

# The languages of wine: negotiating intercultural exchanges through translation

Chiara Bertulessi, Emma Lupano, Bettina Mottura,  
Natalia Riva, Yunqi Zhou

**Abstract:** This paper discusses the cultural and linguistic mediation strategies involved in the compilation of a terminological tool aimed at facilitating the intercultural exchanges between Italy and China in the field of oenology, by taking the *Dictionary of Italian wines and grape varieties (Italian-Chinese)* (Bosc *et al.* 2019) as a case study. The main objectives of the dictionary compilation were the popularization of specialized wine language, the standardization of the names of Italian wines and grape varieties, and the translation of the Italian lexicographical definitions in Chinese. For this process to be effective in terms of intercultural communication and mediation, the negotiation of standardization and translation strategies needed to take into account the differences between the two cultures and languages involved as well as the constraints of the lexicographical genre. After delineating the historical background and presenting the purpose of the dictionary from the lexicographical perspective, the paper delves into the choices made in the compilation of the Chinese text.

**Keywords:** Italian wine, wine dictionary, Italian-Chinese lexicography, translation, intercultural mediation.

**摘要:** 本文以《意大利葡萄酒和葡萄品种词典》(意大利文—中文)(Bosc *et al.*, 2019)为例,探讨了在编译一个旨在促进意大利和中国在酿酒学领域中跨文化交流的术语工具过程中所涉及的文化 and 语言调解策略。编译该词典的主要目的是葡萄酒专业用语的普及、意大利葡萄酒和葡萄品种名称的标准化以及意大利文词典定义的中文翻译。为了使这一过程在跨文化交流和调解方面有效,标准化和翻译策略的协商需要考虑到所涉及的两和语言之间的差异以及词典类型的限制。在从词典编纂的角度描述历史背景并呈现该词典的用途之后,本文深入探讨了在中文文本编译中所做的选择。

**关键词:** 意大利葡萄酒,葡萄酒词典,意汉辞书,翻译,跨文化交际。

## 1. Introduction

With the popularization of grape wine culture in China, in recent years, consumers have shown growing interest in the European wine tradition, making wine a promising ground for the economic and cultural encounter between Europe—with Italy at the fore—and China. The developing exchanges in this sector fostered the

Chiara Bertulessi, University of Milan, Italy, chiara.bertulessi@unimi.it, 0000-0002-9966-1751  
Emma Lupano, Università degli studi di Cagliari, Italy, emma.lupano@unica.it, 0000-0002-2125-0514  
Bettina Mottura, University of Milan, Italy, bettina.mottura@unimi.it, 0000-0002-7898-9002  
Natalia Riva, Catholic University of Sacro Cuore, Italy, nataliafrancesca.riva@unicatt.it, 0000-0002-1132-8357  
Yunqi Zhou, Guangzhou International Primary/Middle School Huangpu ZWIE, People's Republic of China, yunqizhou@126.com, 0000-0002-7176-2913

FUP Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing (DOI 10.36253/fup\_best\_practice)

Chiara Bertulessi, Emma Lupano, Bettina Mottura, Natalia Riva, Yunqi Zhou, *The languages of wine: negotiating intercultural exchanges through translation*, pp. 143-160, © 2021 Author(s), CC BY 4.0 International, DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6.13, in Miriam Castorina, Diego Cucinelli (edited by), *Food issues 食事. Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia*, © 2021 Author(s), content CC BY 4.0 International, metadata CC0 1.0 Universal, published by Firenze University Press ([www.fupress.com](http://www.fupress.com)), ISSN 2704-5919 (online), ISBN 978-88-5518-506-6 (PDF), DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6

need for discursive tools to facilitate the intercultural communication between Italian and Chinese speakers (Romagnoli 2019). The bilingual *Dictionary of Italian wines and grape varieties (Italian-Chinese)*, hereafter the *Dictionary*, is one such example.<sup>1</sup>

The publication of the *Dictionary* in 2019 was the end result of an international lexicographical project which aimed to contribute to the promotion of Italian wine culture in China by systematizing the transmission in Chinese of the Italian wine language. The interdisciplinary research project, that the authors of this contribution participated in, focused on the popularization of scientific language, the standardization of terms, and the translation of the Italian definitions in Chinese. The process required constant negotiation between the two cultures and languages, as well as with the constraints of the lexicographic genre.

