables)*, written by Wen Rui-An (1980), and *Dream of Jianghu* (NetEase, 2019) have links to a wuxia novel series called *楚留香传奇 (The Legend of Chu Liuxiang)* written by Gu Long (1977).
2. **History:** the conveyance of historical context based on the depiction of real historical events, or historical dynasties. Most of the games were set in existing historical dynasties. For instance, both *Jianwang 3 Fingertip Jianghu* (Tencent 2019), and *Dream of Jianghu* (NetEase 2019) were set in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), and *Justice Online* (NetEase 2019) was set in the Song Dynasty (920-1276).

3.2.4.4 Text Locations of CSIs

The locations of the CSIs within the first chapters of the games were also coded. The games all contained the same types of text locations in the opening chapters, and in most cases all text locations included micro-CSIs and were therefore representative. The categories of text locations are defined and explained below:

1. **Menus (character selection/creation):** where the player either selects a character from a roster, or creates a character by selecting a martial arts sect, gender, and other cosmetic features, such as hair style, and eye colour.
2. **Narrative screens:** these screens provide exposition in the form of cinematic action with accompanying dialogue.
3. **Dialogue:** dialogue between the main character and NPCs, or NPCs with other NPCs.
4. **Tutorial:** these instruct the player on how to perform actions or moves.
5. **Inventory:** a place where in game items are stored.

3.2.5 Creation of a Simulated Wuxia RPG ST

Coding the features of interest from real wuxia RPGs resulted in the categorisation of 13 micro-CSIs, 5 meso-CSIs, and 2 macro-CSIs, as well as the 5 text locations in which they exist, as presented above. These features were utilised in the creation of a simulated wuxia RPG ST, which was translated by four professional translation teams, within a professional environment in accordance with professional standards. However, it would be detrimental to objectivity if the researcher simply cobbled these elements together in a ST, and similarly detrimental to authenticity if the simulated text was not created to a professional standard. As such, a professional writer of video game texts, was contacted via the same localisation agency (see 3.3.1) who provided the translation teams, localisation resources, and carried out the translation stage of this case study. The writer had experience of writing game text in wuxia RPGs, as well as online wuxia fiction, and was a fan of both wuxia fiction, and video games. The writer was presented with all three sets of CSI categories, and video game text locations, but was not given any numerical guidelines in terms of how many of each micro-CSIs to include. Instead, the writer was instructed to utilise all the categories of micro-CSIs to simulate a natural Chinese wuxia RPG ST. These CSIs were to be placed in the five types of text location found in these games, contextualised by five types of meso-CSIs, the themed dialogues which provided structure to the plot, and these were to be naturally aligned with the macro-CSIs of wuxia fiction and a corresponding historical dynasty.

This was achieved in a text of 1650 Chinese characters. While this is shorter than the first chapters of the five sampled games, the writer was not given a specific word limit, but was asked to stop writing once the text included all of the required categories of CSIs, and types of video game texts. The reason for the brevity of text is that, as stated below in 3.3.1, the translation would be carried out by professional localisation teams on a voluntary basis, which

means that this project, and related activities, such as questionnaires and interviews, needed to fit in around regular work. As such, the aim was to create a text that simulated the area of interest, but not a whole video game with every conceivable challenge. Nevertheless, a simulated text was created containing all specified categories of CSIs (based on the coding of the five games) in a natural setting, and can therefore be considered a text that authentically simulates CSIs in an abridged first chapter of a wuxia RPG. Moreover, an annotated version of the ST, which includes a column containing information regarding the names of the speakers has been provided in Appendix A, as part of the localisation kit, which is covered below in section 3.3.2.

For the purpose of transparency, it must be stated that this simulated RPG text does not include every conceivable video game localisation challenge, or type of text, and should therefore be considered a carefully designed text with a specific purpose in mind, which was to facilitate the exploration of how linguists translate CSIs in Chinese wuxia RPGs, why they use certain approaches, and how the approaches and reasoning can contextualise each other. Thus, while it can be observed that the ST in Appendix A, (and corresponding sample translation in Appendix C) do include some textual features that were not coded from the five games, such as tags and placeables, as well as instructional text that appears in UI boxes, instead of the general dialogue and plot text that was coded earlier. These were more a result of how the writer of the text has ensured that the CSIs occur in a natural setting. However, these elements, such as tags, variables, and other types of text which were not originally coded, are not the focus of this study, but rather provide a higher degree of realism. Linguists working on these projects can view these tags and variables, but they are not something that the players would see. These tags can influence aspects such as the size, colour, font, and position of the text on the screen, whereas variables can relate to numbers, percentages, and frequency. While the text of different projects can include fewer tags, and variables, and be more straightforward to translate, other projects can include more tags, variables, which can render the text messier than the one presented in Appendix A. These tags and variables may appear daunting for students, or newcomers to the industry; however, for seasoned professionals, they are less of a challenge, and the ways in which they are handled become more internalised. The inclusion of more tags and placeables can indeed result in extra challenges; however, they tend to be less related to CSIs in general, and more problematic in terms of judging whether a variable is singular or plural. However, this feature of video game translation, which has partially been included within the simulated text, is not the focus of this research.

Furthermore, if this was an entire project, and not just the translation of an abridged first chapter, it would contain more types of text. For example Bernal-Merino (2015, 109-110), lists seven types of text that can be present in video games, including (i) narrative text (heard or displayed); (ii) oral/dialogic (heard or displayed); (iii) technical (displayed or printed) relating to hardware specifications; (iv) functional (displayed as menus) and providing choices between different gaming options; (v) didactic (displayed, printed, or heard) to train players how to use the game application; (vi) promotional (printed or displayed); (vii) legal (printed or displayed). As this is a partial localisation however there are no voiceovers, as such, text is only displayed, and not heard. Moreover, due to the coding of the features which were for the first chapter of a wuxia RPG, the simulated source text includes four of the categories listed above: narrative text, dialogic text, functional text, and didactic text; however, it does not include technical, promotional, or legal texts, which are less likely to appear in the first chapter of a game during play. Essentially, this simulated video game text can be used in the analysis of a partial localisation of a wuxia RPG, and not only does this allow for full and direct access to the translations of CSIs in the TTs, but ultimately it can also reveal the details of the localisation kit, and for the first time, provide a voice for linguists, revealing the socio-cultural reasoning behind the utilisation of certain approaches, via interviews.

3.3 Main Stage

The main stage began with setting up of the case study which involved the selection of research site and participants (3.3.1), and the utilisation of a localisation kit (3.3.2). Investigating the first research question ‘how do linguists translate CSIs and are there any patterns?’ involved the coding and categorisation of translation approaches (3.3.3), and the measurement of the strength of the norms attached to the approaches (3.3.4). Addressing the second research question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’ involved the collection of data used to plot the social trajectories of the linguists (3.3.5), interviews (3.3.6), and the coding and categorisation of interview data (3.3.7). Exploring the third research question of ‘what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?’ entailed investigating the links between the socio-cultural reasoning, and the translation approaches used in conjunction with the CSIs (3.3.8).

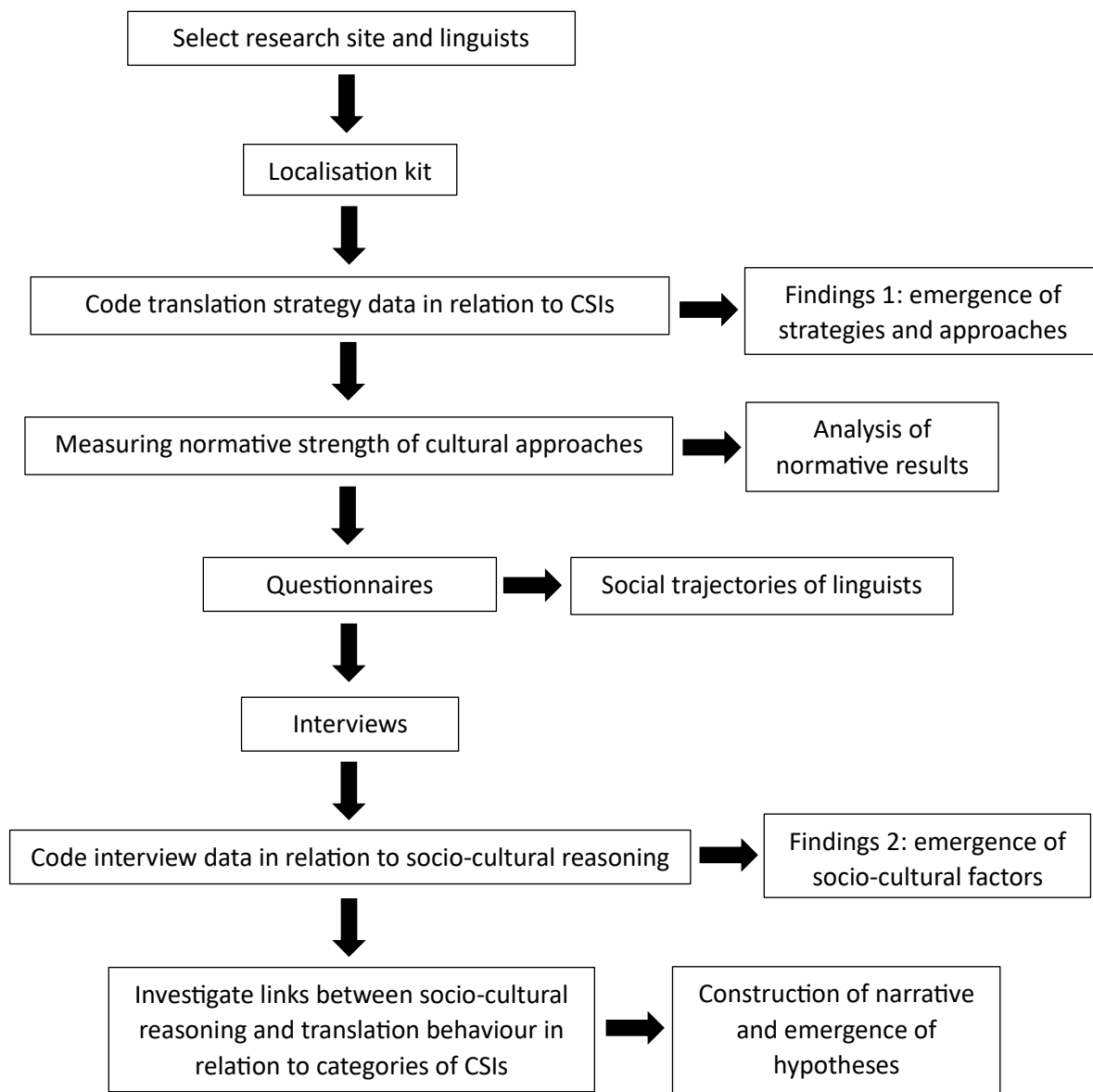


Figure 3.5 Procedures and outcomes of main stage

3.3.1 Selection of Research Site and Linguists

Addressing the research aim and questions required the observation of practice, as carried out by groups of professionals, within an industry setting. Furthermore, observation of norms or patterns of translation behaviour that could be considered more generalisable would require comparisons between a larger group of professionals working on the same case study. As such, Keywords Studios (2024), an international technical and creative service provider to the global video game industry that provides video game localisation across over 80 languages, was selected as the site for this research, as it has a large section dedicated to Chinese to English localisation projects, experienced professionals, the full range of resources to carry out localisation projects and was willing to be part of the research. Accordingly, the linguists

(translators and reviewers), and project managers who participated all worked in the industry and used the same procedures to translate the created game text as they would for an authentic game text, as per a partial localisation.

To be qualified to work as a linguist (translator or reviewer) at Keywords Studios, or indeed most localisation agencies, linguists must possess certain qualifications. The qualifications required to work at Keywords Studios (2018), as listed in a public online job post, in the capacity of a Chinese to English linguist, are similar to the competencies listed in 2.7.2.1 by O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 253-255), and include: (i) 'Native language fluency of target language'; (ii) 'Extensive knowledge of Chinese'; (iii) 'University degree or equivalent professional experience in the translation field'; (iii) 'Minimum 1 years of localization proven experience; (iv) 'Gaming localisation expertise and/or avid passion for Keywords core business'; (v) 'Computer skills (experience with translation tools and TM/Terminology management – preferred software MemoQ)'; and (vi) 'Professional affiliation is a plus'. Most of these points fall neatly into the key competencies listed by O'Hagan and Mangiron; however, the first requirement of this professional job advertisement is having a native fluency of the TL, as shown in point (i). This is more specific than having 'excellent knowledge of the TL', as mentioned in the list of O'Hagan and Mangiron. Other differences were the 'university degree' (iii), and 'professional affiliation' (vi). It is possible that these last two points are due to the rapid development of the industry, and because there were at least five years between the publishing of the key competence areas, and the posting of this job advertisement.

The qualifications mentioned above were observed in 2018 at the beginning of this research, but a similar advert from Keywords Studios (2023) was consulted towards the end of this study, and it was observed that while most qualifications remained similar, there was an adjustment to language proficiency, as instead of specifically asking for native speakers of English, it has stated that applicants are expected to translate Chinese into high quality English, which takes emphasis away from the cultural and linguistic background of the linguists while focusing on the desired output. Furthermore, as standard practice in localisation agencies, in addition to having these qualifications, the linguists must pass a translation test featuring challenges related to video game translation and localisation. However, as requested by the researcher, the linguists put forward by Keywords Studios for this project were not to be recent graduates, but experienced professionals, with several years of experience, which was important, as this means there would more chance for such individuals to have internalised many industry-specific as well as agency-specific norms.

Essentially, this research is interested in the existence of normative patterns of behaviour present across video game linguists, and hypothesises that if this was to occur anywhere, it would be more apparent among experienced linguists who did this as a full time profession, as opposed to those with less experience such as recent graduates, or others who have limited experience of the realities of industry, who may not understand the basics of how to use CAT tools, handle tags and variables, the general need for a concise style writing due to UI and similar restrictions, and may therefore translate this in the same way they would a piece of fiction relating to Chinese fiction and literature. This would ensure that the findings would be more representative of a higher standard of industry practice. As such, the linguists selected by Keywords have worked together on various in-house projects at this agency for several years and have worked on other wuxia RPG titles via the text only partial localisation mode. Thus, while the source text is a simulation, created via the processes described in the preliminary stage and replicated the features of a typical wuxia RPG as closely as possible, the research site and the linguists who carried out the translations were authentic to industry standards, and as such should be considered fully authentic.

3.3.1.1 Linguists: Team Compositions

Four teams of linguists were selected by Keywords Studios, and ethical approval was gained from the participants of all teams regarding the utilisation of materials generated by the translation and interview stages of this research (see Appendix C). The Participants included linguists (translators and reviewers), who carried out the translations and reviews, and project managers, who set up the projects and delivered the instructions to the linguists. The agency used the in-house model, and the linguists used the following designations: *Translators* were responsible for the initial translations. *Reviewers* were responsible for checking the final translations and making any final changes. The linguists formed four teams, each with one translator and one reviewer, and were instructed not to confer with linguists of other teams about any aspects of translation. The following designations were given to the linguists of each team, and the table below also includes language proficiency according to the linguists:

	Translator	Reviewer
Team One	Translator One: Native English Professional Chinese	Reviewer One: Professional English Professional Chinese
Team Two	Translator Two: Professional English Professional Chinese	Reviewer Two: Native English Professional Chinese
Team Three	Translator Three: Professional English Professional Chinese	Reviewer Three: Professional English Professional Chinese
Team Four	Translator Four: Professional English Native Chinese	Reviewer Four: Professional English Native Chinese

Table 3.6 Localisation teams

The linguists provided the following descriptors of their own level of fluency:

- (i) Native: full native proficiency of a language
- (ii) Professional: near native proficiency in the relevant field (video game localisation)

However, Keywords Studios did not provide these descriptors, and used interviews, qualifications, and an exam to determine whether the linguists possess the aptitude to work in a capacity which they have termed as having *native language proficiency* (3.3.1) – there can be differences in how Keywords Studios regards the linguistic proficiency of the linguists, and how they perceive their own proficiency. Thus, as shown in table 3.6, there are three different linguistic profiles based on how the linguists classify their own proficiency: native English with professional Chinese, professional English with professional Chinese, and professional English with native Chinese. Moreover, since linguistic background was beyond the control of the researcher, this aspect is considered an observed parameter of the study, but not a focus related to the research aims. Additionally, separate analyses of participants based on linguistics, or any other parameter, are not the purpose of a norms based analysis seeking to find the presence of patterns of translation behaviour, or lack therefore, across a group of linguists, and are therefore beyond the scope of this study. The singular most important fact determining their suitability for being part of this case study was that these linguists had already qualified to translate Chinese video games into English for the agency, based on professional criteria used during the registration tests, and had worked on numerous projects with the same linguistic direction. As

such, the linguists have already demonstrated the required professional skills in an industry context and are suitable participants for this research.

3.3.2 Localisation Kit

To prevent the creation of an idealised case study based solely on the subjective, yet industry-based experience and observations of the researcher, Keywords Studios was asked to create a localisation kit for the translation stage, designed to reflect a typical scenario in which a text only partial localisation was required, based on previous based on similar projects. Resultingly, the four translation teams were provided with a localisation kit, which included the source text, the client brief, and information required to complete the work, which is standard practice in the localisation industry (see 2.6.3). Due to the level of localisation, the created game text did not include audio-visual resources, as such this case study involves a text only partial localisation as introduced in 1.2, and more thoroughly defined and explained in 2.7.1 and 2.7.3.

This lack of audio-visual resources can place a greater stain on the linguists, who have less context from which to work, and therefore need to rely more on the text, professional experience, and intuition. Furthermore, as the localisation kit was designed to simulate a scenario in which the agency had been asked to localise a wuxia RPG that was part of a popular new franchise, there were no existing resources, such as TMs or TBs, which could be used to expedite the localisation. Additionally, access was not given to the original game, meaning the linguists were not able to play it for more context within the limited five-day turnaround given for initial translation and review. This scenario can emerge for a variety of reasons, though in this case it was linked to temporal demands (of providing a fast service, within a competitive industry in which speed is linked to profitability). For the full localisation kit see Appendix A; in short, it was comprised of a (i) a briefing, (ii) a style guide relating to general approaches, and considerations specific to dialogue, (iii) a list of influences that could be used as secondary audio-visual, and interactive resources, and (iv) an annotated version of the ST.

These items are not surprising, as they feature in the lists of potential resources put forward by researchers such as Chandler and Deming (2012), O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), and Bernal-Merino (2015), as covered in 2.7.3. However, it must be observed that a real localisation kit originating from an industry source designed for a specific game (whether it be a real game text, or a simulated game text), for any level of localisation, has not been included in the published work of any known researchers of TMIES. The reason for this lack of an authentic localisation kit is simple, and that is because it would be covered by the general NDAs

signed by agencies, linguists, and all related professionals, when localising video games for developers. As covered in 1.2, and 3.1 above, an NDA means that it not possible to disclose information related to a given project, including the way of working, and the resources involved. However, the game text was created for this research, and therefore the localisation kit can be fully disclosed (Appendix A) and explained below.

It included a briefing, outlining that this is for a wuxia RPG for PCs, and that the target audience are western and English-speaking gamers, including fans of action, martial arts, and the wuxia genre, who might have played localised wuxia RPGs. It was part of a new franchise, meaning there was no access to existing TMs or TBs, and due to the demand for a swift and competitive service, there was not enough time for the linguists to access and play the original game. There was also mention of how the translations should respect the original wuxia genre.

The localisation kit also included a style guide, which stated that while this was for a PC, and therefore not subject to the same spatial or temporal demands of mobile games, which can have smaller screens and more demanding restrictions, the translations still needed to be clear and concise without redundancy and repetition. As such, while there were no fixed character limits, the linguists were not given free rein to translate without taking spatial or temporal restrictions into considerations. It is also important to point out that the subtitled dialogue in video games, especially for PC or console games do not typically follow the same restrictions of subtitles in movies or televised series. For instance, Valerie Pellatt, Eric T. Liu, and Yalta Ya-Yun Chen (2014, 161-162) point out that the subtitles of video games tend to contain several times more text than those used in standard AVT and observed how in *Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty* (Blizzard Entertainment, 2010), there was room for 65 full-width Chinese characters, compared to the standard 14-16 Chinese characters per line. As Chinese characters are double byte, this would be the equivalent of 130 characters per line for European languages, which is around four times greater than standard limits for subtitle translation. The authors (ibid) speculate that these more relaxed restrictions can be linked to the fact that players sit closer to the screens than the audiences of movies or televised shows. Regardless, this mode working in a concise way, even when there are no given specific character limits, can be possible when experienced linguists have internalised such practices. However, it is also possible for some projects to include more stringent restrictions, especially if the games are to be released on mobile platforms. Nevertheless, this project does not focus on temporal or spatial restrictions nor include character limits. The style guide also specifies that the linguists should respect the spirit and tone of the wuxia genre, and therefore use suitable translations which can highlight

its cultural significance. In relation to dialogue, the linguists were instructed to promote a clear and coherent style but were also instructed to promote authenticity and respect the cultural and historical elements of the source materials.

The localisation kit included a list of influential games that can be used as reference materials. The team responsible for Chinese to English translations at Keywords Studios indicated that it was a normal practice for Chinese developers to provide a list of influential games for various reasons, which can relate to the game being part of a new franchise and therefore having limited access to existing materials, or that there was not enough time to gain access to and play the original game. This is so the linguists can gain a better understanding of the direction and tone of the game without being able to play it, or access audio-visual materials. In essence, while the linguists do not have any direct audio-visual or interactive context of the game in this setting, they can still gain this context from secondary sources, which they may have also worked on as professional linguists or may have played as gamers. This is therefore another step that can be used to prevent blind contextless localisation, despite only working with a game text.

However, it must be observed that this localisation kit (including the ST) does not represent every foreseeable scenario in every possible type of localisation and is specific to the partial localisation of a first chapter of a wuxia RPG and follows the scenario that this was a new franchise, and that the developer had not granted access to the game. From the perspective of this researcher, the ST, the localisation kit, and the scenario were all familiar, and representative of a considerable body of video game translation and review work personally conducted for over a period of a decade for various agencies; however, this cannot be considered academically objective. As such, it is important to factor in that the text was created by a professional writer, and that the localisation kit was created by a localisation agency. Moreover, to further underscore how this scenario compared to other projects carried out by the eight professional linguists involved in this case study, towards the end of the interviews (see 3.3.7 below), an additional question was asked regarding whether the linguists felt that the project in general, including the wuxia text and the localisation process was like other wuxia projects on which they have worked. While this question was not directly related to the research questions, it was included in case questions were ever raised about the generalisability of this case study. Thus, as included in Appendix D, all linguists confirmed that it was either the same as, or mostly similar to other wuxia projects, and one linguist (Reviewer 1) elaborated further and stated that it was not just like a wuxia project, but also applicable to other genres ‘I think

it's similar to most of the projects that I've come across so far'. This does not mean that every linguist working for every agency will have the same experience, but at least it can be clarified that it was representative of a real project to the eight professional linguists working at Keywords Studios on this project, as well as this researcher, who has worked for several agencies including Keywords Studios.

In terms of the theory of norms in translation, the localisation kit would represent the genesis of the preliminary norm, that determines the directness of translation. Moreover, in terms of skopos theory, it would represent the commission, which would determine the overall skopos of the project. The translations were completed, and reviewed within the space of five days, which the agency suggested as a typical timeframe for a project of this size, before being returned. As this research is primarily concerned with socio-cultural phenomena relating to the translation of CSIs, the methodological focus was placed more upon the analysis of translation data, and interview data. However, it is also important to highlight that this partial localisation project followed a set of procedures, which were carried out over 13 steps. This included the debriefing of project managers, who set up the projects on memoQ, which included individual TMs and TBs for the four teams, distributing the client briefs, providing approximately two days for the initial translation, two days for the review, and additional time for facilitating communications, and collecting the completed translations. While these are essential steps in localisation, they were not the focus of this study, but have been recorded and placed in Appendix E for reference. Furthermore, one sample translation has been included in Appendix B for additional context.

3.3.3 Categorisation of Strategies and Approaches from Translation Data

To address the first part of the first research question regarding how the CSIs were translated, the translations were analysed in relation to the ST and coded using thematic analysis. This involved becoming familiar with the materials, and then conducting a coding stage. All 13 types of CSIs were initially coded based on translation strategies. They were then further coded based on the norm concepts of source culture adequate, and target culture acceptable. To echo what has been covered in 2.3.1.2, these concepts have not been created in this study, and belong to Toury's (1995) theory of norms in translation, relating to the initial norm that determines the cultural approach used in translation, which can then be connected to the matricial norms, which determine the translation strategies. In other words, the translation strategies (linked to matricial norms) are then linked to the general cultural approaches (initial norm). Once completed, the

codes were evaluated to see if they needed to be combined or revised. The section below provides three examples of how the strategies and approaches were coded.

Team 1 Translation	English TT:
四神粥	Four Gods' Porridge.
Initial coding: the term was literally translated so it was coded as <i>literal translation</i> .	
Elaboration of codes: this strategy was coded as belonging to the <i>source culture adequate</i> approach as per the theory of norms in translation.	
Evaluation of higher order codes: after the evaluation, this order remained unchanged.	

Table 3.7 Example 1: Source culture adequate approach

Team 1 Translation	English TT:
大婶	ma'am
Initial coding: this term (category of <i>Variable Terms of Address</i>) is comprised of two Chinese characters which literally mean aunt, as in either (i) the wife of your father's eldest younger brother, or (ii) a polite term of address used for woman younger than one's mother – in this instance it was the later. As such, the term was rendered with generalisation via hypernym. This involved selecting a superordinate at a higher level, which was less specific and more general than the ST term.	
Elaboration of codes: this strategy was coded as belonging to the <i>target culture acceptable</i> approach as per the theory of norms in translation.	
Evaluation of higher order codes: after the evaluation, this order remained unchanged.	

Table 3.8 Example 2: Target culture acceptable approach

Team 1 Translation	English TT:
紫金山庄	Zijin Villa
Initial coding: two strategies were used in the translation of the same CSI (category of <i>Places</i>). They were (i) <i>borrowing</i> , which involved the transcription of Chinese into English for the first two characters, resulting in Zijin, and (ii) generalisation via hypernym for the second two characters, which literally meant mountain retreat, but were rendered as villa, which is a superordinate.	
Elaboration of codes: borrowing fits source culture adequate approach, whereas generalisation, fits the target culture acceptable approach.	
Memo: Interesting. A source culture adequate approach (borrowing) is being used alongside a target culture acceptable approach (generalisation) for the same CSI. This dual-strategy approach provides an exotic yet comprehensible effect.	

Evaluation of higher order codes: the combination of two different micro strategies from two different macro approaches used to render an individual CSI were combined into a new normative approach: *source and target culture mixed*.

Table 3.9 Example 3: Source and target culture mixed approach

This resulted in the emergence of 19 translation strategies (referred to as *strategies*) that align within five *approaches*, which correspond with the norm concepts of source culture adequate, target culture acceptable, and in some instances, simultaneously both concepts. These strategies and approaches will be defined and explained in the results and analysis chapter (4.1).

3.3.4 Measuring Normative Strength of Cultural Approaches

Having established how the CSIs were translated in terms of strategies and cultural approaches, focus shifted to the second part of the first research question, relating to the existence of patterns of translation behaviour. As such, a scale was required to measure the strength of any observable cultural translation behaviour generated by the group of linguists, in other words, the normative strength of the approaches used to translate the CSIs. Thus, a norm scale, was utilised (see table 3.10 below) for the weighting, comparison, and evaluation of the various approaches used by the linguists. Moreover, it indicated the strength of the norms from weaker idiosyncrasies to norms, and then up to rules, based on the framework devised by Toury (1995, 55), as covered in 2.3.1.1, but with differentiation between weaker norms, moderate norms, and stronger norms, which sat between idiosyncrasies and rules, to provide a more detailed range of data, and granular analysis. This was based on the percentages of usage, by the linguists, of each translation strategy which aligned with a cultural approach, in connection to individual categories of the CSIs. The scale utilised the following measurements.

Strength of norm	Utilisation of same approach
Idiosyncrasies	1 – 24%
Weak norms	25 – 49%
Moderate norms	50 – 74%
Strong norms	75 – 99%
Rules	100%

Table 3.10 Norm scale

3.3.5 Normative Analysis of Translation Data

To analyse the norm data, tables were constructed to show the normative strength of each approach in relation to each category of CSI. The example below (table 3.11) is for the CSI

category of *Fictional Characters*, and is also present in section 4.3.1.1, where it has been fully analysed as part of the final results. There were three entries for this CSI (each was the name of a character in the game), and each entry was translated by a translator and reviewed by a reviewer. As such, the tables indicate the CSI entries, the teams, the final translations after the review process, as well as the strategy, the approach, and the normative strength of the final translation, as shown below:

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
程儿	1	Cheng'er	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Cheng'er			
	3	Cheng-Er			
	4	Young Apprentice	Explicitation		
睿儿	1	Rui'er	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Rui Er			
	3	Rui'er			
	4	Zirui			
小虎	1	Xiaohu	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Xiao Hu			
	3	Xiaohu			
	4	My son (to) Xiaohu	Explicitation (to) borrowing		

Table 3.11 Example 1: Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for fictional characters

The first entry in table 3.11 was for the translation of the name of character 程儿 (Cheng'er), and was translated by Translator One as Cheng'er. The table indicates that this involved the strategy of borrowing, which is aligned with the source culture adequate approach, and this contributed to the normative strength of a rule, as did most of the initial translations. However, for the third entry 小虎 (Xiao Hu), team four initially translated it as 'My son', which involved the strategy of explicitation, which also aligned with the source culture adequate approach, but during the review it was changed to 'Xiao Hu', which involved borrowing, which was source culture centric. As both term and strategy were changed, they have been highlighted to indicate differences between initial and final translations, but as both strategies were source culture adequate, the final approach was not highlighted. Moreover, the strength of the norm attached to the source culture adequate approach, remained at 100%, and was still a rule.

Tables showing normative strengths of approaches used for all 13 categories of CSIs have been placed in section 4.3 of the results and analysis chapter. This aided the analysis of patterns of cultural translation behaviour and indicated the strength of the norms attached to this behaviour. As in table 3.11, any changes between initial translation and the final reviewed version were highlighted to shed more light on how these CSI were translated; however, importance is placed on the final versions of the translations. This analysis addressed the first research question of how do linguists translate CSIs and are there any patterns? Additionally, the full set of raw data relating to the strategies, approaches used by translators and reviewers in relation to the CSI entries, and corresponding statistical norm data has been placed in Appendix D for reference.

3.3.6 Questionnaires

After addressing the first research question, focus shifted to investigating the research question of why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors? The literature review demonstrated how scholars have utilised Bourdieusian theory to explain the reasons behind translation approaches (see 2.5), and that this was developed into the framework known as the translatorial habitus by Simeoni (1998) (see 2.5.5). Thus, to utilise this translatorial habitus framework, which focuses more on the concept of habitus, as a strategy generating mechanism, it was also necessary to first account for the role that social fields play in the shaping of the habitus, which has been referred to as the plotting of social trajectories. As such, the linguists answered a questionnaire, aimed at revealing the fields in which they have been socialised in relation to video game localisation.

It comprised six questions. Five were closed, and linked to educational background, gaming experience, professional training, professional experience, as well as age, and there was one open question regarding motivation for working in the field. This information has been used to contextualise the responses the linguists made in the interviews (see 3.3.6 below) in relation to the approaches used for the CSIs, in other words – further establish the habitus of the linguists. The questions were as follows:

1. What is your educational background?
2. What translation or localisation training have you received?
3. When did you start working in this field?
4. For how many years have you been playing games?
5. Why have you selected to work in the field of game translation/localisation?

The responses have been placed in section 4.4.1 of the results and analysis, where they can provide deeper socio-cultural context to the interview questions results.

3.3.7 Interviews

The linguists were interviewed to learn the reasons behind the approaches used for the categories of CSIs and reveal the influence of any socio-cultural factors. While consideration was given to using Brownlie's (2003) categories of multicausality, derived from the observations of a corpus of text, as utilised by He (see 2.5.2.3) to explain normative translation behaviour, it was decided that using predefined categories of reasoning would be too prescriptive, and it would be better to allow categories of socio-cultural reasoning to emerge naturally from the data. This research involved semi-structured interviews, in which the linguists were asked how they approached the translation or review each category of CSI, and why they utilised certain approaches. For example, in relation to the CSI category of *Names of Characters*, translators were asked:

What is your usual approach for the translation of character names? What about the translation of 程儿, 睿儿, and 小虎 in this project?

The first part of the question was related to the general CSI category, and the second part, which was asked directly after the first part, included prompts. These prompts varied based on initial responses and were used to help jog the memory of the linguists and elicit more accurate responses. This was to help link the entries to the categories, as the linguists were not aware of how the CSIs had been categorised, and because the interviews took place approximately two months after the translation stage, as the translations needed to be analysed and coded before the interviews took place. After the translators provided information relating to specific translation strategies or approaches, they were asked the follow up question of 'why?' to further reveal any socio-cultural reasoning if it had not been included in the initial response. The specific questions relating to the 13 categories were as follows:

1. What is your usual approach for the translation of character names? What about the translation of 程儿, 睿儿, and 小虎 in this project? (Why?)
2. What is your usual approach for the translation of fictional sects? What about the translation of 武当派, 少林派, 丐帮 and 峨眉派 in this project? (Why?)

3. What is your usual approach for the translation of fixed terms of address used to refer to roles or professions? What about the translation of 师父 and 老板娘 in this project? (Why?)
4. What is your usual approach for the translation of variable terms of address used to refer to characters, for instance, in Chinese, NPCs would refer to your character in different ways based the way they relate to each other depending on factors such as age and position in society? What about ones such as 徒儿, 在下 and 少侠 in this project? (Why?)
5. What is your usual approach for the translation of place names? What about the ones in this project such as 紫金山庄? (Why?)
6. What is your usual approach to the translation of food items? What about 四神粥 in this project? (Why?)
7. What is your usual approach for the translation of medicine items? What about 金疮药 and 惊风散 in this project? (Why?)
8. What is your usual approach for the translation of other items such as currency, like 文钱? (Why?)
9. What is your usual approach for the translation of the names of historical figures? What about 明宪宗, 万贵妃, and 汪直 from this project? (Why?)
10. What is your usual approach for the translation the names of historical organisations? What about 西厂, 锦衣卫, and 东厂 in this project? (Why?)
11. What is your usual approach to the translation of terms that refer to martial arts society such as 武林, 江湖, 下山, and 行侠仗义? Was it any different for this project? (Why?)
12. What is your usual approach to the translation of terms that refer to energies in martial arts? What about 气血, 内息, and 内力 in this project? (Why?)
13. What is your usual approach to the translation of terms relating to martial arts skills and moves? What about 武当长拳, 内家功夫, 太极拳, 【怀中抱月】, 打坐, 把个脉, and 轻功 from this project? (Why?)

14. What are the usual challenges of the translation stage for this type of project? Was there anything specifically challenging about this project? (Why?)

15. Are there other things about the translation stage that you would like to raise?

The reviewers were asked very similar questions in relation to the 13 categories of CSIs, but with slight variations. Instead of asking about the usual approach to translation, the focus was placed on usual approach for the review of certain types of CSIs. Thus, in relation to the same question for *Names of Characters*, the reviewers were asked:

What is your usual approach to the review of character names? What about the review of 程儿, 睿儿, and 小虎 in this project? Did you change any of the translations?

As with the translator questions, there were prompts, but the focus was more on the process of reviewing, which could include re-translation. After the responses were made, the follow up question of ‘why?’ was also used when needed to reveal any socio-cultural reasoning. Accordingly, different responses from both sets of linguists resulted in different follow-up questions. Thus, the evolving set of questions of the semi-structured approach provided the flexibility required to explore the reasons why various CSIs are handled in certain ways and reveal underlying socio-cultural factors. A transcript of one interview has been provided in Appendix F for reference. Furthermore, the interviews also included the question ‘Was this project different or similar to other wuxia projects?’; however, this was related more to the generalisability of methodological design, discussed separately in 3.3.2 above, and the data was included in Appendix I for reference.

3.3.8 Coding of Interview Data

The coding of the interview data was no less rigorous than that of the translation data and used a similar method of thematic analysis. However, this time categories were coded for the socio-cultural reasoning used by the linguists, which represent different aspects of the habitus of the linguists. The interviews were recorded, totalling 280 minutes of audio content, transcribed, resulting in 39,107 words, and then coded. After coding the interviews, four distinct categories of socio-cultural reasoning emerged: source culture centric, target culture centric, industry centric, and game centric. The examples below demonstrate how these categories of socio-cultural reasoning emerged from subcategories, and keywords, from within the transcripts:

Extracted from interview with Reviewer 1 in relation to the review of terms connected to sects:
Yeah, so these are already very established , whether in media like television shows or things like that, so, yeah, there are existing translations , so I take these existing translations ...
Initial coding: (i) established (ii) media (iii) television shows (iv) existing translations.
Elaboration of codes: (i) established, (ii) media, (iii) television show, and (iv) existing translations were all linked to the subcategory of <i>Practice: established translations</i> .
Memo: This indicates that the linguists are not only aware of established translations from of forms of media, they also actively rely on such translations.
Evaluation of higher order codes: All four subcategories aligned with the higher order code of <i>industry centric</i> reasoning.

Table 3.12 Example 3: Industry centric

Extracted from interview with Reviewer 2 in relation to the review of terms of food:
Then I realised that elixir is a kind of translation... it makes game sense as well because you want players to know this is a healing item , you can use this when you are low on health, so calling it an elixir would make perfect sense. So, that's how I landed on elixir.
Initial coding: (i) game sense, (ii) players, (iii) item, and (iv) use
Elaboration of codes: (i) game sense was linked to the subcategory of <i>interactivity</i> . (ii) players were linked to the subcategory of <i>players: people who play games</i> (iii) item was linked to the sub-factor of <i>game items</i> . Furthermore, (iv) use was also linked to the subcategory of <i>interactivity</i> .
Memo: The coining of game sense links with other concepts like functionality and interactivity. The linguists have this game sense, as they are also gamers
Evaluation of higher order codes: All four subcategories aligned with the higher order code of <i>game centric</i> reasoning.

Table 3.13 Example 4: Game centric

3.3.9 Analysis of Interview Transcript Data

This resulted in the emergence of 26 subcategories (see 4.5.2), which were evaluated into a higher order of four main categories of socio-cultural reasoning (see 4.5.2.5). To analyse this data, tables were constructed to indicate which categories of socio-cultural reasoning were referenced the most in the responses the linguists made in the interviews in relation to the 13 categories of CSIs. The tables thus indicate how many of the eight linguists have referenced individual subcategories, and how the subcategories align with the main socio-cultural categories. One example, from section 4.7.1.1, is provided below, for *Fixed Terms of Address*:

Subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning (number of linguists)	Categories of socio-cultural reasoning (number of linguists)
Target audience (5) Linguistics: English language in general (5) Linguistics: sound of target language (3) Linguistics: comprehension (2)	Target culture centric (8)
Players (3) Games (3)	Game centric (5)
Practice: established translations (2)	Industry centric (2)
Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	Source culture centric (1)

Table 3.14 Example of categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for fixed terms of address

The left column indicates how many of the eight linguists referenced individual sub-categories, and the right column indicates how many of the eight linguists referenced the main categories of socio-cultural reasoning. In this instance, all eight linguists referenced the use of target culture-centric reasoning more than any other form of socio-cultural reasoning, and this was connected to the sub-categories of target audience, and three forms of linguistic factors. These tables have been used to demonstrate the different forms of socio-cultural reasoning used in connection with translation approaches that have been applied to the 13 categories of CSIs. The tables of all 13 categories have been presented and analysed in 4.4.3. This addressed the second research question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’ Furthermore, the full set of habitus data linking categories of CSIs to keywords, which were coded to subfactors, and then factors has been included in Appendix D for reference.

3.3.10 Investigate Links between Socio-cultural Reasoning and Translation Behaviour

Addressing the third research question of ‘what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?’ involved the construction of a narrative that explored the connections between categories of socio-cultural reasoning, representing the habitus of the linguists, with the translation approaches used for the CSIs, framed by the theory of norms in translation. This took the form of the discussion in chapter 5 and entailed in-depth examples, that have been theoretically underpinned with the framework of the translatorial habitus, as well as the functionalist theories of skopos theory, and UCT.

Chapter 4. Results and Analysis

This chapter presents the results and findings of the main stage. Sections 4.1 to 4.4 present data which addresses the first research question of ‘how do linguists translate CSIs, and are there any patterns?’. This includes a presentation of how the translation strategies, and approaches, that emerged from the translation stage fit together in a normative framework (4.1), a general analysis of the normative behaviour of the linguists (4.2), and a more specific analysis of normative behavior in relation to the 13 categories of CSIs over the course of the translation (4.3), and a summary of the links between the cultural approaches and categories of CSIs (4.4). Sections 4.5 to 4.8 present data related to the second research question of investigating ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’. This includes the presentation of social trajectory data and an overview of the categories of socio-cultural reasoning that might have guided the approaches used in the translations and reviews (4.5), an overview of the socio-cultural reasoning of the linguists (4.6), an analysis of how the categories of socio-cultural reasoning connected to the 13 categories of CSIs (4.7), and a summary of the links between the different categories of reasoning and CSIs (4.8). The chapter ends with a summary of the results and analysis (4.9).

4.1 Framework of Strategies and Approaches used in the Translation of CSIs

The results of the analysis showed that the 13 categories of CSIs, as defined in the methodology (3.2.4.1) were translated by using one of three approaches, based on the norm concepts of adequacy and acceptability, derived from the initial norm: source culture adequate, target culture acceptable, and source and target culture mixed. Each of the three approaches were derived from a larger collection of 19 translation strategies, and will be presented in the sections below. In terms of the theory of norms in translation, the strategies are the product of matricial norms, which have been shaped by the initial norms, which determine cultural approach, as governed by the preliminary norm, which was conveyed in the instructions of the client brief. Accordingly, strategies which reflected elements from the source culture were categorised as source culture adequate, and strategies that reflected the elements from the target culture were target culture acceptable. While many CSIs were translated using a single strategy, some which were longer phrases or more complex terms, involved the application of two strategies (dual-strategy approach). This resulted in some instances of CSIs being translated with either two source culture adequate or two target culture acceptable strategies; however, there were also instances where the dual approaches involved one strategy from each different cultural approach, and this resulted in the categorisation of the third hybrid approach – source and target

culture mixed. Thus, the section below presents the framework of how the nineteen strategies align with three approaches within a normative framework. Each approach and its strategies are defined, and explained below with examples taken from the translations.

4.1.1 Source Culture Adequate (Single Strategy)

These were single strategies observed in the translation of CSIs. As these strategies reflected elements of the source language, such as the way it was pronounced, or culture, in terms of how they have been framed, they have been aligned with the norms concept of source culture adequacy.

Borrowing: the transliteration of Chinese into pinyin – the phonetic representation of Chinese in English, which results in the same pronunciation as the source culture term. For example, the ST character name 程儿 (Cheng'er) was transliterated as 'Cheng'er'.

Literal: a literal (or direct) translation without any shifts. For instance, 四神粥 (literally: four gods porridge) was translated by one team as 'Four Gods' Porridge'.

Explicitation: rendering the meaning of a CSI, that is implicit to the source culture audience into something explicit to the target culture audience, by providing contextual information. For example, the ST character name 程儿 (Cheng'er) was translated as 'young apprentice', this renders the implicit relationship between the characters explicit.

4.1.1.1 Source Culture Adequate Mixed (Dual Strategy)

Different from the use of a single strategy, this dual-strategy approach involved using two different strategies that both aligned with the source culture adequate approach, but in different ways. It had the dual effect of providing context for the target audience with one strategy and created a foreignizing effect with the other. As both strategies aligned with the target culture adequate approach, this can be considered an extension of the target culture adequate approach.

Borrowing + Literal: borrowing is used on one part of the CSI and literal translation on another. For example, 骊山 (literally: black horse mountain) was translated as 'Mount Li'. The literal translation of 山 (mountain) resulted in 'Mount', provides geographical context, but the transliteration of 骊 (dark horse) as 'Li', obscures the meaning, but recreates the pronunciation of the source language, giving a sense that this belongs to a faraway land.

Borrowing + Explicitation: borrowing is used on one part of the CSI, and explicitation is used elsewhere for context. For example, the ST term for a place 回春堂 (literally:

rejuvenation hall) was rendered as ‘Huichun Medical Store’, where the Chinese word for rejuvenation was transliterated as ‘Huichun’, reflecting the sound of the source language at the expense of the meaning, and the word hall was rendered, via explication, as ‘Medical Store’, which provides the explicit medical context that a more direct translation of hall would not.

Explication + Literal: explication renders the implicit – explicit, and literal translation is used for additional context. For instance, the ST medicinal item term 僵蚕 (literally: stiff silkworm), was translated as ‘medicinal silkworm’, where 僵 (stiff) was translated as medicinal, thus rendering the medicinal context explicit, and 蚕 (silkworm) was translated literally.

4.1.2 Target Culture Acceptable (Single Strategy)

These approaches involved the use of single strategies on CSIs that would result in translations more recognisable to the target culture, and this aligns with the norm concept of target culture acceptable.

Concretisation by Hyponym: translating a CSI which uses a more general term (hypernym), into a more specific term (hyponym) in the TT. For example, the ST interpersonal term of address 姑娘 (literally: girl) was translated as ‘lass’. This is more specific than girl and conveys both a regional and light archaic effect.

Generalisation by Hypernym: a more specific CSI (hyponym) is translated as a more general term (hypernym) for the purpose of target audience acceptance. For example, the currency of 文钱 (literally: money with writing on it), an ancient form of currency, was translated into the more general term of ‘Coins’.

Substitution by Sense Transfer: the substitution of a problematic CSI (due to lack of equivalence), resulting in a general transfer of sense, but with some cultural loss. For example, the Energies term of 气血 (literally: inner power) was translated as ‘Health’, as this transfers the sense but at the cost of the original form.

Omission: the removal of a problematic CSI (due to redundancy, the lack of cultural equivalence, or to preserve brevity). For example, the name of the character 小虎 (Xiaohu) appeared twice in one section of dialogue, and one instance was omitted in the translation, which reduces redundancy.

4.1.2.1 Target Culture Acceptable Mixed (Dual Strategy)

This involved simultaneously using two strategies both aligned with the target culture acceptable approach. While each strategy conveyed something different, this is still categorised as an extension of the target culture acceptable approach.

Substitution by Sense Transfer + Concretisation by hyponym: one component of the CSI is rendered via substitution, where the sense is conveyed but with some cultural loss, and another component is rendered in using a more specific term in the TT. For instance, the ST term of 四神粥 (literally: Four God Porridge, where the four gods refer to four medicinal herbs) was translated by one team as ‘herbal congee’. Four gods refers to the four herbs, and the translation of herbal conveys this sense, but with the loss of the reference to gods, and congee is a specific type of porridge, which involves concretisation.

Substitution by Sense Transfer + Omission: the sense of one component of the CSI is transferred to the TT term, and another is omitted. For example, the TC term 内息 (meaning inner breath as a form of energy) was translated as ‘energy’. This involved omitting the first character, which meant inner, and conveying the sense of the second character.

Omission + Concretisation by hyponym: one component of the CSI is omitted, and another is translated as a more specific term in the TT. For example, the ST term of 金疮药 (literally: metal wound medicine) was translated by one team as ‘medicinal salve’, which involved omitting the first two characters, which meant ‘metal wound’, and then providing a more specific translation of the third character, which meant ‘medicine’.

4.1.3 Source and Target Culture Mixed (Dual Strategy)

This hybrid approach straddled both normative concepts of source culture adequate, and target culture acceptable, but has not been observed in previous normative studies. It involved the utilisation of two different strategies, where one is aligned with the norm concept of source culture adequacy and the other is aligned with target culture acceptability. This has the effect of pulling the translation of a CSI in two different cultural directions, and as with the source culture adequate mixed dual strategy, often manages to simultaneously reflect something of the source culture, as well as providing critical context in terms of the target culture.

Borrowing + Generalisation by Hypernym: the transliteration of part of a CSI into pinyin, and the use of generalisation by hypernym elsewhere. For example, the ST term for martial arts society 武林江湖 (the first two characters literally mean martial arts forest – which

refers to the martial arts world and its many inhabitants, and the second two characters mean rivers and lakes – which similarly refers to the martial arts community and the land it inhabits) was translated as ‘Jianghu, the martial arts world’. This involved transliterating 江湖 (rivers and lakes) as ‘Jianghu’, which is a source culture adequate approach, and then rendering 武林 (literally: martial arts forest) as ‘martial arts world’, which conveys the ST term in more general way, and is a target culture acceptable approach.

Borrowing + Concretisation by Hyponym: the transliteration of part of a CSI into pinyin, and the use of substitution by sense transfer elsewhere. For example, the ST term for a place 回春堂 (literally: rejuvenation hall) was translated as ‘Huichun Pharmacy’. This involved transliterating 回春 (rejuvenation) as ‘Huichun’, which is a source culture adequate approach, and then rendering 堂 (literally: hall) as ‘Pharmacy’, which is a more specific term than hall, providing more specific TT term, which is a target culture acceptable approach.

Borrowing + Omission: the transliteration of part of a CSI into pinyin, and then omitting other parts (due to redundancy, the lack of cultural equivalence, or to preserve brevity). For instance, the ST martial arts style term 太极拳 (literally: tai chi fist) was translated as ‘Tai Chi’, without any mention of fist.

Literal + Generalisation by Hypernym: one part of a CSI is translated literally, and another is translated with strategy of generalisation by hypernym. This renders the ST component in a more general and therefore acceptable way for the target audience. For instance, the ST interpersonal term of 少侠 (literally: young knight) was rendered as ‘young man’, where 少 (young) was literally translated as ‘young’, and 侠 (knight) was generalised to ‘man’.

