

# Translated English Food Articles for a Bilingual Magazine

*in the Urban Context of Chiang Mai*

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## Abstract

The study aims to explore the ways in which translated food articles in a bilingual magazine are translated from Thai into English. The research question is: What are the ways in which translators translate food articles from Thai into English and to what extent, in the urban context of Chiang Mai? The source material of the research consists of food articles from the 2019 Spoon & Fork Magazine. Through the concept of rewriting in the systems, the study compares source-text and target-text paragraphs to discover the ways in which translators treat source-text social and cultural elements that are specific to the Thai source texts, such as foods, activities, locations and so on into the English versions. The findings illustrate that the English translations appear as rewriting and are largely shorter than the original versions. The translators retain social and cultural elements considered major while, at the same time condensing others seen as minor in the narratives. From the systems point of view, this may result from the constraints, such as target readership and the convention of the text genre.

**Keywords:** *Thai-English Food Articles, Bilingual Magazine, Chiang Mai, Thailand*

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## Introduction

Most past research into translation in Thailand primarily focuses on proposing translation strategies that are used to solve translation problems (see Khanjanavisittaphol, 2018; Leenakitti and Pongpairoj, 2019; Mata, 2016; Sukwises, 2019; Treetrapietch, Tipayasuparat, and Webb, 2017). From the systems point of view (Even-Zohar, 1990), translation is an integral part of the entire social system. It is a process that is closely intertwined with other social and cultural systems of both source-text and target-text languages (see Even-Zohar, 1990; Lefevere, 1992; Toury, 1995). This suggests that studying translation strategies alone are not sufficient to understand translation phenomena in the Thai translation environment because translation productions are affected by social and cultural elements that are integral parts of the literary environment, e.g., target-text norms, readerships, ideologies and so on.

In Thailand, through the lens of the system theories, key previous literature shows that social and cultural elements of the source and target language can affect the ways in which translations are produced (for example, see Techawongstien, 2020; Saejang, 2023; Ninrat, 2019; Inphen, 2020). In the past, when the first English fiction “Vendetta” was translated into Thai in 1902, it was rewritten in the form of adaptation since the translator removed some source-text scenes that were not considered inappropriate for the Siamese or Thai readership at that time (Ninrat, 2019:8, 22, 66). More recently, Koraya Techawongstien’s (2020) study also showcases that translations of fantasy youth fiction give rise to a new youth fiction sub-field and encourage Thai writers to produce fantasy fiction in the Thai literary environment. This is unsurprisingly consistent with Jooyin Saejang’s (2023) findings which illustrate how Boy’s Love novels and audiovisual productions have encouraged Thai authors to produce new Boy’s Love sub-genre (Chinese historical Boy’s Love). Last, Wiriya Inphen’s (2020) study also shows that urban readers of translated fiction can be linked to the ways in which translators decide on translation strategies (i.e., foreignizing translation strategies) for translated thriller fiction in Thailand. These previous studies are important in that they establish connections between social and cultural elements and literary works, including translations in the Thai literary environment.

In the Thai literary context, however, existing studies primarily focus on the elements that could affect literary translations. I consider this as a gap that needs further attention – for example, the exploration of translated texts of other genres. Chiang Mai is an urban landscape that is culturally diverse (see Citylife, 2024). Additionally, in a casual conversation, the editor of Spoon & Fork Magazine<sup>1</sup>, posits that the publisher’s target readers are quite specific and comprise of bilingual readers and expatriates who live and work in the city. This background information helps to form the research aim. The study thus attempts to explore how translations of the bilingual magazine genre are produced within an urban landscape like Chiang Mai, Thailand. The research question is: what are ways in which translators translate food articles in a bilingual magazine from Thai into English and to what extent, in the urban context of Chiang Mai?

## Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

### *Readerships and Translation Site: The Case of Chiang Mai Province*

Readership is one of the social and cultural elements that can affect the ways in which translations are produced in the target culture (see Kothari, 2003 and Shamma, 2009). According to the Oxford Dictionary of English (2010), readership is defined as a group of people who read newspapers, magazines, books, et cetera. From the systems theoretical

point of view (Even-Zohar, 1990), readership can be considered an integral element of the translation sub-system operating within in the literary system of a particular culture and society.