The work drew on the expertise of Italian oenologists and linguists, whose knowledge and specialized language had to be translated in Chinese. Yet, this translation could not be successfully carried out only at linguistic level. Instead, it required an ongoing dialogue between Chinese oenologists and Chinese linguists. Thus, in compiling the *Dictionary*, the mediation work was performed at three intertwined levels: 1) the popularization of the specialized language of wine in general, and of Italian wines in particular; 2) the inter-linguistic translation, which cannot be separated from an intercultural mediation of culture-specific concepts and expressions; 3) and the constant negotiation between the needs to properly translate the original meaning and efficiently introduce that meaning into a different cultural environment, where a specialized language of wine, however young and unstable, has been in use for some time.

The contribution is organized in four parts.<sup>2</sup> The first part briefly discusses the historical development of wine culture in China, from its origins to the most recent years, highlighting the fundamental role of the specialized language of wine in the popularization, marketization, and consumption of grape wine. The second briefly presents the nature and purpose of the *Dictionary* from the lexicographical perspective, based on the notions of user's needs and intercultural lexicographical communication in dictionary making. The third discusses the criteria applied in the translation of the names of Italian wines and grape varieties in order to translate the headwords of the *Dictionary*. The fourth analyzes the translation process in the *Dictionary*, highlighting the negotiation strategies applied. This section focuses on the overall structure of the definitions, syntax, and punctuation, leading then to the concluding remarks.

<sup>1</sup> The original title is *Dizionario dei vini e dei vitigni d'Italia (italiano-cinese)*, published by Gambero Rosso in 2019. It was an editorial project involving the Confucius Institute at the University of Milan, as well as the Department of Studies in Language Mediation and Intercultural Communication, the Department of Food, Environmental and Nutritional Sciences, the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences - Production, Landscape, Agroenergy, the Contemporary Asia Research Centre at the University of Milan, and Liaoning Normal University.

<sup>2</sup> In this paper, Lupano is the author of paragraph 2, Bertulesi of paragraph 3, Mottura of paragraph 4, Riva of paragraph 5, except sub-paragraph 5.3 written by Zhou.

The study aims to highlight how, in a bilingual lexicographical work, sociolinguistic negotiation was performed in order to contribute to the diffusion of Italian culture in a context where the consumption of imported wine is perceived as a symbolic resource to achieve distinction (Yang and Paladino 2015) and as a sign of national modernity (Kjellgren 2004).

## 2. Mediating wine language and culture

The production of grape wine seems to have been a worldwide phenomenon since prehistoric times, with experts generally agreeing that the cradle of viniculture should be placed somewhere between Eastern Turkey, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Western and Central China. Such are the connections in terms of timing, techniques, and even languages regarding wine and wine production in this vast area, that scholars have drawn the hypothesis of the existence of a Wine Road in the Eurasian continent well before the establishment of a Silk Road (Kupfer 2010, 7–12).

In particular, wine archaeologist Patrick McGovern's discovery, between 2004 and 2005, of the earliest traces (7000 BC) of grape wine production in the central areas of the later Chinese Empire (Henan province) questioned previous knowledge that viniculture started around 5000 BC in Northern Iran (Kupfer 2010, 10). Whichever conclusions will be reached in the future with further archaeological findings, the history of winemaking appears in essence, and to date, the result of ongoing blending, exchange, and mediation between different civilizations and cultures. Nonetheless, grape wine was—and still is—perceived as the expression of a territory in geographical, material, and anthropological terms; it embodies the traditions and culture of a place and a people, and their ability to create and innovate.

In China, while hints at vine cultivation can already be traced in Zhou dynasty records (*Shijing* 诗经 and *Liji* 礼记), the earliest written evidence of grape wine production in the Western regions of today's China and of contacts with Eurasian vines can be found in the Han dynasty *Shiji* 史记, dating around 100 BC (Kjeller 2004, 15). From then to the Tang dynasty to Kublai Khan, grape wine in China has been traditionally associated to luxury, elite consumption, and foreign (Western) origins, even though in recent years an increasing number of Chinese scholars have argued that grape wine is actually an indigenous product (Wu 2001, 264–307).