Literal + Substitution by Sense Transfer: one part of a CSI is translated literally, and another is translated with the strategy of substitution by sense transfer. For example, the ST interpersonal term of 少侠 (literally: young knight) was also rendered as ‘young master’, where 少 (young) was literally translated as ‘young’, and 侠 (knight/hero) was substituted for ‘master’, which still conveys a similar sense of respect, but loses the connotations of heroism.

Literal + Omission: one part of a CSI is translated literally, and another is omitted. For instance, the term 内力 (literally: inner energy) was translated as ‘energy’. In this instance, the first character was omitted, and the second character was translated literally.

This taxonomy of strategies and approaches is visualised below. It bears some resemblance to the taxonomy created by Pedersen (2005), as covered in 2.1.3.2. However, where Pedersen utilises a Venutian scale, which places individual strategies on a continuum that stretches between the concepts of foreignizing and domesticating approaches, also adopted by Pettini (2022), this study adopted the cultural terminology of Toury’s normative framework. Thus, as shown in the figure below, strategies, representing the matricial norms are grouped in relation to the cultural concepts of source culture adequate and target culture acceptable, which represent the initial norm in Toury’s framework. Source culture adequate strategies are located to the left, and target culture acceptable strategies are located to the right. The hybrid source and target culture mixed approaches however, which draws from both concepts, are placed in the middle ground:

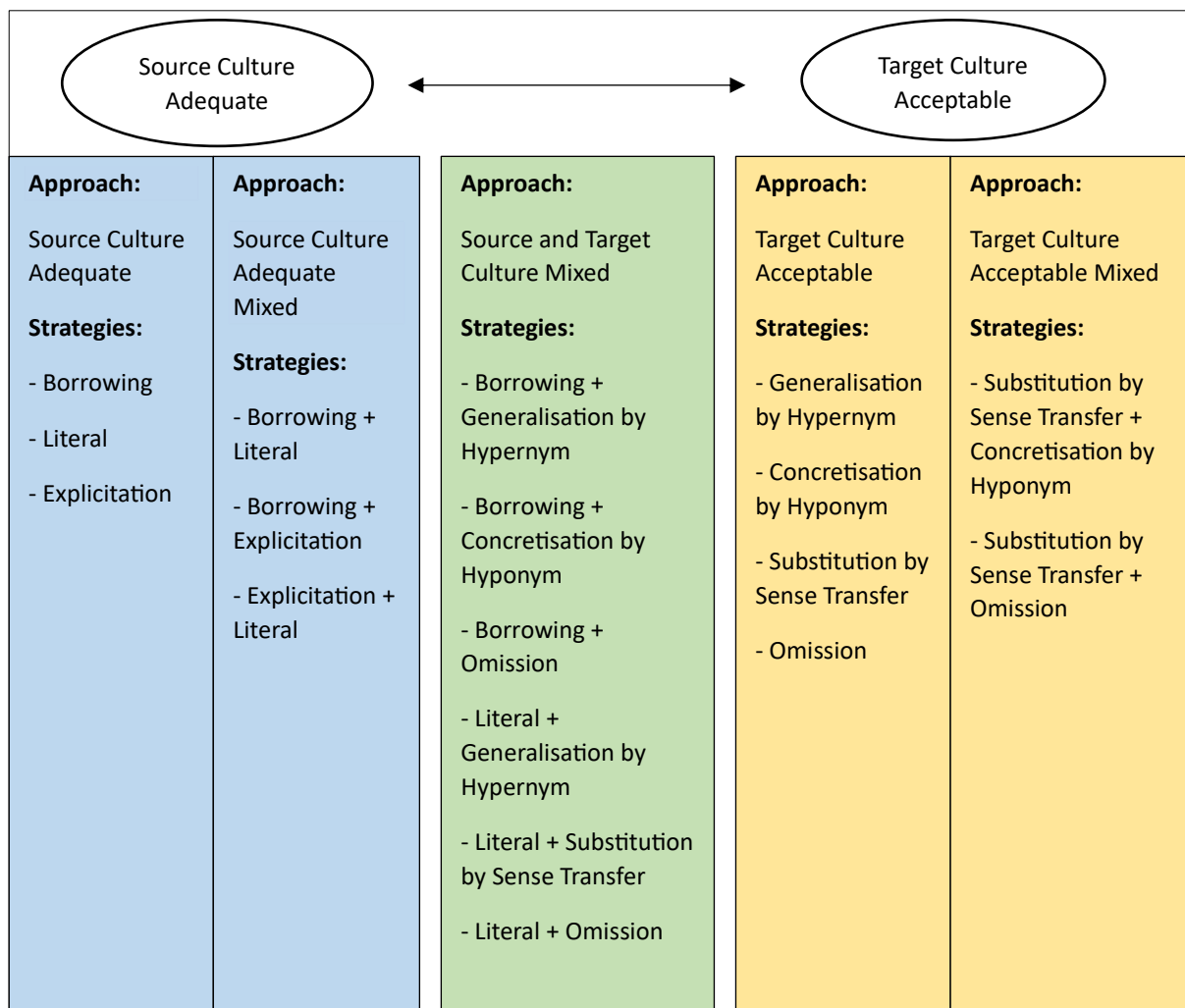


Figure 4.1 Framework of Strategies and Approaches

Where a Venutian scale generally categorises strategies such as borrowing and literal translation as stronger application of foreignization, and explicitation, as being a weaker usage of foreignization, and strategies such as generalisation as being a weaker domesticating approach than the strategy of omission, the strategies are still placed closer to one of the culturally dichotic concepts. This research acknowledges that in a Venutian scale, individual translation strategies can be placed between two culturally dichotic concepts, and that some strategies are depicted leaning more towards stronger or weaker applications, but it is still the case that individual strategies will still lean more towards one cultural approach than the other, and that none are traditionally depicted at sitting exactly between the two cultural concepts. Due to the utilisation of the theory of norms in translation, the framework pictured above focuses on how individual strategies are more connected to these general normative cultural concepts. Moreover, this can be based on a range of effects, that are hard to measure, such as the way a transliteration is pronounced, the directness of translation, the inclusion of explicitation, the application of a generalisation, or even an omission. For these reasons, a Venutian scale has not been used. However, the inclusion of dual strategies has resulted in a third hybrid approach, which simultaneously engages with both cultural concepts.

4.2 Analysis of General Normative Behaviour

This section reports the normative results, before moving onto a more detailed analysis of approaches used for individual categories of CSIs. Having established a framework of strategies and approaches (4.1), it was possible to use a norm scale (see 3.3.3) to measure the strengths of norms connected to the application of different approaches used to translate the CSIs, as described in 3.3.4. Thus, table 4.1 below indicates the strength of the normative approaches used in both the initial translation stage, and in the final reviewed translation stage.

While the final reviewed translations were the most important, it was also important to show how they sometimes differed from the initial translations, to better highlight the role played by the reviewers and any socio-cultural factors that may prompt such changes. For ease of reference, in the table below, the categories primarily translated with *source culture adequate* approaches have been shaded blue, those primarily translated with *target culture acceptable* approaches have been shaded orange, those primarily translated with the *source and target culture mixed* approach have been shaded green, and those with no single dominant approach have been shaded grey. The differences in cultural approaches for the initial translations and the final reviewed translations are indicated by an underline in the final review translation column. Furthermore, the number under each CSI represents the number of times this category

has been translated. Thus, for *Fictional Characters*, there were 3 entries, and they were translated by 4 teams, meaning there were 12 final translations.

CSIs	Initial Translation + strength of norms	Final Reviewed Translation strength of norms
Fictional Characters (12)	Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)	Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)
Fictional Sects (16)	Source Culture Adequate: 81.25% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 18.75% (idiosyncrasy)	<u>Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)</u>
Historical Figures (12)	Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)	Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)
Traditional Chinese Medicine (20)	Source Culture Adequate: 80% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy) Target Culture Acceptable: 5% (idiosyncrasy)	Source Culture Adequate: 80% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy) Target Culture Acceptable: 5% (idiosyncrasy)
Historical Organisations (12)	Source Culture Adequate: 66% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 33% (weak)	Source Culture Adequate: 66% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 33% (weak)
Moves and Skills (20)	Source Culture Adequate: 65% (moderate) Target Culture Acceptable: 20% (idiosyncrasy) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy)	Source Culture Adequate: 65% (moderate) Target Culture Acceptable: 20% (idiosyncrasy) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy)
Fixed Terms of Address (12)	Source Culture Adequate: 41.6% (weak) Target Culture Acceptable: 33.3% (weak) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)	Source Culture Adequate: 41.6% (weak) Target Culture Acceptable: 33.3% (weak) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)
Martial Arts Society (8)	Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) Source Culture Adequate: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy)	Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) Source Culture Adequate: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy)
Currency (4)	Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)	Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)

Variable Terms of Address (36)	Target Culture Acceptable: 72.2% (moderate) Source Culture Adequate: 22.2 (idiosyncrasy) Source and Target Culture Mixed: 5.6% (idiosyncrasy)	<u>Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong)</u> <u>Source Culture Adequate: 19.4% (idiosyncrasy)</u> Source and Target Culture Mixed: 5.6% (idiosyncrasy)
Food (4)	Target Culture Acceptable: 50% (moderate) Source Culture Adequate: 50% (moderate)	Target Culture Acceptable: 50% (moderate) <u>Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)</u> <u>Source Culture Adequate: 25% (weak)</u>
Places (16)	Source and Target Culture Mixed: 62.5% (moderate) Source Culture Adequate: 31.25% (weak) Target Culture Acceptable: 6.25% (idiosyncrasy)	Source and Target Culture Mixed: 62.5% (moderate) Source Culture Adequate: 31.25% (weak) Target Culture Acceptable: 6.25% (idiosyncrasy)
Energies (16)	Source and Target Culture Mixed: 43.75% (weak) Source Culture Adequate: 37.5% (weak) Target Culture Acceptable: 18.5% (idiosyncrasy)	Source Culture Adequate: 37.5% (weak) <u>Target Culture Acceptable: 37.5% (weak)</u> <u>Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)</u>

Table 4.1 Norm strength of approaches in relation to CSI categories

The strength of norms across the 13 categories of CSIs ranged from idiosyncrasies to rules. However, the results showed the presence of moderate norms to rule like normative behaviour in the translation of most of the categories of CSIs, indicating strong patterns of similar translation behaviour in the final translations. As such, three categories were subject to rules, and these were *Fictional Characters*, *Fictional Sects*, and *Historical Figures*, which were all translated by source culture adequate approaches. Five categories were mostly subject to strong norms, and these were *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Historical Organisations*, which were both primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches, and *Martial Arts Society*, *Currency*, and *Variable Terms of Address*, which were primarily translated with target culture acceptable approaches. Three categories were mostly subject to moderate norms, which were *Moves and Skills*, which was primarily source culture adequate, *Food*, which was mostly target culture acceptable, and *Places*, which was primarily source and target culture mixed. However, only two categories were mostly subject to weaker norms, which were *Fixed Terms of Address*, which was most often translated with source culture adequate approaches, and *Energies*, which was equally linked to source culture adequate and target culture acceptable

approaches. While idiosyncrasies did exist, they represented more isolated approaches used by the minority of linguists.

There was very little difference in strength of norms between the initial translations and the reviewed translation. This indicated a high utilisation of shared approaches between the translators and reviewers regarding how to translate and review various types of CSIs at the agency level (which includes all eight linguists) as reflected in the final reviewed translations. In other words, there were highly similar patterns of cultural approaches in relation to the 13 categories of CSIs. This indicated a strong level of understanding and consistency at the agency level. While table 4.1 indicates that the reviewers made some changes to the initial translations in the final revised translation, this only involved making minimal changes to approaches used in 4 of the 13 categories of CSIs. In two of these instances, the normative strength of the dominant approaches was further strengthened in the review, as seen for *Fictional Characters*, and *Variable Terms of Address*. However, in the case of *Food*, the normative strengths of the approaches were not changed by the alterations of the reviewers, and for *Energies*, the normative strengths decreased due to reviewer action. Despite these minimal differences, which demonstrate how similarly the translators and reviewers approach the CSIs, the linguists will primarily be regarded as a singular group at the agency level. Furthermore, while each of the four teams included a project manager, only the reviewers made any changes to the initial translations. While the project managers checked the translations, there were no recorded changes, as such, they cannot be included within the group of linguists, as they have not directly worked on any of the CSIs.

The chart below (Figure 4.2) depicts the results from the final reviewed translation column of table 4.1 but provides an easier visualisation of the overall pattern of translation behaviour across all 13 categories – as well as how the CSI categories are linked with the three different cultural approaches. It shows that there was a general tendency to use more source culture adequate approaches for seven categories of CSIs, target culture acceptable approaches for four categories, source and target culture mixed for one category, and approaches of equal strength for one category.

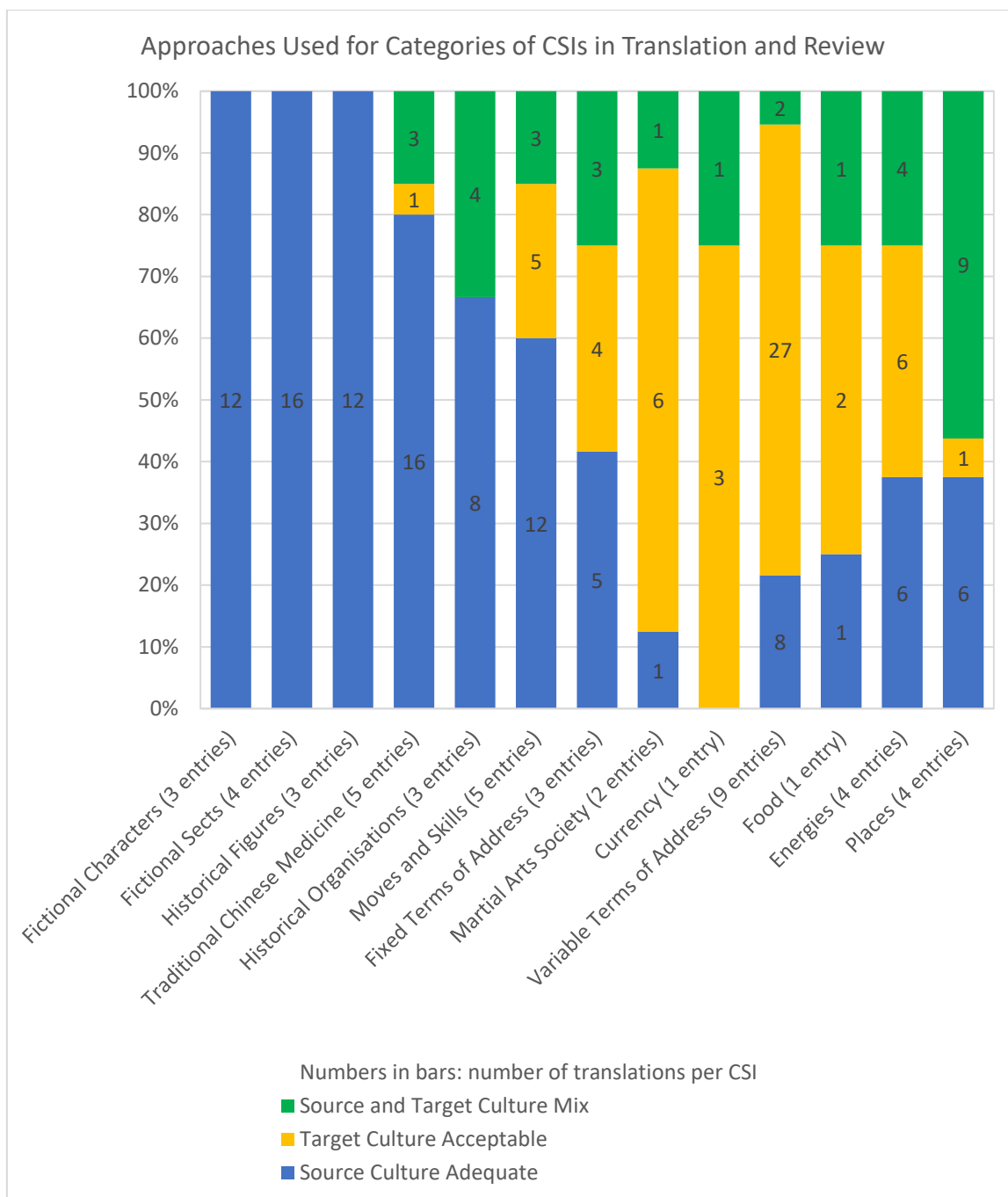


Figure 4.2 Approaches Used for Categories of CSIs

Thus, the first bar on the left is for the initial translation of *Fictional Characters*, which contains the number twelve, meaning there were twelve translations in total (three entries translated by four teams). The translations all utilised strategies that aligned with the source culture adequate approach, which therefore has the normative strength of a rule.

Having established the presence of strong patterns of translation behaviour in terms of cultural approaches on a general level, it is necessary to provide a finer grained analysis,

focusing on the dominant approaches used for individual categories of CSIs, which can reveal if certain patterns of translation behaviour manifest in relation to specific categories of CSIs.

4.3 Analysis of Approaches Used in Relation to Individual Categories of CSIs

The strategies and the way they align with the cultural approaches are integral components of this research, each worthy of attention; however, the CSIs were the catalyst of the resulting strategies and approaches. Each category of CSI had its own unique features and challenges, which resulted in the linguists utilising different sets of strategies and approaches. Accordingly, this analysis will feature all 13 categories of CSIs, and will provide key examples that exemplify the most relevant trends, and phenomena of interest.

Furthermore, while most categories of CSIs were translated using a collection of approaches, the following sections will present the CSI categories in relation to the most dominant approaches used in their translation, as this can better underscore how similar patterns of translation behaviour can occur across certain categories. Therefore, the CSIs which utilise more source culture adequate approaches will be analysed first, followed by target culture acceptable, source and target culture mixed, and then finally categories with no single dominant approach. Additionally, the categories will be covered in sequence of highest normative strengths in relation to the cultural approaches, which corresponds with the order in table 4.1 and figure 4.2.

4.3.1 CSIs Primarily Translated with Source Culture Adequate Approaches

To echo 4.2, seven categories of CSIs were primarily translated with the source culture adequate approach, which represented the highest number of categories linked to any approach. Three categories were translated this way with the strength of rule-like norms, two by strong norms, one by a moderate norm, and one by a weaker norm. No other approach was subject to such high normative strengths, or any rule-like norms.

4.3.1.1 Fictional Characters

There were three entries for this category, which comprises the names of the main character and other NPCs that inhabit this fictional virtual world, set in the Ming Dynasty (368-1644 CE) of China. The utilisation of source culture adequate approaches for this category was so high that it had normative strength of a rule.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
程儿	1	Cheng'er	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Cheng'er			
	3	Cheng-Er			
	4	Young Apprentice	Explication		
睿儿	1	Rui'er	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Rui Er			
	3	Rui'er			
	4	Zirui			
小虎	1	Xiaohu	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate 100% (rule)
	2	Xiao Hu			
	3	Xiaohu			
	4	My son (to) Xiaohu	Explication (to) borrowing		

Table 3.11 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for fictional characters

It was found that all three entries were translated using single strategies that aligned with the source culture adequate approach. This was primarily due to the utilisation of the strategy of borrowing, in which the Chinese was transliterated into English. This can be seen in the way in which 程儿 (Cheng'er) was transliterated as Cheng'er, and 睿儿 (Rui'er) was transliterated as Rui'er. Borrowing is arguably the most foreignizing of all the strategies, as it forgoes any sense of meaning in the target culture to reproduce the pronunciation of the source language. In the initial translation stage, borrowing was used for 83% of the entries across all four teams. However, a change was made during the review stage, as highlighted in orange in table 4.2. The entry of 小虎 (Xiaohu), which had been translated via explication as 'my son,' was changed to 'Xiaohu', via the strategy of borrowing. Due to this intervention, the utilisation of borrowing was increased to 91% across all entries in the final versions. This change improved consistency at the agency level (meaning across the four teams), as it corresponded with both the dominant cultural approach, and with the most used individual strategy of borrowing. Furthermore, it indicates the presence of ingrained normative behaviour, as mentioned in 3.3.1.1, the four teams were instructed to work individually, and no team was permitted to discuss any aspects of the translation with the other teams.

4.3.1.2 Fictional Sects

This category had four entries, which were the names of fictional martial arts sects taken from wuxia fiction. While the norm strength of the source culture adequate approach was strong for the initial translation, in the reviewed translation, it grew in strength to a rule-like norm.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
武当派	1	Wudang Sect	Borrowing + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	- Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)
	2	Wudang Sect			
	3	Wudang Sect			
	4	Wudang (to) Wudang Sect	Borrowing + Omission (to) Borrowing + literal	Source and Target Culture Mixed (to) Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
少林派	1	Shaolin Sect	Borrowing + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	2	Shaolin Sect			
	3	Shaolin Sect			
	4	Shaolin (to) Shaolin Sect	Borrowing + Omission (to) Borrowing + literal	Source and Target Culture Mixed (to) Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
丐帮	1	Beggars' Sect	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Beggars' Sect			
	3	Beggar's Sect			
	4	Beggars' Sect			
峨眉派	1	Emei Sect	Borrowing + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	2	Emei Sect			
	3	Emei Sect			
	4	Emei (to) Emei Sect	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing + literal	Source and Target Culture Mixed (to) Source Culture Adequate Mixed	

Table 4.3 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for fictional sects

The results show that the final translations were all source culture adequate, with a rule-like normative strength, and that this was primarily achieved by source culture adequate dual strategies. The most common dual strategy for this CSI was borrowing with literal translation, in which both strategies belonged to the source culture adequate approach. It was found that instead of using one strategy that conveys a single aspect of the source language, such as the pronunciation or its meaning, the translation conveyed multiple aspects, resulting in markedly different effects than those seen in the usage of the single application of a strategy such as borrowing, or literal translation. For example, teams one, two, and four, all utilised this approach, which resulted in the translation of ‘Wudang Sect’, where the first two characters 武当 (Wudang), a reference to the Wudang Mountains, a real mountain range in the northwest of Hubei, China, and home to the fictional Wudang Sect from the wuxia novels of Louis Cha (1924-2018), were rendered in pinyin via borrowing, which recreated the authentic pronunciation of the Chinese term. Whereas the third character 派 (pai), which means sect, was translated literally, conveying the meaning without any cultural obscuration. This dual strategy had a twofold effect, where borrowing provided a foreignizing effect, with the authentic pronunciation of the Chinese term, and the literal translation provided the essential context, that would allow not only fans of the genre, but also a more general audience, to have a clearer understanding of the term. This same approach was used for two other entries, which resulted in 少林派 being translated as ‘Shaolin Sect’, and 峨眉派 being translated as ‘Emei Sect’.

The single strategy of literal translation was only used for the translations of 丐帮 (gai bang: Beggar’s Sect), where each character was literally translated into English. While the meaning of the words *beggar* and *sect* can be clearly understood in English, and are not individually culturally specific, the combination of these words to form a term that refers to a fictional group of heroic beggars who can also perform Chinese martial arts is not common knowledge in the target culture, who are mentioned in the client brief (Appendix A), were western and English-speaking gamers. Thus, like the single strategy of borrowing, literal translation can also convey one element of the source language. In this instance, the meaning is conveyed, but at the expense of the original pronunciation.

Figure 4.3 also indicates that three changes were made during the review stage, and this changed the final normative strength of the source culture adequate approach from a strong norm of 81.25% to a rule of 100%. The changes were all made in instances where *borrowing with omission* (a source and target culture mixed approach), were changed to the more dominant

normative approach of borrowing with literal translation, which is source culture adequate. As in the category of *Names of Characters*, these indicate a tendency where changes made by reviewers have the effect of improving consistency and the strength of the dominant norm at the agency level.

4.3.1.3 Historical Figures

With three entries, this category was for the names of renowned figures from the Ming Dynasty of Chinese history. Once more, the utilisation of source culture adequate approaches had the normative strength of a rule. However, this time, no changes were made during the review stage, meaning the initial translations all made it to the final versions.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
明宪宗	1	Emperor Ming	Explication + borrowing	Source Culture	- Source Culture Adequate: 100% (rule)
	2	Xianzong		Adequate	
	3			Mixed	
	4	Ming Xianzong, an emperor			
万贵妃	1	Wan Guifei	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Consort Wan	Explication + borrowing	Source Culture	
	3	Consort Wan		Adequate	
	4	Wan Zhen'er (later known as Consort Wan)		Mixed	
汪直	1	Wang Zhi	Borrowing	Source Culture	
	2			Adequate	
	3				
	4				

Table 4.4 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for historical figures

It was found that two of the three historical figures were primarily translated with dual strategies, which can reflect both the pronunciation of the source text, and context, but one was not. Further analysis of the source text and the surrounding sections showed that this could be due to the level of context provided in the text that accompanied these names. For the first entry of 明宪宗 (Ming Xianzong), and second entry 万贵妃 (Wan Guifei), the surrounding sections of source text did not provide any contextual information about the rank or title held by these individuals, who were both prominent historical figures in the Ming Dynasty, and would

therefore be common knowledge to the source culture audience. Therefore, it was necessary to render the implicit titles or ranks explicit for the target audience, for who this would not be common knowledge. However, for the third entry, 汪直 (Wang Zhi: a eunuch military commander), it was found that the information about his rank and title was already provided in the surrounding source text: 西厂由万贵妃宠信的太监汪直统领 (translation: Western Bureau is under the command of Wang Zhi, a eunuch favoured by the concubine, Yang Guifei). This suggests it is likely that not only the nature of the categories determine the use of the single or dual strategy, but contextual information is also a factor that can influence the approach.

4.3.1.4 Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

This category had five entries, which were either medicinal ingredients, or medicines, which can be used in the real system of TCM, or its representation in various forms of fiction. The results show that the source culture adequate approach had a normative strength of 80% (strong), the source and target culture mixed approach had a strength of 15% (idiosyncrasy), and the target culture acceptable approach also had a strength of 5% (idiosyncrasy). Table 4.5 shows that the first entry was translated with a combination of source and target culture mixed approaches, and one target culture acceptable approach, but the following four entries were primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
金疮药	1	Incised Wound Medicine	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	- Source Culture Adequate: 80% (strong) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy) - Target Culture Acceptable: 5% (idiosyncrasy)
	4	Wound Healing Medicine			
	3	Healing Salve	Omission + concretisation by hyponym		
	2	Medicine (to) Elixir	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	
僵蚕	1	medicinal silkworms	Explicitation + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	2	Stiff Silkworms	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	3	Stiff Silkworm			
	4	Stiff Silkworm			
	1	a scorpion	Literal		

全蝎	2	Whole Scorpion		Source Culture
	3	Whole Scorpion		Adequate
	4	Dried Scorpion		Explicitation + literal
朱砂粉	1	cinnabar powder	Literal	Source Culture
	2	Cinnabar Powder		Adequate
	3	Cinnabar Powder		
	4	Cinnabar Powder		
惊风散	1	Jingfeng Powder	Borrowing + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed
	2	Calming Powder	Explicitation + literal	
	3	Fright Syncope Remedy		
	4	Seizure Remedy (to) Convulsion Remedy	Literal	Source Culture Adequate

Table 4.5 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for traditional Chinese medicine

While the table shows that four of the entries were primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches, it does not show that these four entries have something else in common, which is that they were *quest items* to be found and given to other NPCs for the progression of the story but not used directly by the player. These unusable quest items comprised three ingredients and one completed medicine. For the three ingredients, the individual strategy of literal translation was used most often, as seen in the translations of 僵蚕 (jiang can: stiff silkworms), 全蝎 (quan xie: whole scorpion), and 朱砂粉 (zhusha fen: cinnabar powder). The use of literal translation for TCM ingredients conveyed a foreignizing effect. This is because a western audience familiar with modern medicine would not typically associate toxic minerals (Cinnabar Powder is the powdered form of a toxic red mineral ore, made of mercury sulphide), arachnids, or insects as typical medicinal items. However, TCM treatments often involve a combination of plants, animals, and minerals (Steven Foster and Yue Chonxi, 1992, 11). Hence, while the translations can be understood in English, the concept of using such items in medicine indicates a cultural difference. In some instances, literal translation was paired with the source culture adequate strategy of explicitation, which resulted in the more thorough conveyance of source culture terms. Thus, in one of the translations of Stiff Silkworms,

the inclusion of explicitation resulted in ‘Medicinal Silkworms’, which rendered the medical context explicit. Similarly, in one translation of *Whole Scorpion*, the inclusion of explicitation resulted in ‘Dried Scorpion’, which conveyed the implicit fact that this medicinal item has been processed and dried (and was not fresh or alive). While there are advantages in doing this, as more aspects can be conveyed with a dual approach, the single use of literal translations was most common.

The most revealing aspect of this category was not the translation of the three raw ingredients, but rather the two completed medicines, as each was translated with a different cultural approach. The last entry in table 4.5 惊风散 (jing feng san: seizure/convulsion remedy) was both a quest item and a completed medicine. Like the other quest items, it was primarily translated with a combination of source culture adequate strategies, resulting in ‘Jingfeng Powder’ (borrowing with literal), as well as ‘Calming Powder’, and ‘Fright Syncope Remedy’ (both different forms of explicitation with literal). While the strategies differ, they still all aligned with the source culture adequate approach. However, the first entry in table 4.5, 金疮药 (jin chuang yao: metal wound medicine) was also a type of medicine, but unlike the quest item medicine, this was an item that could be used directly by the player within the game to heal injuries. It was translated by three instances of the source and target culture mixed approach, and one instance of the target culture acceptable approach. The common factor being the inclusion of at least one target culture acceptable strategy. While there was only one usable item in this category of CSI, it was translated differently from the non-usable quest items, which indicates that its different functionality may have resulted in the utilisation of different strategies that were more target culture acceptable than the approaches used for the other non-usable entries for this category.

4.3.1.5 Historical Organisations

Like *Historical Figures* (4.3.1.3), there were three entries for this CSI, which were of historic relevance. They were organisations that operated during the Ming Dynasty. However, this time the utilisation of the source culture adequate approach was reflected by a moderate norm (66%), whereas there was also a weak norm (33%) for the utilisation of source and target culture mixed approach.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
西厂	1	Western Depot	Literal	Source Culture	- Source Culture Adequate: 66% (strong) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 33% (weak)
	2	Xichang	Borrowing	Adequate	
	3	Western Bureau	Literal + explicitation	Source Culture	
	4	Western Bureau		Adequate Mixed	
锦衣卫	1	Embroidered Uniform Guard	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Royal guards	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	Source and Target Culture	
	3	Imperial Guards		Mixed	
	4	Brocade-Clad Guards			
东厂	1	Eastern Depot	Literal	Source Culture	
	2	Eastern Depot		Adequate	
	3	Dongchang	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	4	Eastern Bureau	Literal + explicitation		

Table 4.6 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for historical organisations

The results show most entries have been translated with the source culture adequate approach, but this time, it was a more equal collection of the single strategies of literal translation or borrowing, and the dual strategy of literal translation with explicitation. The most common individual strategy was literal translation, which generated terms in English with less cultural opacity, but with some form of cultural loss. For instance, 西厂 (Xichang: Western Depot) and 东厂 (Dongchang: Eastern Depot) were the names of intelligence organisations run by the high court eunuchs of the Ming Dynasty. While the source culture audience would understand that these were not simply depots which might store equipment, food, or weapons, but were in fact organisations linked to covert operations and spies, the literal translations of Western Depot and Eastern Depot do not convey this for the target audience. Moreover, in two instances, borrowing was used, resulting in ‘Xichang’, and ‘Dongchang’, which conveyed the pronunciation of the source language, creating a foreignizing effect, but rendered none of the meaning. However, in three instances, literal translation was paired with explicitation, resulting in ‘Western Bureau’, and ‘Eastern Bureau’. This involved the combination of the literal translation of the first character, with explicitation of the second, and thus instead of depot, the

term bureau was used, which provided more of an indication of the true nature of these clandestine organisations.

The entry of 锦衣卫 (jing yi wei: embroidered uniformed guards), was approached once with the strategy of literal translation, a source culture adequate approach; however, the other three teams all utilised source and target culture mixed approaches. In this instance, they combined literal translation with substitution by sense transfer, which resulted in three different translation outcomes. This is because it is possible to apply different strategies to different characters of the same term. Thus, two translators used substitution on the first two of the three Chinese characters 锦衣 (jing yi: brocade or embroidered uniform), transferring the sense of how wearing these uniforms is connected to working for the imperial court (resulting in ‘Royal Guards’, and ‘Imperial Guards’). However, the other translator using this dual approach only used substitution by sense transfer on the second character of 衣 (yi: uniform), and replaced it with clad, whereas the first and third characters were rendered literally, resulting in ‘Brocade-Clad Guards’. This demonstrates how the same strategy can be applied in various ways, resulting in different translation outcomes, and like with the previous two entries for this category, and those of the *CSI Historical Figures*, highlights how an established historical term can be translated in different ways.

4.3.1.6 Moves and Skills

Comprising of moves or skills from both real martial arts and those fictionalised in the wuxia genre, this category had five entries. This CSI was subject to a greater range of translation strategies, linked to all three approaches. The source culture adequate approach was the most dominant, with a 65% utilisation (moderate norm), whereas the target culture acceptable approach had a 20% utilisation (idiosyncrasy), and the source and target culture mixed approach was at 15% (idiosyncrasy).

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
内家功夫	1	inner martial arts of this sect	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	- Source Culture Adequate: 65% (moderate) - Target Culture Acceptable: 20% (idiosyncrasy) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy)
	2	internal martial art move			
	3	our sect's internal Kung Fu	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	4	Neigong	Borrowing + omission	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
太极拳	1	Taijiquan	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Tai Chi Chuan (to) Tai Chi	Borrowing (to) Borrowing + omission	Source Culture Adequate (to) Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	3	Tai Chi (to) Tai Chi Quan	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate Mixed (to) Source Culture Adequate	
	4	Taiji	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	
怀中抱月	1	Embracing the Moon	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Embrace the Moon (to) Lunar Embrace			
	3	Embracing the Moon			
	4	Embracing the Moon			
打坐	1	sit and meditate	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	2	meditate			
	3	Meditate	Substitution by sense transfer	Target Culture Acceptable	
	4	meditate			

轻功	1	Flies over	Substitution by sense transfer	Target Culture Adequate
	2	Qinggong	Borrowing	Source Culture
	3	Qinggong		Adequate
	4	Qinggong		

Table 4.7 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for moves and skills

Unlike the categories with rule-like norms, or stronger norms, it was found that this category of CSI was subject to all three different cultural approaches. Furthermore, as with the category of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, this category also included multiple entries which functioned in different ways. For instance, the two entries of 内家功夫 (nei gong: meaning internal kung-fu of this sect), and 太极拳 (the martial art: Tai Chi Chuan), were only used in parts of general dialogue and were mostly translated with more source culture adequate approaches. Unusually, the second term, relating to the martial art of Tai Chi had four different versions, and almost all the reviewers changed the initial translations. While Tai Chi is a real martial art with established terms in English, the fact that there were four different final translations, and an unusually high level of involvement from the reviewers suggests that CSI entries with multiple real-world counterparts, as in existing translations, can sometimes result in inconsistent translations. This may also result in a greater degree of speculation and monitoring by linguists who strive to identify the ideal anglophone equivalent.

However, the three entries 怀中抱月 (huai zong bao yue: a martial art move meaning: embrace the moon), 打坐 (da zuo: meaning to meditate), and 轻功 (qing gong: meaning to use light-footed kung-fu to leap and soar) were different from the two others, in that they were actions that can be performed by the player. Furthermore, in the previous category of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, it was shown how a usable item was linked to more target culture acceptable approaches, and this was partly the case for these two, more interactive CSIs. For 打坐 (meditate), this was still the case, as three translations were target culture acceptable, and one was source and target culture mixed, and therefore all included target culture acceptable strategies. Nevertheless, with the martial arts move of 怀中抱月 (embrace the moon), which is also a real move belonging to the martial art of Tai Chi, all teams used literal translation, which is a source culture adequate approach, and with 轻功 (qing gong: to soar) most teams used the

source culture adequate strategy of borrowing, resulting in ‘qinggong’. In this regard, the category was subject to a wider variety of cultural approaches.

4.3.1.7 Fixed Terms of Address

This category had three entries and was related to the fixed terms used to address individuals in relation to their profession or position within an organisation. Moreover, it was subject to a wide range of strategies, which aligned with all three different approaches, resulting in three weaker norms. However, the source culture adequate approach had more normative strength.

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
师父	1	Master	Literal	Source Culture	- Source Culture Adequate: 41.6% (weak) - Target Culture Acceptable: 33.3% (weak)
	2	Master		Adequate	
	3	Master			
	4	master			
师弟	1	Brother	Literal + omission	Source and Target	- Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)
	2	Brother		Culture Mixed	
	3	junior			
	4	(omitted)	Omission	Target Culture Acceptable	
老板娘	1	ma'am	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture	
	2	Madam		Acceptable	
	3	Lady			
	4	Lady Boss	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	

Table 4.8 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for fixed terms of address

Table 4.8 shows that there were fewer commonalities between the approaches used for the three entries of this CSI, in comparison to other CSIs primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches, and this has resulted in weaker normative strengths. In the case of 师父 (shifu: master), a fixed term used to address a martial arts instructor, literal translation had been utilised by all four teams. However, for 师弟 (shidi: brother of the same master), a fixed term of address for a younger male student of the same martial arts instructor, three translators used a combination of literal translation with omission, which is a source and target culture mixed approach. This resulted in two instances of ‘brother’, and one of ‘junior’. In both the first two entries, the strategy of literal translation was commonly used, and one common feature is that both terms relate to a hierarchical order, and seniority in a martial arts context. However, for 老板娘 (laoban niang: lady boss), a reference to an NPC who was not a practitioner of martial

arts, most translators used the strategy of generalisation by hypernym, a target culture acceptable approach, and this resulted in the translations of ‘ma’am’, ‘madam’, and ‘lady’. It therefore appears that this category was less norm governed than the previous categories.

4.3.1.8 Summary of Categories Primarily Translated via Source Culture Adequate Approaches

The analysis of the categories above show that a single source culture adequate strategy can either convey the pronunciation, the literal meaning, or the implied meaning of an entry, but often at the sacrifice of other aspects. In the case of borrowing, the pronunciation of the source language was preserved, but at the loss of the meaning, as seen in the translation of the *Fictional Characters*. With literal translation, the meaning was conveyed directly, but at the loss of the pronunciation, as seen in the translation of *Traditional Chinese Medicine* (ingredients). However, in some instances, where a single strategy did not convey enough context, the dual strategy approach conveyed a greater array of source culture elements. This always included the strategy of borrowing via pinyin (the standard Romanised spelling of transliterated Chinese), which only conveyed the pronunciation of the source language, and this was always paired with another strategy that conveyed more context, such as explicitation as seen in the category of *Historical Figures*, or by literal translation, as seen in *Fictional Sects*.

There were also some common features among the categories most often linked to the source culture adequate approach. In most instances, strategies aligned with this approach were used for categories with historical features, such as *Historical Persons*, and *Historical Organisations*, or categories closely linked with the wuxia genre, such as *Moves and Skills*, *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, *Fictional Sects*, and most entries for *Fixed Terms of Address*. When considering the style guide (Appendix A), source culture adequate approaches make sense in that they reflect the historical and fictional elements of the wuxia genre more closely. While *Fictional Characters* was not as closely linked to historical factors or the wuxia genre as the other categories, it was still relevant to the general region in which the game was set and can promote the authenticity of the game environment. It is thus revealing that CSIs linked to both fiction and real-world history were categorically translated with the same general cultural approach.

Nevertheless, a small number of anomalous entries did not fit the prevalent normative trends shared by the other entries of the same categories and were subject to more target culture

acceptable strategies. These entries tended to be more linked to functionality and action, in that they could be used (from *Traditional Chinese Medicine*) or performed (from *Moves and Skills*).

4.3.2 CSIs Primarily Translated with Target Culture Acceptable Approaches

Four categories of CSIs were primarily linked to the target culture acceptable approach, which was the second most common approach. It involved strategies that reshaped the CSIs into something more acceptable to the target audience, rather than conveying aspects of the source culture. While the categories of *Food*, and *Currency*, were both items that can be used, and therefore may share similarities with the two anomalous entries in the previous source culture adequate section, which were translated by more target culture acceptable approaches, it was less clear why the categories of *Martial Arts Society*, and *Variable Terms of Address*, which were highly culturally specific, would be translated by target culture acceptable approaches, rather than source culture adequate approaches.

4.3.2.3 *Martial Arts Society*

There were two entries for this category and were terms used to refer to the fictional representation of Chinese martial arts society. The target culture acceptable approach was utilised 75% of the time, resulting in a strong norm. However, both the source culture adequate, and source and target culture adequate approaches were each tied to idiosyncrasies of 12.5% respectively.

Entries	Teams	Initial Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
江湖	1	the land	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	- Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) - Source Culture Adequate: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy)
	2	the world			
	3	(omitted)	Omission		
	4	Jianghu	Borrowing	Source Culture Adequate	
武林江湖	1	martial world	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	
	2	pugilist underworld			
	4	pugilistic world			
	3	Jianghu, the martial arts world	Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	

Table 4.9 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for martial arts society

Both entries were primarily translated with the target culture acceptable approach, via the strategy of generalisation by hypernym. Three different strategies were used for the first term 江湖 (jianghu), which literally means rivers and lakes, but also implicitly refers to a wider world of martial artists and people living beyond the reach of the law. Two teams used generalisation by hypernym, which was target culture acceptable, and resulted in ‘the land’, and ‘the world’. In another instance the entry was completely omitted, which was also a target culture acceptable approach. However, there was also one instance of the source culture adequate approach of borrowing, which resulted in ‘jianghu’. It was unusual to observe such a range of strategies with vastly different translations for a single entry.

The second entry was more complex than the first, combining 江湖 (jianghu) with another term 武林 (wulin – literally martial arts and forest), which, implicitly refers to Chinese martial arts societies, and draws upon the geographical feature of a forest, but only in a metaphorical sense. While wulin has similarities with the term of jianghu, referencing a section of society and a physical feature, it refers specifically to those individuals and societies connected to martial arts. Thus, both entries were highly culturally specific with multiple levels of meaning. The results show that 武林江湖 (wulin jianghu) literally: martial arts and forest, rivers and lakes, was primarily translated by three instances of generalisation by hypernym, resulting in ‘martial world’, ‘pugilist underworld’, and ‘pugilistic world’. Thus, references to geographic terms or imagined spaces, like the forest, represented by 林 (lin), and the rivers and lakes represented by 江湖 (jianghu), were not fully omitted, but rather reduced to more general ideas such as world, or underworld, which refer less figuratively to a specific location, and more to the activities that take place in such a domain. Furthermore, the component of Chinese martial arts society, which was more overtly referred to in 武林 (wulin), where the first character 武 (wu) means martial arts, but only implied in the second component, which was 江湖 (jianghu), was still conveyed in a more general sense, by the inclusion of the terms martial, pugilist, or pugilistic. As such, both components, spatial and relating to martial arts society, were conveyed differently, but they all belong to the strategy of generalisation via hypernym. In one idiosyncratic instance, generalisation by hypernym was combined with the source culture adequate strategy of borrowing, resulting in the translation of ‘*Jianghu, the martial arts world*’, which conveyed both pronunciation and the general meaning, but was also longer.

While this category of CSI was as culturally specific as many categories translated with more source culture adequate approaches, such as *Fictional Sects*, and *Historical Figures*, the results showed that it was primarily translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, which was unexpected, considering both the instructions provided in the style guide (Appendix A) which promoted more source culture adequate approaches.

4.3.2.2 Currency

This category only had one entry, and it was for the currency that can be used in the game to purchase other items. The target culture acceptable approach had the weight of a strong norm (75%), and the source and target culture mixed approach was utilised 25% of the time, which indicated a weak norm.

Entries	Teams	Initial Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
文钱	1	Wen	Borrowing + omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed Approach	- Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong)
	2	Coins	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	- Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)
	3	Coins			
	4	Coin(s)			

Table 4.10 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for currency

Table 4.10 shows that for the single entry of 文钱, literally meaning: wen (a unit of currency) money, three teams utilised the single target culture acceptable strategy of generalisation by hypernym, where a more specific term in the source language was rendered as a more general term in the target language. Thus, a form of currency, specific to an ancient period of China, was mostly translated with the weight of a strong norm, as ‘Coins’, which is instantly recognisable in English, conveying the fact that this is a form of currency. While there was also one instance of borrowing with omission, a source and target culture mixed approach, which resulted in the translation of ‘Wen’, in which the first character was transliterated, and the second character was omitted, this only had the strength of a weaker norm. As such, the translations were still mostly target culture acceptable. This is significant, as in this game text, in RPGs in general, and many other genres of video game, currency is a functional item, in that it is used by the players to purchase other items required to progress in the game and can be accumulated by playing through the game, defeating enemies, and completing quests. Therefore, this represents another instance of a functional item, like the more functional medicine in 4.3.1.4,

being primarily translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, despite the style guide promoting more source culture adequate approaches.

4.3.2.4 Variable Terms of Address

With more entries than any other category, this CSI had nine entries and consisted of variable terms of address that can change depending on the level of formality required in social interactions, in accordance with culture specific notions of social hierarchy, derived from Confucian ideology. The target culture acceptable approach was used 75% of the time, indicating a strong norm. Whereas the source culture adequate approach was utilised 19.4% of the time, indicating a weak norm, and the source and target culture mixed approach was only used 5.6% of the time, indicating an idiosyncrasy.

Entries	Teams	Initial Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
大婶	1	ma'am	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	- Target Culture Acceptable: 75% (strong) - Source Culture Adequate: 19.4% (idiosyncrasy) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 5.6% (idiosyncrasy)
	2	Madam (to) Ma'am			
	3	old lady (to) Lady			
	4	Aunty	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
在下	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	
	2				
	3				
	4				
少侠	1	young hero	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Young master	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	3	young man			
	4	you	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	
姑娘	1	daughter	Concretisation by hyponym	Target Culture Acceptable	
	2	Girl (to) lass	Literal (to) Concretisation by hyponym	Source Culture Adequate (to) Target Culture Acceptable	
	3	girl	Literal		

	4	girl	Literal	Source Culture Adequate
兄弟们	1	Brothers	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable
	2	Brothers		
	3	Lads		
	4	boys		
老子	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable
	2			
	3			
	4			
民女	1	Women	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable
	2	women		
	3	girls		
	4	someone else's daughter	Concretisation by hyponym	Target Culture Acceptable
小女子	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable
	2			
	3			
	4			
大哥哥们	1	you	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable
	2	Big brothers	Literal	Source Culture Adequate
	3	big brothers		
	4	big brothers		

Table 4.11 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for variable terms of address

Six of the nine entries were primarily translated with the target culture acceptable strategy of generalisation by hypernym, which removed the implications of social hierarchy and rigid formality. In some instances, this removed an element of self-deprecation, for example the second entry 在下 (literally: at below) was translated by all teams as 'I'. While the Chinese term is originally used by speakers to refer to themselves, with the implication that they are below the social position of the addressee, none of this was conveyed in English. This can be seen in all other entries where terms of self-deprecation are used. Hence, 小女子 (literally: little girl), a term used by a girl or young woman to refer to herself in a self-deprecating manner, was also translated in a more neutral and therefore general way, resulting in 'I'. In other entries, a similar approach was used to remove an element of deference to the addressee, thus the first

entry 大婶 (da shen: auntie) can be used as a term of respect when addressing a middle-aged married woman, who is not a blood relative, which was the case in the game text. For this, most linguists used generalisation by hypernym, resulting in ‘ma’am’, ‘Madam’, and ‘old lady’. While ma’am, and Madam, still conveyed respect, in a way that old lady did not, this application of generalisation had still removed any implication of familiar connection. Similarly, this approach was used to remove a more informal tone, as in entry six, 老子 (lao zi: an informal term of address used by the speaker to indicate that they have seniority), was also translated using generalisation by hypernym, but this time it resulted in three translators using *me*, and one for ‘I’.

There was indeed a trend of utilising generalisation by hypernym in most of these entries, either individually, as seen in the previous examples, or as part of a dual strategy, as seen in the translation of 少侠 (meaning young hero), in which most linguists used literal translation with generalisation by hypernym, resulting in ‘young master,’ and ‘young man’, which still conveyed a sense of formality in English, but not quite as much deference as conveyed by the literal translation of ‘young hero’. However, in this, and other entries, not all linguists utilised the same strategy, as for this entry, team four opted for the most target culture acceptable approach by the single application of generalisation by hypernym, resulting in *you*. While there were two instances of entries only being rendered by literal translation, this only represented an idiosyncrasy.

As such, the results show a strong link between these terms of variable address, and the target culture acceptable approach of generalisation by hypernym. This is unusual in the sense that the client brief promoted a more source culture adequate approach. Perhaps, this category is like that of *Martial Arts Society*, in that a source culture adequate approach would result in something where the strangeness of more source culture adequate translations may overpower the authenticity of a more literal or direct translation. Indeed, as covered in section 2.2.4, these *Variable Terms of Address* were linked to Confucian principles, namely the *Five Relations*, in which characters within a historical context, as portrayed in wuxia fiction, can be expected to attach greater importance to socio-hierarchical positions, and this involves utilising honorific terms for those higher than themselves, and self-deprecating terms for themselves to convey levels of politeness or respect not typically seen in English. Moreover, the implications of using generalisation by hypernym are that any cultural connotations of social formality, originating from Confucian hierarchical ideology have been removed.

4.3.2.1 Food

This category had one entry and was related to consumable food items. The target culture acceptable approach had a moderate (50%) normative strength, the source and target culture mixed approach had a weak (25%) strength, as did the source culture adequate approach (25%).