Thai readership is an important element that is required for understanding how translations are produced for the Thai translation market. As mentioned earlier, in the casual conversation with the editor, the readers of Spoon & Fork City Magazine, presumably, include those who are permanent residents of Chiang Mai City with literacy in Thai and English, as well as expatriates living and working in town. This largely indicates that Thai-English food articles in the bilingual magazine are meant to serve bilingual and expatriate readers in the city.

Chiang Mai province can be considered one of Thailand's urban sites. In his presentation, Faris Yothasamuth (2019) posits that Bangkok is a trade hub in the southeast region since the beginning of the Rattanakosin era (circa. the 1800s). It was a multicultural and multilingual trade hub with the West and other countries in the region. This largely illustrates that Bangkok is not only an urban site for business activities but also a place where languages interact. Similarly, Chiang Mai province shares characteristics with Bangkok in both its economic environment and linguistic landscape. Before and after the pandemic, Chiang Mai has been listed as a world heritage town, attracting tourists from around the world. This makes it a hub for both governmental and private businesses, such as foreign consultates, foods, hospitality entities and investments, to name but a few.

For this reason, Chiang Mai is seen as a site where translations of Thai-English food articles are produced. From a linguistic landscape point of view, Michael Cronin (2006), posits that urban spaces serves as sites where contemporary multilingual and multi-ethnic communities coexist. He describes a city as a place where languages intersect, highlighting it as a space for translation productions (see also Koskinen, 2014). This corresponds to what Sherry Simon (2012:2) perceives as well. Simon goes on to state that most cities are not monolingual but bilingual and/or multilingual. This shows that a city is a site where languages intersect and the ways in which languages are used in the city can demonstrate patterns of such interactions. This makes Chiang Mai town a (provincial) site where the publisher of Spoon & Fork Magazine by Citylife strives to produce translations of food articles to specifically serve its Thai-English bilingual and expatriate readers in the town.

#### *Translation as Rewriting from the Systems Perspective*

In the systems, André Lefevere (1992) states that translation is rewriting that is closely linked with social and cultural elements, e.g., patrons, ideologies and professional entities in the community. He further states that translation is affected by 1) patronage or persons or groups of entities that commission the translations, 2) ideologies or what is perceived as appropriate by most people in a community and 3) professionals such as translators and editors who are involved in the translation process. Translation from the source language to the target one is influenced by these elements that appear both in the source-text and target-text environment. Lefevere (1992), however, posits that translators can either conform to or go against these elements. This shows that translators have the decision to rewrite their translations that they judge to be accepted by the readership in the target culture.

Through the lens of the systems, the concept of rewriting lays the basis for exploring the phenomenon of the study in the Thai literary context. Some key previous studies in Thailand show that rewriting is affected by ideologies in that translators make their translation choices based on what is accepted by and appropriate for the community. For example, Narongdej Phanthaphoommee (2022; 2023), in his recent articles, finds that in the political contexts of Thailand translations are both produced to maintain a reputation of the government while giving less emphasis on the critics. Further, this extends to how each translation agency selects political discourse in the translation (Phanthaphoommee, 2022:9). Apart from translators' interventions in the political translations, literary fiction in Thailand is also affected by how translators choose texts to be translated and also their translation choices (for example, see Fernandez, 2019). Further, in the early period of modern Thai literature (circa. early 1900s), most works of literature in the country were written in Western literary genres with interventions by elitists in the translations (Sangangamsakun, 2021:14-15). At this point, it can be posited that translation is a rewriting process operating as an integral part of the source and target cultures. Translators act as mediators who are affected by these social and cultural challenges arising from differences between the language pairs.

Further, given that this study focuses on translations into English of a bilingual magazine, it falls within the scope of text genres and translations, too. In her book, Anna Trosborg (1997:12, 18) states that genre can be defined to include the body of texts that has communicative functions and can be classified as a text type. She further states that the body of texts can vary from one genre to another (e.g. news reports, magazine articles, and textbooks to name but a few) since each genre has its specific structures and conventions (see also García Izquierdo and Montalt I Resurrecció, 2021:136). This is quite important in the present study in that the key literature shows that text genre can affect the ways in which translations are produced in the target language.

Redzioch-Korkuz's (2021) and Limon's (2004) studies both illustrate that the relationship between text genres, target audience and attitudes all works as constraints when translations are being produced by the translators. Also, this aligns with the way in which translations are considered as rewriting in the systems. It seems that all elements (i.e. social, cultural, political, and economical elements) are all intertwined and, to some extent, act as constraints that affect the decisions of translators when choosing translation strategies. Following this notion, it can also be posited that the translators commissioned for the translations are affected by the genre constraints (see Redzioch-Korkuz, 2021; Limon, 2004). As stated, Trosborg (1997:18) considers that genre can affect how translations are produced in the target culture as genres are typically structured and have specific conventions. Together, these act as constraints for the translators to decide on their translation choices to manage their rewriting when translations are being produced.