The motivations to place the “birth” of grape wine within the national boundaries are in a wide sense political, being in line with an official discourse that, over the last decade, has strived to reaffirm China's leading position on the world stage at economic, geopolitical, and cultural levels, after the so-called “century of humiliation” (*bainian guochi* 百年国耻). As Kjeller puts it:

Wine is a product that in China is strongly linked to the project of modernization. This project [...] is carried out against the historical background of China's international humiliation in the late nineteenth century and the introspective debate on the merits and perils of Chinese tradition that followed. (Kjeller 2004, 25)

Therefore, wine is commercially presented as a desirable, leisure, and healthy product that has become part of the refined and worldly lifestyle of the modern Chinese; yet, local labels often refer to indigenous roots by recalling Xinjiang or Shandong vineyards in their marketing tools.

The fact that most of China's wine is made with imported grape varieties, know-how, and machinery is not seen as a contradiction. Instead, it links well to the century-old idea of "Chinese knowledge as substance, Western knowledge as instrument" (*Zhongxue wei ti Xixue wei yong* 中学为体西学为用) formulated by intellectual Zhang Zhidong at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to call for a selective adoption of Western concepts and technologies in the Chinese realm. Even Changyu Wine Company, the pioneer of China's modern wine industry and one of the top producers, was initiated in Yantai, Shandong, by Zhang Bishi, a Chinese businessman returned from Indonesia who planted vines imported from Austria (Kupfer 2010, 17; Kjeller 2004, 18).

In 2020, China produced around 660 million liters of wine, but the Chinese population consumed more than 1.2 billion liters, making China the sixth leading wine consumer in the world. Red wine is the most popular, covering 80 per cent of the national consumption, a dominance that many explain with the positive meaning of its color, traditionally a symbol of luck, happiness and celebrations (Tang *et al.* 2015). Chinese consumers have started to spend more for better quality wine, among which imported wines hold an important position. International bottles make up 40 per cent of the market, with China being the fifth largest global wine importer in 2020, worth 1.6 billion euros (Ma 2021a, 2021b; Cellar Asia 2019).

After a decade of continuous growth, the Chinese market has started to mature. Domestic consumption hit a record in 2017 and has since been followed by yearly decreases. The trend could be explained with the decline of purchase for special occasions and for gift giving, and with the emergence of wine as a "norm" among a part of the younger population. Drinking and knowing wines, especially foreign wines, is a trait of distinction for the increasingly selective urban and cultured Chinese (Yang and Paladino 2015), who now mostly buy wine (preferably online) for everyday consumption at home (Cellar Asia 2019).

The Chinese cultural industry has prepared and accompanied this trend, as the success of social media celebrities such as Lady Penguin (*Zui'e niang* 醉鹅娘) shows. With 3.8 million followers on Douyin 抖音<sup>3</sup> and 1.5 million on Weibo 微博,<sup>4</sup> a program of offline wine courses throughout the country, and a number of other initiatives and commercial activities,<sup>5</sup> the influencer has estab-

<sup>3</sup> See *Zui'e niang xiao jiuguan* 醉鹅娘小酒馆 (@zuieniang), Douyin 抖音 profile, <<https://www.douyin.com/user/MS4wLjABAAAAsDER3ZorAvonLig3FM1PmuQ8vS-0NGHpibj1d4Y8k1o>>.

<sup>4</sup> See *Zui'e niang* 醉鹅娘 (@醉鹅娘), Weibo 微博 profile, <[https://weibo.com/zuieniang?page=2&is\\_all=1#\\_loginLayer\\_1626103427577](https://weibo.com/zuieniang?page=2&is_all=1#_loginLayer_1626103427577)>.

<sup>5</sup> Such as her commercial website, see <<http://www.ladypenguin.com>>.

lished herself as the main authority on wine (and spirits) in China. Lady Penguin, whose real name is Wang Shenghan 王胜寒, is a proper cultural mediator. She not only leads novices into the secrets of wine tasting, wine pouring, and good drinking manners but also introduces national and international wine regions, wine producers, and bottles, and light-heartedly teaches her audience of non-specialists that each wine is representative of a specific place, history, culture, and civilization. Her use of relatively simple terms, while covering a wide range of wine-related topics, makes Lady Penguin also a language mediator, catering to the national wine industry as a whole.