Entries	Teams	Initial Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
四神粥	1	Four Gods' Porridge (to) Herbal Porridge	Literal (to) Literal + substitution by sense transfer	Source Culture Adequate (to) Source and Target Culture Mixed	- Target Culture Acceptable: 50% (moderate) - Source and Target Mixed: 25% (weak)
	2	Four Deity Porridge	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	- Source Culture Adequate: 25% (weak)
	3	Herbal Congee	Substitution by sense transfer + concretisation by hyponym	Target Culture	- Source Culture Adequate: 25% (weak)
	4	Four Herbs Congee		Acceptable Mixed	

Table 4.12 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for food

The most common approach was target culture acceptable, and this came from the dual strategy of substitution by sense transfer with concretisation by hyponym. For team three, the first two characters 四神 (si shen: four gods, which is an implicit reference to the four medicinal herbs used to cook this dish) was substituted for the term 'herbal', which conveyed the sense of the Chinese term, and the third character 粥 (zhou: porridge) was translated using the more specific hyponym of 'congee', which is a type of rice porridge. Team four used a similar approach; however, instead of herbal, they used 'four herbs', which was still a substitution by sense transfer, though in this instance, more of the sense has been transferred via the word 'four'. While teams one and two initially used the source culture adequate approach of literal translation, in team one, the reviewer intervened, and altered 'Four God's Porridge' to 'Herbal Porridge', which was a source and target culture mixed approach, as it combined literal translation with substitution by sense transfer.

Consequently, most final translations included at least one instance of a target culture acceptable strategy. This is important, as like currency (see: 4.3.2.2), and the one usable medicine entry (see: 4.3.1.4), this food item was also usable, and as in other RPGs, can be consumed in games to replenish health, energy, or to enhance the attributes of the player. This

indicates a trend in which functional items tend to be translated with more target culture acceptable approaches.

4.3.2.5 Summary of Categories Primarily Translated with Target Culture Acceptable Approaches

It was found that two situations resulted in the frequent utilisation of this cultural approach. The first was related to usage and functionality, as seen in the categories of *Currency*, and *Food*, which had also been observed with some of the anomalous idiosyncrasies in the more source culture adequate categories of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Moves and Skills*, where the idiosyncratic usage of target culture acceptable strategies was strongly linked to entries with specific in-game interactive properties.

However, the second situation appeared more related to CSIs that either possessed multiple layers of meaning, implied and explicit, like in the category of *Martial Arts Society*, or they conveyed different levels of formality to those typically observed in the target culture, such as *Variable Terms of Address*. In both instances, the linguists have leaned away from the instructions of the style guide, which represents a different pattern of translation behaviour from that exhibited in the translation of the CSIs primarily linked to the source culture adequate approach.

4.3.3 CSIs Primarily Translated with Source and Target Culture Mixed Approaches

While instances of the source and target culture mixed approach can be found in weaker norms and idiosyncrasies across several CSI categories, it was only primarily linked to the category of *Places*. While the other two dual strategy approaches were still considered extensions of either the source culture adequate, or target culture acceptable approaches, albeit with some differences, this approach had an even more distinct difference from previous approaches, as it was a true hybrid of both, as shown in figure 4.1, and can be considered an expansion of the existing conceptual framework of normative approaches, as covered in 2.3.1.

4.3.3.1 Places

This category had four entries, and each was for the name of a place that existed within the game, which could be found and explored. The source and target culture mixed approach had the strength of a moderate norm (62.5%), the source culture adequate approach was reflected with a weak norm (31.25%), and the target culture acceptable approach, an idiosyncrasy (6.25%).

Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
紫金山庄	1	Zijin Villa	Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	- Source and Target Culture Mixed: 62.5% (moderate) - Source Culture Adequate: 31.25% (weak)- Target Culture Acceptable: 6.25% (idiosyncrasy)
	2	Zijin Villa			
	3	Zijin Manor			
	4	Violet Gold Villa (to) Zijin Villa	Literal + generalisation by hypernym (to) Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym		
回春堂	1	Hall of Rejuvenation	Literal	Source Culture Adequate	
	2	Hui Chun Tang	Borrowing		
	3	Hui Chun Hall	Borrowing + literal	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	4	Huichun Medical Store (to) Huichun Pharmacy	Borrowing + explicitation		
襄阳城	1	Xiangyang	Borrowing + omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	2	Xiang Yang			
	4	Xiangyang			
	3	(omitted)	Omission	Target Culture Acceptable	
武当山	1	Mount Wudang	Literal + borrowing	Source Culture Adequate Mixed	
	2	Wudang	Borrowing + omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	3	Wudang			
	4	Wudang			

Table 4.13 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for places

The most common source culture adequate strategy used in these entries was borrowing (used in 88% of these entries), which conveyed the pronunciation of the target text term, and the most common target culture acceptable strategy was omission (used in 38% of these entries), which was primarily used in conjunction with borrowing. These two strategies were combined by most teams for the term of 武当山 (Wudang shan: Wudang Mountain). In this instance, most teams

transliterated the first two characters of 武当, resulting in ‘Wudang’, but then omitted the third character of 山 (shan), meaning mountain. One reason for this approach, could be that in the wuxia genre, the fictional Wudang Sect of martial artists reside in the Wudang Mountains, and both the sect and its home can be referred to as Wudang. In the game text, this term was used in a section of dialogue where the player (a disciple of the Wudang Sect) said he needed to return to Wudang Mountain, which was reduced to ‘Wudang’ in three of the translations.

Most of these examples utilise borrowing, which are source culture adequate and strongly reflect the cultural roots of these CSIs. However, they are often accompanied with other strategies that can also be source culture adequate, but still provide more context to the target audience. For instance, 回春堂 (Hui Chun Hall) was translated as both ‘Hui Chun Hall’, which involved borrowing of the first two characters, and literal translation of the third. In this, the word ‘Hall’ reveals that it is a location. Furthermore, the same term was translated as Hui Chun Pharmacy by another team, in which explication was used on the third character, to not only reveal that it was location, but also provide context regarding the type of location. Thus, despite the fact that literal translation and explication are source culture adequate, they can both provide contextual information for the target players, who need to find these locations.

The inclusion of omission was used in other entries, which similarly appeared to remove redundant information, as in the case of 襄阳城 (Xiangyan cheng: Xiangyan City), the fact that it was a settlement could be derived from the context of the game dialogue, and therefore three of the translators opted to omit the translation of the third character 城 (cheng) meaning city. One team took this further and omitted the entry completely, as where the original dialogue said 西厂的人千里迢迢从京城来到襄阳城找人 (Western Bureau have dispatched people all the way from the capital to find someone in Xiangyan City), they rendered it as ‘[...] all the way from the capital just to search for a person [...]’. However, this omission could have been because Xiangyan City was the current game location, and this was clear from the context, and this may therefore represent a more thorough purging of redundancy in the target language.

The source culture strategy of borrowing was also combined with generalisation by hypernym in most translations of the entry 紫金山庄 (literally: violet gold mountain villa/manor) which referred to a palatial residence located in the mountains. This involved translating the first two characters 紫金 (zi jin: violet gold) via borrowing, resulting in ‘Zijin’, and then translating the second two characters 山庄 (shan zhuang: mountain villa/manor), as

‘manor’ or ‘villa’, which were both forms of generalisation by hypernym, as they have been simplified from mountain villa/manor to simply villa or manor. While a villa and a manor are two different terms in English, with villa referring to a luxurious house on the coast or in the countryside, and manor being a house or hall of an estate, they are both commonly used in translations of this Chinese term, based on contextual information. Thus, the combination of strategies used here drew from both pools of cultural approaches.

4.3.3.2 Summary of Source and Target Culture Mixed Approaches

The results show this approach borrowed strategies from both cultural concepts of adequacy and acceptability and can produce the widest variety of combinations. Where source culture adequate approaches reflect the source culture, which corresponds more with the style guide, the target culture acceptable approaches lean towards the target culture and ease of understanding. This combination of approaches seemed like source culture adequate mixed approaches, as seen in *Fictional Sects*, that paired the authentic but culturally obscuring pronunciation of Chinese via borrowing, with strategies such as literal translation or explication, that provided more critical context. However, for this source and target culture mixed approach, target culture acceptable strategies such as generalisation by hypernym, or substitution by sense transfer provided context to aid understanding.

Despite this similarity, there was one major difference between these approaches, which was that where source culture adequate dual strategies resulted in longer translations, the source and target culture mixed approaches tended to be shorter due to the frequent inclusion of the target culture acceptable strategy of omission. Moreover, while this approach provided more flexibility, it was only primarily linked to the category of *Places*, and this was by a norm of moderate strength, as in other categories it only had the strength of a weaker norm or idiosyncrasy.

4.3.4 CSIs with No Single Dominant Approach

Most CSI categories were clearly linked to one dominant approach; however, in some of the instances above, the differences between the strengths of norms were very minor. Moreover, in one category, *Energies*, there was no single dominant norm, but rather a more fragmented collection of three weaker norms, where both source culture adequate and target culture adequate norms were tied at 37.5%.

4.3.4.1 Energies

This category had four entries, which were linked to Chinese cultural concepts of flowing energy and internal power, used in a martial arts context. A wide mixture of strategies was utilised which resulted in a wider fragmentation of translation approaches. In this instance, both the source culture adequate approach, and the target culture acceptable approach were tied to weaker norms of the same strength (37.5%). Additionally, the source and target culture mixed approach was also reflected by a weak norm, but at 25%, it was weaker than the other two.

Entries	Teams	Initial Translation	Strategy	Approach	Final Translation Norms
阴阳	1	Yin and Yang	Borrowing + explicitation	Source Culture	- Source Culture Adequate: 37.5% (weak) - Target Culture Acceptable: 37.5% (weak) - Source and Target Culture Mixed: 25% (weak)
	2	Yin and Yang		Adequate Mixed	
	3	Yin and Yang			
	4	Yin meets Yang			
气血	1	Qi	Borrowing + omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	2	Qi (to – omitted)	Borrowing + omission (to) Omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed (to) Target Culture Acceptable	
	3	Health	Substitution by sense transfer	Target Culture Acceptable	
	4	(omitted)	Omission		
内息	1	Inner Energy	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	2	Inner Force (to) breath	Literal + substitution by sense transfer (to) Substitution by sense transfer + Omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
	3	Qi	Borrowing + omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed	

	4	energy	Substitution by sense transfer	Target Culture Acceptable
内力	1	Inner Energy	Literal	Source Culture Adequate
	2	Inner Force (to) Energy	Literal + Substitution by sense transfer (to) Omission + Literal	Source Culture Adequate (to) Target Culture Acceptable Mixed
	3	Chi	Substitution by sense transfer + Omission	Source and Target Culture Mixed
	4	Energy	Omission + Literal	

Table 4.14 Strategies, approaches, and final translation norms for energies

Like *Traditional Chinese Medicine* and *Moves and Skills*, the entries of this category were subject to a more varied application of cultural approaches, leading to a collection of weaker norms. Two entries, including entry two, 气血 (qi xie: chi and blood), which represented the health points (HP) of the characters, and entry four, 内力 (inner energy) representing the inner energy, or qi energy required to perform special moves, were both linked to functions, and furthermore, were translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, or source and target culture mixed approaches, which include at least one target culture acceptable strategy. However, the other two entries were only related to the progression of the plot and the dialogue, as the first entry in table 4.14, 阴阳 (yin yang: Yin and Yang) was mentioned in a section of poetic text and was translated with more source culture adequate approaches. While the third entry of 内息 (nei xi: inner breath) was part of a dialogue where a master described the application of martial arts to his students, it was more subject to a collection of all three approaches.

It appears that categories of CSIs, containing entries of both less usable items, or terms with no links to interaction (often linked to more source culture adequate approaches), as well as usable items, or terms linked to game functions (often linked to more target culture

acceptable approaches) tended to end up with more anomalous entries, like *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Moves and Skills*, or were more clearly fragmented, with a collection of weaker norms, like this category.

4.4 Summary of Links Between Categories of CSIs and Cultural Approaches

It was evident that most categories of CSIs were translated with more source culture adequate approaches, as covered in 4.3.1, which fell more in line with the instructions of the style guide (Appendix A), which encourages a more authentic conveyance of the cultural, historical, and fictional aspects of the wuxia genre. However, some individual anomalous entries in 4.3.1, which had more interactive properties, were translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, which indicated a learn away from the style guide. Furthermore, as shown in 4.3.2, two of the four CSIs which were primarily translated by target culture acceptable approaches, were also of a more interactive nature (*Currency*, and *Food*), which indicated a trend between more interactive entries being translated with target culture acceptable approaches. However, the other two CSIs primarily translated by target culture acceptable approaches (*Martial Arts Society*, and *Variable Terms of Address*), were not interactive, and therefore must have been translated this way based on other criteria, which the theory of norms in translation alone cannot explain.

As such, it was possible to address the first research question by using a framework based on the theory of norms in translation to categorise the strategies, and approaches used by the linguists. Furthermore, different patterns of translation behaviour were revealed, which primarily manifested as a dichotomy of source culture adequate, and target culture acceptable approaches, with fewer instances of source and target culture mixed approaches, which simultaneously drew from both normative concepts of adequacy and acceptability. During the analysis, observations were made regarding the translation approaches, and links were drawn between source culture approaches and an adherence to the style guide, and between more target culture acceptable approaches, and interactive properties of some entries. However, these observations were based on contextual information, such as the features of individual entries, and the instructions provided in the localisation kit (Appendix A). As such, the reasons behind the translations and the socio-cultural factors that can govern or guide the patterns of translation, which address the second research question, have been investigated using interview questions, and data analysis, which is presented in section 4.5.2.

4.5 Socio-Cultural Factors Driving the Translation of the CSIs

The following sections will present results and analyses which address the second research question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’. As established in the methodology (3.3.5), this will entail analysing and categorising the data generated from the interviews, regarding the reasons why the linguists used certain approaches, in line with the Bourdieusian concept of habitus, a strategy generating mechanism which can account for reasoning. However, habitus is also closely linked with the Bourdieusian concept of field, which relates to the social spheres in which the subjects of an investigation have been socialised, and therefore the linguists all answered a questionnaire (3.3.6) designed to trace their social trajectories, which has been used in other studies (see 2.5.1 and 2.5.2.3). This field data will further contextualise the habitus of the linguists. Thus, the following sections include the results of the social trajectory questionnaire (4.5.1), the habitus framework of socio-cultural reasoning (4.5.2), a general overview of socio-cultural reasoning of the linguists (4.6), an analysis of the categories of socio-cultural reasoning in relation to the categories of CSIs (4.7), and a summary of the links between different categories of reasoning and CSIs (4.8).

4.5.1 Social Trajectories

These are the results of the questionnaire which reveal information about the social backgrounds of the linguists, in terms of education, training, experience, and motivation for working in the video game localisation industry. This information was necessary for the contextualisation of the habitus of the linguists, as a strategy forming mechanism. The results have been placed in tables below.

Question 1: What is your educational background?

Translator One	BS in Marketing BA in Chinese Language & Culture	Reviewer One	MA in Translation and Interpretation
Translator Two	BS in Game Design	Reviewer Two	BA in Philosophy
Translator Three	BS Computational Biology	Reviewer Three	BA in Linguistics and Multilingual Studies
Translator Four	BCom in Electronic Commerce	Reviewer Four	BCS in Computing Science (with a specialization in games)

Table 4.15 Educational background data

All linguists held the minimum academic requirement of a bachelor's degree, and in one instance, a linguist also had a master's degree. It can be observed that while this includes a range of subjects, three were more specific to linguistics and translation, and two were more related to video games, which can be linked more to video game localisation, whereas three subjects were less specific to this field. However, as covered in 3.3.1, the linguists needed to at least have a bachelor's degree to register with the agency, but the topic was not specified. Moreover, this was just one of the qualifications, the other requirements also needed to be considered, and linguists also needed to pass a translation test before working for Keywords Studios. This indicates that the linguists have all received a university education by spending time in this educational field. In light of Bourdieusian theory, this indicates, in places where there are tuition fees, an exchange of economic capital for educational capital, which is a form of cultural capital, hence indicating an exchange of economic to cultural capital.

Question 2: What translation or localisation training have you received?

Translator One	Industry	Reviewer One	University + industry
Translator Two	Industry + university	Reviewer Two	University + industry
Translator Three	Industry	Reviewer Three	Industry
Translator Four	Industry	Reviewer Four	Industry

Table 4.16 Training data

It was found that 62.5% of linguists stated that they had primarily gained and developed video game localisation skills, which fits the category of embodied cultural capital, within the industry, and did not feel that their Bachelor degree, representing a more symbolic form of cultural capital, prepared them for this industry in any way. Only 37.5% of linguists recognised that skills gained in higher education were beneficial to industry practice. This indicates that most linguists did not feel that the cultural capital gained from the field of education was beneficial in the field of the industry. Interestingly, only Reviewer One with an MA degree in linguistics found it to be of practical use in terms of industry training, whereas the other two linguists with BAs related to linguistics (Translator One, and Reviewer Three) did not feel that a BA in linguistics prepared them for the industry, which could suggest that MA related to linguistics could cover more industry relevant content. However, one linguist with a BA in game design did find the degree useful, and one linguist found a BA in philosophy to be useful in terms of training.

Question 3: When did you start working in this field?

Translator One	2018 (3 years)	Reviewer One	2017 (4 years)
Translator Two	2016 (5 years)	Reviewer Two	2018 (3 years)
Translator Three	2019 (2 years)	Reviewer Three	2019 (2 years)
Translator Four	2014 (7 years)	Reviewer Four	2013 (6 years)

Table 4.17 Experience in field

The data collection was conducted between late 2020 and early 2021. As such, the length of time spent working in the industry was calculated based on the completion time of the translation of this wuxia RPG text in early 2021. The results indicate that experience ranged from 2-7 years, with an average of 4 years of experience in video game localisation, or in other words, the field of industry.

Question 4: For how many years have you been playing video games?

Translator One	20+ years	Reviewer One	30+ years
Translator Two	15+ years	Reviewer Two	24+ years
Translator Three	15+ years	Reviewer Three	25+ years
Translator Four	30+ years	Reviewer Four	25+ years

Table 4.18 Game experience data

All linguists identified as being serious gamers with between 15+ to 30+ years of gaming experience, with an average of 23 years of experience. In terms of Bourdieusian theory, this represented 23 years of socialisation in this field, which involved the exchange of economic capital (money) for video games, and related experience and knowledge, which is a form of cultural capital. In other words, on average the linguists had almost two decades more socialisation in this field, and accumulation of capital, than they did in the field of industry.

Question 5: Why have you selected to work in the field of game translation/localisation?

Translator One	Enjoyment	Reviewer One	Enjoyment + gaming community
Translator Two	Enjoyment	Reviewer Two	Enjoyment
Translator Three	Interest	Reviewer Three	Interest
Translator Four	Gaming community	Reviewer Four	Gaming community

Table 4.19 Motivation

As this was an open question, the answers were coded into the following three general categories:

- (i) **Enjoyment:** linguists stated that they enjoy playing games and participating in activities related to playing video games.
- (ii) **Interest:** linguists stated that they were interested in learning about deeper processes involved in the creation of video games.
- (iii) **Gaming Community:** linguists wanted to contribute to the gaming community of which they were a part.

The three motivations provided for working in this industry can all be linked to being passionate about video games, and video gaming. As such, half the linguists listed enjoyment as being the motivation, three stated that it was a desire to contribute to the greater gaming community, and two reflected that it was due to a deeper interest in learning about the creation of video games. In terms of Bourdieusian concepts, this suggests a link between the cultural capital gained from playing video games, and wanting to be part of the industry (field) in which these video games are created.

In terms of levels of education, and motivation for working in the industry, there was very little difference in terms of social trajectories among the linguists. Furthermore, while the range of time spent in the industry was from 2-7 years, and the amount of years spent video gaming ranged from 15-30 years, in all cases, the participants had spent at least a decade more video gaming than as linguists working in the industry. While language proficiency was not listed as a result, but considered more of a parameter of the case study, it should also be regarded as being important to social trajectories. As covered in 3.3.1.1, and in table 3.6, the eight linguists reported having three different linguistic profiles: native speaker of English with professional Chinese, professional English with professional Chinese, and native speaker of Chinese with professional English, but these labels were provided by the linguists and may be of a more subjective nature. What also needs to be considered is they had all passed the registration test attaining what was considered to be native level proficiency, and in a more objective sense, were experienced industry professionals. However, by considering both sets of information, it can be reported that video game translation for this project was not carried out by a monolingual or monocultural group, but they had all been assessed, professionally, as being able to produce English output at the level of a native speaker. This social trajectory information is useful in terms of how it can contextualise the habitus of the linguists. However,

the focus of this section remains addressing the reasons behind the translation approaches and the presence of socio-cultural factors, and as such, these Bourdieusian concepts are not the focal point of this study, but have been utilised as framing concepts which can provide further theoretical explanatory power.

4.5.2 The Framework of Socio-Cultural Categories of Reasoning of the Video Game Translatorial Habitus

During the interviews, the linguists answered a series of questions in relation to the translation of the thirteen categories of CSI to discover the socio-cultural reasoning behind the translation decisions. Consequently, the analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that the linguists were influenced by four main categories of socio-cultural reasoning: which were *source culture centric*, *target culture centric*, *industry centric*, and *game centric*, that shaped the decision-making process, and can therefore be considered a representation of the translatorial habitus of the video game linguists, as a strategy forming mechanism. While the linguists provided four main categories of reasoning for utilising various translation approaches in connection to CSIs, these main categories of reasoning were derived from a wider collection of sub-categories, which were coded based on key words taken from the interview transcripts. The section below presents each socio-cultural factor, as well as the sub-factors, and examples of keywords from which they were derived. A more extensive list of keywords which have been coded from the interviews can be found in Appendix G.

4.5.2.1 Source Culture Centric

This category of socio-cultural reasoning was reflected by general references in the interview responses to the source culture via a collection of keywords, which have been coded into subfactors. Three sub-factors were related to linguistics. The others included references to China as a nation, the authenticity of the wuxia genre, Chinese culture in general, and more specific references to Chinese history. The individual source culture centric subcategories were:

Linguistics: Chinese language in general, as in references to the Chinese language, such as the word ‘Chinese’.

Linguistics: use of pinyin, as in references to the strategy of borrowing. This was reflected in keywords such as ‘pinyin’, and ‘transliteration’.

Linguistics: adequacy, which includes references to the preservation of source culture linguistic norms in translation. This included keywords such as ‘retain’, ‘accurate’, and ‘literal translation’.

National identity: references indicating links to Chinese nationality. Examples of keywords include ‘native Chinese’, and ‘China’.

Wuxia genre: references to elements originating from the wuxia literary genre. For example, ‘authentic’, ‘lore’, and ‘literature’.

Chinese culture: general references to Chinese cultural. This included ‘Chinese culture’, ‘culture gap’, and ‘culturally loaded’.

History: relating to the history of China. Examples of keywords included ‘history’, ‘historical record’, and ‘dynasty’.

4.5.2.2 Target Culture Centric

A category of socio-cultural reasoning which comprised general references made to the target culture. It comprised five subcategories related to linguistic aspects, one to the target English speaking audience, one to the target culture in a general sense, and one to the target text. The target culture centric subcategories have been defined as thus:

Linguistics: English language in general, which includes any references to the English language, such as ‘English’, or ‘in English’.

Linguistics: sound of target language, as in references to how certain terms sound when pronounced. Examples included ‘sounds weird’, ‘natural’, and ‘sounds cooler’.

Linguistics: acceptability, which refers to the utilisation of target culture linguistic norms in translation. Typical examples included ‘acceptable’, ‘suitable’, and ‘westernised’.

Linguistics: comprehension, as in references to how well certain translations would be understood. References included ‘recognise’, ‘easy to understand’, and ‘makes sense’.

Linguistics: style, as in references to the style used in translation. Typical keywords included ‘memorable’, ‘stylish’, and ‘wordy’.

Target audience: the English-speaking audience. Examples of keywords included ‘western’, ‘English speaker’, and ‘English speaking’.

Target culture: general, a more general reference to the target culture, for example the ‘target culture’, or ‘culturally’ (based on context).

Target text: as in references to the translation, such as the ‘English version’.

4.5.2.3 Industry Centric

This is a category of socio-cultural reasoning which is reflected by general references made to the industry. Three subcategories were related to different aspects of industry practice, and two were related to roles of individuals or groups. The industry centric subfactors have been defined as follows:

Practice: internet research, as in the use of internet browsers. Keywords included the likes of ‘Wikipedia’, ‘Google’, and ‘search engine’.

Practice: translation technology, which involves the use of computer assisted translation (CAT) tools, such as ‘memoQ’.

Practice: established translations, as in translations that have been established and are already in use. This can be in other video games, or other forms of media. Examples of keywords included ‘established’, ‘commonly used’, and ‘pre-existing translations’.

Roles: client, as in the client who has commissioned this project, reflected in keywords such as ‘client’, and ‘company’.

Roles: practitioners, as in the linguists. Instances included ‘translators’, ‘reviewers’, and ‘linguists’.

4.5.2.4 Game Centric

This type of socio-cultural reasoning was reflected via general references made to other video games, which can be considered a form of intramediality, and the act of video gaming. The subcategories were related to games as a product, players of games, interactivity in video games, the in-game environment, items within games, and the different types of text locations within a game. The subcategories have been defined as follows:

Games: as in the video game text being translated, or any other video game. For example, ‘video games’, ‘game’, and *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo, 2020).

Players: players of video games. This included keywords such as ‘players’, ‘gamers’, and the ‘gaming community’.

Interactivity: any reference to interactivity, functionality, and the act of playing video games. Typical keywords included ‘functional’, ‘interactive’, and ‘gameplay’.

Game environment: the in-game virtual environment. References included ‘immersive’, ‘world-building’, and ‘quest’.

Game items: any items that can be stored, used, or traded within video games. For instance, ‘quest item’, ‘inventory’, and ‘HP potion’ (HP stands for health points).

Game text: text to be translated and was referenced in keywords such as ‘dialogue’, text in the ‘user interface’ (UI), or ‘menus’.

4.5.2.5 Integrated Framework of Socio-cultural Categories of Reasoning of the Video Game Translational Habitus

The main categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning behind the selection of translation strategies and approaches have been placed together in the framework below (table 4.20), which is a visual representation of habitus, a strategy forming mechanism, of the linguists.

Source Culture Centric	Target Culture Centric	Industry Centric	Game Centric
Linguistics: Chinese language in general	Linguistics: English language in general	Practice: internet research	Games
Linguistics: use of pinyin	Linguistics: sound of target language	Practice: translation technology	Players
Linguistics: adequacy	Linguistics: acceptability	Practice: established translations	Interactivity
National identity	Linguistics: comprehension	Roles: client	Game environment
Wuxia genre	Linguistics: style	Roles: practitioners	Game items
Chinese culture	Target audience		Game text
History	Target culture: general		
	Target Text		

Table 4.20 Integrated framework of socio-cultural factors and subfactors

4.6 Overview of Socio-Cultural Reasoning

When responding to interview questions about individual categories of CSIs, individual linguists rarely referenced just one category of socio-cultural reasoning, represents a singular aspect of the habitus, but often referenced multiple categories of socio-cultural reasoning in a single response, revealing how multiple aspects of the habitus linked together in a more complex socio-cultural web of reasoning. The chart below (figure 4.3) provides an overview of how many different categories of socio-cultural reasoning were referenced by individual participants in connection to the approaches used for translating categories of CSIs. Blue indicates *target culture centric* references, orange is for *game centric*, grey is for *source culture*

centric, and yellow is for *industry centric*. This presentation of how the four categories of socio-cultural reasoning link to the thirteen categories of CSIs has been generated by recording each keyword in the transcripts, which belong to individual subcategories, that aligned with one of the main categories of socio-cultural reasoning.

Moreover, when responding to a question about a single CSI category, whether a linguist referenced one of the four main categories of socio-cultural reasoning once or multiple times, it will only be counted once per linguist, per category, to indicate it was part of the thought process. Thus, in response to a single question, whether a linguist mentioned the keyword 'game', linked to the subfactor of 'Games', one time, or several times, or any other subfactor linked to the game centric factor, these results will indicate that this category of socio-cultural reasoning, which in this case is *game centric*, was referenced in relation to the category of CSI. This is because this analysis is concerned with qualitative data, comprised of the logic and reasoning of the linguists, revealing how the socio-cultural phenomena influence the translation decisions, and how the categories of socio-cultural reasoning relate to one another. As such, focus has been placed on whether the four main categories of socio-cultural reasoning have been referenced, in the responses made by the linguists, in connection to individual categories of CSIs, as opposed to a more quantitative focus recording how many times each linguist referenced each keyword.

This is because while the potency of translation action, in terms of being source culture adequate or target culture acceptable can be measured, via the normative scale, it is not possible to measure the weight of the thoughts of the linguists in the same way. As such, the main purpose of this data is to better contextualise and explain the existing normative data. Thus, the focus is more on whether a specific factor was part of the thought process. Consequently, the maximum number of times a socio-cultural factor could be counted per category (in the coloured blocks of the table below) would be eight (one for each linguist).

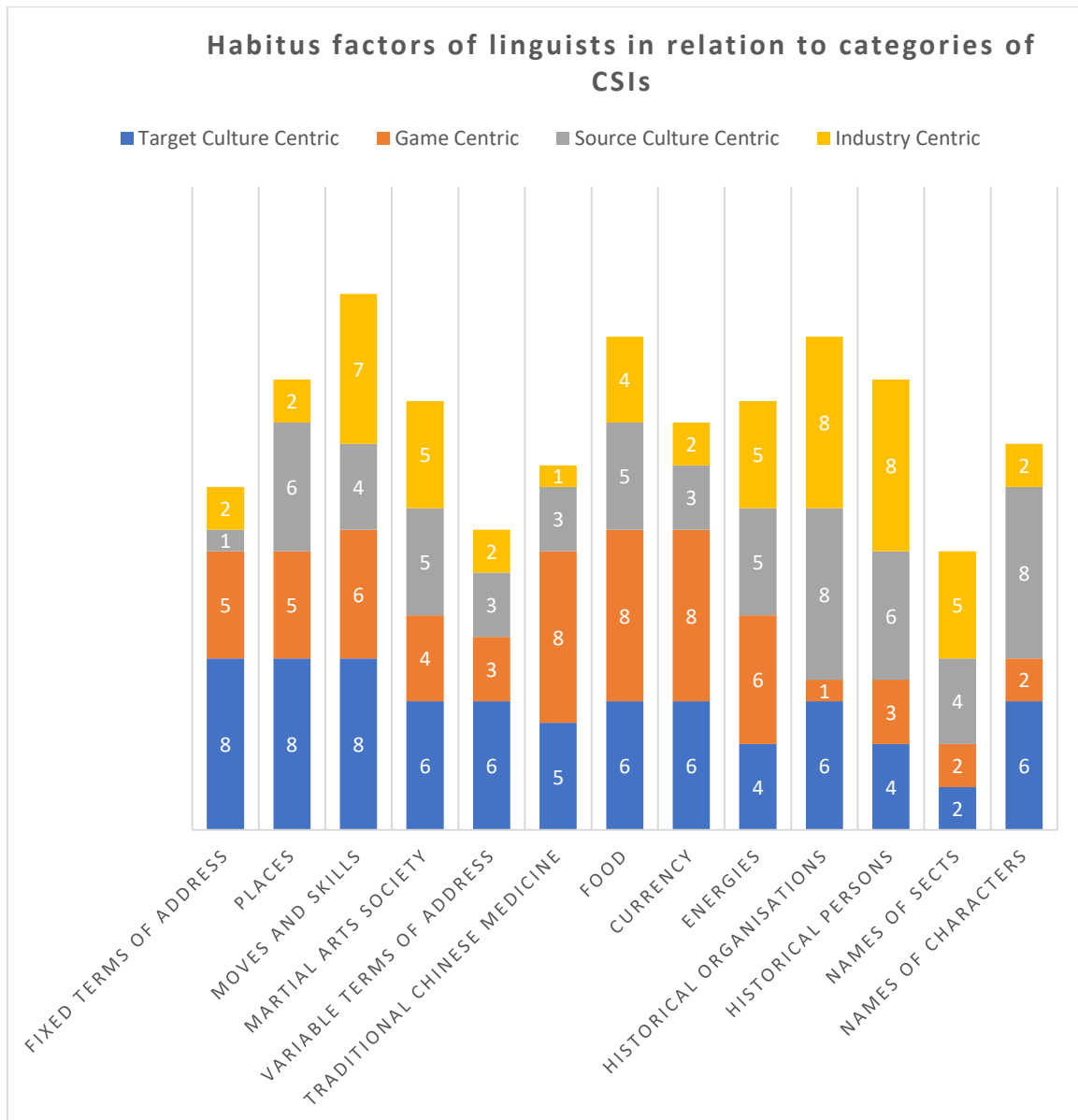


Figure 4.3 Socio-cultural Factors of Linguists in Relation to the 13 Categories of MI-CSI

The chart shows that all CSIs were linked to all categories of socio-cultural reasoning, but that those links were created by different numbers of linguists, and therefore carried different levels of influence on a wider scale. For instance, while one linguist linked source culture reasoning (grey) to the translation of *Fixed Terms of Address*, which carried very little weight in terms of reasoning at the agency level, eight linguists linked target culture centric reasoning (blue) to *Fixed Terms of Address*, *Places*, and *Moves and Skills*, meaning this carried a lot of weight in the decision-making process. While this example broadly demonstrates how different categories were subject to different combinations of socio-cultural reasoning, there will be a full analysis of how socio-cultural reasoning was linked to all categories CSIs (see 4.7 below).

However, focusing on the general trends in figure 4.3 above, it can be observed that the CSIs most strongly linked to target culture centric reasoning (blue): *Fixed Terms of Address*, *Places, Moves and Skills*, *Martial Arts Society*, and *Variable Terms of Address*, were connected to all other categories of reasoning. For these CSIs, there were instances where the second most referenced category of socio-cultural reasoning was source culture centric, or industry centric; however, the most consistent secondary connection was with game centric reasoning, as typically referenced by more than half the linguists in connection to CSIs primarily linked to target culture centric reasoning. The second most referenced category of socio-cultural reasoning was game centric, and this was primarily linked to the translation of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, *Food*, *Currency*, and *Energy and Inner Power*. In three of these CSIs, the second most referenced category of reasoning was target culture centric. This indicates a trend, where target culture centric reasoning is strongest, game centric reasoning is consistently present, and when game centric reasoning is strongest, the second strongest form of reasoning is typically target culture centric. Three categories of CSIs were primarily linked to industry centric reasoning: *Historical Organisations*, *Historical Figures*, and *Fictional Sects*. Moreover, in all three instances, the second most referenced category of reasoning was source culture centric, which indicates another trend pairing strong industry centric and source culture centric reasoning. However, for the one category of CSI most strongly linked to source culture centric reasoning: *Names of Characters*, the second most strongly referenced category of reasoning was target culture centric.

Table 4.3 has therefore broadly shown that the linguists were influenced by a collection of four categories of socio-cultural reasoning for each CSI, and that groups of CSIs were subject to similar combinations of socio-cultural reasoning, which, on the surface, addresses the second research question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’ – as it shows that the linguists select translation approaches based on different combinations of the four different types of socio-cultural reasoning. However, a deeper engagement with this research question requires the analysis of how the different categories of socio-cultural reasoning were linked to individual categories of CSIs. This can shed more light on the general trends of how certain categories of socio-cultural reasoning such as target culture centric and game centric reasoning were more strongly linked to some CSIs, whereas others were more strongly linked to industry centric and source culture centric reasoning.

4.7 Analysis of Socio-Cultural Reasoning in Relation to the Categories of CSIs

It was found that certain types of socio-cultural reasoning, as presented in the interviews, were more strongly linked to certain categories of CSIs (as shown in figure 4.3 above). As such, the analysis of interview data, linking reasoning to CSIs, will be structured in terms of how the thirteen categories of CSIs primarily aligned with each of the four categories of socio-cultural reasoning. In other words, the analysis will follow the same order of CSIs as presented in figure 4.3, starting from CSIs primarily linked to target culture acceptable reasoning, such as *Fixed Terms of Address*, until the last category of CSI, *Names of Characters*, which was primarily linked to source culture centric reasoning. By analysing the thirteen categories in accordance with the strongest forms of socio-cultural reasoning to which they have been subject, it will be easier to identify any patterns in socio-cultural reasoning.

The analysis of each category of CSI is based on the interview data and indicates how many references were made to the main categories of socio-cultural reasoning, which is contextualised by the inclusion of the relevant subcategories. This data will be presented in tables, as demonstrated in the methodology (table 3.18). Accordingly, the data will be supported by key excerpts from the interviews that include keywords (which will be underlined for clarity), and highlight the most representative trends, and other socio-cultural factors that can provide a deeper analysis of the second research question of ‘why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?’.

4.7.1 Target Culture Centric Reasoning

During the interviews, the linguists referenced this category of socio-cultural reasoning most overall, with more than half the linguists connecting this to ten of the categories of CSIs (see figure 4.3 above). Moreover, it was most referenced for five of the categories: *Fixed Terms of Address*, *Places, Moves and Skills*, *Martial Arts Society*, and *Variable Terms of Address*.

4.7.1.1 Fixed Terms of Address

It was found that during the interviews all eight linguists linked the translation of this CSI, which was used to address individuals based on fixed professional titles, to target culture centric reasoning, and just over half linked it to game centric reasoning. However, only two linguists linked the translation of this CSI to industry centric reasoning, and one to source culture centric reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Target audience (5) Linguistics: English language in general (5) Linguistics: sound of target language (3) Linguistics: comprehension (2)	Target culture centric (8)
Players (3) Games (3)	Game centric (5)
Practice: established translations (2)	Industry centric (2)
Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	Source culture centric (1)

Table 3.14 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for fixed terms of address

The interview data revealed that the most referenced subcategories were *target audience*, and *linguistics: English language in general*, which were both target culture centric. Often *target audience* was referenced in connection with other target culture centric subfactors, such as *linguistics: comprehension*, and *linguistics sound of target language*. For example, Translator Two stated that a target culture appropriate approach was used because ‘It’s easier for the reader to understand’, where ‘reader’ was linked to the subcategory of target audience, and ‘understand’ was linked to the *linguistics: comprehension*, which were both target culture centric. Furthermore, Reviewer Four remarked ‘in general, I will try to go for something that’s more natural. That might be usually known to the English speakers.’ In this sense, ‘natural’ was linked to *linguistics: sound of the target language*, and ‘English speakers’ was linked to *target audience*, which were also both target culture centric. This demonstrates how the linguists have frequently utilised different forms of target culture centric reasoning when translating *Fixed Terms of Address*.

However, on several occasions the linguists also linked target culture centric reasoning to other categories of reasoning, which was most commonly game centric. Thus, when asked about why a certain approach was used, Translator One commented ‘I wanted to be able to give the player or reader a certain point of reference’. In this instance, ‘player’ was linked to the game centric subcategory of *players*, whereas ‘reader’ was linked to the target culture centric subcategory of *target audience*. Both Reviewer Two, and Reviewer Three referred to the target audience as ‘gamers’ or ‘players’, which indicated how the linguists view the target audience as not just readers but also players who interact with the product. Moreover, Reviewer Three explained the reasoning against using literal translations, which can be longer, stating ‘that for

a game, it might be too wordy and hard for the player to read, especially sometimes when we have no idea how long the subtitles are appearing on the screen or what the character limit is’. Not only does this link target culture centric reasoning with game centric reasoning, but it also demonstrates how the linguists need to consider spatial and temporal restrictions, even when they are unclear. Regarding industry centric reasoning, there were only two references focusing on *practice: common usage*, and only one reference to the source culture centric sub factor *linguistics: Chinese language in general*. As such, the translation of this category was primarily linked to target culture centric reasoning, and this was frequently supported by links to game centric reasoning.

4.7.1.2 Places

In the interviews, all linguists also linked the translation of this category to target culture centric reasoning. Furthermore, six linked the translation of this CSI to source culture centric reasoning, five to game centric reasoning, and only two linguists linked this to industry centric reasoning. As such, this category was linked to a wider web of reasoning, primarily derived from target culture centric reasoning, but also strongly supported by both source culture centric, and game centric reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Linguistics: style (4) Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: English language in general (2) Target Audience (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1)	Target culture centric (8)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (6) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	Source culture centric (6)
Players (4) Games (2) Interactivity (2)	Game centric (5)
Practice: established translations (1) Practice: internet research (1) Roles: practitioners (1)	Industry centric (2)

Table 4.22 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for places

The interview data revealed that target culture centric reasoning was referenced the most, and this typically involved subcategories related to linguistics. For example, when explaining why one component of an entry was translated with a more target culture acceptable approach, Reviewer Three stated, ‘because that’s, something that the English audience will be able to identify with’, and ‘because it sounded more, I would say stylish’. The keyword ‘English audience’ was linked to the subcategory of *linguistics: target audience*, ‘identify’ was linked to *linguistics: comprehension*, ‘sounded’ was linked to *linguistics: sound of target language*, and ‘style’ was linked to *linguistics: style*. This demonstrates how various subcategories of target culture centric reasoning can be linked. Most linguists linked similar combinations target culture centric subfactors.

While the target culture centric category was referenced the most, the most referenced individual subcategory was *linguistics: use of pinyin*, which was source culture centric, which was mentioned by six linguists. Each reference of pinyin was linked to target culture centric subcategories. For instance, Reviewer One commented ‘I would probably leave it as pinyin, but [...] if there’s an English equivalent, I will translate it as the equivalent’. As such, ‘pinyin’ was linked to the subcategory of *linguistics: use of pinyin*, but ‘English equivalent’, and ‘equivalent’ were both linked to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: acceptability*; however, as it was the same linguist who referenced the same subcategory by two different keywords, and as per the qualitative focus of this analysis, as explained in 4.6, it was only counted as a single reference to this subcategory by a single linguist, as shown in table 4.22. In terms of reasoning, this demonstrated how subcategories belonging to different cultural categories (source culture centric and target culture centric) were combined, as the use of pinyin, indicating source culture centric reasoning, was balanced against the pursuit of equivalence in the target culture, which indicated target culture centric reasoning.

With five references, game centric reasoning was also referenced alongside target culture centric reasoning in most interview responses. For instance, when asked why a more target culture acceptable strategy was used for one entry, Reviewer One continued ‘So, at least the player will understand what kind of location it is referring to.’ As with the previous category of CSIs, Fixed Terns of Address, there appears to be a common link between strong game centric, and target culture centric reasoning.

4.7.1.3 Moves and Skills

Once more, all linguists linked the translation of this category of CSI to target culture centric reasoning. However, this time, seven linguists also linked its translation to industry centric reasoning. The game centric factor was still important, with six references, and the source culture centric factor was referenced by four, representing half of the group. Thus, at least half the linguists have linked this CSI with all four categories of socio-cultural reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Linguistics: sound of target language (5) Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: style (2) Linguistics: English language in general (1) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Target audience (1)	Target culture centric (8)
Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (2) Roles: practitioners (1)	Industry centric (7)
Interactivity (6) Games (3) Players (1)	Game centric (6)
Wuxia genre (2) Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) National Identity (1) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	Source culture centric (4)

Table 4.23 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for moves and skills

Once more, the data, as shown in table 4.23, shows that all linguists referenced subcategories linked to target culture centric reasoning. However, this time, the general reasoning was also strongly linked to a range of subcategories belonging to industry centric, and game centric subcategories. The most common connection between the categories of socio-cultural reasoning, as present in the responses of five linguists, was forged between target culture centric subcategories relating to linguistics, and the industry centric subcategory of *practice: established translations*. Thus, when asked how the translation of entries for this CSI were approached, Translator Four explained how the approaches were influenced by existing translations which could be found online ‘some of the techniques and styles are already translated on the internet’. The keyword ‘already translated’ was linked to the subcategory of

practice: established translations, and ‘internet’ was linked to the subcategory of *practice: internet research*, which were both industry centric. Additionally, Translator Four continued to link this to both the target culture linguistic consideration of *comprehension*, and the game centric subfactor of *players*, and stated by using these existing translations ‘players can understand the meaning’. Thus, in a single response, it was possible to reference several subcategories, belonging to three different categories of reasoning in relation to the translation of a single category of CSI.

While game centric reasoning was not the most referenced category for this CSI, the subcategory of *interactivity*, which was game centric, was referenced more than any other subcategory. This further demonstrates how target culture centric reasoning is often paired with game centric reasoning. Moreover, four linguists connected this to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: sound of target language*. For example, when asked about how the translation of this category of CSI is usually approached, Reviewer Two reported that ‘I have to go and do some research on the actual moves’, and then described the criteria of how such terms are translated ‘first of all, they can’t be too long, [...] that’s the first consideration, the second consideration is we can make them sound more appealing. Like, we should make them sound cooler.’ In this response, the linguist used the keyword ‘moves’, which was linked to the game centric subcategory of *interactivity*, as the moves represent a physical motion within the game (in this case a simulated game text). Furthermore, this was also linked to the keywords of ‘too long’, ‘sound’, ‘appealing’, and ‘sound cooler’, which belong to the subcategory of *linguistics: sound of target language*. Moreover, the reference to the length of the term can also be considered a consideration of the client brief, which stated that there were no specific character limits, but the linguists were encouraged to keep translations clear and concise. In this sense, it can be considered an internalised way of working with texts that need to smoothly correspond with the audio, visual, and interactive elements of the final game. Additionally, there was also the reference to ‘research’, which was industry centric. It can therefore be observed that the translation of this CSI was more strongly subject to a web of socio-cultural reasoning, which centred on interaction, how the terms sound in English, and the existence of established translations.

While this category relates to Chinese martial arts both from the real world and the fictional world of the wuxia genre, source culture centric reasoning was referenced the least. There were only two references to the subcategory of *wuxia genre*, and yet there were five to the industry centric subcategory of *practice: established translations*. This indicates that for

this CSI, more linguists prioritised industry centric reasoning than source culture centric reasoning. Furthermore, while only two of the five entries for this category were interactive (see 4.3.1.6), there were more references to game centric subcategory of interactivity than any other subfactor, which indicates the importance of interactivity to the linguists.

4.7.1.4 Martial Arts Society

The data collected from the interviews shows that while the linguists primarily linked the translation of this category to target culture centric reasoning, as referenced by six linguists, the other categories of reasoning received a similar level of acknowledgement. Thus, five linguists linked the translation of this category to source culture centric, and industry centric reasoning, and four linguists linked it to game centric reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Target audience (4) Linguistics: comprehension (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1)	Target culture centric (6)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (4) Chinese culture (2) Wuxia genre (2) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	Source culture centric (5)
Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (2)	Industry centric (5)
Players (3) Games (1) Interactivity (1)	Game centric (4)

Table 4.24 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for martial arts society

The linguists mostly connected the translation of this category of CSI with target culture centric reasoning. Table 4.24 shows how this was accomplished via a collection of target culture centric subcategories related to different aspects of linguistics, or the *target audience*. Despite this, the most individually referenced subcategory was *practice: established translations*, which was industry centric. As such, the linguists commonly linked target culture centric and industry centric reasoning for this CSI. For example, when asked about the translation approaches used for this category, Reviewer One stated ‘for jianghu, we would translate it to pugilistic world,

because it's established. I mean, it's widely accepted as the term for jianghu'. This shows how the industry centric subcategory of *practice: established translations* coded from the keyword 'established' and the target culture centric subcategory *linguistics: acceptability*, which was coded from 'accepted' can be linked.

Moreover, source culture centric reasoning was also commonly referenced in conjunction with the target culture centric subcategories, and an industry centric subcategory. For instance, in response to a question about which approach was used for this CSI, Translator One stated that for this category, there is a 'largely established canon for this genre', and that 'if it's something that the fans of this genre already recognise and acknowledge as part of the canon, then I'm hesitant to change it'. In this regard, the linguist had referenced target culture centric subfactor of *linguistics: comprehension* via the keyword of 'recognise', and *linguistics: acceptability* via the keyword of 'acknowledge'. Additionally, source culture centric reasoning was referenced via the keyword of 'genre', relating to the wuxia genre, and this was tied to the keyword 'established canon', which belonged to the industry centric subcategory of *practice: established translations*. This adherence to the existing canon of translated works, originating from wuxia fiction, but that have spread to other forms of media, such as TV series, films, and indeed, other video games, was also present in the previous category of *Moves and Skills*. However, while *practice: established translations* was referenced by five linguists, the wuxia genre was only referenced by two, which appears to be a trend in which linguists prioritise industry centric reasoning over source culture centric reasoning when it comes to highly culturally specific items belonging to the wuxia genre of fiction.

Despite these observances of the less dominant categories of reasoning for this CSI, for the translation of entries for *Martial Arts Society*, the linguists have still primarily referenced target culture centric reasoning, but it was also strongly supported by source culture centric, and industry centric subcategories, once more demonstrating the interrelated nature of the socio-cultural categories or reasoning, which represent the habitus of the linguists.

4.7.1.5 Variable Terms of Address

This category of CSI was primarily linked to target culture centric reasoning, by six linguists. However, the other categories of reasoning were referenced considerably less. Three linguists linked the translation of this CSI to game centric, and source culture centric reasoning respectively, and only two linked its translation to the industry centric factor.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Linguistics: style (3) Target audience (2) Linguistics: English language in general (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1)	Target culture centric (6)
Players (3) Games (1)	Game Centric (3)
Chinese culture (2) Wuxia genre (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	Source culture centric (3)
Practice: established translations (1) Roles: practitioners (1)	Industry centric (2)

Table 4.25 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for variable terms of address

In the interviews, the linguists primarily linked the translation of this CSI to target culture centric reasoning, and four of the six linguists who referenced this socio-cultural category, did not connect it with any other category. For example, when asked how the translation of this category of CSI was approached, Reviewer One commented that most of these terms of address were translated into simpler forms such as ‘you’ or ‘I’, as ‘it’s easier to understand’, and that in similar terms of address in English, there would not be the same sense of ‘hierarchy or respectful terminology’. In this sense, the keyword ‘understand’ was linked to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. This illustrates how linguists were aware of hierarchical relevance of these *Variable Terms of Address*, and how the Confucian hierarchical structures stemming from Chinese culture, inherent with the historical and fictional roots of the wuxia genre, differ from those of Anglophone cultures, and could if translated more directly, or literally, create problems of comprehension, and have therefore opted to remove the differing and more nuanced sense of formality which was a typical feature of the source text, for a smoother experience. This further demonstrates how linguists have prioritised the ability of the target audience to smoothly comprehend the target text dialogues, utilising what they consider to be more audience friendly translation, which do not contain the same hierarchical connotations of the source language terms. In this sense the potential ideological impact of Confucian ideological concepts have been reduced, even though the linguists did not directly voice any desire to prevent the replication of aspects of Confucian ideological concepts in the translations.