From what has been illustrated above, translators have an active role and duties in dealing with such constraints in their translation work. David Katan (2004:20-21) states that translators are considered mediators of such linguistic and cultural differences who attempt to ensure that translated texts are readable and comprehensible by the target audience. According to him, "This means that, first, cultural interpreters/mediators need to be extremely aware of their own cultural identities; and, for this reason, they will understand how

their own culture influences perception." From the concept of rewriting presented earlier, translators mediate source and target languages by rewriting the source texts into versions that are acceptable in the target language.

To indicate how much source texts differ from target ones, the concept of translation equivalence can help to illustrate the case. Translation equivalence benefits the research because it provides a conceptual framework that helps to indicate the extent to which the source and target language differ. According to Eugene Nida (1964), translation equivalence can be divided into formal and dynamic equivalence. Nida (1964:159) states that formal equivalence strives to maintain source-text forms and meanings in the target-text versions while, in contrast, dynamic equivalence pays more attention to producing target-text versions that are read naturally in the translated texts. To put it more concretely, the concept permits source-text and target-text versions to be compared (see Toury's (1995) coupled pairs). Comparisons help demonstrate linguistic and semantic differences and similarities between source-text and target-text versions. This means that translation equivalence will help to highlight matching and non-matching linguistic and semantic structures of the paired languages. As the present study strives to explore the ways in which the English translated versions of food articles are presented in the bilingual magazine, comparisons between source and target texts are needed. The comparisons are used generally to indicate the extent to which source- and target-text articles differ, therefore, the focus on Nida's (1964) equivalence is considered sufficient to illustrate the case. .

### Material and Methods

The material of the research includes bilingual food articles (Thai and English versions) published in Spoon & Fork Magazine by Citylife. Food articles mainly present source-text contents that manifest cultural and social elements which are culturally bound. An initial survey of food articles in the magazine shows that the source-text contents mainly present local restaurants with local and Western foods in the Chiang Mai area.

From the perspective of culture-specific items in translation, Javier Franco Aixelá (1996:52–53) states that culture-bound items (whether in the forms of words or phrases) usually pose challenges to translators to overcome as they contain source-text and target-text cultural and normative values that differ from one another. In Thailand, target-text cultural and normative values that are quite specific to the Thai language include, for example, Thai culture related to gender and Buddhist notions (see Rattanakantadilok, 2016). Further, in their study, Phanthaphoommee and Ungsitipoonporn (2023) explore translation strategies for Northern Khmer ethnobotanical terms in Thai into English translations. They consider botanical information that is related to medical terms, tastes and parts of plants as culture-specific due to local specificities and they pose translation problems to translators to overcome. These previous studies help to illustrate that both tangible items and intangible ideas/notions that are specific to the Thai target language possess cultural values that to some extent can be not familiar to the readers in other cultures (other than the Thai one). Due to target-text specificities, translators must mediate such differences to produce translations that make sense in the magazine. Based on the concept of culture-specific items (Aixelá, 1996), translations of food articles present specific notions of cultures that vary from Thai and English and require translators to mediate between the source-text and target-text language systems. Therefore, the translations from Thai into English of food articles are considered valid material for the present research.

This study is designed as a case study research to initially explore the ways in which translated English versions of food articles are translated to serve the readership in the urban environment of Chiang Mai City. According to Saldanha & O'Brien (2013:205), case study research is suitable as it emphasizes contexts that give rise to a particular phenomenon. It is considered that Chiang Mai is the urban environment in which the context of urban readership is involved; case study research is thus considered appropriate and helps achieve the aim. Citylife Group is the company that runs Spoon & Fork Magazine. The company website lists multiple affiliated publishers – City News and City Now! and service business City Group Services – providing event and content services (Citylife, 2024). In addition, as mentioned, the conversation with the editor implies that the publisher attempts to make the magazine accessible to the public in general as much as possible because it wants to promote restaurants and events in town. Since the magazine is a free publication, it is believed that most residents and tourists can access it. Considering the business position of the mother company and the accessibility of the magazine, Spoon & Fork Magazine published under Citylife is chosen because it is assumed to be circulated among a wider readership and visitors to Chiang Mai.