More than with any other commercial product, the marketing and selling of wine is in fact strictly dependent on the consumers' knowledge of the jargon. As Tiefenbacher and Townsend (2019) have noted, wine drinkers have to be educated before they can be targeted as buyers: they have to know the universal "wine speak", meaning the lexicon and syntax used to transfer the "ideological, sociological and technological components of wine culture". This language for specific purposes (Trace *et al.* 2015), that despite specific vernacular contexts remains relatively intact while being transmitted beyond countries and cultures, "conveys the important concepts, qualities, and explanations for the empirical and subjective elements of wines, including how they were grown, how they were crafted, and why they seem to satisfy or dissatisfy the consumer" (Tiefenbacher and Townsend 2019, 3).

Wine consumers have to master the jargon if they want to not only understand what they drink and what they like to drink, but also verbalize their sensations and translate them into meaningful descriptions:

To advance beyond the recognition of white, red, rosé, or bubbly wine, and to find the wines that they enjoy, [the wine consumer] must develop an understanding of what is communicated in advertising and retail settings, and learn the language that effectively and accurately communicates their preferences, relates their experiences, and enables their leisure, their pleasure, their satisfaction, or their meal. (Tiefenbacher and Townsend 2019, 27)

In this perspective, wine language is the very foundation for the production, trade, and consumption of wine. In the context of a growingly important Chinese wine market, language and discursive tools to facilitate intercultural communication between wine producers and Chinese speakers are therefore increasingly needed. The bilingual Italian-Chinese *Dictionary* is one such tool, aiming at the promotion of Italian wine culture.

### 3. A lexicographical tool for intercultural communication

The *Dictionary* is an Italian-Chinese specialized and bilingual lexicographical work that collects names of Italian wines and grape varieties, which represent an instance of specialized language, i.e. the language of Italian wine. Specialized language is defined as a variety of language used within the framework of certain sectors of the linguistic community and characterized by the use of somewhat

specialized terminology in relation to the common lexicon and the presence of specific morphosyntactic structures (Cortelazzo 1994). The *Dictionary* can be considered the product of a terminographic activity as it collects terminological units which allow for the transfer of specialized knowledge (Cabr  2000).

More specifically, the wordlist<sup>6</sup> of the *Dictionary* is composed of Italian wine names (DOCG, DOC, IGT)<sup>7</sup> and grape varieties, which are organized in alphabetical order based on Italian, the source language (SL).<sup>8</sup> Each entry comprises the headword (the wine name or the name of the grape variety) and its lexicographical definition, both provided in Italian and translated into Chinese (the target language, TL). Moreover, with the aim to facilitate the consultation of the *Dictionary* by its prospective users, a short bilingual glossary (Italian-Chinese) with definitions is included in the front matter. The short glossary collects the basic terminology of wine employed in the Italian and Chinese definitions of the entries (Bosc *et al.* 2019).

Bergenholtz and Tarp (2010)—who consider specialized lexicography and terminography basically as synonyms—believe that the making and the nature of any lexicographical work should be related to the user’s needs. These needs, in turn,

[should be] related not only to a specific type of users, but also to the specific type of social situation where this type of user may have a specific type of lexicographically relevant needs that may lead to dictionary consultation. (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 29)

Similarly, drawing from the Communicative Theory of Terminology defined by Cabr  (1999), Edo Marz  (2009, 45–6) reminds us that terminographical (or specialized lexicographical) activities should be oriented towards the satisfaction of the communicative needs arising in specialized areas of knowledge and language use. Therefore, in the making of a specialized lexicographical tool—as is the *Dictionary*—the compilers should be well aware of the nature of its prospective users, their specific needs and the specific communicative context in which this tool may be used (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 46).

From the perspective of the user’s needs, the *Dictionary* constitutes a bilingual tool that was designed to facilitate and enhance communication between Italian and Chinese experts operating in the wine industry, but it is also accessible to Italian and Chinese non-specialized users who may have an interest in wine. As a specialized lexicographical tool, it addresses experts and laypeople alike and can also serve encoding and decoding needs on the part of the users (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 11). Moreover, one of the main objectives of the

<sup>6</sup> A description of the research project and the editorial process of the *Dictionary* is included in Bosc and Mottura (2022).

<sup>7</sup> Controlled and Guaranteed Designation of Origin, Controlled Designation of Origin, Typical Geographical Indication.

<sup>8</sup> An alphabetical index based on Chinese *pinyin* of the headwords of the *Dictionary* is also included as an appendix.