Similarly, in response to the same question, Reviewer Two stated that more literal translations would not be suitable, as they could lead to misunderstanding, and that ‘you’ve got to think of how people usually address the other party, in English’, as well as suggesting that a ‘medieval touch’ would be more suitable here. Both keywords were associated with target culture centric reasoning, as ‘English’ was linked to the subcategory of *linguistics: target language* in general, and ‘medieval touch’ was linked to the subcategory of *linguistics: style*. While Reviewer Two did not explicitly refer to the historical source culture setting of the game, the fact that medieval touch was mentioned implied that it had been part of the thought process. This indicates that just because something is not verbalised, it does not exclude it from the thought process.

The other categories of socio-cultural reasoning had a similarly low level of acknowledgement among the linguists for the translation of *Variable Terms of Address*, consisting of mostly one or two references among the entire groups of linguists to the subcategories shown in figure 4.2.5. This clearly shows how target culture centric reasoning was more of a driving force in the decision-making process, and that it is also possible for translation decisions to be based more clearly upon one category of reasoning, rather than several categories with similar strengths.

4.7.1.6 Target Culture Centric Reasoning Summary

Four of the five the categories of CSIs primarily linked to target culture centric reasoning, were also strongly connected to other categories of socio-cultural reasoning. Thus, *Fixed Terms of Address* was also strongly linked to game centric reasoning; *Places* was also strongly linked to source culture centric, and game centric reasoning; *Moves and Skills* was also strongly linked to industry centric, and game centric reasoning, and *Martial Arts Society* was also strongly linked to the source culture centric, and industry centric reasoning. However, for *Variable Terms of Address*, the only strong form of reasoning was target culture centric. As such, the general trend for CSIs linked most strongly to target culture centric reasoning is that they were also subject to a more complex range of socio-cultural phenomena, and in most cases, game centric reasoning was also strongly referenced.

4.7.2 Game Centric Reasoning

This category of socio-cultural reasoning was the second most referenced among the linguists during the interviews. However, unlike target culture centric reasoning, that was strongly referenced across a greater section of CSIs, as over half the linguists connected it to eleven of

the thirteen categories of CSIs, game centric reasoning was only referenced by over half the linguists in relation to six categories of CSIs. However, for four of those categories of CSIs: *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, *Food*, *Currency*, and *Energies*, it was referenced more than any other form of reasoning.

4.7.2.1 *Traditional Chinese Medicine*

There were two types of entry in this category, one for usable items that the player can use, of which there was only one, and the other was for quest items, that can only be found and given to NPCs to further the plot. Therefore, the usable item was more interactive than the quest items. All linguists linked the translation of this category to game centric reasoning. Target culture centric reasoning was also referenced five times in the interviews, representing just over half the linguists. However, only two linguists linked this with source culture centric reasoning, and only one referenced industry centric reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Factors (number of linguists)
Interactivity (6) Game items (5) Players (4) Games (2)	Game centric (8)
Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (1) Linguistics: English language in general (1) Target audience (1)	Target culture centric (5)
Linguistics: adequacy (1) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: use of pinyin (1)	Source culture centric (3)
Practice: established translations (1)	Industry centric (1)

Table 4.26 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for traditional Chinese medicine

It was found that all linguists linked the translation of this category of CSI to game centric reasoning, and this was mainly via the subcategories of *interactivity*, *game items*, and *players*. Interactivity was a priority when translating items of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, as when asked about what approach was typically used for this category of CSI, Reviewer One stated, ‘my approach is to translate it to be functional’. The keyword ‘functional’ was linked to the subcategory of *interactivity*. Moreover, in response to the same question, Translator Two

explained that ‘Medicine items are more functional’, and that functionality meant ‘not leaving it in pinyin’. In this instance, the keyword of ‘functional’ was linked to ‘item’, which belonged to the subcategory of *game items*, which was also game centric; however, this was also linked to the keyword of ‘pinyin’, belonging to a source culture centric subcategory, but only in the sense that source culture adequate approaches using pinyin would not be suitable for functional items. This is significant, as it shows how the linguists can prioritise the interactive qualities of some CSIs over more source culture adequate approaches, that could potentially be more in-line with the client brief, which advocated for an approach that reflects the spirit and tone of the wuxia genre in terms of its historical and literary context.

The game centric subcategory of *players* was also frequently referenced, and linked to other game centric subcategories, as well as the linguistic target culture centric subcategories of *comprehension* and *style*. For example, when explaining their answer, Reviewer Two elaborated ‘this is a game we’re talking about, so it’s going to be played by western players [...]. If you translate the name of a healing item, as something super convoluted and long, people are not going to understand that this is just an HP potion’. This example demonstrates how game centric reasoning is of central importance to the linguists for categories that perform a function and are therefore linked to interactivity, and how the game is played, as evidenced by the keywords of ‘game’, ‘play’, and ‘players’, which were all game centric. Moreover, there was also a link between interactivity and target culture comprehension, as indicated by the presence of ‘understand’, and ‘convoluted’, belonging to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. This shows how the linguist felt that it was important for players to understand the nature of the interactions. However, there were fewer references to the other two categories of socio-cultural reasoning for this category of CSI. This was unusual, as this category of CSI had five entries, and only one of them was for an item could be used by the players and was thus more interactive. Yet, despite this, the linguists have responded more in relation to this one interactive entry than for the other four less interactive items.

4.7.2.2 Food

This category of CSI was for food items that can be consumed by the player. As with the previous category, during the interviews all linguists linked the translation of this CSI to game centric reasoning. However, this time both the target culture centric and source culture centric reasoning were referenced by six linguists, and industry centric reasoning was referenced by four.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Factors (number of linguists)
Game items (7) Players (5) Interactivity (4) Games (2) Game environment (2)	Game centric (8)
Linguistic: comprehension (5) Linguistics: English language in general (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: acceptability: (1) Target audience (1)	Target culture centric (6)
Wuxia genre (2) Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) Linguistics: adequacy (1) National identity (1)	Source culture centric (6)
Practice: internet research (3) Practice: established translations (2)	Industry centric (4)

Table 4.27 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for food

As with the CSI category of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, the category of *Food* was also primarily linked to game centric and target culture centric reasoning. It was found that in this instance there were even stronger connections between game centric and target culture centric reasoning, and this was typically forged by the connection of the game centric subcategories of *game items*, *players*, and *interactivity*, with the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. For example, when asked why they used a certain approach, Translator Three explained that when translating the single entry for *Food* ‘it’s [...] an item that players can use in the game, so it’s more like for functional purposes’, which closely echoes the explanations linguists gave for *Traditional Chinese Medicine*. As such, the same linguist continued to reason that the use of pinyin would result in something less memorable, but a literal translation would be too long ‘the name would be very long if you try to translate it word for word’, which further demonstrates how the linguists were paying attention to spatial considerations. Moreover, the linguist continued to elaborate on how the functionality of the item is something that players should ‘definitely recognise [...] from the name’. In this regard, functionality and player comprehension emerge as the driving forces behind the translation approach, and while pinyin was mentioned, it was deemed unsuitable.

This, as with the analysis of the previous category of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, indicates a trend in which linguists place interactivity above more source culture centric concerns regarding, for instance the use of transliteration via pinyin, which may better fit the instructions of the style guide. Moreover, the other linguists made similar links between game centric subcategories and the target culture subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*, which suggests a strong connection between play and comprehension.

4.7.2.3 Currency

This CSI was for currency that can be used to purchase items within the game. The analysis of the interviews revealed that the socio-cultural reasoning behind its approach matched that of the previous two categories of CSIs (*Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Food*). As such, game centric reasoning was referenced by all eight linguists, and again, this was strongly supported by target culture centric reasoning. However, the other categories of reasoning were referenced significantly less, with three references to source culture centric reasoning, and only two for industry centric reasoning.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Factors (number of linguists)
Interactivity (6) Game items (6) Player: people who play games (4)	Game centric (8)
Linguistics: comprehension (4) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: style (2) Target audience (1)	Target culture centric (6)
Linguistics: adequacy (1) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: use of pinyin (1)	Source culture centric (3)
Practice: established translations (2) Practice: translation technology (1)	Industry centric (2)

Table 4.28 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for currency

It was found that for most linguists, game centric reasoning was referenced via *interactivity*, as well as *game items*, and these were often connected to the target culture centric subcategories of *linguistics: comprehension*, which matches the previous categories of CSIs with entries that were more interactive. For instance, when asked about the approach used for translating this type of CSI, Reviewer Three stated that when translating the entry for *Currency*,

the focus was on ‘interactivity as well as familiarity’. Furthermore, the same linguist continued to explain that items like currency need to be ‘easy to understand’ and need to ‘sound less confusing’. In this sense, ‘interactivity’ was game centric, and the keywords of ‘familiarity’, ‘confusing’, and ‘understand’ were all linked to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*, which, as observed in the last three categories of CSIs, was a common combination of socio-cultural reasoning for these more interactive CSIs. Similarly, most of the linguists linked game centric subfactors with target culture centric subfactors for this CSI.

4.7.2.4 Energies

This category of CSI was for different types of energies connected to martial arts, as well as TCM concepts, that belonged to the wuxia genre. While there were four CSI entries, only two had interactive properties connected to player attributes, whereas the other two were not interactive, and related to dialogue or the plot. Again, game centric reasoning was still the most prominent, as referenced by six linguists, yet this time, source culture centric reasoning came a close second, as referenced by five linguists. Moreover, the other two categories of reasoning received four references each.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Players (5) Interactivity (4) Games (2)	Game centric (6)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (4) Wuxia genre (4) Chinese culture (2)	Source culture centric (5)
Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (1) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Target audience (1)	Target culture centric (4)
Practice: established translations (4)	Industry centric (4)

Table 4.29 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for energies

It was found that while game centric reasoning was referenced the most for this CSI, and source culture centric reasoning was also strongly referenced, the strongest connection between the categories of reasoning was not in fact game centric and source culture centric. As with the previous three categories of CSIs, when linguists referenced game centric reasoning,

it tended to be more strongly paired with target culture centric reasoning. For example, when responding to the question of how this type of CSI was approached, Translator Four explained that for entries related to player attributes, the aim would be to use ‘gameplay terms, like health and energy’, as they would be ‘easier for the player to understand’. In this instance, the linguist was talking about the two more interactive of the four entries belonging to this category, which were related to the attributes of health and energy, which would be used indicate to the player the status of the playable character within the game. Other linguists made similar responses, and this formed a similar pattern of reasoning as observed in the previous three categories of CSIs, in which linguists focused on the more interactive entries.

However, the four linguists who did not reference the game centric subcategory of *interactivity* for this CSI, tended to focus more on source culture centric subfactors, such as *linguistics: use of pinyin*, and *wuxia: genre*. For example, Translator Three explained how terms transliterated via pinyin, like ‘qi’ can be used for energy, and that such decisions can better represent concepts from the ‘wuxia world’. The usage of pinyin, as suggested by the transliteration of ‘qi’ (meaning energy), belonged to the *linguistics: use of pinyin*, and ‘wuxia world’, which belonged to *wuxia genre*, were both aligned with source culture centric reasoning. This indicates how linguists more focused on interactivity tend to also consider comprehension in the target language, but when linguists do not consider interactivity, or deem it less important for a specific entry, there is a tendency to then utilise more source culture centric reasoning. It was also interesting that despite having two entries that were not interactive, the responses for this CSI mainly addressed the two more interactive entries. This indicates a similar trend with *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, in which linguists are drawn more to the interactive entries when they responded to the interview questions.

4.7.2.5 Game Centric Reasoning Summary

Three of the four categories of CSIs featured a strong connection between game centric and target culture centric reasoning. The focus tended to be on the subcategory of *interactivity* and how certain linguistic choices, more often pertaining to *comprehension* can impact the experience of the players. Thus, with more interactive CSIs, the linguists were more *game centric* in reasoning. Furthermore, while the categories of *Food*, and *Currency*, each only contained one entry, and in both instances, it was an interactive entry, the categories of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, as well as *Energies* were both populated by several non-interactive entries. Despite the non-interactive entries in these two categories, the linguists still focused more on game centric reasoning relevant to the more interactive entries. In the case of

Traditional Chinese Medicine, *interactivity* was still the most referenced subcategory, and in the case of *Energies*, a collection of game centric subcategories were still more commonly referenced than any other category of reasoning. This demonstrates how important game centric reasoning is to the linguists, and how they were more drawn to interactive entries.

4.7.3 Industry Centric Reasoning

The linguists strongly linked industry centric reasoning to five categories of CSIs. Furthermore, it was the strongest form of reasoning in connection to three categories: *Historical Organisations*, *Historical Figures*, and *Fictional Sects*, which are all either connected to the historical or fictional aspects of wuxia fiction.

4.7.3.1 Historical Organisations

This CSI was for organisations both present in wuxia fiction, but also based on the recorded history of China. While all linguists have linked the translation of this category to both industry centric, and source culture centric reasoning, table 4.30 below shows that industry centric reasoning received marginally more references in relation to individual subcategories (12), than source culture centric subcategories (10). Additionally, target culture centric reasoning came a close third, being referenced by six linguists, but game centric reasoning was only referenced by one linguist.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Practice: internet research (7) Practice: established translations (5)	Industry centric (8)
History (6) Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	Source culture centric (8)
Linguistics: comprehension (5) Linguistics: audience (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Linguistics: sound of target language (1)	Target culture centric (6)
Players (1)	Game centric (1)

Table 4.30 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for historical organisations

The results show that in the interviews, industry centric reasoning was referenced the most, in terms of the subcategories of *practice: internet research*, and *practice: established translations*, and this was often combined with the source culture centric subcategory of *history*. For example, when asked what approach was used for this category of CSI, Translator Two remarked ‘I had to use Google simply to find the most common terms’, and that this was because this was deemed ‘a historical thing’. The keywords ‘Google’ belonged to *practice: internet research*, and ‘common terms’ belonged to *practice: established translations*, which were both industry centric; however, ‘historical’ belonged to the source culture centric subcategory of *history*. This consideration of utilising established translations found online for historical terms was echoed in the responses of the other linguists. Furthermore, in five instances, the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension* was also part of the thought process. Thus, Translator One explained that for ‘anything that is historical or rooted in real-world events or places, or groups, or organisations, I try to go with what is more widely recognised among English speakers, and this is usually what you are going to find on the first page of Google’. In this single response, it can be observed how multiple categories of reasoning can be referenced, which indicates a complex relationship between socio-cultural factors, which can vary depending on the category of CSI.

It was also interesting that while this CSI was historically significant to the source culture, that the linguists linked its translation more to the industry centric subcategory of *practice: established translations* than the source culture centric subcategory of *history*. This indicates, that for the translation of this CSI, the linguists relied more on established industry translation norms than personally engaging with the source culture history and generating their own translations.

4.7.3.2 Historical Figures

This category was for the names of renowned figures from recorded Chinese history. Like the previous historical CSI, the linguists referenced industry centric reasoning the most, as referenced by seven linguists. A close second, was source culture centric reasoning, with five linguists. Target culture centric was referenced by four linguists, and game centric reasoning was only referenced by three.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Practice: internet research (6) Practice: established translations (5)	Industry centric (7)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (3) History (2) Chinese culture (1)	Source culture centric (5)
Linguistics: comprehension (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2)	Target culture centric (4)
Players (2) Games (1) Interactivity (1)	Game centric (3)

Table 4.31 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for historical figures

Table 4.31 shows that the linguists linked the translation of this CSI primarily to the industry centric subcategories of *practice: established translations*, and *practice: internet research*, which was like the previous category of *Historical Organisations*. For example, when asked about which approach was commonly used for this type of CSI, Translator Three stated, ‘I do a Google search on it to see if there is a pre-existing translation’. This practice was similarly echoed in the responses of most linguists.

While industry centric reasoning was also paired with source culture centric reasoning in five instances, further establishing these two categories of reasoning as a common pairing for CSIs related to history, this time the focus was more on the source culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: use of pinyin*, which has three references, than it was for *history*, which only had two. Hence, for this CSI, which is objectively as historically significant as the previously analysed category of *Historical Organisations*, industry centric reasoning via subcategories relating to practice was, again, deemed more important than source culture centric relating to historical significance. For instance, when responding to the same question about the approach used for this category of CSI, Translator Two stated that as ‘most of them have already been translated on wiki or something. I will adopt the most common names if possible.’, and further reasoned, ‘More often than not I use pinyin for this, so that if they do any research, they can find who is it is exactly’. This further demonstrates how the industry centric, and source culture centric reasoning can be closely linked for the translation of historical CSIs, and how established modes of practice, found on internet resources such as a ‘wiki’, were more sought when translating categories of more historical significance.

4.7.3.3 Fictional Sects

This CSI was for the names of fictional martial arts sects that exist within wuxia fiction. As with the historical CSIs, linguists primarily referenced industry centric reasoning for the translation of this CSI. Additionally, five linguists linked its translation to source culture centric reasoning. However, the other two categories of reasoning were each only referenced by two linguists.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Categories (number of linguists)
Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (4)	Industry centric (5)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (3) Wuxia genre (2)	Source culture centric (4)
Linguistics: comprehension (2) Target audience (2)	Target culture centric (2)
Players (1) Interactivity (1)	Game centric (2)

Table 4.32 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for fictional sects

Industry centric reasoning was referenced the most in connection to the translation of this CSI, and this was primarily via the subcategories of *practice: established translations*, and *practice: internet research*, which were the same two most referenced subcategories of the previous CSI, *Historical Figures*. Accordingly, when responding to a question about how this category of CSI was approached, Translator One explained ‘I actually referenced Wikipedia, as well as a few other sites to figure out what terminology they would use for these more common terms.’ Again ‘Wikipedia’, and ‘sites’ were keywords linked to the subcategory of *practice: internet research*, and ‘common’ belonged to the subcategory of *practice: established translations*, which were both industry centric. Moreover, the other linguists made similar references to using browsers and websites for established or more common translations.

However, while the previous category was related to Chinese history, this category was related to Chinese fiction. Furthermore, just as the industry centric subcategories of *practice: established translations*, and *practice: internet research* proved more important to linguists than more specific historical considerations for historical CSIs, this CSI was similarly translated with reasoning more strongly linked to the same industry centric subcategories related to practice, rather than the source culture centric subcategory of the *wuxia genre*, which was only referenced by two linguists. This further demonstrates a trend shared by CSIs of historical and

fictional significance, where reasoning is primarily industry-centric and secondarily source culture centric.

4.7.3.4 Industry Centric Reasoning Summary

From these three categories, there was a clear synergy between industry centric and source culture centric reasoning. However, the data also shows that the linguists primarily relied on industry centric reasoning that led to the utilisation of existing translations found via search engines, and that concerns over the historical or fictional qualities of the CSI were of secondary importance. In fact, this trend was also observed in some categories translated by more target culture centric approaches, such as *Moves and Skills* (4.7.1.3), and *Martial Arts Society* (4.7.1.4), where industry centric reasoning was consistently referenced more than the source culture subcategory of *wuxia genre*. This does not signify that linguists do not comprehend the importance of these source culture specific historical or fictional elements, but it does indicate that for these categories of CSIs, the linguists tend to prioritise established practices rather than directly engaging with the source culture content and generating new translations.

4.7.4 Source Culture Centric Reasoning

Source culture centric reasoning was most referenced in connection to the category of *Fictional Characters*, and the joint most referenced category of reasoning for *Historical Organisations*. However, *Historical Organisations* was covered in the industry centric section (4.7.3.1), as it received more referenced to industry centric subcategories than source culture centric subcategories. Thus, only the category of *Fictional Characters* will be analysed in this section.

4.7.4.1 Fictional Characters

This CSI was for the names of the main character and the NPCs. All eight linguists referenced source culture centric reasoning, five referenced target culture centric reasoning, and both the game centric, and industry centric categories were each referenced by two linguists.

Subcategories (number of linguists)	Factors (number of linguists)
Linguistics: use of pinyin (7) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (3) Wuxia Genre: (2) Chinese culture (1) National identity (1)	Source culture centric (8)
Linguistics: English language in general (3) Linguistics: comprehension (1) Target Audience: (1)	Target culture centric (5)
Players (2) Games (1) Game environment (1)	Game centric (2)
Practice: internet research (2)	Industry centric (2)

Table 4.33 Categories and subcategories of socio-cultural reasoning for fictional characters

All linguists linked the translation of this CSI to source culture centric reasoning, and this was mainly via the subcategories of *linguistics: use of pinyin*. Three linguists also linked the decision to use pinyin for the translation of names to deeper cultural considerations, such as the way in which it better reflects the *wuxia genre*, or how it respects *Chinese culture*, or promotes the *national identity*. For instance, when asked about how the translation of this category of CSI was approached, Translator Four stated, ‘I will just use the pinyin for the names’, and that ‘it would be more authentic even though it might be hard for westerners to understand.’ This demonstrates how some linguists were actively using pinyin to promote authenticity of the wuxia genre, despite the challenges it may pose for target culture comprehension.

However, the other four linguists who also referenced the subfactor of *linguistics: use of pinyin* did not link pinyin to any deeper cultural reasoning, and simply remarked that the names were just left in pinyin. The fact that seven linguists raised this source culture centric subcategory, and that the majority did not elaborate on why they have used pinyin indicates that the translation of *Fictional Characters*, may be subject to a more rule-like approach with generates an automatic, but less considered response.

4.7.4.2 Source Culture Centric Reasoning Summary

Fictional Characters was more a product of two categories of reasoning, source culture centric followed by target culture centric, which indicates how reasoning can be simultaneously founded on both sets of cultural and linguistic considerations. It was however unusual that so few CSIs were primarily linked to this category of socio-cultural reasoning, especially when considering the historical and fictional relevance of the wuxia genre. However, as shown in 4.7.3, this was primarily due to the trend of industry centric reasoning being slightly stronger than source culture centric reasoning for these categories of CSIs.

4.8 Summary of Categories of Socio-cultural Reasoning

The chart at beginning of this section (figure 4.3) clearly depicts that all categories of CSIs were translated based on an coalescence of all four socio-cultural categories of reasoning, which provides an answer to the second research question. Additionally, it showed how different categories of CSIs were more subject to different combinations of the four socio-cultural categories of reasoning. After a more detailed analysis of the interview data, it was found that certain subcategories of reasoning frequently appeared linked with certain types of CSIs. For instance, it was evident from section 4.7.2, that for more interactive CSIs, game centric reasoning primarily from the subcategory of *interactivity* was most often paired with the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. However, as shown in 4.7.3, when CSIs were closely linked to the historical or fictional elements of the wuxia genre, with existing translations in various forms of media, such as in novels, and television adaptations, industry centric reasoning, primarily in the form of the subcategories of *practice: internet research*, and *practice: established translations* took centre stage, but were most often paired with the source culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: pinyin*. These synergies between the socio-cultural categories of reasoning represent the reasons why the linguists used certain approaches, and will be explored further, when they are fully contextualised in relationship with the translation approaches in the discussion chapter.

4.9 Results and Analysis Summary

This analysis has addressed and provided answers to both research questions one, and two. It can therefore be stated that linguists translated the CSI categories with a collection of nineteen translation strategies that aligned with three broader cultural approaches: source culture adequate, target culture acceptable, and source and target culture mixed. Furthermore, the linguists primarily used source culture adequate approaches, followed by target culture

acceptable approaches, and on some occasions, source and target culture mixed approaches in accordance with the different categories of CSIs.

In terms of why linguists utilised certain approaches, it was observed that they provided a complex collection of socio-cultural reasons for utilising these approaches, which manifested in the interviews via a large collection of key words, grouped into twenty-six subcategories, which aligned with four main categories of socio-cultural reasoning: target culture centric, source culture centric, game centric, and industry centric. While all four categories of socio-cultural reasoning were linked to the translation of all thirteen categories of CSIs, it was found that certain synergies formed between different categories of reasoning in relation to different CSIs, as summarised in 4.8 above.

Addressing research questions one and two has revealed two bodies of findings, one related to translation behaviour, and the other, to socio-cultural reasoning. As such, the following chapter will address the third research question of ‘what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?’. This will entail integrating both sets of findings to reveal the deeper connections than run between approaches and reasoning in relation to different categories of CSIs.

Chapter 5. Discussion

This chapter constructs a narrative that investigates the third research question of ‘what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?’. As established in chapter four (4.1-4.4), the linguists used a variety of translation strategies, aligned with three main cultural approaches of source culture adequate, source and target culture mixed, and target culture acceptable, in the translation of the thirteen categories of CSIs. Furthermore, as shown in (4.5-4.8) the translation of all categories of CSIs, were linked to all four different categories of socio-cultural reasoning: source culture centric, target culture centric, industry centric, and game centric. In the broadest sense, when considering the connections between the socio-cultural categories of reasoning and normative approaches in relation to all thirteen categories of CSIs, the general overview is that of a nebulous network of connections, as depicted in the image below.

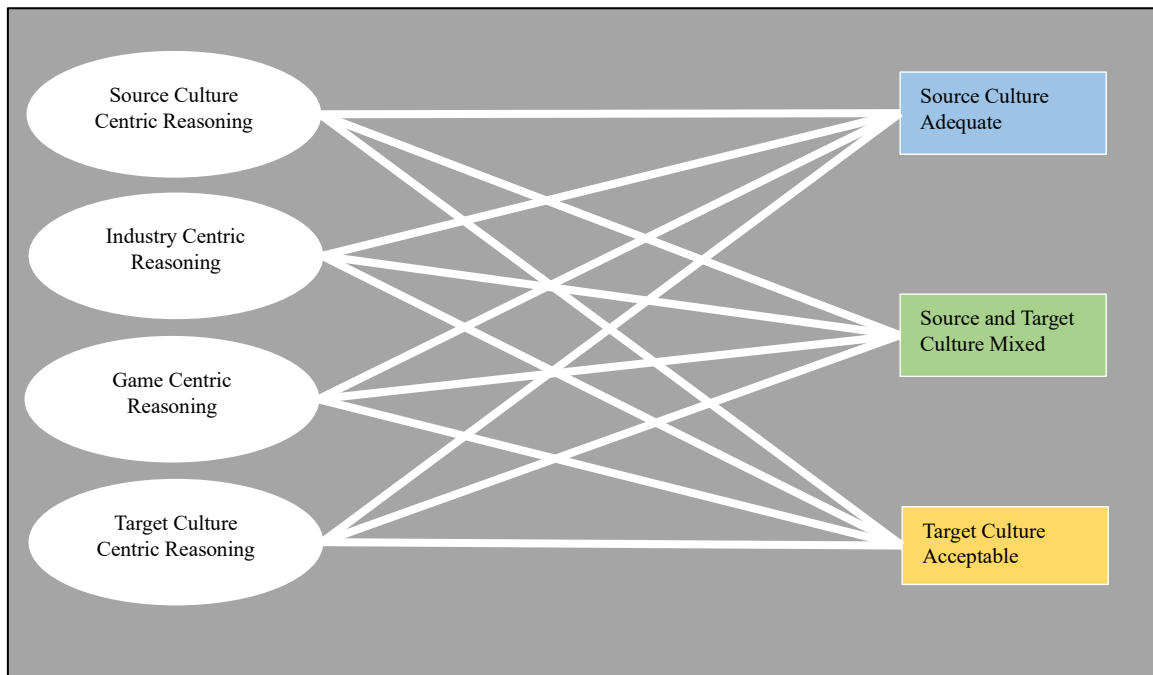


Figure 5.1 Simplified network of connections between socio-cultural reasoning and cultural approaches

However, the finer grained analysis of the translation behaviour revealed that different CSIs were translated more often with different cultural approaches. Moreover, the analysis of the reasons linked to the translation of these CSIs also demonstrated that different categories of socio-cultural reasoning were linked more strongly to different categories of CSIs. Indeed, the analysis of translation behaviour, and socio-cultural reasoning, linked to the thirteen categories

of CSIs represented an untangling and sorting of the socio-cultural reasoning, and translation behaviour depicted in the simplified network graphic of Figure 5.1 above.

By contextualising the connections between socio-cultural reasoning, and translation behaviour, it was possible to reveal how beneath a surface of primarily culturally dichotic translation outcomes, mostly source culture adequate, or target culture acceptable, lie synergistic relationships between categories of socio-cultural reasoning responsible for the utilisation of different translation approaches, depending on the nature of the CSIs. Figure 5.2 below depicts this deeper level of untangling and sorting, in other words a contextualisation, of reasoning and translation behaviour, based on the nature of the CSIs, the typical patterns of socio-cultural reasoning, and the typical normative translation outcomes. The (+) symbols represent how the nature of the CSIs, and the patterns of socio-cultural reasoning influence the use of more source culture adequate, or target culture acceptable approaches.

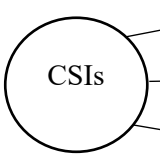
Nature of CSIs	Patterns of Socio-cultural Reasoning	Normative Translation Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less interactive - Stronger intermedial influence <p>(+)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any combination of reasoning, but often strong synergies between Industry Centric & Source culture Centric Reasoning <p>(+)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger Source Culture Adequate Approaches
<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>CSIs</p> </div>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less interactive CSIs - Partially interactive CSIs related to locations - More interactive CSIs - Resists Source Culture Adequate approaches
<p>(+)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More interactive - Resist source culture adequate approaches 	<p>(+)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Often strong synergies between Game Centric & Target culture Centric Reasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger Target Culture Acceptable Approaches

Figure 5.2 Overview of Patterns of socio-cultural reasoning and cultural normative outcomes in relation to categories of CSIs

As depicted in figure 5.2, the nature of the CSIs, and the patterns of socio-cultural reasoning, which represent the habitus as a strategy-forming mechanism, have led to the application of three different translation approaches. As such, the translation of CSIs for the wuxia RPG source text broadly fit into *three trends* linking socio-cultural reasoning to normative translation outcomes. The discussion of these trends directly addresses the third research question, as they represent the integration of both socio-cultural reasoning and translation behaviour. Thus, the most common trend involved CSIs which were either less interactive, or more subject to intermedial influence (or both), tended to be linked to a wide range of socio-cultural reasoning, though this often-included strong synergies between industry centric and source culture centric reasoning, and this typically led to more source culture adequate approaches. Conversely, the second most common trend involved CSIs, which were more interactive, or resisted source culture adequate approaches, that were strongly linked to a synergy of game centric and target culture centric reasoning, and this typically resulted in more target culture acceptable approaches. Moreover, the least common trend involved CSIs that were partially interactive and related to locations, which led to a synergy of more socio-cultural factors, and mostly resulted in source and target culture mixed approaches.

The following sections will discuss the socio-cultural phenomena related to these three trends. This will include examples from the results and analysis chapter. However, this will involve a closer contextualisation of translation behaviour, and the underlying socio-cultural reasons for the utilisation of certain cultural approaches. These key examples represent wider phenomena and will be theoretically underpinned with the framework of the translatorial habitus (see 2.5.2), which draws from both the theory or norms in translation, and Bourdieusian concepts of habitus, field, and capital. The functionalist theories of skopos theory and UCT (see 2.6) will also be utilised to frame socio-cultural phenomena from a more practical and industry focused perspective. Hence, the discussion will begin by looking at the largest trend, resulting in source culture adequate approaches (5.1), followed by the second largest trend, leading to more target culture acceptable approaches (5.2), and this will be followed by the least common of the three trends, that produced more source and target culture approaches (5.3). The discussion of these patterns will lead to a more integrated discussion of theoretical implications that arise when translation behaviour is contextualised by socio-cultural reasoning (5.4), and a hypothesis of cultural opacity and windows of interaction in TMIES (5.5).

5.1 Socio-cultural Reasoning That Leads to Stronger Source Culture Adequate Approaches

Most categories of CSIs were primarily translated with source culture adequate translation approaches. This was understandable when considering the nature of the original commission of the work, or in terms of functionalist skopos theory, the skopos or purpose of the work, as conveyed by the instructions for this project, which were in the localisation kit (see Appendix A). These instructions stated that ‘The target audience includes fans of action, martial arts, and the wuxia genre, who might have played localised wuxia RPGs’, and that ‘The developers require that the translation appeals to the target audience, but at the same time, does not depart too much from the original material’. However, the style guide also (ibid), emphasised that ‘it is important to respect the spirit and tone of the source text’, and that translations of dialogue should authentically ‘convey the way the various characters speak to one another as typically seen in the wuxia genre. Respecting cultural and historical norms where possible.’ Thus, by raising the importance of respecting the original materials, belonging to the Chinese wuxia genre, as well as the pursuit of authenticity, and respect for cultural and historical norms, the skopos of the work, broadly leans towards the normative concept of source culture adequate, which as covered in 2.3.1, involves a closer adherence to the sociocultural constraints specific to the culture, society, and time frame of the source text (Munday 2010, 112). While the localisation kit did not categorically state that target culture acceptable approaches were not permitted, it aligns more closely with the concept of the source culture adequate approach, and as such, it was reasonable that most CSIs were translated in this way.

While seven categories of CSIs were primarily translated with this approach, there was no single pattern of socio-cultural reasoning that led to these outcomes. However, there were still some common patterns of reasoning shared among groups of these seven CSIs. For instance, the strongest pattern was a connection between industry centric and source culture centric reasoning which occurred for three categories: *Historical Organisations*, *Historical Figures*, and *Fictional Sects*. Game centric and target culture centric reasoning were both strongly linked to the translation of *Fixed Terms of Address*, *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Moves and Skills*. However, the remaining category of CSI, *Names of Characters*, was primarily linked to source culture centric, and target culture centric reasoning. In a general sense, this shows that while the client brief may encourage a more source culture adequate approach, there are indeed several different combinations of socio-cultural reasoning, which represent the habitus of the

linguists, that can lead to these outcomes. However, much can be revealed by exploring these stronger and weaker patterns of reasoning.

5.1.1 Synergy between Industry Centric and Source Culture Centric Reasoning: The Governing Force of Intermediality

It was observed that three categories of CSIs were both strongly linked to industry centric reasoning and source culture centric reasoning: *Historical Figures*, *Historical Organisations*, and *Fictional Sects*. However, a deeper investigation of the synergy existing between industry centric and source culture centric reasoning in relation to these three categories of CSIs has revealed how established translations that exist in a wide range of media formats act as an intermedial governing normative force, that shapes the practice of the linguists. Furthermore, this synergy also highlights a wider trend, present in many categories of CSIs, in which industry centric reasoning typically manifests more strongly than source culture centric reasoning, even within this synergistic relationship.

Starting with these three categories of CSIs that share this strong synergy of industry centric and source culture centric reasoning, it has been established in the results and analysis chapter that two of these categories, *Historical Organisations*, and *Historical Figures* were tied to the history of China, and were therefore based on historical facts, and that *Fictional Sects* was related to wuxia fiction. Additionally, as stated in 2.2.3, the genre of wuxia RPGs typically includes references to both Chinese history and wuxia fiction. Furthermore, as explained in 2.1.3.2, CSIs with these fictional and factual cultural elements were also of particular interest to Pettini (2022), who separates CSIs in video games into the categories of realia and irrealia, which she considers to be of a dichotic nature, as where realia are CSIs from the real world and are based on facts, irrealia are CSIs from fictional or the gaming world. While this distinction can also be observed in the categorisation of some CSIs in this research, not limited to *Historical Figures*, *Historical Organisations*, and *Fictional Sects*, this research has investigated both how the linguists translated these CSIs, and how they rationalised the translation decisions, in other words – why they did what they did. Indeed, the question ‘why?’ is what reveals the deeper truths behind the application of various strategies and could not be fully explored in the work of the research covered by scholars in section 2.1.3, which relied on methods such as corpus design, and interpreting the differences between the original version of published video games against those published in other languages, and therefore no direct engagement with the linguists responsible for the translation, the localisation kits, or other contextual information.

Intriguingly, even though the Chinese source text for this case study included both historical and fictional CSIs, which fit the dichotomous categories of realia and irrealia, as utilised by Pettini (ibid.), it was found that there was not much difference in how the linguists approached either category of CSIs in a cultural sense, and this has been proven in the results chapter. Crucially, both historical and fictional categories were frequently subject to a very similar cultural approach in translation. This took the form of strong and often rule-like normative behaviour resulting in source culture adequate outcomes, primarily utilising strategies such as borrowing via pinyin, literal translation, and sometimes a combination of the two. For instance, the *Historical Figure* 汪直 (Wang Zhi: a eunuch military commander), was transliterated by all four teams as ‘Wang Zhi’, which utilised borrowing via pinyin, a strategy that conveys the pronunciation, but not the meaning (4.3.1.3). For *Historical Organisations*, two teams translated 东厂 (Eastern Depot) literally as ‘Eastern Depot’ (4.3.1.5). Furthermore, *Fictional Sects* included several examples of both strategies being used together, for example, all teams translated 武当派 (Wudang Sect), where the first two characters were transliterated with borrowing via pinyin ‘Wudang’, and the third character was literally translated as ‘Sect’, which together makes ‘Wudang Sect’ (4.3.1.2). As such, most entries for these three categories were translated this way. Therefore, while it can be argued that factual and fictional categories of CSIs are as Pettini (ibid.) states dichotomous in terms of being real and fictional, for this case study involving the translation of a Chinese wuxia RPG text, this did not result in different cultural translation approaches. This does not mean that the categories of realia or irrealia, or looking at real and fictional CSIs does not have any merit in terms of systematic categorisation of CSIs, it simply suggests that these differences may not be the main driving elements behind different translation approaches, and that deeper factors need to be considered to determine why CSIs are translated in certain ways. Additionally, the fact that this research contained a client brief which promoted a more source culture adequate approach suggests that translation approaches are not merely a response to different types of CSIs but are also determined by the skopos of the work, as contained in localisation kits. Having established that the factual or fictional nature of these categories of CSIs did not result in two distinct translation approaches, focus can move to what has bound them to the same cultural translation approach.

By observing how the linguists responded to the interview questions relating to these three categories of CSIs (see 4.7.3), it was not only possible to observe that they were translated primarily based on both industry centric and source culture centric reasoning, with more emphasis on industry centric reasoning, it was also possible to observe the most common

combination of subcategories of reasoning that led to these source culture adequate approaches. In all three CSIs, the industry centric subcategories of *practice: internet research*, and *practice: established translations* were the most dominant forms of reasoning, and they were often linked with the source culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: use of pinyin*, but with typically fewer references to history, or wuxia fiction. The most common line of reasoning across all three categories, also present in many other categories of CSIs involved linguists stating that they had researched the terms online, using browsers such as Google, or websites such as Wikipedia to find established translations. For example, in relation to the translation of *Historical Organisations*, Reviewer Two explained ‘I went *online* on *Wikipedia* and did some searching up’. Moreover, other linguists occasionally linked this industry centric reasoning to source culture centric reasoning related to the use of pinyin, for instance, Translator Three recalled ‘I do a Google search on it to see if there is a pre-existing translation on it [...] it will be in Hanyu Pinyin’. Some linguists also linked this to source culture centric subcategory of *history*, as Translator One reasoned, ‘for anything that is *historical* or rooted in real-world events or places, or groups, or organisations, I try to go with what is more widely recognised among English speakers, and this is usually what you are going to find on the first page of *Google*.’ Most linguists reported using a similar approach for all three of these CSIs, as well as many others, consistently referencing industry centric reasoning, and occasionally linking this to source culture centric reasoning.

However, sometimes the linguists elaborated further, as to how the translation of these CSIs was governed by established translations that exist in other media forms. For example, in relation to one entry for *Historical Organisations* (see entry three in table 4.6) Translator Three stated that it was usually translated as ‘Imperial Guard, and a lot of *books and movie fictions* use [it] already’, and further reasoned ‘It’s like that in a lot of *media, and books... and movies*, they are already using this word’. Similar reasoning was demonstrated in relation to *Historical Figures*, which shares the historical connection, but also to *Fictional Sects*, as Reviewer One explained that ‘these are already very *established*, whether in *media* like *television shows* or things like that [...], so I take these *existing translations*.’ This was recognition that these CSIs were not limited to the textual domain, but also existed in other forms of media such as television, which also has audio and visual channels, and that these established translations had strong normative power in that they governed the choices of the linguists, which in the case of this research, had primarily led to source culture adequate outcomes. In other words, translations previously created within the industry, in a range of media formats have the power

to not only influence, but strongly govern the selection of translation approaches used by linguists in current practice. The word govern is used, as firstly, the linguists demonstrated that they searched for established translations, and used them and secondly, because these actions led to either rule-like normative translation action, or strong normative translation action. This phenomenon corresponds with Simeoni's (1998, 21-22) observation how the translatorial habitus, is both structured, in that it is shaped by the accumulation of translation practice and acquisition of skills within the industry, and structuring, in that it represents an internalisation of dispositions which can shape and reinforce the scope and power of the existing norms. Thus, the norms present in established translations for these categories of CSIs govern the choices of the linguists, which represents the habitus, as a strategy generating mechanism. Hence, reasoning and actions are locked in a cyclical relationship, which supports Simeoni's (ibid., 33) argument that, norms are the product of the habitus, that habitus is the product of norms, and that neither can exist without the other.

While this phenomenon has been documented in previous studies, as covered in 2.5, this research has further demonstrated how these governing norms are also present in a multitude of different media formats, which have an intermedial normative governing power, which has been referred to as *intermediality* in this research. This underlines how the translation of CSIs in a digital interactive product, such as a video game, which can exist as either individual text, audio, visual, or interactive elements, or as any combination of these elements, can be governed by the same or similar CSIs that already exist in a range of other media formats such as books, comics, movies, and televised series. While the source text for this case study only featured text, with no audio or visual elements, as part of the partial localisation design, some of the CSIs had interactive properties, and therefore resulted in the linguists simultaneously engaging with both textual and interactive elements. However, interactivity will be discussed further in section 5.2.1.3. The section below will focus on the delineation of the parameters of intermediality, and how it differs from existing concepts.

5.1.1.1 The Intermedial Nature of CSIs

This concept of *intermediality* builds upon the transmedial observations of scholars who have observed similar intermedial connections between CSIs across *different* media formats, such as Ranzato's (2016, 64) intertextual references in AVT (see 2.3.2), and can be considered different from the *intramedial* connections between CSIs in different video games, within to the *same* media format, as covered by Pettini's (2022) *intratextual metaludic references*, which underscore how CSIs in one video game can refer to those in another video game belonging to

the same franchise (see 2.1.3.2). Additionally, Bernal-Merino (2007, 3) observes that ‘Video games very often draw on different elements of popular culture, such as films, literature, comic books or sports.’. Thus, intermediality takes a step beyond the concept of intertextuality, as it embraces not only text elements, but also audio, visual, and interactive elements. This is because CSIs in video games can exist as either text, audio, visual, or interactive elements, or a combination of these elements. For example, the CSIs in wuxia RPGs and can mirror other CSIs in text only formats, as most wuxia video games are inspired by or loosely based upon wuxia novels (see 2.2.4), or audio-visual formats, as many wuxia novels have also been adapted into television series, movies, and can therefore be linked to audio, and visual elements, and in this respect, creates connections across different media formats – hence the term intermedial. However, CSIs from one game can be featured in other video games, such as those which were coded to create the taxonomy of CSIs for this research, as covered in section 3.2.4.2, which contain CSIs that have text, audio, visual, and interactive properties, and in this case, the connections are drawn from within the same media format and may be considered *intramedial*. When considering both intermedial and intramedial connections, both can be encapsulated by the wider term – *transmedial*, which O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 73-74) observe as the way in which rich intertextual connections can be formed across a range of different media. While transmediality can encompass both intermediality and intramediality, due to the nature of this study, the wuxia genre which is inspired by wuxia fiction, and the responses of the linguists, more focus has been drawn to connections between CSIs in video games, and those in other forms of media, such as literature, and audio-visual products such as movies or televised series, and therefore intermediality. This does not mean the concept of transmediality has been rejected in this research, but rather that intermediality was a more precise term for the type of transmedial influence in operation with the source culture adequate approaches, and was, via the results distinguishable from intramedial influences, which have been attributed to game centric reasoning, as covered in 5.2 below.

Intermediality therefore highlights the way in which these CSIs are linked in a network of influence that connects multimodal elements across different media formats. This concept not only encapsulates elements observed by other scholars, but it also widens the existing scope beyond text. Essentially, it builds on what Ranzato (2016) refers to as *intertextual references*, where a CSI in subtitles can refer to a CSI in other text formats, or entire bodies of text-based work. It also relates to Pettini’s (2022) concepts of *realia*, and *irrealia*, which connects CSIs in a game with external elements that can be factual, fictional, which this study would categorise

as intermedial, but can be distinguished from Pettini’s (ibid.) concept of intratextual metaludic references, referring to CSIs that exist in other video games of the same franchises, which this study would consider intramedial. Additionally, it embraces Zhang’s (2022, 327) observation of the transmedial quality of video games, which can share elements with other works of fiction, and traces links between intertextuality and the different forms of media to which video games can be linked. However, while this builds on existing notions, this study also frames intermediality, and by extension, transmediality in terms of the theoretical framework of the translatorial habitus. Essentially, it has demonstrated how the translation of CSIs, with both textual and interactive properties, have often been shaped by established translations in other forms of media, shaped by the habitus of previous linguists, have the normative power to govern translation behaviour, and continue to shape the habitus of linguists who have translated this wuxia RPG text.

Intermediality accounts for how CSIs can exist and be connected across different forms of media, in text only formats, texts with images; audio visual works, such as movies, and television series; and in other digital interactive products, such as apps. Furthermore, it is part of the greater concept of transmediality, that also includes intramediality, which can account for links to CSIs within products of the same media format, such as other video games. From a greater transmedial perspective, connections between CSIs can be forged between any individual element or groups of elements, including text, audio, visual, or interactive elements recorded across any media format as depicted in table 5.1 below:

CSIs in video games can feature elements belonging to single or multiple channels including:			
Visual	Audio	Audiovisual	Interactive
Text Images	Songs Music Sound effects	Audio track with subtitles Animation with sound effects	Interactions with menu screens Playing within the game environment
These elements (of single or multiple channels) can be linked to CSI in various media formats:			
Text only books Illustrated books Comic books Visual art	Songs Musical compositions	Movies Television series Plays	Apps Websites Other video games

Table 5.1 Transmedial connections of video game-based CSIs

Thus, as the simulated game text created for this research was based on wuxia fiction, and a dynasty in the history of China, it included a range of CSIs only in the text format that belonged to the visual channel. However, the five games (see 3.2.2) used in the creation of this simulated game text contained the same categories of CSIs, but with supporting audio content, in the music designed to recreate the atmosphere of ancient China, and sound effects established within other forms of media, including movies, series, plays, and other video games. Some animations that occurred as part of the narrative of the games, included both an audio track and animations, which can also be based on other audiovisual, or interactive products. Furthermore, a single CSI, such as a special move, may be represented in text, with an impressive sounding name, but also triggers an animation when performed during play, which is visual, and a sound effect based on its equivalent in other forms of media, which is audio. As such, a single CSI in a video game can be subject to an intangible web of transmedial forces, intermedial and intramedial which could all govern the behaviour of the linguists.

However, the linguists can only be governed by intermediality, or transmediality, as intended by the commission, if they can identify these CSIs as being of cultural importance in the first place. This would mean that the linguists would need more specialist cultural knowledge about Chinese history and wuxia fiction for this to work, which corresponds with the Bourdieusian concept of cultural capital and how it functions in the theory of practice (see 2.4.2). For instance, capital, in its various forms, can be used to propel an individual through the social space, known as field, in this case the localisation agency, and the localisation industry. Cultural capital would be gained by consuming specific cultural products, which typically entails the exchange of economic capital (money) for the knowledge gained by obtaining a university education, reading novels, watching movies, playing video games. Even though the linguists did not seem to do much with this form of cultural capital for the three categories of *Historical Organisations*, *Historical Figures*, and *Fictional Sects*, besides check which established translations were being used, it still guided them towards internet searches, and prevented them from attempting more individual or freer translations, that could have resulted in more idiosyncratic translations, and potentially criticism from fans of the genre, who were mentioned as being part of target audience in the localisation kit.

In this respect, for these three categories of CSIs, the linguists, were governed by the normative power of intermediality, which was facilitated by possessing the cultural capital to be able to identify the historical and fictional importance of the CSIs, and this resulted in strong to rule-like norms at the agency level. In addition to this, there was another significant trend

among these three categories of CSIs which also influenced a wider range of CSIs. The trend occurred in instances in which both industry centric and source culture centric reasoning were both strong and involved linguists making more references to industry centric reasoning than source culture centric reasoning.

One peculiarity of intermediality, is that while it primarily led to the same cultural approaches, which tended to be more source culture adequate, it can still result in differences on the more granular level of translation strategies, and therefore translations. For instance, in *Historical Figures* (see 4.3.1.3), the first entry, 明宪宗 (Ming Xianzong) an emperor who reigned from 1464 to 1487, during the Ming Dynasty, all four translations used the same translation strategies belonging to the same translation approach, but to different effect. This resulted in translations such as ‘Emperor Ming Xianzong’, and ‘Ming Xianzong, an emperor’, which both included the strategies of borrowing, for transliterated components, and explication, which provided the mention that this figure was an emperor, but with differences in the word order of the final translations. This belonged to a category of CSI which was strongly linked to industry centric reasoning that emphasised established translations and internet searches, and despite this, it appears that while the teams have navigated similar intermedial networks, the destinations were slightly different. Yet, in other instances where industry centric reasoning was still strong, the linguists seemed to travel very different routes on the intermedial networks, for example in the category of *Energies* (see 4.3.4.1), one entry, 内力 (literally: inner power) was translated in three different ways. One team used ‘inner energy’, a literal translation which was source culture adequate; however, two teams used, ‘energy’, which was source and target culture mixed, as ‘inner’ was omitted, and ‘energy’ was translated literally, and another team used ‘Chi’, which involved translation by sense transfer, as well as omission, and was therefore also source and target culture mixed. Thus, the linguists have been governed by intermediality, as evidenced from the interviews, but in some instances, they have interpreted the intermedial connections differently, and this sometimes resulted in weaker norms, as observed in categories such as *Fixed Terms of Address*, and *Energies*. On this basis, it appears that the intermedial network can sometimes present the linguists with several viable translations, and in such instances, they must proceed based more on intuition, as guided by experience and knowledge, represented by embodied cultural capital.