Bilingual food articles published in the 2019 magazines are focused. In 2019, the publisher published seven magazines – Issues 57 to 63. When requesting copies from the publisher, Issue 62 of October was not located at the publisher's premises. The magazines that are available as material thus include six issues - Issue 57 of January; 58 of February; 59 of March; 60 of May-June; 61 of July-August; and 63 of November-December in total. The 2019 magazines are used for the analysis for two major reasons. First, as the world experienced the pandemic era in late 2019, this inevitably made business activities halt. Chiang Mai, one of the most visited cities in Thailand, has also been affected by this global disruption. This implies that most restaurants and other food-related businesses in the town are affected. Some may suspend or even stop their operations. The chief editor of Spoon & Fork further posits that the times before the pandemic can be considered the glory periods for restaurants and bars in town. Considering that the Citylife Publisher, the publisher of Spoon & Fork Magazine, mainly publishes food articles related to restaurants and their menus in Chiang Mai, the abundance of restaurants and related businesses is seen to flourish in the magazine before the pandemic. Thus, it is presumed that food articles published in Spoon & Fork Magazine by Citylife are presented with full content that provides a wide range of foods and menus like the ones before the pandemic.

Second, the column named 'Main Dish' is chosen for the study due to its food contents that serve the aim of the research. The table of contents of Spoon & Fork Magazine illustrates 12 columns in total. All of them mainly contain content related to foods, sweets, drinks and food-related activities in Chiang Mai. For example, the 'Food Trails Column' mainly presents articles about current and future activities in town, while 'Main Dish' exclusively features restaurants and bars and their foods and drinks in the city. In the Main Dish column, the publisher presents restaurants and bars in Chiang Mai or major hotels and resorts in town. The column directly deals with culture-bound elements such as the historical background and story of the venues and their menus, foods and drinks and ingredients, chefs and menu creators and so on. The column is therefore chosen due to its essence related to the food contents that represent social and cultural elements appearing as an integral part of the Chiang Mai urban environment.

As for the methods, the criteria for choosing the data (in the form of bilingual food articles) are determined following the concept of culture-bound items in translation (Aixelá, 1996). It will be remembered that, through the concept of equivalence, the source and target languages are mostly non-equivalent, and most importantly they manifest different cultural values. Food articles are enriched with elements whose cultural and social values differ. It therefore can be posited that the source-text social and cultural elements are, to certain degrees, different from the target-text ones. In following this notion, the contents of the food articles represent different values of the elements that translators mediate to produce translations for the readers.

Initial observations show that the English translated versions are largely shorter than the Thai ones. With the help of the rewriting concept, the English versions of the food articles are considered rewriting works in the target language (see Lefevere, 1992). For this reason, it is not accurate to collect data in the forms of words and phrases because it is too ambitious to find their corresponding equivalents in the target language. Collecting data based on the paragraphs they presented is thus considered more feasible and valid.

The data are in the form of source-text and their corresponding target-text paragraphs. The criteria for choosing the data are as follows: 1) paragraphs must appear in the 'Main Dish' column and 2) they must contain social and cultural elements tied to the food contents. The paragraphs are collected purposively based on the set criteria (see Saldanha & O'Brien, 2013) and stored in an Excel spreadsheet to compare paragraph segments between Thai and English.

The research is qualitative and employs the concept of source-text and target-text oriented translation in the analysis. Considering the aim of the research, the quantitative aspect is not included at this time because the study does not aim to use statistical data to answer the research questions. Instead, the research only aims to explore the ways in which translations of a bilingual magazine are produced. Thus, from the qualitative aspect, the source-text paragraphs (Thai) are compared with the target-text corresponding (English) paragraphs to discover how translations are rewritten in the target language. This is quite sufficient to indicate the link between the readership that is pre-determined and how translations are produced in the specialized urban environment of Chiang Mai town.

### Findings

The analysis reveals that the translations of the food articles are rewritten in shorter versions than the source texts. This can be considered as rewriting work in the Thai translation environment (Lefevere, 1992). In the theoretical section, the research is situated in the systems theories – translation is a sub-system that operates as an integral part of the larger social systems (Even-Zohar, 1990) or, in this case, the Thai translation environment. The translation is thus affected by social and cultural elements – target readers, urban environment, text genres and others. From this point of view, the findings help to illustrate that the translators rendered the English-translated magazine articles into works of rewriting in which social and cultural elements, e.g. foods, cultural activities, locations and et cetera, were both retained and condensed in the translations.

The findings below will show that the translations appear in a form of rewriting. The social and cultural elements remained present in the rewritten works; however, the translators

rendered them into English in two manners – 1) rewriting of translated versions with the retention of major social and cultural elements and 2) rewriting of translated versions with the condensation of minor social and cultural elements. In what follows, the extent to which main and minor social and cultural elements appear in the magazine will be shown.

### *Rewriting of Translated Versions with the Retention of Major Social and Cultural Elements*

The findings show that the translated versions of the bilingual magazine were rewritten while retaining the key or major social and cultural elements they want to preserve in translations. The comparison between source texts and target texts shows that the translated versions appear much shorter than the original articles, however, some social and cultural elements were retained in the translated versions. In essence, the translators seem to retain the elements that may be perceived as major elements and that are needed in the target texts. The major social and cultural elements include 1) food, 2) activity, 3) location, 4) people, and 5) awards. The examples drawn from the magazines are presented with issues numbers and pages, respectively, for example, Issue 57:15.

First, the major element “food” usually refers to main dishes, featured menus and drinks available at the restaurants – e.g. **Khao Soi, Thai northern style sausages, sticky rice, ... or international foods from Europe and Asia such as pizza, burger, tender BBQ ribs, mala ...** (B.T.) (Issue 57:15). Second, “activity” represents activities taking place at market sites, restaurants, cafes and related venues, e.g. **‘forn leb’ and ‘forn jong’, or ‘umbrella dance’ ...** (B.T.) (Issue 57:17). Third, “location” represents places and venues where activities are taking place or where foods are available, e.g. **Nana Jungle Café and Restaurant (NANA Jungle Café & Restaurant)** (B.T.) (Issue 61:18). Fourth, “people” represents individuals and groups of people who are involved in food making processes or locations of restaurants and cafes and hotels, for instance, **Chef Tiw Ratchanon Rakarin, a northern-born male with a handful of experience** (B.T.) (Issue 63:14). Last, “awards” represents rewards, recognitions and awards received by individuals or restaurants, cafes and hotels, for example, **... with rewards guaranteeing the title of number one Asian restaurant...** (B.T.) (Issue 63:17).

In the translations from Thai into English, the translated versions appear to contain only selected social and cultural elements that may be perceived as necessary for the translations. This means that the translators decided on what to retain in the translations. Due to the limited space, the example of how the translators retain the food elements in the translations is used to illustrate the case only in that it is quite evident to show what has been retained. In the examples, ST refers to source texts while BT back translation and TT target texts.

As stated, the “food” element is used as a specific example to illustrate the circumstance where translators decided to rewrite the translated versions while retaining major social and cultural elements. This element represents foods, menus and drinks that appear in the source texts. However, not all of them were fully presented in the translated versions. The example shows that only some food items were retained while some were omitted. At this point, it can be presumed that the translators tend to retain the food elements that they want to present in the translated versions. Below is an example.



Source text	Back translation	Target text
...ไม่ว่าจะเป็นอาหารเหนือแบบท้องถิ่นที่ยกขบวนกันมาทั้งข้าวซอย ไส้อั่ว น้ำพริกหนุ่ม ไก่ย่าง ข้าวเหนียว ... หรืออาหารนานาชาติ ทั้งยุโรปและเอเชีย อย่าง พิซซ่า เบอร์เกอร์ <sup>2</sup> <u>ชีโครงหมูบาร์บีคิวเนื้อนุ่ม หมอลำ</u> ... (Issue 57:15)	... local northern foods include khao soi, Thai northern style sausages, sticky rice, ... or international foods from Europe and Asia such as pizza, <b>burger</b> , tender <b>BBQ ribs</b> , mala ...	Wander from stall to stall and sample an authentic pad thai or bite into a juicy <b>burger</b> ; grab a <b>grilled stick of meat</b> or dig into a big bowl of curry, the choices are endless and varied. (Issue 57:15)

Figure 1. Retention of Food Elements.