5.1.1.2 Industry Norms before Cultural Norms

In all three categories of CSIs covered in this section, industry centric reasoning, via the subfactors of *practice: established translation*, and *practice: internet research* was referenced in the interviews more than any source culture centric subcategories relating to either history or fiction. Furthermore, while all three categories were primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches, and in two cases this even resulted in rule-like norms, the reasoning was still more industry centric than source culture centric. This was also the case for other CSIs related to wuxia fiction, such as *Moves and Skills*, and *Marital Arts Society*. Therefore, where both categories of reasoning were strong, the source culture centric reasoning linked to the importance of history or fiction, and how they should be translated, which typically resulted in transliterations using pinyin, via the strategy of borrowing, were framed with industry centric reasoning. This demonstrates how the linguists did not directly engage with these CSIs in terms of how acceptable they might be to the target culture, but rather approached these translations with a very industry centric perspective, which was occasionally supported by source culture centric reasoning.

This strong manifestation of industry centric reasoning subscribes to Chesterman's (1997, 64-68) concept of expectancy and professional norms (see 2.3.2), where professional translators, who function as norm authorities in the industry, responsible for the generation of norms, follow professional practices in the pursuit of meeting the expectancy norms of the target audience. In this, the professional translators are ethically bound, by what Chesterman refers to as the accountability norm, a subcategory of the professional norm, to thoroughly pursue the commission of the translation (*ibid.*, 68). In this case, that involved completing the translation in accordance with the instructions provided in the localisation kit (Appendix A), which encouraged more source culture adequate approaches in translation to respect and preserve the spirit and tone of the wuxia genre. This adherence to commission similarly fits the *skopos* rule of *skopos* theory (see 2.6.2), where the priority is given to the *skopos*, or purpose of a translation, as present in the instructions provided by the commissioner of the work.

However, while most of the CSIs, including these in which industry centric reasoning were prioritised, were translated with source culture adequate approaches, unusually, in the interviews, not one single linguist directly referenced the localisation kit, or the client brief and style guide within. This could suggest that these norms were so ingrained, from having worked in this field for several years, as shown in 4.5.1 (table 4.17) the linguists had spent an average of four years working in this industry, and therefore these practices may have become second

nature, and therefore normalised. Regardless of not mentioning the localisation kit, this strong utilisation of industry centric reasoning that has still adhered to the commission of the translation has theoretical implications. In terms of the translatorial habitus of these video game linguists, it would mean that they have been subject to governing norms of an intermedial nature, as observed and practiced in previous video game localisation projects, which had shaped their socio-cultural reasoning, as reflected by the concept of habitus, as a strategy generating mechanism. From another perspective, prioritising industry-centric reasoning does not necessarily represent a diminishment of the importance of source culture history or fiction, but rather it provides a regulated, and professional sense of continuity between these historical and fictional CSIs that occupy a vast and growing intermedial domain.

5.1.2 Other Synergies of Socio-cultural Reasoning in Source Culture Adequate Approaches

As stated at the beginning of section 5.1, there were several combinations of socio-cultural reasoning that led to stronger source culture adequate approaches. By looking at figure 4.3 in section 4.6, it shows that three categories of CSIs, *Fixed Terms of Address*, *Moves and Skills*, and *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, were all strongly subject to both target culture centric and game centric reasoning, which contrasts with the CSIs discussed above, which were strongly linked with industry centric and source culture centric reasoning. However, on deeper analysis of these three categories of CSIs, it became apparent that the linguists responded differently to questions about *Fixed Terms of Address* (4.7.1.1), than they did for the other categories of *Moves and Skills* (4.7.1.3), and *Traditional Chinese Medicine* (4.7.2.1). The reason for this was that the categories of *Moves and Skills*, and *Traditional Chinese Medicine* contained some entries which were interactive with links to in-game functions. Even though there were fewer interactive entries for these two categories, as two out of five entries for *Moves and Skills* were more interactive, and only one out of five for *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, the linguists typically focused on the more interactive entries when responding to the interview questions. As such, the reasoning for these two categories primarily reflects the fewer interactive entries, which despite being a minority in these bigger categories, tended to be translated with more target culture acceptable approaches. Therefore, these interactive entries, which were exceptions, will be discussed in section 5.2.2, which explores the implications of interactivity. However, apart from the interactive entries, which appeared to capture the attention of the linguists, most of the non-interactive entries for these two categories were still translated with source culture adequate approaches.

For *Fixed Terms of Address*, however, there were no entries directly linked to game functions, and therefore interactivity, but linguists still prioritised target culture centric reasoning, and this was supported by game centric reasoning. This typically manifested in reasoning that included the target culture centric subcategories of *target audience*, *linguistics: English language in general*. Thus, Translator Four stated that, ‘I used the most easily acceptable name titles by westerners.’ Another linguist explained how ‘I will try to go for something that’s more natural. That might be usually known to the English speakers’, and then went on to explain how the translation of 师父 (shifu: literally meaning master), which all linguists translated as ‘master’ would be a suitable translation, as the *Star Wars* (Lucasfilm Ltd. 1977-present) franchise used similar terminology. This demonstrates how knowledge of popular culture in the target culture can be utilised in the translation of video games. Not only does this support what O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 254) identify as being a key area of competence for professionals working in video game localisation (see: 2.7.2.1), it is also exemplifies the Bourdieusian concept of how capital gained in one social field can be utilised in another. In this case, economic capital would have been used to consume cultural products relating to the *Star Wars* franchise, and this resulted in the accumulation of popular cultural knowledge, which is cultural capital. This cultural capital has then been used to power translation action.

This type of reasoning differs from that in the examples of the three categories of *Historical Figures*, *Historical Organisations*, and *Fictional Sects*, as discussed in 5.1.1, in which cultural capital was utilised to detect the intermedial connections of the CSIs, which governed the linguists to adhere to set translations. Instead, this and similar examples which were not so closely bound to historical or fictional terms, but were more linked to the general style and tone of the dialogue involved a more active utilisation of cultural capital, in which the linguists were not going down predetermined pathways, but were rather connecting dots, or intermedial CSIs, in the way that the linguist in the previous example connected the master and student relationship in wuxia fiction, as featured in the ST, to similar tones and registers used between characters in the *Star Wars* franchise, which could be utilised in the translation. In such instances, the linguists use this embodied cultural capital to power these leaps from source culture CSIs to suitable target culture CSIs. With more cultural capital, linguists could potentially detect a wider intermedial web of connections. While this does not seem as closely linked to professional norms, it still fits the original skopos of the project, and resulted in mostly source culture adequate approaches. Additionally, while there were references to game centric

subcategories for this CSI, they were less prevalent than the target culture centric reasoning, and more generally linked to games, and players, in which the linguists referred to the target audience as gamers, or players, or referenced how this was a video game. This example demonstrates how linguists can arrive at similarly source culture adequate translation outcomes, but via different categories of socio-cultural reasoning.

There was also the category of *Names of Characters*, which was linked to source culture centric reasoning by all linguists, and occasionally supported by target culture centric reasoning. Intriguingly, despite very few references to industry centric reasoning, linked to professional norms in 5.1.1.2 above, which typically resulted in strong norms or rule-like norms for source culture adequate approaches, the translations for this category also resulted in source culture adequate approaches with the strength of a rule. In this, most linguists referenced the usage of pinyin, which belonged to the subcategory of *Linguistics: use of pinyin*, which fully conveys the sound of the source language, but sacrifices the meaning in the target language, and conveys a strong foreignizing effect. Despite this clear preference for a source culture adequate approach, most linguists did not elaborate why this approach was selected, and, as covered in 4.6.4.1, stated how they ‘just’ applied this approach, potentially indicating a lack active involvement in this process, and yet this reflected a norm that was so powerful, it had become a rule, reflected in the habitual practice of the linguists at the agency level. However, there was little recognition among the linguists for why this practice existed, or how it might be advantageous, or even fit the client brief. Thus, despite not actively referencing industry centric reasoning, this translation behaviour still fits the concept of professional norms. It could be that the linguists have observed and practiced this so often, that it has become ingrained, highly normative to the point of becoming an unopposable rule, which linguists no longer question or challenge. Ultimately, however, it is also another form of reasoning which leads to source culture adequate approaches.

5.1.3 Cultural Disconnections between Reasoning and Translation Behaviour

One interesting phenomenon that was observed in the translation of several categories of CSIs, was how reasoning primarily linked to one culture, seemed to result in translation behaviour that favoured the other. Most often, this occurred in the translation of CSI categories that resulted in source culture adequate approaches, as seen in figure 4.3 (in section 4.6), such as *Fixed Terms of Address, Moves and Skills, Traditional Chinese Medicine*. In a sense, there seemed something paradoxical about how strong target culture centric reasoning could lead to strong source culture adequate translation behaviour.

However, this seemingly disconnected relationship between reasoning and action, as observed in section 4.7 of the results and analysis chapter, was more of a reflection of how the linguists prioritised the experience of the target audience. For instance, in the three categories mentioned above, the primary target culture centric linguistic subcategories that were referenced were related to the target audience, comprehension, and the way the terms would sound in English. Just as demonstrated in the example discussed in 5.1.2, for *Fixed Terms of Address*, where a source culture adequate translation resulted in ‘Master’, and the linguists stated how this would sound natural, and be easily understood by English speakers. For the categories of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Moves and Skills* however, the target culture centric reasoning was also more closely tied to game centric reasoning; however, that synergy will be discussed in more depth in section 5.2.

This phenomenon appears to be a form of cultural filtration, where the linguists scrutinise the CSIs to determine whether they can be translated with more source culture adequate approaches. According to the general results, this was most often the case, which corresponds more closely with the instructions provided in the client brief, relating to the preservation of the wuxia tone, and source culture. However, there were also some instances in which CSIs were not processed in the same way, and these will be covered in 5.2, and 5.3 below.

5.1.4 Summary of Socio-cultural Reasoning Leading to more Source Culture Adequate Approaches

The discussions above reveal that it is possible to achieve source culture adequate translation outcomes, which correspond more closely with the instructions included in the localisation kit, via a wide collection of categories of socio-cultural reasoning, that reflect different aspects of the translatorial habitus of the linguists, but also that industry centric reasoning, closely tied to the concept of intermediality, was a strong governing force. Moreover, the discovery that more source culture adequate approaches were used in the translation of this wuxia RPG text corresponds with findings in other studies, which touch on CSIs in video game localisation involving Chinese video games. In 2.1.3.1, three studies by Dong and Mangiron (2018), Hsu (2020), and Wu and Chen (2020), it was expressed how foreignizing approaches were deemed more preferential in terms of linguistic choice, and player preference. As covered in 2.3.1, parallels can be drawn between Venuti’s (1995) concept of foreignization, and Toury’s (1995) concept of adequacy, which are overarching approaches that belong to different DTS theories both concerned with culture and can both include strategies such as *borrowing* via pinyin, and

literal translation, which this study has categorised as being source culture adequate. This situates the translation of most categories of CSIs in this study as part of a greater industry trend.

However, as covered in 5.1.1, and 5.1.2, regardless of whether the categories of CSIs fit Pettini's (2022) (see 2.1.3.2) categories of realia or irrealia, this study revealed that in the case of a Chinese wuxia RPG text being translated into English, there was little difference in how the linguists approached CSIs connected to history or fiction in terms of translation behaviour. Indeed, both historical and fictional categories of CSIs were frequently subject strong and often rule-like source culture adequate norms, and the linguists were similarly governed by a synergy of industry centric and source culture centric reasoning, heavily governed by the force of intermediality. Therefore, while it can be argued that the categories are as Pettini (ibid.) states dichotomous in terms of being real and fictional, this did not result in a similar dichotomy of cultural translation approaches for this case study.

When considering the implications for the translatorial habitus, the translation of some of these categories of CSIs mostly conforms with Simeoni's (1998, 12) argument that translators are hardworking, invisible, subservient to the client, and ultimately do as they are paid. As such, this represents a cycle in which the habitus of the linguists has been shaped by existing norms from previous work, experienced in the industry, and consumed via cultural products, and now, as normative authorities, perpetuate those norms in current work, which will then shape expectancy norms of future consumers of the video games as cultural products. This would especially be the case with the likes of *Historical Figures*, *Historical Organisations*, and *Fictional Sects*, where cultural capital was used to detect intermedial governing norms. However, it was different for categories such as *Fixed Terms of Address*, in which cultural capital was used as more than a system of detection to find a correct and established translation, but rather to find a suitable option among many, based on the tone of dialogue. Such processes which involve connecting ST CSIs with an intangible web of potential translations in the target culture is very much determined by cultural capital as accumulated and implemented by individual linguists, hence less prescribed, and therefore supports the arguments put forward by Inghilleri (2003, 2005) and Sela-Sheffy (2005), as covered in 2.5.2.1, that the translator has some agency, and that translators shape norms, as much as they are shaped by them.

Nevertheless, for all CSIs that have primarily been translated with source culture adequate approaches, whether it was via more norm governed behaviour, or with more active utilisation of cultural capital, where functionalist theory is concerned, both closely fit the

concept of how the skopos of the work, as contained in the original commission, which leaned towards more source culture adequate approaches, takes hierarchical precedence.

5.2 Socio-cultural Reasoning That Leads to Stronger Target Culture Acceptable Approaches

Not every category of CSI however was primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches. Four categories of CSIs, over a third of the total number of categories, were primarily translated by target culture acceptable approaches: *Currency*, *Food*, *Variable Terms of Address*, and *Martial Arts Society*. Furthermore, as established in 5.1.2, several categories primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches, such as *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, *Moves and Skills*, and *Energies*, also contained more interactive entries, which tended to be atypically translated with more target culture acceptable approaches. However, where in the previous sections of discussion, source culture adequate approaches were linked to a wider range of socio-cultural reasoning, with typically strong industry centric reasoning, often supported by source culture centric reasoning, the reasoning behind these target culture acceptable approaches followed a more singular trend, in which there was a strong synergy between primarily game centric reasoning, supported by target culture centric reasoning.

Any instances of more target culture acceptable approaches carry several significant implications, as they represent a lean away from the commission as included in the localisation kit, a deviation from more subservient action, a restructuring of the typical relationship of expectancy and professional norms, and a prioritisation of something beyond the traditional skopos of the work. Furthermore, such approaches run counter to observations made in previous studies that have focused on video game localisation involving Chinese video games (see 2.5.2.1) which indicated a tendency to use foreignizing approaches, which correspond with the source culture adequate approach as described in this study. Furthermore, there were two trends of socio-cultural reasoning linked to the use of target culture acceptable approaches in this study, one involved more interactive CSIs, and represented a wider range of CSI categories, and the other related to less interactive CSI categories. As such, the following section will focus on phenomena linked to the utilisation of more target culture acceptable translation outcomes in these two different trends.

5.2.1 A Synergy between Game Centric and Target Culture Centric Reasoning: The Guiding Influence of Interactivity

The results (see 4.6, Figure 4.3) revealed that primarily game centric reasoning, supported by target culture centric reasoning, was linked to the translation of the categories *Food*, and *Currency*, which each only included one entry. This combination of reasoning was also linked to the translation of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Energy and Inner Power*. In the case of all four CSIs, the reasoning, as derived from the interviews, was typically the result of references made to the game centric subcategories of *interactivity*, *players*, and *game items*, which were often supported by the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. In other words, the linguists attached great importance to how players would understand these interactive CSIs in English. The following section will first discuss the categories of *Food*, and *Currency*, each representing a whole category of CSI, before moving onto *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Energies*, which exhibited more atypical phenomena in terms of reported reasoning and observable translation behaviour.

Food, and *Currency* each consisted of only one CSI entry, but in both cases, there were moderate to strong norms for target culture acceptable approaches. Regarding *Food* (4.3.2.1), the single entry was 四神粥 (literally: four gods' porridge), and this was an item, which could be consumed by the player to confer beneficial effects within the game. Furthermore, the most common approach for this entry was a target culture acceptable mixed approach (which still belongs to the target culture acceptable approach but includes two individual strategies) involving *substitution by sense transfer*, and *concretisation by hyponym*. Two different examples of this approach include the translation of 'Herbal Congee', and 'Four Herbs Congee'. Both examples used the strategy of *substitution by sense transfer* on the first two characters 四神 (literally: four deities), as four deities refers to the fact that there were four herbs in the meal, and both translations convey the sense, without resorting to a more literal translation, whereas both translations used 'congee' for the last character, which is a more specific type of porridge.

When asked why they used these primarily target culture acceptable approaches, as shown in 4.7.2.2, all linguists provided game centric reasoning, and this mainly involved references to *game items*, *players*, and *interactivity*. For example, Translator Three linked all three of these subcategories in a single comment 'for food *items* we have food and medicine inside here, so, it's more like for an *item* that *players* can *use* in the game, so it's more like for *functional* purposes.' Hence, the linguist identified the interactive nature of this item and how

it should function for the players. The other linguists made similar observations; however, Translator Three elaborated further, explaining why source culture adequate approaches, involving pinyin, were not ideal for this interactive item, and stated pinyin terms ‘don’t register as English to them in ways that carries meaning. So, [...] if you look at herbal congee, I can remember that, or can retain that memory for a longer time, as compared to Hanyu Pinyin such as *si shen congee*.’ This illustrates in general how more target culture acceptable approaches have been selected over more source culture adequate strategies, such as borrowing, which would have rendered the first two characters of the ST term into ‘*si shen*’ (literally: four gods), which, as the previous comment highlights, would create English translations that were less memorable, and less comprehensible. As such, most teams linked game centric reasoning to the target culture centric subcategory of *linguistics: comprehension*. For instance, when rationalising why pinyin was not ideal for food items, one linguist pointed out that in wuxia RPGs there can be ‘thousands of food *items*’, and if the players keep encountering pinyin, they will struggle to ‘figure out which one is which, because these are all *unfamiliar* words.’ It is apparent that the linguists have focused on the fact that the translation was for an in-game item, that it was interactive, and that player comprehension, which facilitates the ability to recognise and remember functional food items, was of paramount importance, and this resulted in more target culture acceptable approaches.

There was a similar trend for the CSI category of *Currency*, in which there was a strong norm for target culture acceptable approaches. As shown in 4.3.2.2, most teams translated 文钱, literally meaning: wen (a unit of currency) money, as ‘Coins’, which used the strategy of *generalisation by hypernym*. When asked why this approach was used, strong game centric reasoning was supported by target culture centric reasoning. For example, one linguist emphasised how ‘*interactivity* as well as *familiarity*’ were prioritised and stated that items like currency need to be ‘easy to *understand*’ and need to ‘sound less *confusing*’. Thus, in these two categories of CSIs, there is a clear link between game centric, and target culture centric reasoning that leads to more target culture acceptable outcomes, based on interactivity and comprehension.

5.2.1.2 Categories of CSIs with Both More Interactive, and Less Interactive Entries

It was intriguing that the results for the categories of socio-cultural reasoning (figure 4.3 in section 4.6) also show how *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, and *Energies*, were primarily linked to this synergy of reasoning which has just been shown to result in more target culture

acceptable approaches than the other CSIs in the same categories primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches. However, the translation results (figure 4.2 in section 4.2) revealed that *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, only included idiosyncratic norms for both the target culture acceptable, and the source and target culture mixed approaches, which were both linked to the single more interactive entry. Similarly, the category of *Energies* only had a weaker norm for the target culture acceptable approach, representing two entries of five. However, only after a closer analysis of the interview data, it became apparent that while these larger categories of CSIs mostly consisted of less interactive entries, during the interviews, the linguists disproportionately talked about the interactive entries. Indeed, most of the less interactive items in these categories were translated with more source culture adequate approaches, as shown in the results (*Traditional Chinese Medicine*: 4.3.1.4, and *Energies*: 4.3.4.1), but the linguists did not speak much about these entries in the corresponding socio-cultural reasoning sections (*Traditional Chinese Medicine*: 4.7.2.1, and *Energies*: 4.7.2.4). This indicates how interactivity was creating divisions within the larger categories.

One such example can be observed in *Traditional Chinese Medicine* (4.3.1.4), which contained five entries. While all entries could be considered interactive, they functioned in different ways. For instance, there were four quest items, which could only be found, and then given to an NPC to further the plot of the story, meaning that the player had to take these actions to progress in the game. These consisted of three items which were medicinal ingredients, and one item that was a completed medicine. The player could not directly use any of these items, and as such, all teams translated them using source culture adequate approaches with the potency of a strong norm. However, there was one item, that was also a completed medicine, but unlike the quest item, it could be used directly by the player to heal the characters in the game. Furthermore, this usable item was translated with both target culture acceptable, and source and target culture mixed approaches, which in both cases were more target culture acceptable than most source culture adequate approaches used for the quest items.

In terms of socio-cultural reasoning, like the categories of *Food*, and *Currency*, this category was also primarily linked to by game centric reasoning with a focus on interactivity, but only because the linguists primarily discussed the single more interactive entry. Thus, Translator Three reflected ‘it’s the same approach as the food *items* [...] 金疮药 (jin chuang yao) is a very common like healing medicine, so, I translated it [...] based on *functionality*, so it’s like wound healing.’ The same linguist also raised the how these medicinal items would appear to the players ‘most of the time I will just use *common* terms like pills, medicine, potions,

and stuff, because those are the ones that *gamers* will usually see.’ This comment touches on how video games are, as Bernal-Merino (2015) observes, multimedia interactive entertainment software, meaning that multimedia factors beyond text alone, relating to visuals and audio, also need to be considered, and therefore underscores the importance of multimodal considerations in the translation of TMIES. However, what makes these general comments about interactivity, often linked to target culture linguistic considerations, that sometimes touch upon visual or audio elements even more interesting, is that even though this project was based on a video game text with a basic localisation kit, without visuals or audio content, the linguists still demonstrated the ability to visualise how items, like this medicine, would not only function, but also appear in the game, and how there needs to be coherence between name and the item.

In this regard the linguists have appeared to use what O’Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 251) referred to as *game literacy* (see 2.5.2.1.1) to enhance translations. For instance, on several occasions the linguists talked about other similar video games. Just as how translators utilise parallel texts, the linguists were utilising what this study will refer to as *parallel games*, as in games of a similar genre with similar terminology, or other audio-visual, or indeed interactive features. Hence, in relation to gaming literacy and this single interactive medicine entry, Reviewer Two explained ‘So, I actually did like a reverse *search*, and searched for 金疮药 (jin chuang yao), that is *currently used* in *existing games*, and what I found was that in the Chinese version of *World of Warcraft* there is this event *item* that is called 金疮药 (jin chuang yao), and when I looked for the original, the English name, it was just like elixir of life or something.’ This can be linked to not only game centric reasoning, but also the concept of intramediality (connecting aspects from one game with others within the same media format), which, alongside intermediality, form the greater concept of transmediality. As such, this example links the translation of a CSI with textual and interactive elements to a similar CSI in another game, which not only has corresponding textual and interactive properties, such as the name, and its function, but also with visual elements, as in the corresponding graphics, and audio elements, such as the sound effects that occur when the medicine is stored or taken. Thus, intramediality can be viewed as a feature of game centric reasoning. However, such references to other video game titles were only mentioned for some categories of CSIs, such as *TCM Items*, *Places*, and *Variable Terms of Address*, where more direct translations were described as being problematic, and therefore intramediality did not dominate the category of game centric reasoning in the same way that intermediality dominated the category of industry centric reasoning, which was linked to the translation of almost every source culture adequate translation.

Interestingly, this same term 金疮药 (jin chuang yao) was also included in the work of Zhang and O'Hagan (2019, 196-197), with a group of other medicinal items that can be used in the fantasy RPG *Perfect World* (Beijing Perfect World, 2015). The authors (ibid) draw the conclusion that the transcreation of these CSIs, which was translated as 'Medicinal Potion' (which this study would consider to be a combination of target culture acceptable strategies of translation by sense transfer and generalisation), along with the translation of other medicinal items, was carried out based on the needs of the audience, and how something familiar sounding would be better. This echoes the target culture centric reasoning the linguists used in connection to all functional CSIs in this study but did not raise the importance of interactivity or transmediality. As the study by Zhang and O'Hagan (2019) did not include a client brief, but did include several medicinal items, which – if analysed using the same methods of this research, would be considered target culture acceptable, as per the initial norm in relation to specific strategies, it can be surmised that the linguists working on that project may have been given a similar client brief, and may have applied similar socio-cultural reasoning (game centric and target-culture centric) as the linguists who worked on this project, and may also have a similar level of gaming literacy.

In terms of this study, it demonstrates how gaming literacy can enable linguists to navigate a transmedial network of resources. With the internet, it is possible for any linguist to look for ideas in parallel games; however, understanding which video games can make suitable parallel materials requires a deeper understanding of video gaming and video game culture. This ties in with the Bourdieusian concept of cultural capital. However, this time it would involve the exchange of money, as economic capital, for knowledge and experience of video games, as a form of embodied cultural capital. Regarding game literacy, Reviewer Two, utilised the target culture acceptable strategy of generalisation by hypernym, which resulted in the English translation of *elixir*, and reflected 'I realised that elixir is a kind of translation... it makes *game sense* as well because you want *players* to know this is a healing *item*, you can *use* this when you are low on health, so calling it an elixir would make perfect sense.' Thus, Reviewer Two not only coins the word *game sense*, which will be used later in this section, but also illustrates its application, and demonstrates how, for interactive CSIs, these linguists were not passively following existing norms, but were more invested in conveying the interactive elements of these terms. The notion of *game sense* can be likened to O'Hagan and Mangiron's (ibid.) concept of game literacy and shall be discussed further in section 5.2.1.3 below.

However, the other four less interactive entries for *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, received less attention. When explaining how the approach used for the more interactive entry in this category was like the approach used for food items, Reviewer Two stated ‘medicine is like the same as well. Especially if it’s actually *usable* medicine instead of like a *quest item*.’ Reviewer One also highlighted how the other entries were quest items and therefore less interactive ‘Yes, so for such *items* [...] just ingredients for something, then you probably just see an image next to a name. So, things like that, I’ll probably just translate whatever the *Chinese* is, so scorpion and silkworm and things like that.’ This response, and the responses of the linguists when talking about less interactive items, and CSIs, was similar in tone to that of when they talked about translating *Fictional Characters*, which were typically ‘just left in pinyin’. While in this case, these quest items were not translated via pinyin, but rather literally translated from the Chinese, nevertheless, literal translation is still a source culture adequate approach, which suggests a link between source culture adequate approaches, and a more passive or prescribed approach to the translation, that similarly aligns with professional norms, and closely follows the skopos of the work. Furthermore, similar scenarios played out in the categories of *Energies*, where more attention was given to the interactive entries, which were often translated with more target culture acceptable approaches.

This carries several theoretical implications that will be unpacked in the following sections. However, before moving onto the theoretical implications of interactivity, this section will address why some of the categories of CSIs appear to have more fragmented approaches, and thus weaker norms than perhaps they should. This was the case for the category of *Energies* (4.3.4.1), which was subject to weaker norms for source culture adequate approaches, a weaker norm for target culture acceptable approaches, and an idiosyncrasy for source and target culture mixed approaches. If this category had been categorised differently, in terms of more interactive and less interactive entries, the two more interactive entries would have had stronger target culture acceptable norms, and the two less interactive entries would have had stronger source culture adequate norms. This means that while the translation results, as depicted in Figure 4.2 in section 4.2, reveal that the linguists were guided by mostly strong norms, if interactivity had been factored into the initial categorisation process, the norms would have been stronger still. However, prior to this research, there was no literature available on the existence of interactive CSIs, and therefore, the original categorisation was based on cultural factors. The importance of factors such as the transmedial concepts of intermediality, and interactivity however only emerged after the interviews.

5.2.1.3 *The Emergence of Interactive CSIs*

Just as scholars have identified how AVT differs from the translation of texts without audio or visual input, leading to the development of concepts, and theoretical frameworks more specific to AVT, such as multimodality, Bernal-Merino (2015, 98) has identified the unique characteristics of video game translation. He illustrates how video game translation differs from the translation of products relying only on the visual channel, such as books and documents with only text and illustrations, and AVT products, that require subtitling or dubbing (ibid., 53), in that it entails the translation of multimedia interactive entertainment software products (TMIES). This draws attention to how, while AVT does have audio and visual considerations, it typically involves a more passive and linear experience. However, video games, which also have text, audio, and visual channels, are also played, and are therefore interactive. Players need to interact with video games, which are as Dietz (2006, 124) states, non-linear, and therefore different interactive inputs will yield different outputs. Moreover, as shown in the results, and discussed in 5.2.1.2 above, some CSIs were intrinsically different from those typically found in text-only translation, or even AVT, and this difference was that they had interactive properties, which impacted both the reasoning of the linguists, and the resulting translation approaches.

While a video game itself is interactive, some text, such as dialogue or plot related text for general exposition can simply appear when the right conditions have been met and can thus be considered less interactive. However, there are also some terms in the game which are much more closely tied to play and interaction. These include inputs the player must make to move or act within the game, including the actions of tapping, pressing, or clicking, depending on the gaming platform, as well as specific in-game commands, such as *attack*, *jump*, *take*, *consume*, *rest*, or perform a *special move*. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of these video game linguists, as featured in this project, to identify the functional properties of these terms, and translate them to ensure the players receive the expected experience. Indeed, many interactive terms in video games, involving verbs relating to input commands, such as *move*, *open*, or *harvest*, are not inherently culturally specific, and therefore do not require linguists to choose between the preservation of the source culture and the conveyance of interactivity. It was only by analysing how linguists translated interactive terms, which were also CSIs, in a highly culturally specific game, such as a wuxia RPG, that it became apparent to what extent experienced video game linguists prioritised interactivity, even in a partial localisation.

Even though these more interactive terms were as culturally specific as the other CSIs in the game, and as relevant to the historical context or literary canon typical to most wuxia

RPGs, the linguists still prioritised the perseverance of interaction over the conveyance of culture. This indicates a deviation from the client brief, which can be deemed the official skopos of the project, and an adherence to more user-centred translations (see 2.6.3), that enhance the entertainment and interactive elements, and therefore a pivot towards what TMIES scholars, such as O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013), and Pettini (2022) consider to be the true skopos of video game translation. Moreover, in normative terms, this indicates the utilisation of expectancy norms (see 2.3.2) for interactive items, in which the expectations of the gamers have been prioritised over professional norms, which may have resulted in more source culture adequate approaches, as favoured by the client brief, and exemplified in section 5.1, above.

Furthermore, as observed by O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 193), professional and expectancy norms can also be linked to what Pym (2004, 28) refers to as 'internal knowledge' and 'external knowledge', in relation to localisation, where 'internal knowledge' is possessed by those working within a localisation project, whereas 'external knowledge' is what is known by those outside of the localisation, such as the end-users (ibid.). However, as explained in section 2.5.2.1, these linguists are both professionals who had worked in the localisation industry for an average of 4 years (see 4.5.1, table 4.17) and have been playing video games for an average of 23 years (see 4.5.1, table 4.18), as such, they have an overview of both professional, and expectancy norms, or, in Pym's (ibid.) terminology, internal and external knowledge. As such, there seems to be a seamless relationship between the professional, and expectancy norms. This also suggests that linguists do not singularly work in a subservient fashion, slavishly following the client brief, and bound to the governing power of intermedial norms, which would fit Simeoni's arguments (see 2.4.3.3), but can also change tack in accordance with the needs of gamers when interactivity is jeopardised by less suitable translation approaches, utilising more target culture acceptable approaches, even when the client brief advocates for more source culture adequate strategies.

In this case study, it was shown that experienced linguists can detect categories of CSIs with interactive properties, even in the absence of any accompanying audio or visual assets. Moreover, when linguists felt that source culture adequate approaches would threaten these interactive properties, the linguists translated them with more target culture acceptable approaches, to facilitate a better user experience. Consequently, while the overall profile of the translation project was more source culture adequate, there were significant pockets of more target culture acceptable translations, and these tended to be used on more interactive terms. This was reflected in a less prescriptive, more intuitive approach, that focused on players, games,

and interactivity, in which the expectancy norms of the linguists, who were both linguists and gamers, took charge, whereas the less interactive items, tended to *just* be translated according to established norms from common practice, and therefore embodied the notion of professional norms, or what Simeoni linked to the more subservient nature of translation practice. This suggests that video game translation can both involve more independent agency, as shaped by expectancy norms, and subscribed practice, as shaped by professional norms, and the governing power of intermediality.

5.2.1.4 Video Gaming Experience as Cultural Capital

Having analysed both the translation behaviour and socio-cultural reasoning linked to the more interactive entries, it was almost as if the functional properties of these more interactive CSIs sparked something within the linguists, a *game sense*, who, despite only working with the game text, as per the partial localisation set up, with no access to the game, or any other visual elements, were able to visualise, or simulate these interactions within their minds. It was remarkable that the linguists could accomplish so much with so little, in terms of the basic localisation kit, as per the case study. Indeed, when discussing the translation of the more interactive CSIs, the linguists did not talk about common translations, or searching the internet to find established translations, instead, they spoke with confidence, from the perspective of both professionals who translate video games, as well as players of these products.

As recorded in the plotting of the social trajectories (see 4.5.1), these linguists have all been playing video games for a long time, with an average time of twenty-three years, which is significantly more than they have spent time in education. It is also almost two decades longer than they have spent in the localisation industry, of which they reported having an average of 4.25 years of professional experience prior to this research. They also demonstrated a passion for videogaming and stated that they worked in this industry for enjoyment, or interest in video gaming, or out of loyalty to the gaming community. These facts are all directly relevant to the Bourdieusian concept of field (see 2.4.2), as in the social domains of activity in which the linguists have formed networks of relations and gained various types of capital. In this case, the linguists have spent a significantly longer time video gaming, and therefore will have accumulated more capital from this field.

Initially, this cultural capital seemed to be entirely the same as what O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 251) describe as gaming literacy, which includes possessing knowledge of game culture, including genres, videogaming history, and having a passion for gaming (ibid.),

which they deemed as being of vital importance to video game translators. Consequently, in most of the interviews, the linguists frequently demonstrated this form of cultural capital, and referenced other video games, just as with the example in 5.2.1.2, where a linguist referenced similar game items in the *World of Warcraft* (Blizzard Entertainment 2004) franchise. Other linguists made similar references to a wider range of games, for example, when discussing the translation of the CSI category of places, one linguist talked about how inspiration was taken from the Chinese RPG *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo 2020). When talking about the general tone of dialogue, another linguist explained how they drew from a variety of sources for a more archaic tone, that has a medieval feeling, this included ‘*Game of Thrones*, *Lord of the Rings*, you know, a good one that I also reference as honestly like a standard format in game localisation is probably *Final Fantasy XIV*, just because of how they managed to incorporate the older English and sometimes even like Shakespearean English’. While *Lord of the Rings* (Tolkien 1954), and *Game of Thrones* (Martin 1996), could refer to the original novels, or the movie adaptations, *Final Fantasy XIV* (Square Enix 2010), is unmistakably a reference to a Japanese RPG. As such, this linguist and others not only demonstrated cultural knowledge relating to literature and movies, but also video games, which links general knowledge of pop culture to game literacy.

However, while the concept of *game sense*, as coined by one of the linguists, as mentioned in section 5.2.1.2 above, required game literary, or video gaming capital (as a form of cultural capital specific to video games), it also represented a more active usage of this resource. Thus, game sense was used a mechanism for detecting interactivity. In terms of Bourdieu’s theory of practice (1977), and what this means for the habitus of the linguists, which Bourdieu (ibid., 72) referred to as a ‘strategy generating principle’, this game sense, which the linguists use to navigate the translations, detect the more interactive elements, and respond with suitable translation approaches, appears to be a newer manifestation of cultural capital, which acts upon the habitus. This is because it is the direct result of economic capital, money, which has been exchanged for desirable objects (video games), which carry cultural capital. These objects take the form of the hardware required to play games, such as computers, consoles, or handheld devices, as well as the software, which can take the physical form of game cassettes, cartridges, floppy disks, CDs, or a digital form, as many games are now simply downloaded. Accordingly, gaming experience and knowledge, which can be used in the same sense as game literacy, to reference other franchises of video games, can also manifest as game sense in the detection and translation of interactive CSIs. Regardless, both game literacy and game sense

are different aspects of video gaming capital, which shapes and drives the habitus of the linguists, and as Bourdieu (ibid., 15) stated, a skilled strategist can turn capital into an instrument of power.

From one perspective, it can be conceived that these linguists have developed this ability to visualise digital-interactive phenomena, or utilise *game sense*, to accommodate for the standard mode of working in partial localisations, which involves texts that has been fragmented with a CAT tool, and often lacking any visual or audio references, which is often referred to as blind localisation (see 2.7.3). Moreover, because of their social trajectories, and the time they have invested in the field of video gaming, these interactions have become second nature. As broadly shown in the results and analysis chapter, without playing a game, they can look at a source text, identify the terms related to interactivity, and draw upon decades of experience spent in the digital interactive environments of countless other video games, and provide more than simply educated guesses, relying on this game sense. From a more integrated translatorial habitus perspective, however this also indicates that sufficient video gaming capital can bridge the gap between the expectation norms of the gamers, and the professional norms of the linguists, as these linguists are both producers and consumers of the same cultural products.

5.2.1.5 Interactive Entries Atypically Translated with Source Culture Adequate Approaches

While most of the more interactive entries were translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, there were some exceptions in the category of *Moves and Skills* (4.3.1.6). Three out of the five entries were more interactive; however, only one of the three was translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, meaning that the two other more interactive entries, and the two less interactive entries were primarily translated with source culture adequate approaches. Furthermore, the results from the interviews (4.7.1.3) showed how the linguists mainly utilised target culture centric reasoning, despite the translation outcomes being more source culture adequate, and this was primarily based on the target culture centric subfactors of the target audience, and target language linguistic considerations such as how it sounds, and if it can be comprehended. This further demonstrates how target culture centric reasoning can also result in more source culture adequate approaches, as discussed in 5.1.3. What was unusual about this category, however, was that like the other more interactive entries, the stronger target culture centric reasoning was also supported by strong game centric reasoning, which involved more references to the subcategory of interactivity than any other for this CSI, as this socio-cultural synergy mostly resulted in target culture acceptable approaches. However, one thing different about this category, was that there was also very strong industry centric reasoning.

In terms of target culture centric reasoning, most references were to *linguistics: sound of target language*. As such, when discussing the approaches used for one of the more interactive entries in this category 怀中抱月 (literally: embracing the moon), which is also a real martial art move belonging to the martial art of Tai Chi, one linguist explained ‘So, I translated the meaning as to embrace the moon. Yeah, so it *sounds* more like a *skill*’. Another linguist stated that it was important that ‘all kinds of *players* can *understand* the meaning’, and that a translation for a skill ‘*sounds cool*’. The other linguists made similar remarks about how these skills or moves should sound to the players, and there was an emphasis on *coolness*, which shows how they strived to convey positive feelings and make the target culture players feel empowered. This target culture centric reasoning was also strongly linked to the subcategory of *practice: established translations*, and therefore the governing power of intermediality. For instance, another linguist explained that when translating entries related to moves and skills, the approach involved balancing a utilisation of ‘what is most *commonly used*’, and what ‘*sounds nicer... or sounds cooler*’.

Indeed, Chinese martial arts are part of western Anglophone popular culture, and have been made popular by famous actors, such as Bruce Lee (Lee Jun-fan 1940–1973), Jackie Chan (Cheng Long 1954–), Jet Li (Li Lian-jie 1963–), and Michelle Yeoh (Michelle Yeoh Choo Kheng 1962–), who have starred in movies which feature Chinese martial arts moves, such as the highly popular Ang Lee (Li An) movie *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon (Wohu Canglong 2000)* which was set in the 19th-century Qing Dynasty, which was also based on a wuxia novel of the same name, which was part of the *Crane-Iron Series*, published between 1941 and 1942 by Wang Baoxiang, under the pseudonym of Wang Dulu (1909-1977). Thus, as Chinese martial arts have become part of popular culture, moving from wuxia fiction to popular movies, and now video games, it can be understood how fans have become more accepting of the culture specific concepts and terms associated with the relevant martial arts moves and styles. This certainly applies to this case study, as stated in the client brief (Appendix A), the target audience players included fans of the wuxia genre. Consequently, where more source culture adequate approaches involving literal translation for other more interactive CSIs may sound out of place, and have resulted in more target culture acceptable approaches, the linguists have strived to convey the grand and empowering nature of these Chinese terms for more interactive entries for this category of CSI.

Thus, for this category of CSI, the linguists have sought out existing translations, as governed by intermediality, and these also tended to use source culture adequate approaches.

Furthermore, the linguists have scrutinised these existing source culture adequate translations in terms of whether they sounded acceptable in the target language. It was through this method of rationalisation that strong target culture centric reasoning resulted in primarily source culture adequate translation outcomes. Therefore, again, a lack of cultural consistency does not signify a deficiency of logic, it is rather a reflection of a more complex interaction of socio-cultural phenomena. This indicates that translations involve more than considering the source and target cultures in a traditional sense and can also involve considerations of both the guiding principle of interactivity, and the governing power of intermediality. Crucially, however, this example shows how not every CSI strongly linked to the synergy of target culture centric and game centric reasoning resulted in a target culture acceptable translation, and that the governing power of intermediality can result in more interactive entries being translated with more source culture acceptable outcomes. In this sense, it suggests that in highly culturally specific genres of games, like wuxia RPGs, when there is less of an established intermedial network of references, more interactive CSIs are likely to be translated with target culture acceptable approaches, but this is by no means a rule.

5.2.1.6 A Synergy between Game Centric and Target Culture Centric Reasoning: The Limits of Cultural Obscurity

There was another trend in which two categories of CSIs, *Martial Arts Society*, with just two entries, and *Variable Terms of Address*, which had nine entries, the most of any category, were similarly linked to both strong game centric and target culture centric reasoning, as can be seen in the results and analysis chapter (*Martial Arts Society*: 4.7.1.4, *Variable Terms of Address*: 4.7.1.5). While this was like the more interactive categories of CSIs, and entries discussed in the section above, and similarly resulted in more target culture acceptable approaches, this time, these two categories only contained less interactive entries. This raises more questions, as if not for the preservation of interactivity, as seen in the highly functional entries above, then why would the linguists once more lean away from the client brief, or skopos of the work? This can be linked back to the discussion in 5.1.3, where linguists appear to use a system of cultural filtration, and the more easily the CSIs can pass through, the more likely they are to retain more source culture features, as per the source culture adequate approaches. However, this also meant that CSIs which did not pass through easily would end being changed to a higher degree, as per target culture acceptable approaches. As such, these two categories of CSIs did not pass through the filter with ease.

In both cases, this can be linked to degree of cultural opacity, as coined by Mailhac (1996), as covered in 2.1.1.1, which is a term used to describe how CSIs, when translated with more direct methods, for instance using Venuti's (1995) concept of foreignization, or Toury's (1995) concept of source culture adequacy, remain culturally opaque to the target audience, which results in limited, or a complete lack of comprehension. As evidenced in 5.1, most CSIs were successfully rendered using more source culture adequate approaches, as per the client brief; however, due to higher degrees of cultural opacity, as perceived by the linguists, these two categories were translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, which created a higher degree of cultural transparency.

These two categories each conveyed a different form of cultural opacity. For *Martial Arts Society*, as shown in 4.3.2.2, both entries contained multiple layers of meaning, some more explicit, and others more implicit, and were typically translated using variations of the target culture acceptable strategy of generalisation by hypernym. When asked why these approaches were used, as shown in 4.7.1.4, most linguists referenced a wider selection of socio-cultural categories, that drew attention to the difficulty of this term, and how it resisted more source culture adequate approaches. This could be linked to the fact that these entries had multiple levels of meaning, and just taking the term 江湖 (jianghu, literally: rivers and lakes) Helena Wu (2012, 60) observes that while it literally means rivers and lakes, it does not refer to a fixed location, but rather a fantastic world of Chinese martial artists, martial arts societies, as well as triad societies, outlaws, and other characters both with and without martial arts skills, beyond the reach of the government. Furthermore, while target culture centric reasoning was the strongest for this CSI, by referencing other categories, such as source culture centric reasoning, the linguists highlight the cultural opacity of these entries. For example, Reviewer Two reasoned 'these terms are *culturally loaded*', and that 'sometimes the wulin... jianghu... may simply be referring to the environment, and sometimes it may be referring to people' and that if there was a lack of context 'I will be forced to use the Hanyu *Pinyin*'. This illustrates how pinyin was not deemed an optimal choice for these culturally loaded terms, which, as covered in 4.3.2.3, mostly utilise geographical terms which carry multiple layers of meaning and can refer to different things based on contextual use, referring either to general lands in which martial artists and outlaws roam, or the individuals and groups that inhabit these lands, or both. As such, linguists considered pinyin a last resort if there was insufficient context to provide something more target culture acceptable.

In other instances, target culture centric reasoning, often from the subcategory *target audience*, was tied to industry centric reasoning, as Reviewer One stated ‘for jianghu, we would translate it as pugilistic world, because it’s established. I mean, it’s widely accepted as the term for Jianghu. I know some people use jianghu, but I just think it makes it a bit *difficult* for people who have no knowledge for this type of term.’ In this, ‘difficult’ is connected to comprehension, and the second usage of ‘people’ referred to the target audience, in which for this CSI half the linguists referred to as ‘players’, which was a game centric subcategory. As such, while there was evidence of strong game centric reasoning, in that over half the linguists demonstrated this form of reasoning, it was mainly linked to players, and not as directly linked to interactivity, as the CSIs and entries discussed in 5.2.1, which were intrinsically linked to specific functions. However, while cultural opacity was the leading reason for the approaches used for *Martial Arts Society*, it still cannot be ignored that linguists have voiced concerns over how more source culture adequate approaches, for instance, using pinyin, would impact the ‘players’ for this category, and on this point, there is still a link to interactivity, but more in the way of how an unsuitable translation, too culturally opaque, may negatively impact the gaming experience, and break the general sense of immersion within the virtual wuxia environment.

In the case of *Variable Terms of Address*, challenges posed by cultural opacity were also a major concern for the linguists, as shown in 4.7.1.5, though this time it was more related to the tone of the dialogue and thematic wuxia narratives, and the implications of using *Variable Terms of Address*. This relates to the cultural concept of *xia*, and *xia yi* as introduced in 2.2.3 as central wuxia themes, as referring to acts of righteousness and chivalrous righteousness, performed in opposition of the opposing concept of *li*, referring to acts of self-profit and corruption, as well as the Confucian ideological concept of the five relations, introduced in 2.2.4, which determine how characters involved in dialogues in which these ideological themes are present, refer to one another within a Confucian sociological hierarchy. Resultingly, the most referenced category of reasoning was target culture centric, and the most common subcategory was *linguistics: style*; however, this was mostly supported by the game centric subcategory of *players*. As with *Martial Arts Society*, there was little direct reference to interactivity, but more recognition that the target audience were video gamers and was thus different from the more interactive entries discussed in 5.1. Furthermore, this combination of subcategories was also often supported by other target culture centric subcategories including *target audience*, *English language in general*, *acceptability*, and *comprehension*.

In the interviews, it was clear that linguists focused on addressing the cultural gap created by these Chinese *Variable Terms of Address*. As such, Translator Three observed ‘It’s really a very big *culture* gap when you do translations like this. So, I would actually tend to make it more *understandable* to the *English readers*.’ Moreover, the same linguist further elaborated how more specialised variable terms of address for familiar bonds in Chinese, are often translated via the strategy of generalisation, which was used in the majority of the nine entries for this category (see 4.3.2.4), which rendered more specific references to gender, societal positions, and formality in a more general sense, and in doing so, diluted the impact of Confucian ideological concepts of hierarchy to improve target culture comprehension. Hence, Reviewer Three elaborates that the aim was to ‘make it easier to *understand*’, as for these variable terms of address in English, ‘there’s no such thing as hierarchy or respectful terminology’. Reviewer Two similarly explained that ‘in *western society* [...] you’ve got to think of how *people* usually address the other party, in *English*’, and in this sense, most linguists link the translation of these terms to both the *target audience*, as well as *comprehension*.

As outlined in 2.2.4, these culture specific terms of address are linked to Confucian concepts of social hierarchy, namely the *Five Relations*. Furthermore, most translations entailed a shift in formality and tone to being completely neutral in the target language, but this also conferred slightly different implications. For example, the translation of 在下 (literally: at below), as in the speaker is humbly acknowledging that they are of a lower social standing than the addressee, was translated as ‘I’, which represents a move away from self-deprecation, and formality, to a more neutral term in English. The term 老子 (Old, plus a suffix), which means ‘this old one’, in a more informal sense, which can be used to indicate seniority, was also translated simply as ‘I’. Moreover, another term 小女子 (little girl), was also translated as ‘I’. However, not only did this entail a shift towards informality and a clear step away from the original self-deprecating tone, involving the same strategy of generalisation by hypernym, it may also be considered a form of *hijacking*, which is a feminist translation strategy. According to Luise von Flotow (1997, 82), this strategy is applied by feminist translators as a corrective measure and involves ‘appropriating the text in order to construct feminist meaning’. While the linguists did not discuss the translation of this entry from the perspective of feminist translation theory, they had all collectively reduced the impact of any potential patriarchal aspects of more archaic terms with roots in Confucian concepts of social hierarchy. Indeed, this behaviour is clearly a consistent component of the translatorial habitus, present in the practice of all four teams; however, it was not clear whether this was done to reduce patriarchal power, or just as

part of a general movement away from all forms of formality and self-deprecation as simply elements of cultural obscurity, as observed in most entries for this category, and into something more natural sounding for the target language gamers.