The comparison between the source and target texts above shows that the food elements – juicy burger and grilled stick of meat are the two items that have been retained in the translations. As shown above, the excerpt is from the sub-column titled “Go On ... Take a Bite” in Issue 57 of 2019. The sub-column mainly presents foods that are available for visitors at Ploen Ruedee Market in Chiang Mai. The example shows that the Thai source-text version contains a number of food menus such as ‘ข้าวซอย ไส้อั่ว น้ำพริกหนุ่ม ไก่ย่าง ข้าวเหนียว’ (... local northern foods include khao soi, Thai northern style sausages, sticky rice, ..., B.T.) and ‘พิซซ่า เบอร์เกอร์ ชีโครงหมูบาร์บีคิวเนื้อนุ่ม หมอลำ’ (pizza, burger, tender BBQ ribs, mala..., B.T.) On the contrary, the English version merely contains ‘authentic pad thai or bite into a juicy burger; grab a grilled stick of meat or dig into a big bowl of curry.’ It can be seen that the food items ‘burger’ and ‘grilled stick of meat’ are retained and appear in the translations with additions of ‘pad thai’ and ‘curry.’ This shows that through a rewriting process, the translators decided not to translate some food elements into the English versions while at the same time retaining some food elements that they wanted to emphasize to the readers. From this practice point of view, it can be posited that the target-text versions are rewriting of the original articles with key or major social and cultural elements needed for the target readers in the translations.

**Rewriting of Translated Versions with the Condensation of Minor Social and Cultural Elements**

The findings further show that the translated versions of the bilingual magazine were rewritten with the condensation of social and cultural elements that may be seen as minor by the translators. This is quite similar to the rewriting of translated versions with the retention of major elements. The difference, however, is that minor elements appear as contextual elements that are connected to the major elements presented above. The analysis initially identifies four social and cultural elements in the translated versions: 1) quality, 2) scene, 3) story and 4) method.

First, as stated, the “quality” element appears to include the scents and tastes of the foods – for example, ... by grilling it [foie gras] on a ready-to-serve hot pan so you can experience the taste foie gras that is tender to your tongue (B.T.) (Issue 58:13). Second, “scene” is a social and cultural element that appears in the narratives where the atmosphere of the

locations including music activities and vibes are concerned, e.g. This street [Kensington Street] lies towards more than 20 restaurants giving dining experience of foods of various tastes and cultures – Thai, Chinese, Singapore, Malaysian, Hong Kong, Indian, Korean, and Japanese. The restaurants come in small sizes on the road, like street foods to fine dining cooked by reward-guaranteed chefs (B.T.) (Issue 63:14). As the magazine aims at presenting food articles, the atmosphere is a social and cultural element that is integrated into the texts to give the vibes of the location.

Third, the “story” element is mostly used in narratives that are connected to the location and people that appear as the main elements. The source-text authors usually describe how each restaurant is set up and its menus are created. This further includes stories of business owners and chefs working in the restaurants – for instance, ...as a child, she [Chef Tutu] always strived to ask questions about food. From that day, she has found answers to curiosities by practicing and experiencing life. This has made her an experienced chef today (B.T.) (Issue 61:19). And, last, the “method” element appears in the narratives that are connected to the ingredients and origins of the foods, e.g. ... people to try without modifying their tastes. The dish was cooked in Isaan authentic styles with carefully selected ingredients. ‘Fermented fish’ that was imported from Kalasin gives a ‘well-rounded’ taste and is made in a clean process. It also makes the branch very successful (B.T.) (Issue 60:14). However, due to space limitations, the example of how the translators condense the “quality” elements in the translations is used, focusing on its clear evidence. Below is the excerpt with detailed contexts to explain the circumstances.

The social and cultural “quality” element, scents and tastes of the foods, is one of the other elements that the translators decided not to fully present in the English versions. This results in condensed translations. The example below is in Issue 58 of February 2019, which mainly presents Dhara Dhevi Hotel and its restaurants in Chiang Mai. The article features ‘Sunday Brunch’ at the hotel restaurant that offers Western foods. It presents various menus visitors can find there, such as foie gras, pizza and pasta.