Indeed, when considering the overall approach, of how almost all sense of Confucian hierarchies and therefore ideology has been significantly reduced by the utilisation of generalisation via the target culture acceptable approach, and replaced with much more general terms of address, more common to the anglophone audience, instead of talking specifically about feminist hijacking, it may be more pertinent to talk about a more general ideological hijacking, involving the erasure of Confucian concepts of formality and hierarchy. Furthermore, while the original wuxia themes were still conveyed in the translations, especially of carrying out acts of *xia yi* in the face of *li* (righteous chivalry in the face of corruption), which are intrinsically part of the main line quests in wuxia RPGs, as featured in the simulated game text used in this case study based on similar main line quests in the wuxia RPGs which were coded in 3.2.4.2, the utilisation of smoother more target culture acceptable translations nevertheless can also have the effect of reducing the social distance between all speakers in all dialogues. This alters the nature of all interactions, and all dynamics of the five relations, especially between the affluent and powerful antagonists who abuse their authority, and the less affluent and privileged heroes who would stand against them. In this sense, simple changes made to *Variable Terms of Address* have subtly diminished these complex cultural dynamics, but these are sacrifices that have been clearly and consistently made, according to the linguists, for the sake of style, target culture comprehension, and ease of play.

Thus, while the linguists have mainly linked decisions for heavily pruning these cultural and linguistic ties with Confucianism to linguistic style, and player requirements, such decisions carry cultural implications. Hence, despite the client brief, the linguists have opted for more target culture acceptable approaches. As with the previous category of *Martial Arts Society*, this was not done in opposition of the client brief, or to diminish authenticity, but rather to overcome cultural opacity, facilitate target language comprehension, and meet the needs of the players. As such, these deviations were utilised to provide a better experience for the target audience. This should benefit the client, as if more players enjoyed the product, it could receive more favourable reviews, which may result in better sales, which was an important consideration in a study by Dong and Mangiron (2018), as covered in 2.1.3.1, in relation to maximising ROI by utilising certain cultural approaches in translation. However, where Dong and Mangiron (ibid) linked maximisation of ROI to a foreignizing approach, this example

demonstrates how such approaches were not always deemed optimal by the linguists. Furthermore, it cannot be ignored that under skopos theory, the Skopos rule should take precedence over anything else, such as coherence, but, in the translation of variable terms of address, coherence (linked to *linguistics: style*, and *linguistics: comprehension*) has been prioritised. This therefore also appears to be a case of user-centred approaches taking precedence over the official skopos, as included in the client brief.

5.2.2 Summary of Socio-cultural Reasoning Leading to more Target Culture Acceptable Approaches

The discussions above have explored how a strong synergy between game centric and target culture centric reasoning can lead to more target culture acceptable approaches. This was especially the case for a wider range of more interactive entries, in which the translations were more directly guided by interactivity, and game sense, as a manifestation of video gaming capital, as discussed in 5.2.1. The same synergy of socio-cultural reasoning was also observed for the less interactive entries covered in 5.2.2, which were also primarily translated with target culture acceptable approaches, but this was more due to cultural opacity, and less directly linked to interactivity. Both trends have resulted in a significant portion of the overall number of CSI categories being translated with target culture acceptable approaches. This however runs counter to what has been observed in other studies involving the translation of CSIs in Chinese video games, as raised in 5.1.3, in which there was a trend of using foreignizing approaches, which correspond with the source culture adequate approach.

Returning to the notion of how the intrinsic qualities of CSIs or entries can impact the cultural approaches used in translation, it has been shown in the results and analysis chapter, and discussed in this section, how interactivity is strongly linked to target culture acceptable approaches. While more interactive entries were not always translated with more target culture centric approaches, most of more interactive entries, as present in the highly culturally specific wuxia RPG ST that has been used in this case study, were translated this way. Thus, where Pettinni (2022) viewed the categories of realia and irrealia as being of a dichotic nature, in that one was based on the real world, and the other, from fiction, this study did not find that these categories made any significant impact on the translation approaches, or socio-cultural reasoning. However, the importance of interactivity in the more interactive entries, has been proven in this case study to guide the linguists to use target culture acceptable outcomes with mostly strong norms, just as how intermediality has the norm governing power to drive the linguists into using more source culture adequate approaches, as discussed in 5.1. In this, it

appears that these factors of interactivity and intermediality play a more influential role in the way that CSIs are translated.

Returning to interactivity, and the concept of game sense, it was remarkable how despite the highly culturally specific content of the game, in both the fictional and historic sense, and the general guidance of the client brief, that the linguists mostly handled the interactive entries in a different way from the less interactive CSIs. This not only has implications for the study of video game translation but represents an irrefutable difference between traditional translation of text, or text with images, as well as audio visual translation, as compared to the translations of CSIs in digital interactive products, such as video games, even when the linguists were carrying out a text only partial localisation. It also demonstrates that when interactivity is compromised, the linguists are more than willing to diverge from the skopos as contained in the client brief and utilise more user-centred translation. In other words, they take on a more active role as advocates for the gamers, or indeed create translations for gamers, by gamers.

This represents how embodied cultural capital was gained via decades of time spent within the field of video gaming and manifested as a dominant part of the habitus of the linguists, which was actively applied as gaming literacy and game sense to shape current practice. Furthermore, this resulted in the more interactive CSIs, which resisted source culture adequate approaches, being translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, which were clearly intended to be more user-centred, as consistently emphasised by the linguists. This conforms to Simeoni's (1998) view that the translatorial habitus is a mechanism that is both structured, consisting of dispositions, in this case shaped by the acquisition of skills, and knowledge of video games, and the norms embodied within these cultural products; and indeed structuring, in that these dispositions contribute to the elaboration of norms, which reinforces their power' (ibid., 21-22). However, it also illustrates how video game translation is not only a prescriptive task reliant on professional norms, but also involves the active utilisation of cultural capital, and taking a more intuitive approach, even if it leans away from the client brief.

5.3 Socio-cultural Reasoning That Leads to Stronger Source and Target Culture Mixed Approaches

Most CSIs were translated via more source culture adequate approaches, and a sizable minority were translated with more target culture acceptable approaches, which corresponds with the theoretical framework of the theory of norms in translation (Toury 1995), and its culturally dichotic concepts of adequacy and acceptability, and similarly, with the dichotic concepts of

domestication and foreignization, as put forward by Venuti (1995). However, during the analysis of the translations, it became apparent that some entries representing longer terms with more Chinese characters, were translated with two different strategies, and that each strategy belonged to a different cultural approach. For most CSIs this tended to be more of an idiosyncratic approach, and therefore with little normative strength; however, for the category of *Places*, this hybrid approach was the most dominant. This was primarily linked to more balanced target culture centric, and source culture centric reasoning, which was also strongly supported by game centric reasoning. The most referenced subcategory was *linguistics: use of pinyin*, which was source culture centric, and the joint second most referenced subcategories were *players*, which was game centric, and *linguistics: style*, which was target culture centric. It appears that the way in which this collection of subcategories have synergised has resulted in the manifestation of the cultural hybridity of these translations.

5.3.1 Socio-cultural Reasoning that Balances Form and Function

When discussing the translation of one entry, Translator One explained ‘I’ll maybe incorporate some *pinyin*, and then use *English* for like... say Mount Li [...], to kind of tell the *player* what this place actually is – is it a mountain, is it a valley, is it a river, what is it?’ They elaborated further on the usage of pinyin for parts of these terms ‘So, when it is something that is explicitly set in *China*, I’ll try to retain that *flair*.’ In these two statements, the linguist reasoned how both pinyin and English can be used in the same term. This can benefit the experience of the player in both a functional manner, as the incorporation of English for geographic features such as mountains, or valleys, can help the players locate these places, and the application of pinyin in the right places, can retain a sense of the flavour of the source language. Consequently, the two approaches cover both form and function.

Similarly, for another entry 紫金山庄 (*zijin shanzhuang*, literally: purple gold mountain villa), Reviewer Two stated that pinyin was used for the first two characters ‘I used the *pinyin* Zijin – Z-I-J-I-N’, and that ‘the main consideration here is that it’s for a *game*, so usually for a *game* you need to consider if a text is *functional*’. The same linguist also reasoned that when the functionality of a term is important, more English can be used, but where functionality is less important, pinyin can be utilised more. The other linguists also touched on this balancing of the two elements, source culture form and target culture function, which have primarily led to the hybrid source and target culture mixed approach. Thus, while observing translation strategies alone, which could have been done using the corpus design can reveal significant trends, it is only by engaging with the participants and gaining a deeper understanding of the

project and client brief that the deeper reasons for the approaches emerge, as well as the struggles and sacrifices made to arrive at the final product. In this regard, the journey reveals more than the destination alone.

Moreover, it becomes apparent that this hybrid approach was the result of a relationship between the conveyance of the form, or authentic pronunciation of the source language, via the source culture adequate strategy of borrowing via pinyin, and the retention of the functionality of the terms, by either other source culture adequate strategies that can provide more context, such as literal translation, or explicitation, or target culture acceptable strategies such as omission or substitution by sense transfer. In most other instances for this project, the CSIs have been pulled more strongly towards one of the two opposing forces, but for this CSI, the translations have primarily landed in between, and this hybridity depicts the threshold between the opposing forces of retaining cultural authenticity and preserving interactivity. However, this hybrid approach is not a new phenomenon, as the usage of both pinyin and English is typical in the translation of Chinese geographical locations. For instance, the *Five Great Mountains of China* or Wuyue, are translated as: 泰山 (Mount Tai), 华山 (Mount Hua), 衡山 (Mount Heng – of Hunan), 恒山 (Mount Heng – of Shanxi), and 嵩山 (Mount Song). With other geographical features in China, however, such as rivers, and lakes, this can vary. For instances, 黄河 (Huang He) is typically rendered as Yellow River, and not River Huang, yet 松花江 (Song Hua Jiang) is translated as the Songhua River.

Hence, while this approach is already rooted in existing translations, and can include strategies from both cultural approaches in the translation of singular terms, it is still significant that the linguists did not merely observe that this is how the translation of locations are normally approached, as they did with the usage of pinyin in *Fictional Characters*, nor did they state that they were following industry practices by using existing or common translations, which would indicate a more transmedial influence. Instead, they have linked this approach to functionality, and how the players need to interact within the gaming environment. Indeed, it is just as Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen, Jonas Heidi Smith, and Susana Pajares Tosca (2016, 129) state, in video games ‘Geography, representation, and gameplay are interrelated’. Therefore, just as a traveller or tourist needs to find locations on a real map, and the names of these locations need to make sense, the same functional logic applies to these locations within a virtual environment. Thus, it appears that as the categories of socio-cultural reasoning were so intertwined, as per the

reasoning of the linguists, that most translation outcomes have retained features common to both cultures, as well as balancing form and function.

There were instances where the responses of linguists revealed the tension between conveying the form of source culture authenticity and maintaining functionality. For example, Translator One reasoned that ‘if it’s for something that I feel the *function* is more important... than [...] what the *pinyin* would show to the *player*, then maybe I would translate into full *English*. Like Hall of Rejuvenation.’ This demonstrated that where interactivity or functionality was jeopardised by more source culture adequate approaches, such as the strategy of borrowing, some linguists would lean away from the skopos contained in the client brief, and more towards coherence, or in other words, gravitate towards a more user-centred translation. However, interestingly, as outlined in 2.6.2, O’Hagan and Mangiron argue that the skopos of video game translation is to entertain, and Pettini, posits that the skopos is interactivity. This could suggest that there is more than one skopos, and that linguists will rely on personal judgment, and this leads to more user-centred approaches that do not gravitate towards the skopos in the more traditional sense, as in the client brief, but rather towards the greater or implied skopos of entertainment and interaction, which are intrinsic to video games, as made clear in Bernal-Merino’s (2015) definition of TMIES, which integrates both concepts.

This dynamic between maintaining authenticity, as per the client brief, and facilitating the more interactive elements is one of the main findings of this research, and while this example has revealed, through the comments of the linguists, that the category of *Places* is more connected to interactivity than the CSIs covered in 5.1, which were primarily related to dialogue, it is also not as interactive as most CSIs discussed in 5.2, which represented functions and actions. Thus, while the places could not be picked up, stored, or exchanged as items, or performed, like moves, they still need to be found and explored, and are therefore linked to movement and exploration. In this sense, they are the locations in which many interactions occur, and can therefore be considered partially interactive.

5.3.2 Summary of Socio-cultural Reasoning Leading to more Source and Target Culture Mixed Approaches

The discussion above demonstrates how nebulous connections between categories of socio-cultural reasoning can result in approaches which embrace a form of cultural hybridity not typically accounted for in most theoretical frameworks, such as the theory of norms in translation, or foreignization and domestication. This may be a result of a more detailed analysis

of a large body of CSIs that were translated from Chinese into English, which as explained in 2.1.1 involves bridging a large linguistic and cultural gap. One linguistic element, as observed in the translation of many CSIs, was how Chinese words, comprised of two or more characters, were translated with multiple strategies. In many cases, there were two different source culture adequate, or two different target culture acceptable strategies, used in tandem, which still aligned with the general source culture adequate, or target culture acceptable approaches; however, in several instances, most often with the category of *Places*, strategies from both cultural approaches were used in tandem.

However, as stated in 5.3.1, this is not a new phenomenon and Chinese names of places can often be translated with two separate strategies, which can be from the same or different cultural approaches. Therefore, it appears that this was more of a result of the linguistic composition of Chinese words, as comprised of individual characters, that each carry meaning, rather than a collection of letters, that serve as instructions for pronunciation. Hence, where each Chinese character has a separate meaning, which can be contextually derived based on the other characters to which it is joined, English words are composed of letters, which typically do not carry individual meaning, but serve as instructions on how to pronounce a word.

This approach has illustrated how the linguists can be simultaneously subject to both the conveyance of authenticity, as per the client brief, representing the skopos of the project, as well as the needs of the players, which is more closely bound to the principle of UCT. In this regard, it reveals that it was possible for linguists to be not only more subject to professional norms when translating CSIs with more source culture adequate approaches, or to embody expectancy norms when translating CSIs with more target culture acceptable approaches, but for them to also be simultaneously influenced by both, as in the translation of *Places*.

5.4 Theoretical Implications for TMIES

Each of the three main areas of discussions above have focused on a different trend, typically related to CSIs being less interactive, more interactive, or partially interactive, and as such revealed different socio-cultural phenomena, which was depicted in figure 5.2, at the beginning of this chapter. The discussions have included theoretical underpinning via the utilisation of the translatorial habitus, which has enabled a socio-cultural investigation of the research questions, with implications for both the theory of norms in translation, and Bourdieusian theory. Furthermore, it also involved the utilisation of functionalist theories, which have provided a more industry centric perspective of the emerging socio-cultural phenomena. The following

sections however will theoretically underpin the wider patterns of reasoning and translation behaviour, as observed across all three main trends, as discussed in 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 above, in a more singular and integrated socio-cultural picture, which carry deeper theoretical implications for this case study, and research in the wider field of TMIES.

5.4.1 Translatorial Habitus of Video Game Linguists: Governed by Intermediality and Guided by Interactivity

There were two key elements that influenced the translatorial habitus of the video game linguists, a translation strategy generating mechanism, and were therefore responsible for the primarily culturally dichotic translation outcomes as represented by the three main trends, which were mostly source culture adequate, occasionally target culture acceptable, and in one case, equally source and target culture mixed. These were the norm shaping powers of intermediality, as discussed in 5.1, and interactivity which was discussed in 5.2. Intermediality governed the linguists towards more source culture adequate approaches, which typically involved engaging more industry centric, and source culture centric reasoning, which represent two socio-cultural categories of the translatorial habitus. Furthermore, interactivity, which to a lesser degree was sometimes linked to elements of intratextuality, most often guided linguists to more target culture adequate approaches, and involved more game centric, and target culture centric reasoning, which represented the other two socio-cultural categories of the translatorial habitus. While these two synergies of socio-cultural reasoning were not the only synergies present, as discussed above, they were responsible for most of the translations, which led to culturally dichotic outcomes. This, therefore, broadly addresses the research questions.

The Bourdieusian concepts of field, capital, and habitus, which represent practice, as covered in 2.4.2, can underpin the socio-cultural reasoning behind the translation behaviour. By tracing the social trajectories of the linguists, as presented in 4.5.1, it was possible to contextualise the translatorial habitus of the group, at the agency level, in terms of both field, and capital. Hence, it was learned that while the linguists had spent an average of four years in the localisation industry, which represented one social sphere, that they had spent an average of 23 years playing video games, which represented another social sphere, or field. While the linguists all held university degrees, which could have been significant in terms of training and knowledge, as an education is considered a form of cultural capital, in that it has involved an exchange of economic capital for a recognised qualification, most linguists did not consider this to be useful for video game localisation and indicated that they have primarily learned their skills from within the industry (see table 4.1.6, in 4.5.1). Hence, education does not appear to

have played much of a tangible role in the skill sets of the linguists, meaning that primary fields of interest were industry, and video gaming. In Bourdieu's theory (1983), capital is the social power and resources acquired in these fields and can be used to power actions within the fields, which are dependent on the habitus of the subjects. Considering the length of time spent in both fields, it can be reasoned that the linguists had considerably more time and opportunities to accumulate cultural capital from the field of video gaming, than they had to accumulate cultural capital in the field of industry, which would take the form of translations skills, and therefore, the strategies generated by the habitus, could therefore be heavily influenced by this video gaming capital.

In light of the socio-cultural reasoning, and the discussions in 5.2, this has proven to be the case, as the linguists tended to focus more on interactivity, and the comprehension of the players for the more interactive entries, and, as observed in the categories of *Traditional Chinese Medicine*, *Energies*, and *Moves and Skills*, resulted in the linguists talking at length about a minority of interactive entries, while not saying as much about the less interactive entries. Not only were the linguists able to use video gaming capital to draw inspiration from other video gaming franchises, which reflects O'Hagan and Mangiron's (2013, 251) game literacy, which can also be considered an intramedial influence, they were also able to use this as game sense, to actively detect different levels of interactivity, in terms of CSIs being less interactive, like *Names of Characters*, *Names of Sects*, or *Variable Terms of Address*, partially interactive, like *Places*, or more interactive, like *Food*, or *Currency*, despite the lack of any audio or visual materials, in the localisation kit for this simulated wuxia RPG ST. This form of cultural capital guided the habitus to more intuitive action, and this generated more target culture acceptable approaches.

However, this does not signify that the linguists have not accumulated cultural capital, or skills and knowledge from other fields, such as industry. If anything, most of the CSIs were translated with highly industry centric reasoning, which, from discussions in 5.1, was shown to be heavily governed by the force of intermediality. Furthermore, it was demonstrated how primarily industry centric reasoning was often supported by strong source culture centric reasoning. While the source culture centric reasoning of linguists also demonstrated cultural capital, in terms of knowledge about popular culture relating to wuxia fiction, or the history of China, this cultural capital however was mostly framed by industry centric reasoning, which placed an emphasis on how the translations in the current project should be consistent with established translations in a variety of media formats, and how this could be found online. As

such, cultural capital was utilised, but more as a method to detect the strongest governing norms, in an intermedial network of connections.

This shows how in some respects the act of translating video games, or at least Chinese wuxia RPGs into English, involves the linguists working in a more prescribed fashion, as determined by the instructions of the localisation kit, as well as working more intuitively, to preserve interactive elements for the target culture players. This could even be detected in the language and tone of the linguists, as for example in the translation of *Names of Characters*, the linguists often remarked how they would ‘just’ leave it in pinyin, without much elaboration, or how for many other CSIs, they emphasised how they would ‘just’ use internet searches to find historical or other cultural terms. This shows how practice can be shaped by existing norms. This deterministic view was supported to some degree in the findings of Liang (2010), (see 2.5.2.2) who found that for fantasy fiction in the literary field of Taiwan, CSIs were primarily translated based on market logic, and profitability, which echoes the more industry centric reasoning utilised in the translation of historical and fictional CSIs in this case study.

However, when guided to use more target culture acceptable approaches by interactivity, the linguists appeared to be less shaped by industry norms, and took a more active role in the shaping of practice, which is more in line with the findings of Inghilleri (2003), who constructed the habitus of community interpreters, and found that interpreters were not subservient to norms, and later (2005), reflected that translators and interpreters both have the power to shape practice. This also supports the findings of Kung (2010), as covered in 2.5.2.2, who observed how translators are not merely subservient to norms but play a more nuanced role in mediating between cultures for the benefit of the target culture audience, and its expectations. This shows how the observations of scholars can vary, and support both arguments. Essentially, in the case of video game linguists, as investigated in this case study, the translatorial habitus has proven to work both ways, shaped by existing practice, governed via intermediality, which reflects a more deterministic practice, and shaping practice, guided by interactivity, and thereby reflecting the constructivist nature of norms.

5.4.2 Professional Video Game Linguists: Seamless Norms

Drawing from the themes of intermediality and interactivity, linked to the more prescribed, and intuitive modes of translation, raised in 5.4.1 above, as well as the discussions of 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3, it has been observed how the linguists working on this localisation project have demonstrated adherence to professional norms, and the embodied expectancy norms. They have

used knowledge and skills, or as defined in the previous section, cultural capital to detect intermedial connections, as well as the degree of interactivity of CSIs, and respond accordingly in terms of translation behaviour. This can be considered a further development of the relationship between professional and expectancy norms.

While Chesterman (1993, 3) (see 2.3.2), envisions professional norms as being subservient to expectancy norms, in that professional linguists are driven by them in the pursuit of creating translations which can meet the expectations of the target audience, this implies that a gap exists between the two. It therefore follows that the linguists are tasked with closing that gap to deliver satisfactory translations. In this case study however, the video game linguists demonstrated how by possessing the required skills and knowledge, or cultural capital which manifested as both game literacy, and game sense, as well as a more general knowledge of popular culture, they did not simply pursue the expectations of the players, they seamlessly bridged the gap between professional and expectancy norms, because they were also players, and therefore these expectations had been internalised.

This concept of seamless norms, coined here, does not guarantee perfect results in terms of translation, but indicates rather that the linguists are both professionals, working in the field of industry, and have a deep understanding of the final product, in this case, video games, due to having spent on average over two decades accumulating cultural capital in this field. Therefore, they can use this embodied video gaming cultural capital to seamlessly follow professional norms, and recognise expectancy norms, meaning less effort may be required to accomplish an acceptable standard of quality than if the linguists did not possess such knowledge and experience. Thus, the more professionally experienced, and the more knowledgeable the linguists are of the product, in this case video games, the closer the integration of both sets of norms.

5.4.3 Bridging Skopos Theory and UCT

The more seamless transitions between professional and expectancy norms, which were powered by cultural capital, as discussed in the previous section has direct implications for functionalist theories. The linguists in this case study have been observed moving between the official skopos, as contained in the client brief, which indicates a stronger adherence to professional norms, and more user-centric translations, which entailed a closer alignment with expectancy norms. Thus, the seamless bridging of these two types of norms, also indicates a similarly seamless bridging of functionalist concepts of skopos, as in the officially

commissioned purpose of a project, and user-centred translations, which involve more intuitive approaches for a better user experience.

Hence, the linguists have diverged from the official skopos of the client brief in places where interactivity was jeopardised, to deliver a better gaming experience. While the client brief, as included in the localisation kit (Appendix A) has been referred to as the skopos, as in the purpose of this project, it did not limit which strategies or approaches the linguists should use, but it did stipulate that linguists should respect cultural and historical norms, and ‘respect the wuxia genre – this is an established genre with many fans, and so it is important to respect the spirit and tone of the source text’. These instructions lean more towards Toury’s (1995) concept of adequacy, and therefore the source culture adequate translation approaches. Paradoxically, these instances where the linguists used more user-centred approaches for the sake of the gamers, and the preservation of interactivity, also gravitate strongly to what TMIES scholars claim to be the true skopos of video game translation, which falls more in line with the official definition of user-centred translation, as covered in 2.6.3. Consequently, in terms of the linguists of this case study, this indicates a deviation from the commissioned, or literal skopos of the client brief in favour of the perceived, or greater skopos of interactivity, which would fit a more user-centred approach.

From a more synergistic perspective, instead of this signifying a deviation from the official skopos, it could also be considered a closer integration of both functionalist frameworks, which encapsulates not only the skopos, defined by the commissioner of the translation, but also user-centred translations that would benefit the players. It would therefore not be appropriate to portray the linguists as daring risk takers, who openly defied rules stating that they must use source culture adequate translations, as this was not the case, and the client brief posed no such direct restrictions. Instead, it would be better to argue that the linguists know when to read between the lines and use more intuitive approaches in circumstances where a more literal adherence to a client brief would negatively impact user experience, to which they are finely attuned, as they are also gamers.

5.4.4 Cultural Opacity and Windows of Interactivity

This research has demonstrated how for most CSIs, the influence of intermediality resulted in more source culture adequate approaches, but also how interactivity resulted in more target culture acceptable approaches. The linguists often prioritised interactivity where more source culture adequate approaches would have impacted player comprehension, even though the

client brief encouraged such approaches. One way to envision this uneven approach of mostly applying source culture adequate approaches for less interactive CSIs, more subject to intermediality, professional norms, or the original skopos, but then using more target culture acceptable approaches for more interactive CSIs, that resist intermediality and source culture adequate approaches, would be to imagine the game text as a surface, with different levels of cultural opacity, that connects the real world of the players and the virtual world of the games.

While this may seem like Kwame Anthony Appiah's (2021, 472) concept of 'thick translation', which entails providing rich cultural and linguistic context in the form of annotations and glosses, for the purpose of teaching literary translation, especially connected to highly culturally specific texts, the concept of *cultural opacity and windows of interaction* in video game translation is different. This is because cultural opacity in the concept of windows of interaction refers more to the cultural directness of translation, rather than the inclusion or absence of annotation and glosses. Moreover, when mentioning directness of translation, or more specifically opacity and transparency, there are indeed more similarities with Venuti's (2018) concepts, in which transparency is increased by domesticating approaches, but decreased with foreignizing approaches, and how translations with more foreign features, which were more culturally opaque, may be negatively perceived by an anglophone audience primarily reading for immediate intelligibility (ibid., 273). However, where Venuti raises the negative reception of more foreign elements, and the more positive reception of domesticating approaches, the concepts of transparency and opaqueness in the windows of interaction, as revealed in this research, are both used in the careful balancing of cultural immersion in rich historical wuxia narrative settings, as per more source culture adequate approaches, and natural interaction within the gaming environment, as per more target culture acceptable approaches. As such, neither is inherently negative or positive, but need to be considered in terms of the client brief and needs of the players.

For this case study, the client brief encouraged more source culture adequate approaches, which would lead to a higher degree of cultural opacity, as guided by intermediality, and for most CSIs, this cultural opacity was achieved, and viewed as a desirable quality that enhanced authenticity. However, this was problematic for some CSIs, particularly of a more interactive nature, such as those relating to food, currency, and usable TCM items, which, if rendered with source culture adequate approaches, would have become opaque to point of obscurity. This high level of opacity would be hugely detrimental to the interactive experience of the gamers

and would directly impact the ability to play the game, as it would require more effort to connect the game text to the audio, visual, and indeed interactive elements of the game.

Bernal-Merino (2018, 130) refers to this as polysemiotic consistency, where each semiotic layer is carefully considered in the localisation process, to prevent polysemiotic dissonance, or as Bernal-Merino also states, ‘the conversation between the game-machine and players should not break down’. While this partial localisation only included the game text, and any such input regarding the other semantic layers of audio, visual, or interactive elements were dependant on the video game capital of the linguists, as per game literacy, and game sense, the linguists, as per the results and the discussions of this chapter were very clearly aware of the impact of polysemiotic dissonance. In such cases, the linguists went against the client brief, and utilised more target culture acceptable approaches, which were more culturally transparent for the purpose of facilitating interactivity. Returning to the analogy of the text as a surface between the players and the game environment, which can be more culturally opaque or transparent as needed and is less of a barrier between the players and the game, but more of a medium by which the players can interface with the game environment. As such, where possible, without hindering interactivity, the surface is made more opaque, to give the target culture players a sense that this is taking place in a faraway land, a long time ago, and in doing so it enhances the authenticity of the localisation. However, for CSIs that have more interactive properties that would be compromised by source culture adequate approaches, the surface is rendered more transparent, to create windows of interaction, so that the gamers can play the game in an unrestricted manner.

In this sense, these linguists, who were also players, demonstrated a more seamless bridging of norms, and were like skilled architects of both culture and interaction, who expertly knew which sections of the surface should be more opaque, as well as the key locations where interactivity demanded greater transparency. These windows of interaction can be used as an analogy to better understand how the socio-cultural factors, including the forces of intermediality and interactivity, guided the mostly culturally dichotic approaches observed in the final translations in this project.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This thesis has investigated the socio-cultural phenomena surrounding the translation of CSIs, in a case-study focusing on the professional Chinese – English localisation of a wuxia RPG. Consequently, this has involved addressing these three research questions which were designed to explore different aspects of this topic:

- Research Question 1: how do linguists translate CSIs, and are there any patterns?
- Research Question 2: why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?
- Research Question 3: what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?

Having addressed these research questions, the conclusions made based on the results and analysis chapter, as well as the discussion chapter have been summarised in relation to the individual research questions below.

6.1.1 Three Distinct Cultural Translation Approaches Linked to Strong, and Consistent Normative Behaviour (Research Question 1)

The first research question ‘*how do linguists translate CSIs, and are there any patterns?*’ was addressed and answered in chapter 4, based on the analysis of the strategies and approaches used by the four teams of linguists in the translation of the CSIs. Essentially, it was found that the translation of CSIs in the ST was mostly influenced by strong translation norms, reflecting a high degree of consistency between all the linguists working in the same teams, and across all four teams, at the agency level. Furthermore, these strong translation norms resulted in three different cultural approaches. This was not expected, as typically, cultural translation outcomes tend to be linked to a traditional dichotomy of concepts, such as source culture adequate, and target culture acceptable, as modelled in frameworks such as Toury’s (1995) norms in translation, and Venuti’s (1995) concepts of foreignization and domestication. This was due to the presence of a third hybrid cultural approach, not previously documented in normative studies, involving the application of dual strategies in which linguists used one source culture adequate and one target culture acceptable strategy to translate individual Chinese CSIs into English.

6.1.2 The Four Main Socio-cultural Factors of the Translational Habitus (Research Question 2)

The second research question ‘*why do linguists translate in this way, and are they influenced by any socio-cultural factors?*’ was addressed in the later part of chapter 4 and was based on the analysis of data gathered by interviewing the linguists and considering their social trajectories. It was revealed that four categories of socio-cultural reasoning were responsible for the decisions made by linguists when selecting translation strategies for the CSIs, and as such represents socio-cultural reasoning that drives the translational habitus, a strategy generating mechanism, of the video game linguists. These categories were source culture centric, target culture centric, game centric, and industry centric. Furthermore, it was discovered how the reasoning behind the translations was often complex and tended to draw from multiple categories of reasoning. It was common for a single response regarding one category of CSIs to include references to all four socio-cultural categories, which indicates the interwoven nature of the reasoning.

6.1.3 Considering Both Translation Behaviour and Socio-cultural Reasoning in Context (Research Question 3)

Having generated a set of data and categories for the cultural approaches used in the translation of CSIs, as well as another set of data and categories for the socio-cultural reasoning, it was then possible to explore the third research question ‘*what is revealed when both the translation behaviour and the reasons underpinning their practice are considered in context?*’ in chapter 5. Consequently, by integrating both sets of data and categories into a more focused narrative, it was revealed that an often-complex web of socio-cultural reasoning provided the context necessary to understand the application of the three different cultural approaches. While the connections between cultural approaches and socio-cultural reasoning forged a nebulous network of actions and reasoning, it was possible to discern how stronger patterns of reasoning were more commonly linked to certain types of CSIs, as those with strong interactive properties tended to be translated more with target culture acceptable approaches, and those with strong intermedial properties tended to be translated with more source culture adequate approaches. Further exploration uncovered two main synergies between the four socio-cultural categories of reasoning, which resulted in what was primarily a cultural dichotomy of translation approaches, with a minor inclusion of a third hybrid approach. This took the form of a strong synergy between the source culture centric and industry centric factors, governed by the force of intermediality, which resulted in more source culture adequate approaches. There was also a

strong synergy between target culture centric and game centric reasoning, driven by the force of interactivity, which led to more target culture acceptable approaches. Thus, having summarised how this study has explored the research aim, by addressing the three research questions, the following section will highlight the specific contributions made by this work.

6.2 Contributions

This thesis has generated new knowledge connected to the study of TMIES in relation to translation studies concepts and theories, the practice of translating Chinese – English wuxia RPGs, and methodological approaches used in TMIES case studies.

6.2.1 Developing Existing Translation Studies Theories and Concepts for TMIES

This research has made breakthroughs in the conceptualisation of CSIs and cultural specificity in TMIES, the development of both Toury's (1995) theory of norms in translation, and Chesterman's (1997) concepts of expectancy and professional norms, and the application of the theoretical framework, as created by Simeoni (1998) referred to as the translatorial habitus. It has also drawn parallels between norm concepts and functionalist theories in relation to the practice of TMIES. Each of these contributions shall be raised in the following sections.

6.2.1.1 CSIs in TMIES: Accounting for Both Intermediality and Interactivity

This study reveals the role played by intermediality, a transmedial force, in the translation of CSIs. Moreover, it illustrates how intermediality binds linguistic practice and production in video game localisation, in which the text and CSIs can be comprised of text as well as corresponding audio, visual, and interactive elements, in a web that spans video games, and a range of other works in various media formats. As such, intermediality emerges as a central socio-cultural driving force which determines how linguists select translation approaches for CSIs. While the concept of intermediality links to work explored by AVT scholars such as Ranzato (2016), and TMIES scholars such as Pettini (2022), and Zhang (2022), this work expands and theoretically underpins intermediality, and frames it in terms of the translatorial habitus, as covered the discussion chapter.

This work has also broken ground in terms of identifying CSIs with interactive properties, in which the level of interactivity has proven to exert an influence on the cultural translation approaches used by the linguists. The impact of interactivity on the translation of CSIs in TMIES, or the acknowledgement that some CSIs are inherently more interactive and therefore require different cultural approaches is unique to this study. The importance of interactivity in TMIES was highlighted in the seminal work of Bernal-Merino (2006, 2007,

2015), and this served as an important point of departure. However, this study focused more on CSIs, and in doing so, revealed the significance that interactivity plays in translation. This has been theoretically underpinned with the translatorial habitus, which was similarly covered in chapter 5. Crucially, this knowledge indicates how individual CSI entries can be further categorised as more interactive, partially interactive, or non-interactive, and this carries important implications for the study of cultural specificity in TMIES, as the pull of interactivity and intermediality, as well as any cultural factor, must be fully considered for a better understanding of the decision-making processes of professional linguists.

One of the most significant contributions to existing theory is the discovery of how essential the interplay of interactivity and intermediality can be in shaping the decisions of linguists. Moreover, as shown in this case study, this interplay can result in observable and consistently patterned behaviour in terms of cultural translation outcomes, in which these patterns primarily follow the cultural dichotomy of source culture adequate and target culture acceptable approaches. In the case of Chinese to English translations, this can also include the source and target culture adequate approach, which draws from both cultural approaches. As such, the translations of more interactive CSIs, which resist the power of intermediality and more source culture adequate approaches, are more driven by the power of interactivity, as detected by game sense, a manifestation of video gaming capital. Conversely, the translation of CSIs, with established translations, or less interactivity properties, were more subject to the power of intermediality, a network of established translations spanning various media formats, shaped by the normative actions of previous linguists, and with the power to shape the current practice of linguists, and therefore the habitus, as a strategy generating mechanism. This knowledge of the impact of intermediality and interactivity in the translation of CSIs, as theoretically underpinned in relation to normative theory, Bourdieusian sociology, and functionalist theories, can both inform other studies in TMIES, and function as a point of departure for scholars intending to further explore the translation of CSIs in other genres of video games.

6.2.1.2 Bringing Normative Studies to TMIES

Prior to this research, there had been no in-depth normative studies in TMIES in terms of Toury's (1995) theory of norms in translation, nor in the development of Chesterman's (1997) professional and expectancy norms. O'Hagan and Mangiron's (2013) had speculated that such a study could reveal much about the nature of translation in video game localisation and had highlighted how the roles of expectancy and professional norms could be promising avenues of

research, but that industry restrictions would likely hinder such research. However, due to the methodological approach (see 6.2.2 below), these industry restrictions were resolved, and as such, this study represents the first in-depth application of norms in translation in any TMIES research and has made several contributions to the framework of the theory of norms in translation, as well the developments of professional norms, and expectancy norms.

This study has not only established a taxonomy of cultural approaches and strategies using the theory of norms in translation (see 4.1), but it has also uncovered a new cultural approach, undocumented in other normative studies, which expands Toury's framework of two cultural approaches, as featured in the traditional dichotic framework to three. Originally, the theory of norms in translation (Toury, 1995) has been framed with the dichotomous relationship of source culture adequate approaches, and target culture acceptable approaches. However, in addition to source culture adequate approaches, and target culture acceptable approaches, this study uncovered a third, hybrid approach, that involved using one strategy from each cultural approach on different components of the same term. This means the resulting translation simultaneously embodied both source culture adequate and target culture acceptable approaches. Furthermore, this was not merely an idiosyncratic approach, and was used for various entries across the categories of CSIs and was even the dominant approach for one of the thirteen categories of CSIs: *Places* (see 4.3.3.1). However, this expansion of the original normative framework may be less related to the field of TMIES, and more a direct result of an in-depth normative analysis of a Chinese to English translation, involving a highly culturally specific source text. This suggests that more in-depth normative studies of cultural specificity in a wider range of languages may lead to the emergence of more cultural categories that sit between the poles of source culture adequate and target culture acceptable. Nevertheless, this expanded framework can be utilised in other normative studies involving Chinese and English.

This research has further developed the theory of norms in translation in terms of Chesterman's (1993) concepts of expectancy and professional norms, establishing how linguists can more closely, or seamlessly, integrate both expectancy and professional norms in the same project, in what this research refers to seamless norms. Thus, using knowledge and experience, linguists can seamlessly bridge the gap between the two sets of norms, and thereby fulfil both professional obligations, and the expectations of the target audience. It was observed, in terms of translation data, and interview responses, as presented in chapter 4, and discussed in chapter 5, how the linguists were subject to both professional norms, and expectancy norms in the practice of translating the CSIs. Hence, the professional norms guided linguists to a closer

adherence to the client brief for the translation of most CSIs, which resulted in more source culture adequate approaches. However, expectancy norms, in response to the places in which interactivity was threatened, drove the linguists away from the client brief, and into more target culture acceptable approaches.

As such, it was observed how the linguists, who were both professional translators and reviewers, as well as life-long video gamers, seamlessly moved from adherence to professional norms, and expectancy norms, in relation to the intermedial or interactive nature of the CSIs. It was therefore hypothesised that when a professional linguist is proficient and knowledgeable in the translation product, they can access both sets of norms, and that the greater the proficiency and knowledge of the product, the more seamless the connection between professional and expectancy norms. This was observed in the full-time linguists working on this video game localisation project, as part of in-house teams, and raises questions of whether linguists working in other sectors of the industry, or indeed, other areas of translation, such as AVT or literary translation, would also have the requisite autonomy and knowledge to initiate working by seamless norms.

6.2.1.3 Introducing Bourdieusian Sociology to TMIES

This study represents the first in-depth application of Bourdieusian sociology in TMIES and may be considered the start of the socio-cultural turn in TMIES. Initially, the Bourdieusian concept of habitus, as an integral component of the translatorial habitus, appeared to provide explanatory power of socio-cultural phenomena beyond that of anything in DTS alone. However, as covered in 2.4.2, the habitus is but one component of Bourdieu's theory of practice, in which practice is the product of capital and habitus, in relation to the concept of field, and therefore an application of habitus, also involved engaging with the concepts of field and capital. Thus, the habitus of the linguists was contextualised through the tracing of social trajectories of the linguists, revealing important information pertaining to the concepts of field, and capital.

A new form of cultural capital emerged from this study, which was coined as video gaming capital. In Bourdieu's (1977) system, the social power and resource of capital, in its various forms can be used to power an individual through the social sphere, as represented by field, and furthermore, the way in which the individual behaves is determined by habitus, a strategy-shaping mechanism, and the outcome represents practice. Consequently, it was found that the linguists possessed a newly established form of embodied cultural capital, which was video gaming capital. This capital is accumulated by the exchange of economic capital, money,

for the cultural products of video games, as well as the consoles and other hardware required to consume these cultural products over the course of many years. The linguists then utilise this video gaming capital in the field, represented by the in-house team of a localisation agency, who compete with other agencies within the industry. Furthermore, video gaming capital, which shapes the habitus of the linguists, can be used as knowledge of video games as a form of popular culture, and therefore connect the linguists to a vast intermedial network of video game knowledge. However, it can also manifest as game sense, as shown in 5.2.1.4, in which knowledge and experience stored as video gaming capital enable the linguists to detect the interactive properties of a game text – even in the presence of no audio or visual resources – and thus determine which strategies and cultural approaches the linguists employ, as reflected in practice.

In the utilisation of the translatorial habitus, this study has created a new framework with four categories of socio-cultural reasoning, which represent the habitus of the collective group linguists, as a strategy forming mechanism (see 4.5.2). Initially, to create a more balanced contextualisation of translation behaviour, and the underlying socio-cultural reasoning, this research took a different approach to the construction of the translatorial habitus as observed in other studies. This study attached as much importance and analytical rigour to the categories of translation behaviour generated via engagement of the theory of norms in translation (as presented in 4.1-4.4), as it did to categories of socio-cultural reasoning, which reflected Bourdieu's concept of habitus, (presented in 4.5-4.8). Scholars who have previously used the translatorial habitus, as mentioned in 2.5.2.2, have primarily discussed normative trends with Bourdieu's concepts, such as Liang (2010), or with both Bourdieu's framework, and Latour's ANT, such as Kung (2010). In the case of He (2017), however, Brownlie's (2003) model of multiple causality was used so that translation behaviour could be linked to multiple categories of causality, which entailed a closer integration of behaviour and reasoning. Yet, as covered in 2.5.2.2, Brownlie's categories were derived from observations of corpora, and were more speculative than objective. For this study however, the categories of reasoning were not predefined – they emerged from the findings and were therefore more specific to video game localisation, and based more on observations, rather than speculations. Moreover, they were placed in a framework: the framework of socio-cultural categories of reasoning of the video game translatorial habitus (see 4.5.2). Hence, this study benefitted from being able to connect categories of both translation behaviour, and reasoning, as achieved by He with Brownlie's model; however, unlike He, additional steps were taken to create socio-cultural categories for

socio-cultural reasoning from the ground up by coding the interview data and allowing the categories of reasoning to emerge more naturally. In this regard, this framework of categories was more specific to the practice of video game localisation, and the translation of wuxia PRGs.

As such, future scholars of TMIES can consider utilising the same framework, adapting it as needed, or by constructing the translatorial habitus through the approach of coding the interview data for categories of socio-cultural reasoning, as well as the normative outcomes for the CSIs in question. This wider theoretical framework, which may be referred to as the *translatorial habitus network* approach, as it connects categories of normative translation behaviour with categories of socio-cultural reasoning, and as depicted in figure 5.1, has helped contextualise the socio-cultural phenomena that manifest in the translation of CSIs, and was ultimately responsible for detecting the importance of intermediality and interactivity in this case study. It may therefore be similarly useful in other TMIES studies, or in relation to the localisation of other interactive products, such as apps, and websites, which, like video games, are also interactive digital products. It may also be useful in the research of literary translation, technical translation, AVT, and even, interpreting, in which the translatorial habitus of linguists with varying degrees of knowledge and expertise of the end product, or target text, may be constructed and analysed, revealing new networks and synergies between different socio-cultural factors.

6.2.1.4 Applying Functionalist Theories to TMIES

This thesis also contributed to the application and conceptualisation of functionalist theories in TMIES and represents the first in-depth application of Vermeer's (1978) skopos theory, and UCT, by Soujanen et al. (2015, 1) in video game translation. These functionalist theories have not previously been utilised to explain how linguists translate CSIs, or why they use specific approaches. While functionalist theory was not the starting point of this research, the fact that the localisation kit contained a client brief, which set the tone for the intended translation, meant that functionality could not be ignored. This is because in a professional setting the translation outcomes, including the way in which the CSIs are translated, should be framed in terms of the client brief, which is a central component of skopos theory. Thus, even though this research did not originally intend to investigate connections to functionalist theories, the findings are both intriguing and carry significant theoretical implications.

This study revealed how linguists can simultaneously pursue the skopos, and lean away from the skopos, to use more user centred translations, over the course of a localisation project.

According to skopos theory, the client brief, should determine how the linguists translate, and that they should strictly follow the hierarchy of the skopos rule, the coherence rule, and the fidelity rule in the translation of various CSIs. However, it was revealed that while the linguists mostly adhered to the original skopos, and this resulted in more source culture adequate approaches, there were also clear instances of the utilisation of user-centred translation, which resulted in coherence being prioritised over the skopos rule, and this goes against the hierarchical rules of skopos theory, in which the skopos always takes precedence over coherence, and fidelity.

Intriguingly, the skipping between adherence to skopos and user-centred translations perfectly mirrored the way in which the linguists were guided by seamless norms. As such, the adherence to more professional norms also meant a closer pursuit of the original skopos, and adherence to expectancy norms resulted in more user-centred translations approaches. This represents a movement towards an integration of a normative-functionalist framework within the field of TMIES.

6.2.2 The Practice of Translating Chinese – English Video Wuxia RPGs

This research has uncovered several aspects relating to the translation of Chinese wuxia RPGs into English. This includes the nature of the culture specific challenges faced by linguists in the translation of CSIs in the genre of wuxia RPGs, as well as the individual roles of translators and reviewers, and the roles of the linguists collectively, at the agency-level.

6.2.2.1 Highlighting the Historical, Fictional, and Ideological Translation Challenges in Wuxia RPGs

This case study has revealed how Chinese wuxia RPGs are typically dense with CSIs relating to Chinese history, wuxia fiction, as well as Confucian ideology, and highlighted how linguists working on such projects must be able to recognise these features and translate them accordingly. There was a lack of TMIES studies conducted in the localisation of Chinese video games, and no studies relating to the translation of Chinese wuxia RPGs. This research has taken crucial steps in addressing this gap, and demonstrated how this genre is not only of value to scholars of TMIES due to its inherent cultural specificity, but it also indicates how knowledge of Chinese history, wuxia fiction, and concepts of Confucian ideology, such as the five relations, can benefit linguists involved in the practice of translating wuxia RPGs and be more generalisable to potentially other games with wuxia themes, which can also include strategy, puzzle, or action games. As demonstrated from the results, wuxia RPG texts brim with CSIs,

as these games tend to be set in specific dynasties from the history of China, and can include references to historical sects, and figures. In terms of wuxia literature, these games typically included references to Chinese martial arts, outlaws, and martial arts societies, as well as traditional Chinese medicine. Furthermore, the way in which the characters interact is closely connected to Confucian hierarchies, which changes depending on different social backgrounds, genders, and seniority. While this work has explored several common aspects of cultural specificity in the translation of Chinese wuxia RPGs, it has also highlighted how this genre would remain an excellent choice for more focused research into the translation of CSIs.

6.2.2.2 Delineating the Roles of the Linguists: Translators and Reviewers

It was found that translators were responsible for the initial translations, and that the reviewers, who were responsible for the final translations, seldom made changes to the initial translations, which indicated a high degree of agreement between the linguists. However, when the reviewers did make changes, they tended to strengthen norms at the agency-level – which, in other words meant improving consistency of approaches used within the same team (between the translator and reviewer), as well as that of the other teams. While this research has treated the linguists as a homogenous group, who worked together to translate the Chinese ST into a final reviewed translation, ready to be delivered to the client, these key differences were observed, and covered in 4.2 of the results and analysis chapter. The titles of each type of linguists, as in translators, and reviewers, clearly indicated the roles they played in this case study and practice in general, and related literature was reviewed in chapter 2 to contextualise these roles. However, this research was able to demonstrate just how translators and reviewers collectively work on CSIs, and how the actions of reviewers result in greater consistency, and therefore stronger translation norms. More however could be learned by observing all the changes made by reviewers, and not just to CSIs, to further delineate the role from that of translators, and this may be explored in future research.

6.2.3 Adapting Methodological Approaches in Case Studies for TMIES

The methodological contributions made by this project are no less significant than the theoretical or practical contributions. This research has generated several sets of categories used in the methodological approach, provided ways to mitigate industrial and ethical restrictions to the research of TMIES, demonstrated the application of a multimodal approach to coding CSI data in existing video games, and has gone beyond a focus of the initial translation only, by including the work of all related linguists, both translators and reviewers.

6.2.3.1 Generating Categories of CSIs and Contextual Categories for CSIs

The investigation of this case study involved the generation and analysis of CSIs. This included the original 13 categories of CSIs (referred to as micro-CSIs in chapter 3) which emerged from the coding of the sample video games as utilised in the creation of the simulated game text. However, this research also involved the generation of contextual CSIs, as in the themed dialogues of Chinese wuxia RPGs (meso-CSIs), and the historical and fictional context (macro-CSIs), which contained and framed the micro-CSIs.

This study has identified 13 categories of CSIs in the genre of wuxia RPGs (see 3.2.4.1), relating to various aspects of Chinese history, ideology, and wuxia fiction. While the work of other scholars, in three separate works, as reviewed in 2.1.3.1, identified some categories of CSIs in a range of Chinese games, including names of characters, terms of address, number format, food terminology, myths and legends, and songs, these were connected to a wider range of video games genres, and were not as systematically analysed in terms of translation strategies, or as consistently underpinned with theory. As such, this work represents the most thorough investigation of CSIs in the translation of wuxia RPGs, or any genre of Chinese video games. Thus, future research focusing on the analysis of CSIs in wuxia RPGs may therefore utilise or adapt this taxonomy of 13 CSIs (micro-CSIs).