Source text	Back translation	Target text
เสียงซู่ซ่าจากกระทะร้อนๆ อาจทำให้ต้องละสายตาดูจากหอยนางรมตัวอวบสักครู่ เพราะมุมถัดมาเป็นมุมที่มีฟัวกราส์ชิ้นโตถูกจัดวางเรียงรายอยู่ในจานสีขาว มีเชฟคอยปรุงให้เสิร์ฟสรรพ (a) <sup>3</sup> โดยการย่างบนกระทะพร้อมเสิร์ฟ ให้ได้ลิ้มลองรสของ (b) ตัวฟัวกราส์ที่นุ่มละมุนลิ้น ด้านข้างมีพิซซ่ามาเนี่ยที่อบใหม่ๆ และพาสต้าปรุงสดโดยเชฟอาหารอิตาเลียน มีหลากหลายให้ได้เลือกสรร ทั้งฟูซิลี ลิงกวินี ริซอตโต สเปกเกตตีและเพนเน่ นำไปปรุงได้หลายซอส ไม่ว่าจะป็นซอสแดง คาโบนารา ครีมเห็ด หรือผัดซีเม่าแบบไทยๆ ก็จัดจ้านดี (Issue 58:13)	The sizzling sounds of the hot pan may make you take your eyes off the juicy oysters for a while because the next corner is the corner where big pieces of foie gras have been laid in white plates. The chef cooks it (a) by grilling it on a ready-to-serve hot pan so you can experience the taste of (b) foie gras that is tender to your tongue. On the side, there are freshly baked pizzas and cooked pastas by Italian chefs. It comes with various kinds of pasta – fusilli, linguini, risotto, spaghetti and penne. They can be cooked with various sauces – red sauce, carbonara, mushroom cream or spicy Thai style ‘pad khee mao’.	Following the sizzling sounds of the hot pan and select whatever sized piece of foie gras you wish the chef to cook to order. Just next door is the pasta station where you can select all manner of pasta – linguini, fusilli, spaghetti, penne and even risotto – to be cooked in many classical ways from carbonara to Bolognese. Or you can go daring and order some spicy Thai style pasta filled with chilies and spices. (Issue 58:13)

Figure 2. Condensation of Quality Elements.

The example shows that the minor element about the quality of the food including its scents and tastes is mostly condensed in the English translated version. First, in (a), the quality of the foie gras that is served on a hot pan is rewritten in the English version. The source-text “...โดยการย่างบนกระทะพร้อมเสิร์ฟ...” (“... **by grilling it on a ready-to-serve hot pan** ..., B.T.) that helps to illustrate the quality of foie gras was not rendered into the English version. Further, as indicated in (b), the source-text phrase “... ตัวพืกราสที่นุ่มละมุนลิ้น” (... **Foie Gras that is tender to your tongue**, B.T.) was rendered into English as ‘foie gras’ only. The translation shows that the translators did not convey the quality of Foie Gras (i.e., its soft and tender quality) into the target texts at all. Instead, the translators deliberately condensed them into the translated versions. This reflects a practice in the translations of magazine articles where minor social and cultural elements are condensed in the rewriting.

### *The Target-Text Versions and its Readership*

The main aim of the research is to explore how the translated English versions of food articles are produced for the readership that is quite specific in the Chiang Mai urban space. As posited earlier, translated articles appear in rewritten form. The translators retain major social and cultural elements and, in some cases, condense minor social and cultural elements. The translated versions are different from the source texts because the original Thai versions strive to present narratives that contain these elements to their fullest extent.

Nevertheless, the ways in which translators rewrite the translations in the Thai context appear to have no clear boundary between the retention and condensation of social and cultural elements. Through the lens of the systems, this can be linked to how translators rewrite their translations that are mostly linked to the target readers (Even-Zohar, 1990; Lefevre, 1992) and genres (see Trosborg, 1997:12; García Izquierdo and Montalt I Resurrecció, 2021:136; Redzioch-Korkuz, 2021; Limon, 2004).

As discussed, translation is rewriting that is affected by source- and target-text social and cultural elements (Lefevre, 1992). In the Thai context, ways in which translations are produced can be influenced by translators whose works are rewritten under influenced of the social and cultural constraints, such as their commissioners and readers (see Lefevre’s (1992) patron and ideology). For instance, Phanthaphoommee (2022; 2023) adopts the concepts of rewriting and ideology in his works and illustrates that translations of political texts into Thai are intervened by translators, such as a straightforward translation of the politician’s address and an attitude-driven translation of the politician’s address, respectively. This is important since both studies show that translations in the Thai environment are mostly affected by its socio-political context.

In adopting the systems as the framework, the findings seem consistent with previous research. Considering the target readership and the aim of the bilingual magazine, the translated versions can be considered rewriting containing selected social and cultural elements. As shown earlier in ‘Rewriting of Translated Versions with the Retention of Major Social and Cultural Elements’, the translators mostly retain major social and cultural elements that are related to food, activity, location, people and awards. This can imply that what has been retained in the translations is judged quite sufficient to offer the target

readership the essence of the articles. Similarly, the translators in some cases rewrote the translations while condensing minor social and cultural elements. This in most ways makes the readership experience social and cultural elements that are less than the original Thai versions.