This research has uncovered two new types of CSIs in TMIES, which contextualise the micro-CSIs. Due to the requirement of needing to create a natural and generalisable source text, it was also necessary to replicate the way in which these CSIs appeared, which led to the emergence of two types of CSIs, which operated on larger scales. These comprised the meso-CSIs, and the macro-CSIs. The meso-CSIs (see 3.2.4.2), took the form of culture specific themed dialogues, typically in the case of wuxia RPGs reflecting some aspect of Confucian hierarchies, wuxia values, or both. These meso-CSIs, unlike the micro-CSIs, were not individual words or phrases, but rather longer dialogues held between multiple characters, which contained the micro-CSIs. They were the medium by which the micro-CSIs were introduced to the gaming experience, and essential structural components to the ludonarrative of the game. The macro-CSIs (see 3.2.4.3) however, operated on an even larger scale, and took the form of the general culture specific themes of the games, in this case, the historical setting of the game, and the wuxia narrative. Like the meso-CSIs, these were not individual words or phrases, but served more as culture specific framing devices for the entire game, and as such, contained the meso-CSIs, and the micro-CSIs. As such, research focusing on CSIs in video games should also pay attention to these contextual CSIs, and scholars hoping to recreate

similar case studies, with a game text creation stage, can also utilise the concepts of meso-CSIs, and macro-CSIs, so that any simulated game texts contain not only the desired categories of micro-CSIs, but also that they are manifest in natural dialogue and situations and framed in the correct cultural context – and can therefore be considered representative of the genre of video game in question.

6.2.3.2 Resolving Industry Restrictions to the Research of TMIES Case Studies

One of the most significant contributions of this research, responsible for all the findings generated by this thesis, was the methodological approach, which involved a preliminary stage comprising the creation of a source text that could simulate the typical characteristics of wuxia RPG texts and be utilised as part of this case study. This was followed by the main stage, which included the translation of the ST, as well as the analysis of the translations, and the interviewing of the linguists. Such an approach was needed since this case-study represents both a revelatory case, as it had not been studied before, due to industry restrictions, but also a typical case, because it represents one mode of current industry practice.

Not only did the act of creating a game-text specifically for this research bypass a host of industry restrictions, including conditions of any NDAs, concerns regarding copyright infringement, the pre-release leakage of intellectual property, it arguably resulted in a source text that was more generalisable, in terms of the typical features of a Chinese wuxia RPG, than any single wuxia RPG. This is because the game text included the CSIs, text locations, ludonarrative elements, and connections to wuxia fiction, and Chinese history based on several, rather than one game. This is because the method of categoric sampling was used on several of the most popular Chinese wuxia RPGs at the time, in which data pertaining to types of CSIs, themes of dialogues, location of text, and links to wuxia fiction, and Chinese history were coded, and categorised. This data was conveyed to a writer, who created a natural Chinese wuxia game text that contained all the desired features. As such, the game text reflected a wider range of typical features than any one single game, and was also a unique creation, unfettered by industry restrictions. While such an approach required more time to organise, it resulted in a natural game text, rich with the desired, generalisable features, and therefore uncovering the revelatory nature of this case study. In essence, following this methodology should enable other researchers to similarly generate highly generalisable game texts in various game genres.

Once the shell of this case study, consisting of industry restrictions, had been cracked, by generating a simulated but highly generalisable game text, it was then possible to access a

typical, and therefore generalisable, case study of how experienced in-house translation teams working in a localisation agency, as part of the video game localisation industry, translate video game texts, and more specifically, approach the CSIs of a wuxia RPG. This entailed having a professional localisation agency facilitate the translation stage from start to finish. This was accomplished by gaining ethical permission from the agency, as well the individual participants, to protect anonymity, while granting permission and full access to interview the participants and elevate this study beyond the restrictions posed by corpus design approaches, which do not typically address the reasons why linguists utilise certain approaches. Another advantage of using established translation teams, is that it further removes the bias of the researcher, so it is not possible to cherry pick who they consider to be ideal translators and reviewers. The greatest strength of this methodology is that it reflects the designated aspect of industry practice. However, researchers hoping to utilise a similar approach must also forge links with industry bodies before these revelatory and yet typical cases can be investigated in more detail.

6.2.3.3 Utilising a Multimodal Approach in the Coding of CSI Data

The identification and coding of culture specific features in the five sample games, which were replicated in the simulated game text, represent a new multimodal approach that has not been utilised in other studies involving TMIES. While the final created game text only included text, and no audio or visual content, as it was based on a text-only partial localisation (defined in 2.6.1), as explained in 3.3.2, it was still based on real video game texts, which were coded from screenshots, featuring information delivered in various semiotic channels, including images, animations, and various on-screen text, that were collected from play-throughs, as exemplified in 3.2.3. In this sense, the 13 categories of CSIs and the two types of contextual CSIs were coded utilising a multimodal approach. This improved the authenticity of the simulated text, imbuing it with a variety of CSIs which ranged from less interactive, such as names of characters, to partially interactive, such as names of places, and to more interactive, such as usable items in the categories of food, medicine, and martial arts moves and skills. This multimodal approach to coding CSIs, or potentially other textual features, or audio-visual elements present in other semiotic modes could be beneficial in the analysis of the translation of other video game texts, or in the creation of simulated game texts, as demonstrated in this research.

6.2.3.4 Contextualising the Practice of Partial Localisation

By setting up the case study to use a partial localisation with limited resources, based on similar projects undertaken by the agency, and verified by all eight professional linguists (see Appendix

I) as being like other wuxia localisation projects upon which they have worked using partial localisation, this research has contextualised some of the practices, parameters, and challenges of partial localisation for the first time. It has revealed how linguists who may only have access to the text and a limited set of instructions need to envision how the text will be incorporated in multimedia interactive entertainment software, without being able to see the visuals, hear the audio, or play any elements of the game. This research highlights how partial localisation, which is text only, does not include the dubbing of voiceovers, and typically conducted with a lower budget, involves the provision of fewer resources, including the lack of access to audio-visual elements, and even the original game itself. As such, it demonstrates that while agencies do receive localisation kits for partial localisations, they are not always as comprehensive as those used for full localisation. Therefore, linguists who work under these conditions, which, as covered in 1.2, and 2.7.3, is still very much a common mode of practice, experience a reality that is somewhere between what researchers consider the dark ages of video game localisation, where nothing beyond the text is provided, and the more ideal practices observed in big budget AAA games with more comprehensive localisation kits, and less restrictive deadlines.

6.3 Limitations

The methods used in this research have been rigorous and the findings still stand. As with any research however, this case-study has been subject to several limitations, which shall be raised below. These include the size and genre of the sample text (6.3.1), the number of participants (6.3.2), the localisation model and resources (6.3.3), and the localisation agency (6.3.4).

6.3.1 Size and Genre of Sample Text

Keywords Studios volunteered to have the game text translated by four teams of in-house linguists, based on a mutual interest in furthering the study of TMIES. However, it was important that this project could be completed without interrupting regular work from clients. As such, it was important to create a game text that would not take too long to translate, but still include the typical features of a Chinese wuxia RPG. Thus, instead of looking at the translation of an entire RPG, this study focused on replicating the textual features and CSI challenges of the first chapter of such games, which as covered in 3.2.1.2, entail a wide range of features, including gameplay mechanics, as well as providing the right level of knowledge and exposition for players to be able to progress to the following chapters. Moreover, as shown in 3.2.2, even a single chapter of a real wuxia RPG can contain 6,000 to 25,000 characters of text, 3.2.2 whereas, as explained in 3.2.5, the simulated text, was designed to contain all the required categories of CSIs, and contextual text, while being short, so as not to occupy too much

of the time of the translation teams, and therefore contained 1650 Chinese characters, and as such represents an abbreviated, rather than a full first chapter of a wuxia RPG. Furthermore, it did not contain every type of text that can be included in a video game, and as stipulated in 3.2.5, due to the focus on CSIs, it did include, narrative text, dialogic text, functional text, and didactic text, but it did not include technical, promotional, or legal texts. While this generated a rich set of data required for this investigation, it is also possible that if other chapters of the games were analysed and included in the categorical sampling, more categories of CSIs, and contextual CSIs, may have emerged. This could have also resulted in the generation of more translation strategies, which aligned with the three cultural approaches. Furthermore, it is possible that new sub-categories, or even categories of socio-cultural reasoning could emerge during interviews if participants were questioned about the translation or review of a larger body of CSIs.

Taking this argument one step further, it can be said that the findings, including the categories of CSIs, cultural translation approaches, and socio-cultural reasoning are more generalisable to the translation of Chinese wuxia RPGs, and therefore may be less applicable to other genres of video games which involve no or fewer references to Chinese culture in terms of history, fiction, or ideology, or role-playing elements, such as first person shooters, sports, or MOBA games, or games that explore more modern or science fiction oriented themes that can be culturally specific in different ways. Furthermore, every language and culture can be culturally specific in different ways, and therefore these findings are more specific to CSIs in Chinese video games.

6.3.2 Number of Participants

While this research benefited from the participation of four small translation teams, with a total of eight linguists, it would have been more advantageous in terms of generalisability if there had been more teams, and more linguists. However, this would have not been possible with this case study design, as it already utilised all available more experienced Chinese to English linguists who were working full time in a large localisation agency using the in-house model. One of the reasons why the theory of norms in translation was utilised over a framework focusing on foreignizing and domesticating approaches, was that the theory of norms in translation not only has the tools to account for cultural approaches and translation strategies, but it is also concerned with the presence of patterns of translation behaviour, in other words – translation norms. As such, the emergence of patterns that formed in larger groups of participants would be more generalisable than those that formed in smaller groups.

It can however still be argued that if there were more translation teams, the patterns of behaviour, in terms of the norms, may have been stronger or weaker. Nevertheless, this study, with four different translation teams who have all worked on the same source text, represents the only study of its kind in TMIES. Furthermore, it was both highly advantageous and fortunate that a single localisation agency had four teams of full-time linguists, in a single language direction, available for such a case study. Therefore, the fact that while four teams were used, but more would have been better, was not so much a criticism of the design of this research, but rather a reflection of how normative studies function, and how a greater body of participants would have increased generalisability.

Additionally, this research was based on parameters set up by Keywords Studios, with the aim to identify socio-cultural norm-based phenomena across the entire group of eight linguists at the agency level and has thus not conducted separate analyses based on the impact of different linguistic backgrounds, education, training, or gaming experience on cultural translation approaches. Any such divisions would be detrimental to a normative study aiming to observe patterns across the largest possible group of participants, as per the aims of this research. Consequently, this study observed these aspects across the entire group, and the results have shown that some characteristics, like time spent in the industry, motivation, and video game experience were very similar, but linguistic and educational backgrounds were different, and despite this – the four teams still tended to use similar cultural approaches for similar categories of CSIs, as reflected by primarily strong norms, and this was linked by all linguists to similar game centric, industry centric, and target, and source culture centric reasoning. However, a comparative analysis based on how individual factors, such as linguistic backgrounds, education, training, or gaming experience impacts the translation of CSIs was not the aim of this research, remains beyond the scope of this study, but may be explored by others using different theoretical frameworks.

6.3.3 The In-House Localisation Model, Partial Localisation, and Resources

This research focused on a case study featuring four teams of linguists who frequently work together, under similar circumstances with the in-house model (3.3.1.1), and as such it is possible that the strong normative behaviour, and specific patterns of socio-cultural reasoning, as discussed in 5.1-5.3, may be generalisable for other teams of professionals, also working in in-house teams. This may especially be the case in agencies where linguists have worked together on multiple projects, in which they can influence, and be influenced by one another over a longer stretch of time. However, while in-house translation occurs within the video game

localisation industry, it does not represent the entire industry which also includes outsourced teams of freelancers, and hybrid teams of freelancers and in-house linguists, in which the linguists have fewer opportunities to influence each other, or for more dominant norms to take hold. Therefore, these findings, may not be as pronounced, or even present in teams using other localisation models.

In addition to the localisation model, the fact that this was a partial (text only) localisation and featured a localisation kit with limited resources also carries important implications. As part of the creation of this case-study, the teams were provided with a localisation kit comprised of the source text with annotations, and a document including a client brief, style guide, and a list of similar video games, which the linguists could consider as referential sources. This fits the model of partial localisation, which only included text localisation, but with the absence of audio-visual content. Furthermore, there was no access to the game, or time given to become familiar with it, which can be tied to the temporal restrictions of having to work to tight deadlines. As such, there was no audio-visual content in the simulated game text. However, this is a common situation localisation linguists face, when either a client does not wish to jeopardise the leaking of sensitive content, which may damage ROI, as covered in 2.6.3, or simply there may be pressures to hit a deadline.

Thus, the findings apply more to the category of partial localisation, which only involves text. This means, these findings are more generalisable to other partial localisations, but may not be as generalisable to partial localisation projects with more extensive localisation kits with more with full access to the game. Furthermore, this will be less generalisable to full localisations in which voiceover is also localised. Indeed, due to the lack of voiceover, and the fact that this was for a PC game, and not a mobile device, it was stated in the localisation kit that while there were no specific temporal or spatial restrictions, the translations still needed to be concise while avoiding redundancy and repetition. While it must be clarified that such instructions may not be suitable or detailed enough for every type of professional who works in video game localisation, who may not understand the need to naturally gravitate towards more concise writing, this localisation kit and briefing however was created based on the fact that the linguists were experienced professionals, who have already internalised such practices. However, it cannot be denied that some localisation projects will have more specific temporal and spatial restrictions, which were not the focus of this project, and therefore the lack of focus on spatial and temporal factors is a limitation of this research. With the inclusion of more resources, which can better contextualise the CSIs within the multichannel environment of the

video games, the need for linguists to rely so heavily on game sense in the presence of blind translation could be eliminated, and this could result in even stronger normative translation behaviour, as it would be immediately clearer which CSIs were more interactive, partially interactive, and non-interactive.

6.3.4 Localisation Agency

The findings of this research can be considered generalisable in terms of the localisation model, and the level of resources available to the translation teams. However, there may still be differences between the agency that was included in this case study, Keywords Studios, and other agencies who translate Chinese wuxia RPGs into English, even when using the same localisation model and providing a similar level of resources. This can be due to a variety of differences in terms of the size of the agency, the culture and language used where the agency is located, and its own corporate culture. Thus, bigger, and more experienced multinational agencies with more outreach, that have more stringent professional and linguistic demands of the translators and reviewers, may be able to offer more competitive salaries as well as opportunities, and therefore be able to attract more experienced linguists from across the world. This could lead to better outcomes in terms of translation output, and potentially stronger translation norms, as observed in this case study. However, smaller, or newer and less experienced agencies that may not be able to offer as competitive rates, or have the same international appeal, may need to rely more on recent graduates, or other less experienced linguists. This could result in a less consistent translation output, and weaker translation norms. Furthermore, in comparison to this case study, different agencies may establish a more rigid or relaxed hierarchy between the members of a translation team or employ different methods of communication between the various linguists working on a given project, and these differences may also influence the translation of CSIs.

6.4 Future Research

Several new avenues of research emerge just by considering the limitations, as featured in the previous section. These involve altering the parameters of the existing case-study in terms of video game genre (6.4.1), language direction (6.4.2), localisation model (6.4.3), and levels of resources (6.4.4). Future research could also explore areas connected to the production stage of a localisation project and utilise different theoretical frameworks to further explore the relationships between the networks forged by linguists and other professionals involved in the production stage, such as project managers (6.4.5). Another adjacent area of research would be

reception studies, in terms of how the intended audience of a localised video game text receives and respond to the final translations (6.4.6).

6.4.1 Different Genres of Video Games

Importance was placed upon using a highly culturally specific genre of video game for this research to ensure a deeper engagement with CSIs. In this respect the genre of Chinese wuxia RPG, selected as a case study based on how rich it was with Chinese CSIs, its growing popularity in anglophone locales, as well as the personal observations of the researcher, who, as stipulated in 1.1, has first-hand experience of working as a translators and reviewer on many wuxia RPGs, proved to be highly culturally specific. However, it would also be interesting to use the same methodology to investigate the translation of CSIs in other genres of video game.

Many of the findings generated from this study could also be directly applicable to other genres relating to Chinese wuxia fiction, and history, such as strategy or puzzle games. This could also be the case for other games with more similarities to wuxia RPGs, such as other Chinese RPGs, puzzle games, and strategy games based not loosely on wuxia fiction, but rather those that more closely follow the plots of classical Chinese novels, such as *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (Luo Guanzhong, 14th century), and *Journey to the West* (Wu Cheng'en, 1592), which as mentioned in 2.2.2 have many video game adaptations, and are also highly culturally specific in terms of Chinese literature, history, and ideology.

Moreover, future research into the translation of Chinese video games may also include those that are culturally specific in different ways, or contain different types of CSIs, which may result in different challenges, for instance, RPGs set in fantasy worlds, such as *Genshin Impact* (miHoYo, 2020) or inspired more by science-fiction, such as *Hongkai: Star Rail* (miHoYo, 2023). While these are also RPGs, the fact that they draw inspiration from the genres of fantasy and sci-fi could mean that linguists working on these games could encounter different challenges, and this would mean the findings of this study may be on partially generalisable to such work. Indeed, other researchers may also investigate the translation of CSIs in other genres of Chinese games, not related to wuxia, or RPGs, such as *PUGB: Battlegrounds* (Tencent Games 2017) a highly popular shooting game played in the first-person or third person perspective, or casual games that can be played on mobile phones, such as puzzle or strategy games, or multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) games, such as *Arena of Valor* (TiMi Studio Group 2018), and *Honor of Kings* (TiMi Studio Group 2023) which are also popular in China. Such genres may contain different culture specific challenges, which could require different

cultural translation approaches depending on the nature of the client briefs as well as the resources provided to the linguists, and therefore a entail a different interplay of intermedial, or indeed transmedial, and interactive reasoning, not covered in this research.

6.4.2 Different Language Directions

A case study investigating the localisation of a culturally specific video game from English into Chinese could potentially reveal a different relationship between interactivity and intermediality as observed in this thesis. This is because, as covered in 2.1.1, the video game industry in China is more closely regulated by governmental departments, than those in western markets. One concern for the localisation of any English game into Chinese is censorship and being able to conform to the different societal norms of the Chinese market. It would therefore be valuable to examine which types of video games are most often localised into Chinese recreating such a game text using categorical sampling, and then having the text translated by professional English to Chinese linguists. This could reveal a different dynamic between the forces of intermediality, more shaped by the influence of state censorship, and interactivity, which may lead to very different cultural approaches in terms of translations. Under such conditions, adherence to professional norms in terms of which translations are less likely to result in censorship, could be prioritised over expectancy norms, which may have led to more user-centred translations. Central research questions for such an investigation could include, does censorship drive a wedge between professional and expectancy norms, and thus prevent the utilisation of seamless norms? Furthermore, what approaches do linguists utilise to avoid censorship in the translation of CSIs, but ensure a positive gaming experience?

Fortunately, Zhang (2012) has written about the role played by censorship in China, how it regulates video game content, and how this can impact the localisation of video games, which was further contextualised in Zhang and O'Hagan (2019). In doing so, Zhang and O'Hagan create a foundation of knowledge upon which future studies focusing on censorship can draw inspiration. Furthermore, Yu Tong (2024) explains how censorship can impact a wide range of topics including violence, addiction, political affairs, moral ambiguity, strong or taboo language, and the inclusion of English text in a Chinese game, and as such emphasises upon which areas researchers can focus. Moreover, in addition to changing the direction of the localisation, it can also be envisioned that researchers can benefit from using this methodology for different language pairs, that may not include Chinese or English. By engaging with different cultures and linguistic systems, new culture specific challenges may arise, as well as new categories of CSIs that require different cultural approaches.

6.4.3 Different Localisation Models

As this research design focused on in-house localisation teams, there is not only scope for setting up a similar case studies with the same localisation model, to further test the validity of the findings against those generated by in-house teams working for different agencies, but there is also the option of conducting similar case studies with different localisation models. By running similar projects using the outsourcing model, which would be comprised of freelance linguists, or the hybrid model, which would include both freelancers and in-house linguists, it would be possible to explore whether the cultural translation norms would be as strong as they were in this case study, and if the teams were subject to similar socio-cultural phenomena when the linguists on the translation teams were not as well acquainted as those of in-house linguists who frequently work together. Not only could this reveal different patterns of translation behaviour and socio-cultural reasoning, but it could also further test the generalisability of the findings of this study in comparison to wider sections of industry practice.

6.4.4 Different Levels of Resources

It would also be worthwhile to observe how different levels of resources, as provided in localisation kits, impact the translation of CSIs. This case-study focused on a text-only partial localisation of title from a new franchise, with some resources in the localisation kit, but without the provision of audio-visual content, and this resulted in the linguists having to visualise the interactions, as common in the situation of blind translation, as covered in 2.7.3. Other studies could therefore look at similar games, but with published prequels which can be accessed and played by the linguists, as this may result in more intramedial connections, in terms of how CSIs, and other important terms are translated. Additionally, other research can also focus on case-studies including the provision of some audio-visual content in the localisation kit, such as graphics and audio files, all the way up to having full access to the video game in question. This could reveal how resources impact the translation of highly culturally specific video games. Another consideration would be investigating similar studies with a larger group of linguists. This would allow for even more generalisable results and could explore the impact of specific parameters in more depth, such as linguistic background, level of training (professionally or educationally), and length of time spent playing video games in relation to translation output. However, the only caveat here is finding a large enough group of professional linguists who embody certain characteristics to agree to participate in such a research project. This project only included eight linguists but is the largest and only one of its kind.

Moreover, it would also be beneficial to approach such case studies, comprised of multimedia and multimodal resources, from a multimodal perspective. While multimodality has been discussed within the field of AVT, there is still potential to further develop its framework within TMIES, which could include the channel of interactivity. Such case studies could include different scenarios, such as a partial localisation kit only containing text (as demonstrated by this case study), but also case studies containing text and audio-visual content, as well as those with both source text and full access to the original game. Furthermore, in relation of audio-visual considerations, future projects could include more stringent spatial and temporal considerations, with character limitations, which can be observed in PC and console games, but can be stricter in video games on mobile platforms with limited screen size. However, such research would require more than the creation of a simple game text, it would also require the inclusion of audio-visual content, and a video game, or at least sections of video game. Gaining this access could be costly and challenging, especially if it involves engagement with the industry, which would be necessary for more authentic or generalisable data; however, this would be worthwhile, and could further the development of multimodality as a tool used in the research of TMIES.

6.4.5 Exploring the Wider Networks in the Production of a Localised Video Game Text

In the early stages of this research, the way in which the linguists and the project managers worked together in the production stage was also analysed. While the findings can be used to expand existing knowledge of the roles of the two different types of linguists, and the project managers, this thesis had generated more data than expected, and to fully explore the research aim and questions it was necessary to remove content less central to cultural specificity and the socio-cultural domain. This included the role of project managers, as it was found that they did not directly impact the translation of CSIs in this case study, and in fact categorically left the translation of CSIs, and all content, to the linguists. However, this does not mean that they were not vital in other aspects, such as creating the structures and networks through which the projects were completed, using a combination of digital technology, including CAT tools, and messenger apps. Initially, these networks were mapped and analysed utilising Bruno Latour's (1996) Actor Theory Network (ANT), which included ANT maps, originating from the field of sociology, to explore the relationships between project managers and linguists, as it was reasoned that this could further contextualise practice; however, as this research became more focused, these elements needed to be removed, so that they could be fully explored in a separate study, which will also be based on this case study. As such, this content has been integrated

into a separate but complimentary forthcoming study, which illustrates the nature of translation networks in the production stage of a video game localisation project, and further delineates the roles of the linguists and the project managers.

6.4.6 Reception Studies of Chinese Video Game Translations in TMIES

This research was primarily concerned with the translation of CSIs in the production stage of a localisation project, and highlighted how the linguists can also be considered a part of the target audience. This was framed with Chesterman's (1993, 9) norms, in terms of how the video game linguists working on this project were also video gamers who embodied both professional and expectancy norms and could therefore seamlessly bridge the gap between such norms. However, it would also be revealing to take this a step further, and have fans of the wuxia RPG genre, participate in a reception study based on the translation of CSIs, and other areas of translation. While some reception studies have been conducted in TMIES, including Mangiron (2016, 2018), there remains scope for in-depth research relating to the reception of video games being translated from Chinese and into Chinese. Not only could such studies draw attention to translation quality in terms of localisation models, and levels of resources, they could further contextualise differences and similarities in terms of the expectancy norms of linguists who are also video gamers, and mono-lingual gamers who may be less aware of the challenges involved in translating highly culturally specific video game texts.

6.5 Final Remarks

Upon the journey of exploring the nebulous connections between socio-cultural reasoning and translation behaviour of the linguists – directly from the linguists, it has become apparent that this study represents a larger step towards the understanding of how existing translation studies theories, as well as frameworks from within the field of sociology can be applied to map the new digital frontier of TMIES. While this thesis has uncovered new knowledge that will benefit both academia and the industry, it has also revealed there is still much scope for the development of existing theories, and the creation of new frameworks within TMIES, a large and ever-expanding field, driven by consumer demand and rapidly developing digital technology. It is hoped that the theoretical and practical findings, as well as methodologies utilised in this thesis, can open new avenues of investigation, and generate rich findings for the next wave of researchers interested in TMIES, previously impeded by industry restrictions, and the limited resources available to researchers.

Appendix A: Localisation Kit and Annotated ST

Briefing

The ST is from a single-player, wuxia, action RPG for PCs, which has been created by one of the leading Chinese game developers. It contains many of the classic features of this game genre, but it is a new franchise, and so there are no TMs, TBs, or other resources for previous games of this franchise. This means that translators will need to translate all the terms for the first time.

Owing to the popularity of this game in China, the developer wishes to have it localised for western and English-speaking gamers. The target audience includes fans of action, martial arts, and the wuxia genre, who might have played localised wuxia RPGs. The developers require that the translation appeals to the target audience, but at the same time, does not depart too much from the original material.

Style Guide

General:

- Keep it clear and concise – while this is for a PC and will not need to adhere to a strict character count, the goal should be to convey the meaning of the source text in a natural way that avoids the redundancy and repetition seen in more literal Chinese to English translations.
- Respect the wuxia genre – this is an established genre with many fans, and so it is important to respect the spirit and tone of the source text.
- The importance of context – to better understand how the text fits together, the original text with the names of the speakers and other useful information has been provided as part of this localisation kit. Translators should use this as a reference.

Dialogue:

- Maintain coherence – the dialogue should flow clearly and naturally.
- Authenticity – the text should accurately convey the way the various characters speak to one another as typically seen in the wuxia genre. Respecting cultural and historical norms where possible.

Influences

The game is inspired by the literary works of Louis Cha, who went by the pen name of Jin Yong, the televised adaptations of wuxia fiction, and on games such as *justice Online*, *Gujian 3*,

Jianwang 3, Moonlight Blade, and Yimeng Jianghu. These titles may come in handy as references when dealing with the translation of terminology.

Annotated ST

	武当派
	阴阳相生，拳剑相辅。 以静制动，以柔克刚。
	少林派
	苦乐皆可舍，生死皆是空。 刚拳卫家国，禅棍护众生。
	丐帮
	一棒打狗，一掌降龙。 以酒会友，市井英雄。
	峨眉派
	刚柔若流水，巾帼胜须眉。 一剑穿云雾，双刺走江湖。
	“情宠娇多不自由，骊山举火戏诸侯。只知一笑倾人国，不觉胡尘满玉楼。”
	明朝成化年间，明宪宗贵为天子，却舍弃后宫三千，独宠年长自己十七岁的侍女万贵妃。同时，设立特务机构西厂，以伺察朝中官员与平民百姓的言行。西厂由万贵妃宠信的太监汪直统领，能随意逮捕官民，先斩后奏。一时之间，西厂的势力凌驾于锦衣卫与东厂之上。但汪直竟滥用职权来铲除异己，迫害忠良。西厂横行，宦官当道，皇上沉迷奢侈淫乐，官吏贪污剥削百姓，如此世道之下，就连武林江湖也动荡不安……
师父	程儿，为师上次教你的武当长拳，可学会了么？
秦尚程	回师父，徒儿已将套路熟记在心，求师父点拨。
师父	那就让为师看看你的进度如何。出招吧。
UI text	点击鼠标左键，进行普通攻击。
UI text	点击鼠标右键，进行格挡。
师父	很好，看来你已掌握武当长拳的精髓。切要记得，“清静为基，圆柔为形，养气为宗，阴阳为本。”接下来为师将传授你本派的内家功夫——太极拳招式【怀中抱月】。
UI text	点击屏幕下方的红色招式图标或快捷键“1”，使出【怀中抱月】。
秦尚程	徒儿谢师父赐教！
师父	人在江湖，需时时警惕。若气血不足或内息不稳，可寻安全之处进行打坐，休养生息。

UI text	点击屏幕下方的蓝色图标或快捷键“0”，进行打坐，回复气血与内力。
大师兄（徐子睿）	师父，您召见徒儿所为何事？
师父	前些日子，为师听闻紫金山庄的庄主出门在外遭到歹徒埋伏，受了点伤。睿儿，你和程儿一同下山给庄主送药去吧。路上万事小心，互相照应。
UI text	获得 四神粥
UI text	获得 金疮药
大师兄，秦尚程	是，师父！徒儿这就出发。
秦尚程	大婶，你哭得那么伤心，发生什么事了？
赵大婶	呜呜呜，今早我儿子小虎到后山玩耍，也不知道发生了啥，被人发现的时候已经倒在地上，两眼翻白，全身抽搐不止，如今还高烧不退.....我的宝贝儿子啊啊呜呜呜.....
大师兄	大婶莫慌，小虎应当是小儿惊风犯了。在下略懂医术，不如让在下帮小虎把个脉？
大师兄	师弟，我需要这几味药：僵蚕、全蝎、朱砂粉。是否可劳烦师弟到回春堂买来？
秦尚程	好，包在我身上！
回春堂老板	少侠，这可真不巧，这几味药都售罄了。不过，蝎子可从后山捕到，朱砂也可从后山矿场里找。至于僵蚕，城尾有一户养蚕人家，少侠可到那儿碰碰运气。
客栈老板娘	哎，少侠！二楼包厢已经被别的客人包下来了，你不能上去！
秦尚程	老板娘，人命关天，劳烦你让开！
客栈老板娘	少侠，听我一句劝，别多管闲事，否则会惹来杀身之祸的！
秦尚程	老板娘.....对不住了.....(施展轻功)
客栈老板娘	哎！少侠！来人呐！
官兵甲	是谁在楼下大吵大闹？找死吗？
秦尚程	把养蚕人家的姑娘给交出来！
官兵乙	哼！哪里来的小毛头？兄弟们，上！
酒肉和尚	（打酒嗝）咋那么热闹呐？打架怎不叫上老子？小兄弟甭怕！老子罩你！
钱公公	是哪个不要命的敢在此撒野？
官兵甲	禀告公公，就是这两个家伙要闯入包厢，还把看守的弟兄们都打了一顿！
钱公公	哼，你们这班没用的废物！

秦尚程	狗官！你不仅强抢民女，还霸占民田剥削百姓，我今日就要替天行道、警恶惩奸！
钱公公	不知天高地厚的小子！
酒肉和尚	（打酒嗝）哟，这男的怎么细皮嫩肉长得像娘们儿？来，陪老子喝坛酒！
钱公公	胆敢油嘴滑舌，那就让你们尝尝西厂的厉害！
钱公公	哼，算你们俩运气好，爷有要事在身，不陪你们玩了。下次再见，就是你们人头落地之时！
UI text	获得 赤炎剑
UI text	获得 护魂甲
秦尚程	姑娘，你没事吧？
养蚕姑娘	小女子无恙，多谢少侠相救。
秦尚程	姑娘可知他们为何要抓捕少妇和幼童？
养蚕姑娘	小女子只知道，被他们抓了的女人，都一个个轮流被领到那位公公面前，可公公只看一眼，摇摇头便让官兵把她们给带走了。他们还仔细检查了每个幼童的背部，小女子觉得.....他们像是在找什么人一般。
秦尚程	找人？西厂的人千里迢迢从京城来到襄阳城找人，总觉得事有蹊跷.....啊，对了！在下急需僵蚕一用，姑娘可否施舍一些？
养蚕姑娘	当然可以，请少侠随我来！
秦尚程	师兄，你吩咐的药材都找齐了！
大师兄	甚好！你看着小虎，我马上去煮药。
UI text	获得 惊风散
赵大婶	多谢两位少侠治好了小虎！大恩大德，无以为报！我这儿有块可以辟邪的玄虎玉，就送给少侠防身吧。
小虎	多谢大哥哥们！我以后也要像大哥哥们一样，到武当山学武，以后出来江湖行侠仗义，做个大英雄！
	文钱

Appendix B: Steps and Procedures Involved in the Localisation Project

The entire project was carried out within the space of five days, which allowed for approximately two days for the initial translation, two days for the review, and approximately one day for several steps including the initial setting up of the project on memoQ, the debriefing prior to translation, facilitating communications, and then checking that all was in the place at the final stage of the project. The list of procedures below were generated by Keywords Studios in relation to this specific project, which was a text only partial localisation.

Step	Procedure
1	Keywords employee (acting as client) sends a request to the PMs through email with project materials, details, and project brief (localization kit).
2	Project managers to assess request and decides on whether details are workable (5-day deadline).
3	Project managers accept request and create projects in memoQ. (Take note to separate projects so that teams are unable to view project copies across teams – to prevent inter-team reference/influence).
4	Project managers to initiate Q&A file (set up query sheet, double confirm on any final project details).
5	Project managers hand off files to translators (a copy of hand off/communications to be kept for reference – if any).
6	Translators translate and post questions/comments (if any) in Q&A file.
7	Translators to inform project managers that translation is ready for review.
8	Project managers to export a copy of the translation-only file for their team and a version of the Q&A file – if any queries raised.
9	Project managers hand off files to reviewers (a copy of hand off/communications to be kept for reference – if any).
10	Reviewers review and post questions/comments (if any) in Q&A file.
11	Reviewers to inform project managers that review is complete.
12	Project managers to export a copy of the completed file and keep a version of the Q&A file after review – if any queries raised.
13	Project managers to look through file (if required, subjected to individual project manager preferences), consolidate all required documents, return to Keywords employee (client).

Appendix C: Sample Translation

This is a sample translation, created by one of the translations teams. It has been provided here for consultation by thesis readers who cannot read the original Chinese source text.

Wudang Sect
Yin and Yang give rise to each other, while the fist and sword complement each other. Counter movement with stillness, overcome strength with flexibility.
Shaolin Sect
Dispensable are the feelings of happiness and suffering, for life and death are but emptiness. With strong fists we defend our homeland, with pewter staves we safeguard all life.
Beggars' Sect
A cudgel to strike the cur, a palm to slay the dragon. A toast to solidarity, raised amongst a band of street-born heroes.
Emei Sect
With the strength and grace of flowing water, our heroines shall outmatch any man. A sword to pierce the heavens, two thrusts to roam the world.
"Lighting the beacons and mocking his generals, all in a bid to earn a laugh from his queen. He won the queen's laugh but lost his men's trust, as they left him for dead at Mount Li."
It was the Ming Dynasty, during the reign of Chenghua. Despite his nobility, Emperor Ming Xianzong had decided to set aside his harem of three thousand concubines in favor of Consort Wan, a servant girl seventeen years older than he was. At the same time, a spy agency loyal only to the Emperor was set up: the Western Bureau. Their agents spread across the country, covertly monitoring, and reporting on the words and actions of any person, officials and civilians alike. At the helm of this clandestine division was a eunuch whom Consort Wan was incredibly fond of. His name was Wang Zhi. With the power to freely arrest any official or civilian, alongside the special privilege to act first before reporting back to the Emperor, the Western Bureau's power and influence grew rapidly, quickly overshadowing and overriding that of the Embroidered Uniform Guard and the Eastern Depot. However, Wang Zhi took things one step too far, abusing his power to eliminate his political opponents and persecute good men. With the eunuch's faction taking on more power, the Western Bureau wreaked havoc while the Emperor indulged in luxuries and carnal pleasures, as corrupt officials exploited civilians across the country. In this foul state of politics, even the pugilist underworld begins to grow unsettled...

Cheng'er, have you mastered the Wudang Long Fist that I taught you previously?
Yes Master, I have already memorized the moves. Please instruct me, Master.
Then I shall bear witness to your progress. You may begin.
Click the left mouse button to perform a normal attack.
Click the right mouse button to perform a parry.
Excellent, it seems that you have grasped the essence of the Wudang Long Fist. Always remember to perform "with a foundation of tranquility, the form of sphericity, a maxim centered around the nourishment of Qi, and an orientation towards Yin and Yang." Next, I shall impart upon you one of our sect's internal martial arts—a Tai Chi Quan technique called [Lunar Embrace].
Click the red technique icon at the bottom of the screen or press the shortcut key "1" to use [Lunar Embrace].
Thank you Master for your imparting your teachings!
The world is a dangerous place, so we have to be wary at all times. If you ever feel faint or have trouble catching your breath, find a safe spot and meditate, to recuperate and recover.
Click the blue icon at the bottom of the screen or shortcut key "0" to meditate, recovering Life and Energy.
Master, why have you summoned me?
A few days ago, I received news that some thugs ambushed the Villa Master of the Zijin Villa, leaving him slightly injured. Rui'er, run along with Cheng'er down the mountain and deliver some medicine to the Villa Master. Be extra careful and be sure to take care of each other on your way there.
Obtained Four Diety Porridge
Obtained Elixir
Yes, Master! I am on my way.
Ma'am, what's the matter? Why are you crying?
Sob sob, my son Xiao Hu went to play around the rear hills this morning, and something happened to him. He was found twitching on the ground, with his eyes rolled back. And now, he's running a high fever that just wouldn't go down...what on Earth is happening to my poor son, sob sob...
Don't worry Ma'am, Xiao Hu's probably just in pediatric shock. I do have some knowledge of medicine myself, would you let me take his pulse?
Brother, I need a few medicinal items: Stiff Silkworms, Whole Scorpions, and Cinnabar Powder. Could I trouble you to buy them from Hui Chun Hall?

Sure, I'm on it!
Young master, it is unfortunate, but we are sold out on all these medicinal items. However, you can catch Scorpions in the Rear Hills, and you can find Cinnabar Powder in the Rear Hills Mine. As for Stiff Silkworms, there is a family of Silkworm Farmers at the tail end of the city, you may try your luck with them.
Hey, young master! The second floor has been reserved by other customers, you aren't allowed there!
Lady Boss, it is an emergency, a matter of life and death! Please let me through!
Young master, take my advice and don't stick your nose where they don't belong, else you'll risk dancing with death.
Lady Boss... I'm so sorry... (Performs Qinggong)
Oy! Young master! Guards!
Who's that making a scene downstairs? Are you tired of living?
Hand over the silkworm farmer lass!
Hmph! Where did this rascal come from? Lads, take them out!
(Hiccup) What's the commotion? A fight? Why didn't anyone invite me? Rest easy, young man! This old geezer's got your back!
Who's this suicidal guy? You dare to wreak havoc here of all places?
Your Lordship, we found these two guys attempting to break into the room. They've already beaten down the guards!
Hmph, you useless bunch of good-for-nothings!
You depraved cur! Abusing your power to abduct women, unjustly seizing farmland for yourself, and exploiting common folk to no end...I'll put an end to this! Today, I shall exact justice and punishment on behalf of heaven, for all of your wicked kind to witness and fear!
Why, aren't you a cocky little rascal?
(Hiccup) Whoa, this guy's skin is mighty soft and delicate, just like a lassie! Ha, come have a drink with me then!
Such blatant disrespect...no matter, I'll give you a taste of the Western Bureau's might!
Hmph, count yourselves lucky for I have more important matters to attend to. The next time we meet, will be the day both of you meet your doom!
Obtained Crimson Flame Blade
Obtained Soulshield Armor
Are you alright, miss?

I am fine, thank you for saving me, young hero.
Miss, do you know why they are abducting young women and children?
I only know that every girl they abduct is brought before that high ranking eunuch. He simply takes one look and shakes his head, sending them to be taken away by the guards. They also carefully inspected every child's back, so I think they may be looking for someone.
Looking for someone? The Western Bureau coming all the way from the capital to Xiang Yang just to find someone, something sure smells fishy... Ah right! I need some Stiff Silkworm right now, are you able to spare some, lady?
Yes of course! Please follow me, young hero!
Brother, I've gathered all of your medicinal items!
Perfect! Take care Xiao Hu while I cook the medicine.
Obtained Calming Powder
Thank you for curing Xiao Hu, young heroes! I will never be able to repay such kindness! Here, take this evil-warding Black Tiger Jade, and let it safeguard you on your adventures.
Thank you, big brothers! When I grow up, I want to be just like you! I want to learn martial arts in Wudang, and then roam the world as a chivalrous hero, helping all in need!
Coins

Appendix D: Raw Data of CSIs, Entries, Strategies, Approaches, and Statistical Data of Norms Strengths for Linguists

The following table contains all data relating to norms in translation. It has been aligned so that the normative data of each CSI can be observed. As such, the category of CSI is followed by the individual entries, translation strategies (operational norm), approaches (initial norm), and then corresponding (quantitative) statistical data. Orange highlights show changes made by reviewers. Some abbreviations have been made for the approaches to enable the table to fit on these pages. Thus:

SCA: source culture adequate.

SCA Mixed: source culture adequate mixed.

TCA: target culture acceptable.

TCA Mixed: target culture acceptable mixed.

S&TC Mixed: source and target culture mixed.

CSI	Entries	Teams	Translation	Strategy	Approach	Translation Norm Strength
Fictional characters	程儿	1	Cheng'er	Borrowing	SCA	
		2	Cheng'er	Borrowing	SCA	
		3	Cheng-Er	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Young Apprentice	Explication	SCA	
	睿儿	1	Rui'er	Borrowing	SCA	
		2	Rui Er	Borrowing	SCA	
		3	Rui'er	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Zirui	Borrowing	SCA	
	小虎	1	Xiaohu	Borrowing	SCA	
		2	Xiao Hu	Borrowing	SCA	
		3	Xiaohu	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	My son (to) Xiaohu	Explication (to) borrowing	SCA	Total: SCA: 100% (rule)
Fictional sects	武当派	1	Wudang Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed	
		2	Wudang Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed	
		3	Wudang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		4	Wudang (to) Wudang Sect	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing + literal	S&TC Mixed (to) SCA Mixed	

	少林派	1	Shaolin Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed			
		2	Shaolin Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed			
		3	Shaolin	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed			
		4	Shaolin (to) Shaolin Sect	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing + literal	S&TC Mixed (to) SCA Mixed			
	丐帮	1	Beggars' Sect	Literal	SCA			
		2	Beggars' Sect	Literal	SCA			
		3	Beggar's Sect	Literal	SCA			
		4	Beggars' Sect	Literal	SCA			
	峨眉派	1	Emei Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed			
		2	Emei Sect	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed			
		3	Emei	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed			
		4	Emei (to) Emei Sect	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing + literal	STC Mixed (to) SCA Mixed			
	Currency	文钱	1	Wen	Borrowing + omission		S&TC Mixed	Total: SCA: 100% (rule)
			2	Coins	Generalisation by hyponym		TCA	
			3	Coins	Generalisation by hyponym		TCA	
			4	Coin(s)	Generalisation by hyponym		TCA	
Martial Arts Society	江湖	1	the land	Generalisation by hyponym	TCA			
		2	the world	Generalisation by hyponym	TCA			
		3	Jianghu	Borrowing	SCA			
		4	(omitted)	Omission	TCA			
	武林江湖	1	martial world	Generalisation by hyponym	TCA			
		2	pugilist underworld	Generalisation by hyponym	TCA			
		3	Jianghu, the martial arts world	Borrowing + Generalisation by hyponym	S&TC Mixed			

		4	pugilistic world	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	Totals: TCA: 75% (strong) SCA: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy) S&TC Mixed: 12.5% (idiosyncrasy)
Variable Terms of Address	大婶	1	ma'am	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	Madam (to) Ma'am			
		3	old lady (to) Lady			
		4	Aunty	Literal	SCA	
	在下	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		3	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		4	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
	少侠	1	young hero	Literal	SCA	
		2	Young master	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
		3	young man	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
		4	you	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
	姑娘	1	daughter	Concretisation by hyponym	TCA	
		2	Girl (to) lass	Literal (to) Concretisation by hyponym	SCA (to) TCA	
		3	girl	Literal	SCA	
		4	girl	Literal	SCA	
	兄弟们	1	Brothers	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	Lads	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		3	Brothers	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		4	boys	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
	老子	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		3	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		4	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
	民女	1	women	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	women	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	

		3	girls	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
		4	someone else's daughter	Concretisation by hyponym	TCA			
	小女子	1	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
		2	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
		3	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
		4	I	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
	大哥哥们	1	you	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA			
		2	big brothers	Literal	SCA			
		3	big brothers	Literal	SCA			
		4	big brothers	Literal	SCA			
	Totals: TCA: 75% (strong) SCA: 19.4% (idiosyncrasy) S&TC Mixed: 5.6% (idiosyncrasy)							
	Moves and Skills	内家功夫	1	inner martial arts of this sect	Literal + generalisation by hypernym		S&TC Mixed	
			2	our sect's internal Kung Fu	Literal		SCA	
			34	internal martial art move	Literal + generalisation by hypernym		S&TC Mixed	
			Neigong	Borrowing + omission	SCA Mixed			
太极拳		1	Taijiquan	Borrowing	SCA			
		2	Tai Chi Chuan (to) Tai Chi	Borrowing (to) Borrowing + omission	SCA (to) SCA Mixed			
		3	Tai Chi (to) Tai Chi Quan	Borrowing + omission (to) Borrowing	SCA Mixed (to) SCA			
		4	Taiji	Borrowing + omission	SCA Mixed			
怀中抱月		1	Embracing the Moon	Literal	SCA			
		2	Embrace the Moon (to) Lunar Embrace	Literal	SCA			
		3	Embrace the Moon	Literal	SCA			

		4	Embrace the Moon	Literal	SCA	
	打坐	1	sit and meditate	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	S&TC Mixed	
		2	meditate	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
		3	Meditate	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
		4	meditate	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
	轻功	1	Flies over	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
		2	Qinggong	Borrowing	SCA	
		3	Qinggong	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Qinggong	Borrowing	SCA	
						Totals: SCA: 65% (moderate) TCA: 20% (idiosyncrasy) S&TC Mixed: 15% (idiosyncrasy)
Historical Figures	明宪宗	1	Emperor Ming Xianzong	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		2	Emperor Ming Xianzong	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		3	Emperor Ming Xianzong	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		4	Xianzong, an emperor	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
	万贵妃	1	Wan Guifei	Borrowing	SCA	
		2	Consort Wan	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		3	Consort Wan	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		4	Wan Zhen'er (later known as Consort Wan)	Explication + borrowing	SCA Mixed	
	汪直	1	Wang Zhi	Borrowing	SCA	
		2	Wang Zhi	Borrowing	SCA	
		3	Wang Zhi	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Wang Zhi	Borrowing	SCA	
						Total: SCA: 100% (rule)
Fixed Terms of Address	师父	1	Master	Literal	SCA	
		2	Master	Literal	SCA	
		3	Master	Literal	SCA	

		4	master	Literal	SCA	
	师弟	1	brother	Literal + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		2	junior	Literal + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		3	(omitted)	Omission	TCA	
		4	Brother	Literal + omission	S&TC Mixed	
	老板娘	1	ma'am	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		2	Lady Boss	Literal	SCA	
		3	Madam	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
		4	lady	Generalisation by hypernym	TCA	
						Totals: SCA: 41.6% (weak) TCA: 33.3% (weak) S&TC Mixed: 25% (weak)
TCM	金疮药	1	Incised Wound Medicine	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	Source and Target Culture Mixed	
		4	Wound Healing Medicine	Generalisation by hypernym		
		3	Healing Salve	Omission + concretisation by hyponym		
		2	Medicine (to) Elixir	Generalisation by hypernym	Target Culture Acceptable	
	僵蚕	1	medicinal silkworms	Explicitation + literal	SCA Mixed	
		2	Stiff Silkworms	Literal	SCA	
		3	Stiff Silkworm	Literal	SCA	
		4	Stiff Silkworm	Literal	SCA	
	全蝎	1	a scorpion	Literal	SCA	
		2	Whole Scorpion	Literal	SCA	
		3	Whole Scorpion	Literal	SCA	
		4	Dried Scorpion	Explicitation + literal	SCA Mixed	
	朱砂粉	1	cinnabar powder	Literal	SCA	
		2	Cinnabar Powder	Literal	SCA	
		3	Cinnabar Powder	Literal	SCA	
		4	Cinnabar Powder	Literal	SCA	

	惊风散	1	Jingfeng Powder	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed	
		2	Calming Powder	Explicitation + literal	SCA Mixed	
		3	Fright Syncope Remedy	Explicitation + literal	SCA Mixed	
		4	Seizure Remedy (to) Convulsion Remedy	Literal	SCA	
Places	紫金山庄	1	Zijin Villa	Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
		2	Violet Gold Villa	Literal + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
		3	Zijin Villa	Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
		4	Violet Gold Villa (to) Zijin Villa	Literal + generalisation by hypernym (to) Borrowing + generalisation by hypernym	S&TC Mixed	
	回春堂	1	Hall of Rejuvenation	Literal	SCA	
		2	Hui Chun Hall	Borrowing + literal	SCA Mixed	
		3	Hui Chun Tang	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Huichun Medical Store (to) Huichun Pharmacy	Borrowing + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
	襄阳城	1	Xiangyang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		2	Xiang Yang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		3	(omitted)	Omission	TCA	
		4	Xiangyang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
	武当山	1	Mount Wudang	Literal + Borrowing	SCA Mixed	
		2	Wudang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		3	Wudang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	

		4	Wudang	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	Totals: S&TC Mixed: 62.5% (moderate) SCA: 31.25% (weak) TCA: 6.25% (idiosyncrasy)
Food	四神粥	1	Four Gods' Porridge (to) Herbal Porridge	Literal (to) Literal + substitution by sense transfer	SCA (to) S&TC Mixed	
		2	Four Deity Porridge	Literal	SCA	
		3	Herbal Congee	Substitution by sense transfer + concretisation by hyponym	TCA Mixed	
		4	Four Herbs Congee	Substitution by sense transfer + concretisation by hyponym	TCA Mixed	
Historical organisations	西厂	1	Western Depot	Literal	SCA	
		2	Western Bureau	Literal + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
		3	Xichang	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Western Bureau	Literal + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
	锦衣卫	1	royal guards	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	S&TC Mixed	
		2	Embroidered Uniform Guard	Literal	SCA	
		3	Imperial Guards	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	S&TC Mixed	
		4	Brocade-Clad Guards	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	S&TC Mixed	
	东厂	1	Eastern Depot	Literal	SCA	
		2	Eastern Depot	Literal	SCA	
		3	Dongchang	Borrowing	SCA	
		4	Eastern Bureau	Literal + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
Energies	阴阳	1	Yin and Yang	Borrowing + explicitation	SCA Mixed	

		2	Yin and Yang	Borrowing + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
		3	Yin and Yang	Borrowing + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
		4	Yin meets Yang	Borrowing + explicitation	SCA Mixed	
	气血	1	Qi	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		2	Qi (to – omitted)	Borrowing + omission (to) Omission	S&TC Mixed (to) TCA	
		3	Health	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
		4	(omitted)	Omission	TCA	
	内息	1	Inner Energy	Literal + substitution by sense transfer	S&TC Mixed	
		2	Inner Force (to) breath	Literal + substitution by sense transfer (to) Substitution by sense transfer + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		3	Qi	Borrowing + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		4	energy	Substitution by sense transfer	TCA	
	内力	1	Inner Energy	Literal	SCA	
		2	Inner Force (to) Energy	Literal + substitution by sense transfer (to) Omission + literal	SCA (to) TCA Mixed	
		3	Chi	Substitution by sense transfer + omission	S&TC Mixed	
		4	Energy	Substitution by sense transfer + omission	S&TC Mixed	

Appendix F: Sample Interview Transcript

This is the transcript of one interview that took place between the researcher (referred to as interviewer) and one reviewer (referred to as reviewer). All instances of references that can be used to identify this linguist or other linguists have been removed and replaced with neutral terms like translator and reviewer, as per the ethics form (Appendix E above).

Interviewer: What is your usual approach for the review of character names? Like, in this game there was 程儿 (Cheng'er), 睿儿 (Rui'er), and 小虎 (Xiaohu).

Reviewer: My usual approach as in not specifically for wuxia games?

Interviewer: Yes. In wuxia games, but not necessarily for this project.

Reviewer: I would say that the most direct approach is just to take the Hanyu Pinyin directly.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: And in cases where that would not sound very nice or sound very appealing. We could do with removing certain suffixes from the name, such as the 'er'.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: As the 'er' would not sound very nice in English.

Interviewer: OK. Good. So, a combination of keeping the original pinyin but sometimes kind of adapting it a little bit.

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, that's great. And what about for this project?

Reviewer: I think for this project I stuck with the Hanyu Pinyin approach mostly.

Interviewer: OK. Great.

Reviewer: I think for some of the other names, like, I think there was one for the eunuch, I think I remember using Qian Gongong or something...

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: I think, I can't really remember but I think I did... I kind of used the honorific like used in western society, like 'Your Lordship' or something like that.

Interviewer: OK, excellent, but something like 'Your Lordship', it's a little bit archaic. It feels like something we'd say a long time ago, or like something you might hear in Game of Thrones, for instance, you know, that kind of thing.

Reviewer: Exactly, so, so, like wuxia is also like a classical time in China, so I try to bring that kind of that more medieval touch.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: To the English translations.

Interviewer: OK, that's nice. Thanks. So, what is your usual approach for the review of names of sects? Like, 武当派 (Wudang Sect) and 峨眉派 (Emei Sect).

Reviewer: I think those have generally accepted translations, which are mostly the Hanyu Pinyin versions. I would say I so, I kind of searched them up online and stuck with whatever was mostly used.

Interviewer: OK, no problem. And that's what you did with this project, yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, great. What is your usual approach for the review of what I call fixed terms of address? For instance, referring to refer peoples' jobs, or professions, like for instance, there was 师父 (shifu: master) and 老板娘 (laoban niang: boss lady).

Reviewer: Those are generally direct, as in shifu would be something like master and laoban niang would be something like shopkeeper or like some kind of auntie.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: I guess the weirder one would be the case of the eunuch.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: Because you wouldn't address a eunuch as 'sir eunuch' or something like that. So, that would sound kind of weird, so I went for something more in the honorific sense. Like, more kind of archaic. Like, 'Your Lordship'. That kind of stuff.

Interviewer: So, it makes sense when you're interacting with these kinds of characters, you know the nature of the interaction – yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: Ok. That's great.

Reviewer: Because a eunuch was like a high-ranking official.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: So, they had power so you've got to try and bring that into the English text and make the player feel like this is some kind of big boss guy that you can't mess with.

Interviewer: OK, that's great, thanks. And similar, but different, what is your usual approach for the review of what I call *variable terms of address* used to refer to characters, for instance, in Chinese, NPCs would refer to your character in different ways based on factors such as age and position in society? So, they might refer to you as 兄弟 (xiongdi: brother), 大哥哥 (da gege: big brother), or 少侠 (shaoxia: young knight-errant), you know, or a female character might be referred to an elder sister in one instance and then 姑娘 (guniang: girl) in the next. An individual might refer to themselves as 在下 (zaixia:

at below) or 小女子 (xiao nuzi: small girl) in a self-deprecating way. How do you convey this? How do you review these terms?

Reviewer: Hmm yeah so this is more related to the speaker of the line and the new character. So, I think the one that maybe has a little bit of information loss is between brothers because they can really be brothers or just part of the same sect... and they have to be... kind of like they have the same master, so in a western context it's going to be a little bit weird if you have to call them big brother and little brother. That would sound a little more like they have actual blood relationships.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: Family relationships, so just leaving them as brother makes it sound like a Shaolin temple thing, or yeah, I'm thinking of a situation where they are living together but not actual brothers. Like in western society you have the term brothers being used to refer to other people in the Christian religion.

Interviewer: Right. Like monks or nuns or things like that.

Reviewer: Sorry?

Interviewer: Like monks or nuns...

Reviewer: Yeah, like brother or sister – that kind of brother or sister, not the blood ties version. So, that one would be the one that had a little bit of meaning loss because it doesn't like carry elder or younger. Erm, as for things like shaoxia... since shifu is master, shaoxia would be like young master, because it's used by the common folk to refer to the main character or refer to any of the wulin characters. So, they will usually be young master of some sort I would say. Yeah, but since the character you're playing is a younger one, so young master seems to work very well. Erm, as for guniang, I can't remember what I reviewed it as... but a lot of ones used to refer to the player, or the speaker, I just left as I.

Interviewer: OK, I just meant your approach in general. I mean, as you say, you kind of work with the context and see what makes sense in English, is that right?

Reviewer: Yes, so you've got to think of how people usually address the other party, in English like, with a more medieval touch I would say.

Interviewer: OK, great. And that's what you did for this project? Yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, no problem. What is your usual approach for the review of place names? So, for instance in this project we had 回春堂 (huichen tang: rejuvenation hall), 武当山

(wudang shan: Mount Wudang), and 紫金山庄 (zijin shanzhuang: purple gold mountain retreat).

Reviewer: Right, so this one was a little bit more interesting. I mean, usually I would leave the Chinese and translate the meaning, but in this case, the meaning was a little bit difficult, as it sounded a bit weird in English. Maybe like ‘purple gold’, something, so... I kind of went into a few other games, that also have the Chinese elements in them. Most notably, I borrowed a little bit from Genshin Impact.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: As it’s a recent mobile game.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: But what they did was for names or proper nouns – most of them left it in Hanyu Pinyin.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: So, without bringing the meaning over, but for English players it would still sound like a memorable place, like a memorable proper noun. So, as compared to if you tried to convey the meaning, it would sound a little bit awkward. Yes, so borrowing some from there, I decided to change zijin shanzhuang to just... I used the pinyin zijin – Z-I-J-I-N, and something English for the rest.

Interviewer: So, partly pinyin and partly English?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: To show that it’s a unique name, like it’s a proper name.

Interviewer: Is this to highlight the source culture, or make things easier for the players, or both?

Reviewer: I think the main consideration here is that it’s for a game, so usually for a game you need to consider if a text is functional, and in this case it’s partly functional, in a sense that the players don’t need to know the meaning of the name of the places, so it’s much better if we put a name that would allow players to remember it but then some English so they can find it... give a more memorable experience.

Interviewer: OK

Reviewer: So, instead of coming out with more clunky translations, which is more semantically accurate, I went with something that is foreignized and domesticated, as you would say?

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: Ah, yes, but it captures the name and the uniqueness more succinctly.

Interviewer: And is that what you did with the other names of places.

Reviewer: Yes, I think so. A similar idea.

Interviewer: OK. That's great, and what is your usual approach to the review of food items? So, for instance, in this game we had 四神粥 (si shen zhou: four deity porridge).

Reviewer: [reply is based on an entry that was related to a different category of CSI, but I let the interviewee respond first, and then asked again in relation to the term mentioned above]: So, I think one of the big things in this one was 金疮药 (jin chuang yao: metal wound medicine). Yeah so, usually, I will look for what the thing is in real life and try to see if there is an official translation of some kind, but this jin chuang yao thing is... it's kind of mythical. There's no concrete source of what it is. And what it actually means in Chinese is just... it's just a kind of medicine to treat wounds that are created by metallic weapons.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: So, the 金 (jin: metal or gold) here doesn't refer to gold, it just refers to metallic weapons. So, it would be awkward if you translated it as some kind of medicine for weapon damage or wounds, so it would sound weird. So, actually, I borrowed a little bit from World of Warcraft in this case, so I actually did like a reverse search, and searched for jin chuang yao, that, is currently used in existing games, and what I found was that in the Chinese version of World of Warcraft there is this event item that is called jin chuang yao and when I looked for the original, the English name, it was just like elixir of life or something. Then I realised that elixir is a kind of translation... it makes game sense as well because you want players to know this is a healing item, you can use this when you are low on health, so calling it an elixir would make perfect sense. So, that's how I landed on elixir.

Interviewer: It's interesting that you used game sense. So, by that do you refer to interactivity? So, with an item you have to interact with this item...

Reviewer: Correct. Functionality.

Interviewer: So, we are talking about functionality, interaction, it's not just a cultural item, it's also something the player has to work with. Yes?

Reviewer: Exactly, this is a game we're talking about, so it's going to be played by western players, so they need to like... translate a game you never know what the gamers are expecting. Right, if you translate the name of a healing item, as something super

convoluted and long, people are not going to understand that this is just an HP potion, that kind of thing.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: So, you need to have that kind of connection to the players. In that case, the specific... the accuracy of the meaning can be given up... I'm of this stance. So yeah.

Interviewer: That's great, so I previously asked you a question about food, but when you answered it was more to do with medicine. But because...

Reviewer: I put them together.

Interviewer: Yes, but that actually was going to be the next question I was going to ask, but you already answered it, so, is it ok to return to the food item I mentioned?

Reviewer: Ah, OK, for the food item, 四神粥 (si shen zhou: four deity porridge), I don't remember particularly having much trouble with that one, because, again, I think I understood that as a quest item.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: An item that was meant to be delivered to the quest target in the zijin shanzhuang area. If it's a quest item then the functionality is different, the approach can change as then you could give it a more convoluted name that is more accurate to the lore because, if it's a quest item, it is not consumable, you can't use it. I didn't think it was consumable but left some English just in case. I didn't have too much trouble with that, I think I called it like 'Four Gods Porridge' or something.

Interviewer: But again, that's a translation. It's not pinyin. So, for names of characters we see a pattern, where people are using pinyin, but for names of items, whether it's medicine or food or whatever that you use in the game, or what you find, there is more of a tendency to actually translate it, so the gamers can interact and understand.

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: So, there is a pattern...

Reviewer: It's definitely functional, it's part of the functionality of the game. So, you can have a game that is filled with names of people that you don't recognise, like places that you don't recognise, and it will feel foreign, but that is fine, the game world is usually fantastical anyway. But if you go into a game and all of things you can do seem very unintuitive, or just like the reverse of what gaming has taught you for your entire life, that would feel very bad, like that would make you want to just stop playing immediately.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: So, maintaining the functionality of the game... it's more... it's paramount for any game, not just wuxia games. So, adding in the lore, so we have to add in the lore and culture into a game, without shaking the playability of this game.

Interviewer: That's really interesting...

Reviewer: Without adding culture to the point that players really don't know what to do any more.

Interviewer: That's really interesting. You're noticing a balance of these two things, preserving the lore or the culture, but maintaining functionality. Never getting rid of functionality for the sake of lore. So, are you saying that as long as it makes sense in terms of functionality – you can add some elements of lore and culture?

Reviewer: I think this is more of a uniqueness of game translation, as compared to if you're translating a novel.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: Because for a novel there won't be a functionality.

Interviewer: No.

Reviewer: In a sense, it's just a book, so you can go wild with that.

Interviewer: OK. That's great, thank you. And similar to the previous questions: what is your usual approach for the review of other items such as the currency 文钱 (wen qian: wen coins)? How do you normally review these kind of things?

Reviewer: These items like currency would definitely be classified under functional, so, in the game text they would definitely have to be translated according to their function.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Of course, currency needs to be clear, so you know what it is, and like weapons and armour can have more fancy names, like flamboyant names, but they have to be immediately recognisable as 'oh, it's a piece of armour'.

Interviewer: OK, that's great.

Reviewer: Yeah, medicine is similar as well. Especially if it's actually usable medicine instead of like a quest item. Yeah, I think that's the general approach. Maintaining functionality.

Interviewer: That's great, and that's what you did for this project?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, that great. So, what is your usual approach for the review of the names of historical persons? You know, such as we had 万贵妃 (Wan Guifei), and 明宪宗 (Ming Xianxong). People like that.

Reviewer: Sorry?

Interviewer: What is your approach for the review of historical persons, such as in this game. We had 万贵妃 (Wan Guifei), 明宪宗 (Ming Xianxong), and...

Reviewer: Oh, Wan Guifei, right, OK, OK... So Wan Guifei was just Consort Wan. So, for these kind of names... it's historical, it's easy because we can just Wikipedia it and find the official name. And uh, of course here like in this case there isn't really such an issue but again it's back to you've got to preserve the playability of the game. So, if for example the historical name of a character... is kind of out there, like people don't really know this character, then I guess more liberties could be taken to try to make the character sound more appealing.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: But if it's like some character that is well known, and is easily searchable, then I guess using the official name isn't really that big of a deal.

Interviewer: OK, thanks, that's great. Thank you. And that's what you did for this project, yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: And what is your usual approach for the review the names of historical organisations? Like we had 西厂 (Xi Chang: Western Bureau) and 东厂 (Dong Chan: Eastern Bureau).

Reviewer: Yeah, so that one, I went online on Wikipedia and did some searching up. I remember that the official name wasn't what I eventually used. Because the official name didn't really sound like it was an organisation.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Yeah, so in this case, the thing is that... this kind of thing... even the official names, there are like several versions.

Interviewer: Exactly.

Reviewer: So... because the Dong Chang (Eastern Bureau) is actually the one that is more prominent, Xi Chang (Western Bureau) only existed for a very short time. So... for Dong Chang, I remember one of the names that exists was Eastern Bureau, and so I took that because actually... bureau sounds a lot more like a government organisation.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: So, I just took that and just sorted out East and West that way.

Interviewer: Yes, OK. That makes sense. So, it's not a case of you creating something entirely new, you had several different points of reference, and you had to choose the one you thought fits the best?

Reviewer: Correct, but it was a case like where the options provided by historians, I presume, were sufficient. So, in the case where there weren't such an option, like Eastern Bureau, instead all the names were quite weird sounding, and they didn't sound like an evil organisation or an organisation at all... and then I might have to practice a bit of liberty and come up with a name that yeah, that kind of sounds like an evil organisation.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: But I'll probably just leave the 'Western' in because that's kind of the hallmark thing. But yeah, if there wasn't this alternative, then I will come up with something of my own.

Interviewer: OK, great thank you. Moving onto a slightly different area now. So, what is your usual approach to the review of terms that refer to martial arts society such as 武林 (wulin: martial forest – meaning various societies of martial artists), 江湖 (jianghu: rivers and lakes – referring to the collective greater society of martial artists, outlaws, heroes, and wanderers that roam the land)?

Reviewer: OK, so these are probably the hardest. I would say if... a lot of it depends on the context of the sentence I would say. But if like it refers to the actual wulin or jianghu, and within the context it can't really be replaced with anything else, er, then I guess I will be forced to use the Hanyu Pinyin.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Those terms are extremely loaded, culturally loaded...

Interviewer: Definitely.

Reviewer: So, it's not going to be easy to translate them. But within a certain context like, I believe I did translate it as pugilist underworld or something.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Yeah, it was because it was in depth, in the context of the sentence it makes sense. So, I would say that for these terms, you have to exercise more liberty and try to, you've got to try to figure out what exactly the sentence is trying to say. Because sometimes the wulin... Jianghu... may simply be referring to the environment, and sometimes it may be referring to people, so for different cases we can actually use different translation strategies. But yeah... there are cases wherworks,hing works and we have to resort to the Hanyu Pinyin.

Interviewer: This is quite interesting.

Reviewer: And for all those kinds of things, jianghu related, I would say since the idea is the reflection of wuxia, in the western world, it would be something like medieval knights.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: So, like, the kind of language that I would choose, would also kind of be more like the knightly kind of stuff.

Interviewer: Yes.

Reviewer: So, yeah, chivalry. That kind of thing. Maybe a bit close, the chivalry would be a bit closer to xia yi (chivalrous hero justice) that stuff.

Interviewer: That's great. No, so what we're seeing is that pinyin terms are quite tricky and for some things like names, there is a tendency to go straight for the pinyin, whereas, if we have functional items, you might translate the meaning, so people can understand the functionality. For some established translations, like how do you translate 龙 (long: dragon), it's dragon straight away, even though it's not a dragon, you know how 'long' is a different creature, compared to a western dragon.

Reviewer: Yeah, it's not exactly the same, but even though the word is a bit confusing, as there are dragons, and wyverns... there are many different kinds of fantasy creatures, so, but there are drakes, so, I mean all of them are technically different, but we call them dragons anyway, so I don't think there's a big issue with calling a Chinese dragon a dragon.

Interviewer: Sure, sure... but it's fixed, because so many people have translated it as dragon, so even if you wanted to call it something different, we feel that we have to call it a dragon, but with something like wulin or jianghu, you highlight that it's tricky because it's not a case of going straight to pinyin or straight to a term, as it can depend on the context. Some people may have heard of these terms, some people may not have heard of these terms, so sometimes you feel like it's OK to use pinyin, sometimes you want to elaborate and use things like pugilistic underworld, and things like that – yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, and that's interesting. And that's what you did for this project – yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK, great. So, what is your usual approach to the review of terms that refer to energy and inner power in martial arts? Did you leave or change the translation of 气血 (qi xie: qi and blood), 内息 (nei xi: inner force), and 内力 (nei li: inner energy)?

Reviewer: OK, so this one... like clearly there's an easy tendency for us to use qi for everything, but for like xi xie, nei li, and nei xi, there's like existing kind of like terms in the Chinese gaming community, where it is known that qi xie (qi and blood) is just HP.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Nei li (inner energy) is pretty much just mana, that's not in the western context, or just energy. So, for these, they are definitely functional terms because the player needs to know what they do. So, it would be highly inefficient to transliterate them literally,

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: It would be much better if the translation was more functional and made in a way that the player would be able to tell. So, I think for qi xie (qi and blood), I used something like life.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Where it's obvious that that's your HP. Some western games do use the term 'life' as well. Instead of health, and it's a little bit of a twist on health, since health is the generally more commonly used term. But life seems to work well, and for nei xi (inner force), or nei li (inner energy), I think I used the energy instead of mana, as mana is little more like western fantasy, so energy... energy is still commonly used, a common resource in RPGs... resource for a couple of different single player games in the western gaming society, so that is easily acceptable.

Interviewer: So, you're considering functional terms that players can get to grip with quite quickly, yes?

Reviewer: Yes.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: Because I... the part we had to translate was more like a tutorial part at the beginning of the game, where like the master is teaching the pupil how to regenerate their health and mana. So, this is actually pretty important, so like the player actually fully grasps what is going on. So, we really have to use something that is tied down to the functionality. And like I said, I did do a little bit of a twist on it. It's not like the traditional HP, MP, but it's like life and energy, so there is a twist on it, but not so far as to the point that players will not be able to recognise this as just HP and MP.

Interviewer: OK, that's great. Thank you very much. So, staying on the theme of martial arts, what is your usual approach to the review of terms relating to martial arts skills and

moves? Like we had 怀中抱月 (huizhong baoyue: embrace moon), 内家功夫 (neijia gongfu: inner sect Kungfu), 太极拳 (taiji quan: taijichuan), these kind of things.

Reviewer: OK, so, some of these things are actual moves, some of these things are not actual moves, they are like a system of moves, so like neijia gongfu is not really a move, it's a way of describing a certain set of techniques. So... for most of these I have to go and do some research the actual moves, erm, regardless of whether it was in the original fiction, or some of them have actual real like... have actual techniques in real life erm martial arts, so... but for these moves, since they are skills that the players are supposed to use, to like fight, so first of all, they can't be too long, erm that's the first consideration, the second consideration is we can make them sound more appealing. Like, we should make them sound cooler, in a sense, since they're supposed to be abilities and skills, so... but it can get very trick as it's very difficult to translate like... the amount of information in four Chinese characters, in a very succinct way. And sometimes, if you try to do that it will sound very... it will sound more awkward, and it will sound very long. So, usually, the strategy will just be to just try to focus on one thing. Like what exactly is it that the skill does. Like what is the action – what is the primary action of this technique and try to bring that out in English. And if there's some kind of meaning, then you can try to pack that in, and if it doesn't work, you can just throw it out.

Interviewer: OK, OK. Great. So, it depends very much on the context, and trying convey the functionality – yes?

Reviewer: Yeah, in a sense, like if an ability is like meant to have some kind of game functionality... like stun, or it slows the enemy – then the name of that ability ought to have some kind of cue, certain words that will make people think that it will do that – yeah.

Interviewer: OK, again, a link to functionality and interaction – to how it works. Very good. And that's what you did for this project?

Reviewer: Mm-hm (affirmative).

Interviewer: Thank you. OK, moving onto a different area. What do you think are the usual challenges of reviewing a wuxia video game project?

Reviewer: So, I would say that my translator had a lot of good ideas, like on how to translate, about the lore, and like the poetry, but the translator kind of fell into the trap a lot of people fall into when translating very culturally different texts, which is over-translation.

Interviewer: OK.

Reviewer: So, it made the English text sound not so natural in places. So I had to trim down a lot of stuff. Like paraphrase, and the translator's selections for the names, like pronouns... like some of the names characters used to address each other were also changed. Like for the eunuch because the translator used 'eunuch sir', which sounded awkward, so I had to change that. Yes, and for the kind of tone I would say... the translator often used a similar tone, which was a very formal tone. But that doesn't really match with the source text, because the formal tone is pretty much just used with the, uh, the shifu (master). And sometimes with shixiong (martial brother). So, for like the usual conversations with the common folk, or even with the bad guys, the main character actually sounds a little more casual. And this tone was not always reflected in the translator's original translation. So, I had to edit sections as well. Yeah, I would say that the biggest kind of pitfall for translating like culturally loaded game texts, is just over translation... trying to translate too closely to the source text. To the point that the target text looks like and sounds highly unnatural.

Interviewer: Yeah, that's a good point. So, for these issues and challenges in general would you say that this wuxia project was similar to other wuxia projects you've worked on?

Reviewer: Yes, and I have done more translation than reviewing of other wuxia projects. I have also played a lot of wuxia games. Some of them were translated into English, some of them badly translated into English, so the issues that I can see, are kind of similar, in that sense. Yeah, it's a little bit like over translation.

Interviewer: OK. Thank you. And there's just one final question – are there other things about the reviewing stage that you would like to raise?

Reviewer: No, nothing in particular... it seems very... the text seems pretty typical for the kind of game that... like for the games that would appear in this genre.

Interviewer: OK, thank you.

Appendix G: Full List of Keywords Belonging to the Subcategories

Source Culture Centric Reasoning

Subcategories	Keywords
Linguistics: Chinese language in general	Chinese
Linguistics: use of pinyin	Pinyin, transliteration
Linguistics: adequacy	Source, keep, retain, accurate, literal translation
National identity	China, us (context based), native Chinese
Wuxia genre	Authentic, wuxia, original, literature, flavour, flavourful, lore, background, story
Chinese culture	Chinese culture, culturally (context-based), culture gap (context-based), cultural/culture (context-based), culturally loaded
History	Historical, historical references, historical record, historian, history, dynasty

Target Culture Centric Reasoning

Subcategories	Keywords
Linguistics: English language in general	English, in English
Linguistics: sound of target language	Sounds weird, natural, weird in English, sounds unappetising, sounds cooler, sounds fancy, strange, sounds nicer
Linguistics: acceptability	Acceptable, appropriate, doesn't do justice, suitable, accessible, accessibility, westernised, equivalent
Linguistics: comprehension	Familiar, understand, recognise, unfamiliar, confuse, easy to understand, remember, identify, hard time, makes sense, tired
Linguistics: style	Express, memorable, stylish, awkward, appealing, emotion, looks, wordy, too long, convoluted
Target audience	Western, English speaker, English speaking, reader, target, sensitive, native

Target culture: general	Culture, culturally, target culture
Target text	English version

Industry Centric Reasoning

Subcategories	Keywords
Practice: internet research	Search engine, Google, Wikipedia, online, net, references, Wikis, check, research, encyclopaedias, glossary, sites
Practice: translation technology	TB (term base), memoQ, materials, UI
Practice: established translations	Common terms, established, established cannon, commonly used, commonly, television, media, existing translations, generally accepted, usually known, common, official translation, official name, existing literature, adopted, established, pre-existing, searchable, movies, style guide, novels, IP, well known
Roles: client	Client, companies
Roles: practitioners	Translators, we, us, linguists, reviewers, you, they

Game Centric Reasoning

Subcategories	Keywords
Games	Games, game, video games, <i>Dynasty Warriors</i> (Koei 1997-2010, Koei Tecmo 2010–), <i>Final Fantasy series</i> (Square Enix, 1987–), <i>Genshin Impact</i> (miHoYo, 2020), <i>World of Warcraft</i> (Blizzard Entertainment, 2004), existing game
Players	Player, players, fans, they, gaming society, expecting
Interactivity	Purpose, gameplay, functional, gameplay effects, use, functionality, performs, interact, usable, interactivity, playability, play, game sense, what it does, skill, gaming, playing, moves
Game environment	Immersive, world-building, quest
Game items	Quest item, key item, item, inventory, HP potion (HP stands for health points)
Game text	UI, dialogue, inventory

Appendix H: Raw Habitus Data of CSIs, Keywords, Subfactors, and Factors

The table below contains the raw (qualitative) habitus data. It is comprised of the category of CSI, followed by the individual linguist, the keywords they used in reference to the category of CSI. The keywords were then coded into subfactors, and then factors.

CSI	Linguist	Keywords	Sub-factors	Factor	Sub Factor Analysis (individual references)	Factor Analysis (number of linguists)
Fixed Terms of Address	T1	Reader	Target audience	TCC	SCC: Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	SCC (1) TCC (8) GC (5) IC (2)
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC		
	T2	In English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC	TCC: Target audience (5) Linguistics: English language in general (5) Linguistics: sound of target language (3) Linguistics comprehension (2)	
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Reader	Target audience			
	T3	English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC	Linguistics comprehension (2)	
		Video games	Games: as a general product	GC		
	T4	Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general	SCC	GC: Players: people who play games (3) Games: as a general product (3)	
		Acceptable	Linguistics: acceptability	TCC		
		Westerners	Target audience			
		English	Linguistics: English language in general		IC: Practice: established translations (2)	
		Sounds	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Games	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Commonly used	Practice: established translations	IC		
	R1	They	Target audience	TCC		
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
	R2	Sound weird	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		English	Linguistics: English language in general			
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC		
	R3	English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
Games		Games: as a general product	GC			

		Player	Players: people who play games			
	R4	English speakers	Target audience	TCC		
		Natural	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Usually known	Practice: established translations	IC		
Places	T1	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of pinyin (6) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	SCC: (6) TCC: (8) GC: (5) IC: (2)
		Chinese culture	Chinese culture			
		Retain	Linguistics: adequacy			
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Commonly acknowledged	Practice: established translations	IC	TCC: Linguistics: style (4) Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: English language in general (2) Target Audience (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2)	
		Wikipedia	Practice: internet research			
	T2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	Linguistics: acceptability (1)	
		Emotion	Linguistics: style	TCC		
		English reader	Target audience			
	T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	Linguistics: acceptability (1)	
		English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
	T4	Transliterate	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	GC: Players: people who play games (4) Games: as a general product (2) Interactivity (2)	
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Players	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Gameplay	Interactivity			
	R1	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	IC: Practice: established translations (1) Practice: internet research (1) Roles: practitioners (1)	
		English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
		Equivalent	Linguistics: acceptability			
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC		
R2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			

		Weird in English	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		Memorable	Linguistics: style			
		Games	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Players	Players: people who play games			
		Functional	Interactivity			
		They	Roles: practitioners	IC		
	R3	English audience	Target audience	TCC		
		Identify	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Sounded	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Stylish	Linguistics: style			
		Game	Games: as a general product	GC		
	R4	Transliteration	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		Pinyin				
		Very long	Linguistics: style	TCC		
		Awkward				
Moves and Skills	T1	Recognise	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	SCC: Wuxia genre (2) Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) National Identity (1) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1) TCC: Linguistics: sound of target language (5) Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: style (2) Linguistics: English language in general (1) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Target audience (1) GC: Interactivity (6) Games: as a general product (3)	SCC (4) TCC (8) GC (6) IC (7)
		Found in novels	Practice: established translations	IC		
	T2	Sounds nicer	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		Cooler				
	T3	Commonly used	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Wuxia genre	Wuxia genre	SCC		
		Sounds more like	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		Play	Interactivity	GC		
		Skill				
	T4	Game	Games: as a general product			
		Common	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Original	Wuxia genre	SCC		
		Transliterated	Linguistics: use of pinyin			
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		

	Acceptable	Linguistics: acceptability		Players: people who play games (1) Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (2) Roles: practitioners (1)
	Cool	Linguistics: sound of target language		
	Player	Players: people who play games	GC	
	Moves	Interactivity		
	Translated	Practice: established translations	IC	
	Internet	Practice: internet research		
R1	Sounds cool	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC	
	Doesn't sound awkward			
	Move	Interactivity	GC	
	Well known	Practice: established translations	IC	
R2	Appealing	Linguistics: style	TCC	
	Sound cool			
	Sound awkward			
	Sound long			
	Game	Games: as a general product	GC	
	Functionality	Interactivity		
	Move			
Research	Practice: internet research	IC		
R3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	
	English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC	
	Identify	Linguistics: comprehension		
	Action	Interactivity	GC	
	Them	Roles: practitioners	IC	
R4	Us	National identity	SCC	
	Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general		
	English speaker	Target audience	TCC	
	Very long	Linguistics: style		

		Game	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Skill	Interactivity			
Martial Arts Society	T1	Genre	Wuxia genre	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of pinyin (4) Chinese culture (2) Wuxia genre (2) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (1)	SCC: (5) TCC: (6) GC: (4) IC: (5)
		Target culture	Target audience	TCC		
		Sounds	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Fans	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Play	Interactivity			
		Established	Practice: established translations	IC		
	T2	Acceptability	Linguistics: acceptability	TCC	TCC: Target audience (4) Linguistics: comprehension (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1)	
	T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		People translate it as	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Google	Practice: internet research			
	T4	Linguistic comprehension	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	GC: Players: people who play games (3) Games: as a general product (1) Interactivity (1)	
		Target audience	Target audience			
		Adopted	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Internet	Practice: internet research			
	R1	Linguistic: comprehension	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	IC: Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (2)	
		Target audience	Target audience			
		Game	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Established	Practice: established translations	IC		
R2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			
	Culturally loaded	Chinese culture				
	Reflection of wuxia	Wuxia genre				
	Western	Target audience	TCC			
R3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			
	Source culture	Chinese culture				

		Sounds better	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC			
		Westernised	Linguistics: acceptability				
		Players	Players: people who play games	GC			
		Commonly used	Practice: established translations	IC			
	R4	Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general	SCC			
		Transliterate	Linguistics: use of pinyin				
		They	Players: people who play games	GC			
Variable Terms of Address	T1	Reader	Target audience	TCC	SCC: Chinese culture (2) Wuxia genre (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	SCC: (3) TCC: (6) GC: (3) IC: (2)	
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC			
		Common	Practice: established translations	IC			
	T2	Emotion	Linguistics: style	TCC			
	T3	Chinese culture	Chinese culture	SCC	TCC: Linguistics: style (3) Target audience (2) Linguistics: English language in general (2)		
		Culture gap					
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC			
	T4	Appropriate	Linguistics: acceptability	TCC	Linguistics: acceptability (1)		
	R1	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	Linguistics: comprehension (1)		
		English	Linguistics: English language in general				
	R2	Western	Target audience	TCC	GC: Players: people who play games (3) Games: as a general product (1)		
		English	Linguistics: English language in general				
		Medieval touch	Linguistics: style				
	R3	Wuxia	Wuxia genre	SCC	IC: Practice: established translations (1)		
		Express	Linguistics: style	TCC			
	R4	Keep	Linguistics: adequacy	SCC	Roles: practitioners (1)		
		Games	Games: as a general product	GC			
They		Players: people who play games					
Player							
We		Roles: practitioners	IC				

Traditional Chinese Medicine	T1	Literal translation	Linguistics: adequacy	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: adequacy (1) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: use of pinyin (1)	SCC: (2) TCC: (5) GC: (8) IC: (1)
		Sounds	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		English	Linguistics: English language in general			
		Game inventory	Game items	GC		
	T2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	TCC: Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (1) Linguistics: English language in general (1) Linguistics: style (1) Target audience (1) GC: Interactivity (6) Game items (5) Players: people who play games (4) Games: as a general product (2) IC: Practice: established translations (1)	
		Functional	Interactivity	GC		
		What it does				
	T3	Functionality	Interactivity	GC		
		Items	Game items			
	T4	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Gameplay effects	Interactivity	GC		
		They	Players: people who play games			
	R1	Functional	Interactivity	GC		
		Items	Game items			
	R2	Culture	Chinese culture	SCC		
		Western	Target audience	TCC		
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Convoluted	Linguistics: style			
		Long				
		Functionality		Interactivity	GC	
		Gaming				
		Playing				
		Expecting	Players: people who play games			
		Players				
		Game	Games: as a general product			
		Existing game				
		Item	Game items			
	HP potion					
	R3	Remember	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Players	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Items	Game items			
R4	Gamers	Players: people who play games	GC			
	Function	Interactivity				
	Common term	Practice: established translations	IC			
Food	T1	Literal translation	Linguistics: adequacy	SCC	SCC: Wuxia genre (2)	SCC: (6) TCC: (6)

	Sounds disgusting	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC	Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) Linguistics: adequacy (1) National identity (1)	GC: (8) IC: (4)
	Unappetising				
	They	Players: people who play games	GC		
	Items	Game items			
T2	Flavourful	Wuxia genre	SCC	TCC: Linguistic: comprehension (5) Linguistics: English language in general (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (2) Linguistics: acceptability: (1) Target audience (1)	
	Doesn't do justice	Linguistics: acceptability	TCC		
	Items	Game items	GC		
	Game	Games: as a general product			
	Worldbuilding	Game environment			
T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	GC: Game items (7) Players: people who play games (5) Interactivity (4) Games: as a general product (2) Game environment (2)	
	English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
	Recognise	Linguistics: comprehension			
	Players	Players: people who play games	GC		
	Game	Games: as a general product			
	Item	Game items			
	Use	Interactivity			
	Functional				
	Research	Practice: internet research	IC		
T4	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
	Gameplay effects	Interactivity	GC		
	They	Players: people who play games			
R1	China	National identity	SCC	IC: Practice: internet research (3) Practice: established translations (2)	
	English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
	Functional	Interactivity	GC		
	Use				
	Item	Game items			
	Website	Practice: internet research	IC		
R2	Lore	Wuxia genre	SCC		
	Game sense	Interactivity	GC		
	Functionality				

		Player	Players: people who play games			
		Quest item	Game items			
		Official translation	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Search	Practice: internet research			
	R3	Sounds cooler	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
		Sounds fancy				
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
		English	Linguistics: English language in general			
		Key item	Game items	GC		
		Quest	Game environment			
		Existing	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Literature				
	R4	Transliterate	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		Audience	Target audience	TCC		
		Familiar	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Tired				
		Hard time				
		Unfamiliar				
		Game	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Player	Players: people who play games			
		They				
		Items	Game items			
Currency	T1	Retain	Linguistics: adequacy	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: adequacy (1) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: use of pinyin (1) TCC: Linguistics: comprehension (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (3) Linguistics: style (2) Target audience (1)	SCC: (3) TCC: (6) GC: (8) IC: (2)
		Looks	Linguistics: style	TCC		
		Sounds	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Performs	Interactivity	GC		
		Player	Players: people who play games			
		Items	Game items			
		Reference online materials	Practice: established translations	IC		
	UI	Practice: translation technology				
	T2	Emotion	Linguistics: style	TCC		
		Player	Players: people who play games	GC		
Items		Game items				

	T3	Understanding	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	GC: Interactivity (6) Game items (6) Player: people who play games (4)		
		English reader	Target audience				
		Items	Game items	GC			
	T4	Gameplay wise	Interactivity	Players: people who play games	GC		IC: Practice: established translations (2) Practice: translation technology (1)
		Usage					
		Interact					
		Player					
		Existing translations	Practice: established translations	IC			
		Adpoted					
	R1	Chinese	Chinese culture	SCC			
		Cooler	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC			
		Cool sounding					
		Functional	Interactivity	GC			
		Items	Game items				
	R2	Recognisable	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC			
		Functional	Interactivity	GC			
		Function					
		Usable					
		Functionality					
	Quest item	Game items					
	R3	Familiarity	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC			
		Easy to Understand					
		Sound	Linguistics: sound of target language				
Interactivity		Interactivity	GC				
Players		Players: people who play games					
Item		Game items					
R4	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC				
	Functional	Interactivity	GC				
	Interact						
Energies	T1	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of pinyin (4) Wuxia genre (4) Chinese culture (2)	SCC: (5) TCC: (4) GC: (6) IC: (4)	
		Recognised	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC			
		Often translated	Practice: established translations	IC			
	T2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			
		Flavour of the world	Wuxia genre				TCC: Linguistics:

	Commonly used	Practice: established translations	IC	comprehension (3) Linguistics: sound of target language (1) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Target audience (1)
	People	Players: people who play games	GC	
T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	GC: Players (5) Interactivity (4) Games: as a general product (2)
	Culture	Chinese culture		
	Wuxia world	Wuxia genre		
	Flavour			
	Official	Practice: established translations	IC	
T4	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	IC: Practice: established translations (4)
	Gameplay	Interactivity	GC	
	Player	Players: people who play games		
R1	Functional	Interactivity	GC	
	Players	Players: people who play games		
R2	Western	Target audience	TCC	
	Acceptable	Linguistics: acceptability		
	Functional	Interactivity	GC	
	Functionality			
	Player			
	Gaming society	Players: people who play games		
	Existing terms	Practice: established translations	IC	
	Commonly used			
Common				
R3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	
	Culture	Chinese culture		
	Wuxia	Wuxia genre		
	Sound	Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC	
	Game	Games: as a general product	GC	
R4	Flavour	Wuxia genre	SCC	
	Familiar	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	
	Game	Games: as a general product	GC	

		Players	Players: people who play games			
		Gameplay	Interactivity			
Fictional Characters	T1	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of pinyin (7) Linguistics: Chinese language in general (3) Wuxia Genre: (2) Chinese culture (1) National identity (1)	SCC: 8 TCC: 6 GC: 2 IC: 2
		English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
	T2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
	T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general			
		English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
	T4	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	TCC: Linguistics: English language in general (3) Linguistics: comprehension (2) Target Audience: (2)	
		Authentic	Wuxia genre			
		Westerners	Target audience	TCC		
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
	R1	Chinese culture	Chinese culture	SCC	GC: Players: people who play games (2) Games: as a general product (1) Game environment (1)	
		Familiar	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Games	Games: as a general product	GC		
		Players	Players: people who play games			
		immersive	Game environment			
		Search Engine, Google, Wikipedia	Practice: internet research	IC		
	R2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		Wuxia	Wuxia genre			
		China	National identity			
		English	Linguistics: English language in general	TCC		
Western		Target audience				
R3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			
	Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general				
	Player	Players: people who play games	GC			

	R4	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC			
		Chinese	Linguistics: Chinese language in general				
		Google, online,	Practice: internet research	IC			
Historical Organisations	T1	Historical	History	SCC	SCC: History (6) Linguistics: use of pinyin (2) Chinese culture (1) Linguistics: adequacy (1)	SCC: 8 TCC: 6 GC: 1 IC: 8	
		Recognised	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC			
		Google	Practice: internet research	IC			
	T2	Historical	History	SCC			
		Google	Practice: internet research	IC			
		Common terms	Practice: established translations				
	T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	Linguistics: audience (2) Linguistics: acceptability (1) Linguistics: sound of target language (1)		
		History	History				
		Already existing Books and movies Fiction	Practice: established translations	IC			
		Internet Google	Practice: internet research		GC: Players: people who play games (1)		
		T4	Accurate	Linguistics: adequacy	SCC		Practice: internet research (7) Practice: established translations (5)
			Promote culture	Chinese culture			
	Acceptable		Linguistics: acceptability	TCC			
	Understandable		Linguistics: comprehension				
	Audience		Target audience				
	Already translated Existing translations		Practice: established translations	IC			
	R1		Historically accurate	History	SCC		
		English sounding	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC			
		Google	Practice: internet research	IC			
	R2	Historian	History	SCC			
		Sounds		TCC			

		Weird sounding	Linguistics: sound of target language			
		Wikipedia	Practice: internet research	IC		
		Searching				
		Official name	Practice: established translations			
	R3	Historical references	History	SCC		
		Cultural references	Chinese culture			
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Players	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Google search	Practice: internet research	IC		
	R4	Transliteration	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
		People	Target audience	TCC		
		Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
		Search Online	Practice: internet research	IC		
		Existing terms	Practice: established translations			
Historical Figures	T1	History	History	SCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of pinyin (3) History (4) Chinese culture (1)	SCC: 6 TCC: 4 GC: 3 IC: 7
		Recognisable	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
		Books	Practice: established translations	IC		
		Encyclopedias				
		Common way				
	T2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC	TCC: Linguistics: comprehension (2) Linguistics: sound of target language (2)	
		Them	Players: people who play games	GC		
		Research	Practice: internet research	IC	GC: Players: people who play games (2) Games: as a general product (1) Interactivity (1)	
		Commonly used	Practice: established translations			
	T3	Dynasty	History	SCC		
		Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin			
		Google search	Practice: internet research	IC		

		Pre-existing translation	Practice: established translations		IC: Practice: internet research (6) Practice: established translations (5)	
T4	Strange		Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
	Translated		Practice: established translations	IC		
	Already translated					
	Common					
	Adopt					
Wiki		Practice: internet research				
R1	Google		Practice: internet research	IC		
	Established		Practice: established translations			
	Media					
R2	Historical		History	SCC		
	Sound appealing		Linguistics: sound of target language	TCC		
	Playability		Interactivity	GC		
	Game		Games: as a general product			
	Wikipedia		Practice: internet research	IC		
	Searchable					
	Official name		Practice: established translations			
R3	Historical references		History	SCC		
	Cultural references		Chinese culture			
	Understand		Linguistics: comprehension	TCC		
	Players		Players: people who play games	GC		
	Existing literature		Practice: established translations	IC		
	Commonly used					
	Commonly					
R4	Pinyin		Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
	Research		Practice: internet research	IC		
Fictional Sects	T1	Recognised	Linguistics: comprehension	TCC	SCC: Linguistics: use of	SCC: 4 TCC: 2

	Fans	Players: people who play games	GC	pinyin (3) Wuxia genre (2)	GC: 2 IC: 5
	Players				
	Wikipedia	Practice: internet research	IC	TCC: Linguistics: comprehension (2) Target audience (2)	
	Common terms	Practice: established translations			
	Established genre				
T2	Commonly used	Practice: established translations	IC	GC: Players: people who play games (1) Interactivity (1)	
	Common terms				
T3	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
	Westerner	Target audience	TCC	IC: Practice: established translations (5) Practice: internet research (4)	
	Google	Practice: internet research	IC		
	Commonly	Practice: established translations			
T4	Original	Wuxia genre	SCC		
R1	Established	Practice: established translations	IC		
	Television				
	Media				
	Existing translations				
R2	Pinyin	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
	Generally accepted translations	Practice: established translations	IC		
	Online	Practice: internet research			
R3	Literature	Wuxia genre	SCC		
	Western audience	Target audience	TCC		
	English speaking				
	Understand	Linguistics: comprehension			
	Existing	Practice: established translations	IC		
	References	Practice: internet research			
	Net				
	Research				
	Wikis				
R4	Transliteration	Linguistics: use of pinyin	SCC		
	Purpose	Interactivity	GC		

Appendix I: Interview Question Testing Generalisability of Case Study

The researcher asked all linguists this question in relation to the respective translation or review:

‘Was this project different or similar to other wuxia projects you have worked on?’

This was asked towards the end of each interview for the purpose of validating the authenticity and therefore generalisability of the various parameters of the case study as a partial localisation of a wuxia RPG. The given designations of the linguists and responses have been included below:

Linguist	Response
Translator 1	More or less the same with Classical Chinese and the historic references.
Translator 2	It was just a wuxia game with the usual difficulties of a wuxia project.
Translator 3	It feels like a wuxia text I would say.
Translator 4	Yes. (and in a previous section had raised how it contained some challenging classical Chinese and historical elements – the ‘yes’ was a confirmation that it was the same in these respects).
Reviewer 1	I think it’s similar to most of the projects that I’ve come across so far.
Reviewer 2	Yes, and I have done more translation than reviewing of other wuxia projects.
Reviewer 3	I think it’s fine so far. It’s just maybe harder because the source text was still pretty short. [Follow up question by researcher for clarification ‘I mean, do you think this is typical as to what you might see at the beginning of a project?’] Yeah.
Reviewer 4	Yeah, definitely. I think it’s basically... basically whatever there is in a wuxia game. It’s a very accurate example.

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Gameography

Game title (Developer Year, Publisher – if different from developer)

A Dream of Jianghu (NetEase 2019)

Animal Crossing: New Leaf (Nintendo EAD 2012, Nintendo)

Arena of Valor (TiMi Studio Group 2018, Tencent Games)

Battlefield 4 (DICE 2013, Electronic Arts)

Detention (Red Candle Games 2017)

Diablo III (Blizzard Entertainment 2012)

Dragon Age II (Bioware 2011, Electronic Arts)

Dynasty Warriors series (Omega Force 1997-2010, Koei; Omega Force 2010–, Koei Tecmo)

Elder Scrolls series (Bethesda Softworks 1994-1998; Bethesda Studios Game 2002–)

Ether Saga Odyssey (Beijing Perfect World 2009, Perfect World Entertainment)

Fantasy Westward Journey (NetEase Games 2001)

Final Fantasy (Square Enix 1987)

Final Fantasy VII (Square 1997, Square Enix)

Final Fantasy X (Square Product Development Division 1 2001, Square)

Final Fantasy X-2 (Square Product Development Division 1 2003, Square Enix)

Final Fantasy XIV (Square Enix 2010)

Genshin Impact (miHoYo 2020, HoYoverse)

Gujian 3 (Aurogon Info & Tech 2018, Wangyuan Shengtang)

Heroes of the Three Kingdoms (Perfect World 2009)

Hongkai: Star Rail (miHoYo 2023, HoYoverse)

Honor of Kings (TiMi Studio Group 2023, Tencent Games)

Jianwang 3 Fingertip Jianghu (Tencent 2019)

Justice Online (NetEase Inc 2019)

Mass Effect series (Bioware 2007-11, Microsoft Game Studios; Bioware 2008–, Electronic Arts)

Mass Effect 3 (Bioware 2012, Electronic Arts)

Medal of Honor Warfighter (Danger Close Games 2012, Electronic Arts)

Moonlight Blade Mobile (Tencent Games 2019)

Ode to Heroes (DH-Games 2019)

Pokémon Scarlet and Violet (Game Freak 2022, Nintendo)

Perfect World (Beijing Perfect World 2015)

PUGB: Battlegrounds (Tencent Games 2017, Krafton)

Rogue Trader (Owlcat Games 2023)

Starcraft II: Wings of Liberty (Blizzard Entertainment, 2010)

The Legend of Sword and Fairy series (Softstar 1995–)

The Legends of Three Kingdoms series (Odinsoft 1998–2005, UserJoy Technology 2006–)

The Legend of Zelda series (Nintendo 1986–)

The Witcher 2 (CD Projekt 2011, Atari)

Wandering Sword (The Swordman Studio, Xiameng Studio 2023, Spiral Up Games)

Westward Journey II (NetEase Inc 2005)

Where Winds Meet (Everstone Studio, NetEase Inc 2024)

World of Warcraft (Blizzard Entertainment 2004)

Wo Long: Fallen Dynasty (Koei Tecmo Games 2023)

Xuan Yuan Sword 7 (Softstar 2024)

Playthroughs of Wuxia RPGs

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