It can be observed that there are possible reasons for the retentions and condensations of social and cultural elements. First, in an informal conversation, the chief editor asserts that it is not necessary to re-present all social and cultural elements in the target-text versions. Since the translated versions are aimed at delivering food menus, activities and locations where they could locate or find them, the readers would probably not need to know very specific detailed elements related to them. Not all major elements in the source texts could correspondingly appear in the target texts. This implies that rewriting of social and cultural elements with retention and condensation methods is a usual practice at the publisher.

Further, apart from the specific target readership, considering that the translated versions are seen as rewriting of the source-text bilingual magazine, the ways in which they are rewritten are influenced by the text genre as well. As mentioned, Trosborg (1997:12) refers to genre as completed texts that contain communicative functions and text types as elements of the texts (see also García Izquierdo and Montalt I Resurrecció, 2021:136). This includes, for example, newspaper reports and articles, TV news, textbooks and so on. She also posits that genre can affect how translations are produced in the target culture due to its structured nature and specific conventions (ibid.:18). Together, these act as constraints that can affect translators when translations are being rewritten.

It will be remembered that the material of this study is a bilingual magazine and has specific communicative functions. The bilingual magazine has its specific target readership in the urban setting of Chiang Mai town. The material is considered a magazine genre in that it has specific communicative functions and conventions for specific readership. The ways in which they were translated are seen to be affected by these specificities, which also act as genre constraints. (see Redzioch-Korkuz, 2021; Limon, 2004). One of the key specificities includes not only its target readers but also the spaces available for English translations. It seems that the space of the columns presented in the magazine also affects how the translators rewrote the translations to fit the space in each column and page. The column space in the magazine is considered an important criterion for the translators to rewrite the translations. The information received from the chief editor of Spoon & Fork Magazine indicates that column space is sold to clients (e.g., bar and restaurant owners) with the promise that their food articles will appear in the magazine. The rate the clients will have to pay depends on how much space they want in the magazine. So, the column space where the publisher publishes its clients' food content is limited by this purchase. For example, in Issue 58 of 2019, the entire Main Dish column was devoted to featuring the restaurants and bars in Dara Dhevi Hotel. This could cost around five figures or six figures in Thai Baht per issue. Because the magazine is bilingual, both Thai source texts must appear alongside the English versions. As the original articles are written in Thai, the English versions could not occupy the same space as the original ones. Nonetheless, to ensure that the food articles reach wide circulation that meets the expectations of the clients and objectives, the translators may perceive that the English translations be made to convey the selected content effectively in the English versions. This, by and large, affects the ways in which the

translators decide to present the English translated versions in shorter or condensed forms. In other words, the English translated versions are meant to deliver specific content to the readers, focusing mainly on foods and where they can find them.

### Conclusion

The analysis helps to shed light on a translation of the bilingual magazine genre that is produced in the Thai environment. The findings and discussion show that the translation of the bilingual magazine genre from Thai into English are far from faithful to the source texts but are produced to showcase the essence the translators judged sufficient and necessary for the specific readers. As translation is a sub-system that is an integral part of the Thai social and cultural systems, the findings show that translations of a bilingual magazine genre are rewritten under the constraints – the target readership and text genre conventions. This means that the translators make decisions on what social and cultural elements are to be delivered to the readership – either through the forms of retention and/or condensation of them. This study gives a new perspective on translation phenomena in the Thai translation environment. As the study is descriptive and follows the systems theoretical point of view, the study highlights that, in an urban setting, translators rewrote source-text articles into rewriting works so that they specifically serve their target readers while maintaining the publisher's aim – attempting to reach wider readers to maximize the economic benefits from selling the column space, for instance.

### Endnotes

- 1 Information about the publisher and magazine was given by the editor of Spoon & Fork Magazine when the researcher was permitted to receive the hard copies of 2019 magazines in Chiang Mai in December 2022. The conversation was informal to provide the researcher with the fundamental knowledge of the magazine. The editor was given the research proposal and informed of the aim. The permit to obtain the magazines used as data for the research was given. The information obtained from the conversation is meant for the context of the study only. As the research focuses on analyzing source- and target-text food articles, contextual information has not been used for the analysis.
- 2 Bold typeface appearing throughout the paper is used to highlight comparisons between Thai-English versions.
- 3 Sub-examples are labeled in alphabetical order i.e. a) and b).

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