*Dictionary* is to define a norm for the names of Italian wines and grape varieties in Chinese providing a standardized translation, thus benefiting its users and the marketization of Italian wine in China. Therefore, the *Dictionary* also poses itself as a tool of communication and mediation between two languages and two cultures. Specifically, it collects and presents in Chinese the language of Italian wine and, consequently, also the culture that this language embeds.

According to the communicative model of lexicography put forward by Yong and Peng, lexicography constitutes:

the theory and practice of encoding and transmitting, intra-culturally or interculturally, information and knowledge concerning socialized linguistic forms of a given speech community and/or extralinguistic reality from the compiler to the user so as to affect the user's knowledge structure and perception of the world. (Yong and Peng 2007, 11)

From this perspective, the difference between monolingual and bilingual lexicography not only lies in the number of languages represented, but also in the fact that when two languages are involved, two cultures are also inevitably involved. For this reason, the bilingual dictionary can also be described in terms of intercultural communication (Yong and Peng 2007, 11).

Food is inextricably related to culture, and it also constitutes an interdisciplinary field that embraces, among others, history, and geography. Consequently, food terminology, a category to which wine terminology belongs, is “imbued with cultural meanings” (Faber and Claramonte 2017, 156; Counihan and Van Esterik 2013; Garzone 2016). This inevitably poses a number of issues also when food terminology constitutes the object of definition of a bilingual lexicographical tool, which is intended to provide lexical equivalents in the TL (Chinese in the case of the *Dictionary*). However, finding lexical equivalence is generally acknowledged as being a very difficult task, and this is especially true when pairs of languages with different cultures are involved in the process (Hartmann and James 2001, 14). It is seen as the compilers' duty to contribute to the development of the user's awareness “of the foreign culture and create lexical associations and images that are as close as possible to those existing in the mind of the native speakers” (Yong and Peng 2007, 128).

Wine language is not only the language of a specific subject field but is also deeply culture-bound: the names of Italian wines and grape varieties are an expression of culture and territory, of social practices and cultural models. As a result, to ensure the effectiveness of the process of lexicographical and intercultural communication, the making of the *Dictionary* and the process of standardization and translation of wine terminology required that not only linguistic elements, but also existing cultural differences between the Italian and Chinese cultures be taken into account (Bosc and Mottura 2022).

Based on these premises, the following paragraphs describe the translation processes of the *Dictionary* in order to highlight the commitment to ensuring the effectiveness of the process of intercultural communication and mediation between Italian and Chinese speakers, through the language of Italian wine.

#### 4. The standardization process: sources and method

Against the background of the sociolinguistic context discussed above, the compilation process of the *Dictionary* developed in two phases: the elaboration of the Italian text; and the translation into Chinese.

The process started with the identification in Italian of a list of dictionary entries selected from oenology specialized discourse and the compilation of the Italian definitions. Useful linguistic data and content information were collected from oenological academic catalogues and from local regulations and documents on wine production. This work required a strong interaction between Italian linguists, oenologists, viticulture experts, and wine specialists. It led to a final draft of the *Dictionary* which contained 793 wine entries and 666 grape varieties entries in Italian.

Subsequently, two further processes began, namely the search for Chinese equivalents of the Italian headwords (i.e., names of wines or grape varieties) and the translation into Chinese of the lexicographical definition. Both aspects involved deep synergies and constant interaction between Chinese and Italian sinologists and wine specialists. This paragraph and next one highlight selected aspects of the translation process, all greatly characterized by cultural mediation and linguistic negotiation efforts (Liddicoat 2016).

Aware of a pre-existing wine-related linguistic context in China, the translators first looked for specialized sources to build lists of wine and grape names, terminology, and lexicon of wine language in Chinese, and draw from them when translating the headwords and the dictionary entries. The literary review led to a sample of books on Italian oenology and wines for the general public and a selected number of official Chinese documents aimed at the standardization of terminology in international trade.

Three documents emerged as authoritative primary sources to draw upon for our translation work. Two standards published by the People's Republic of China (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Shangwubu, 2015; Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Zhiliang Jiandu Jianyan Jianyi Zongju and Zhongguo Guojia Biaozhunhua Guanli Weiyuanhui 2005)<sup>9</sup> and a specialized online dictionary (Yi Xiang Guoji Putaojiu Yu Liejiu Jiaoyu 2004–2012), sponsored by several international organizations involved in wine commerce and marketing, such as the Italian Institute of Foreign Trade. Moreover, Chinese equivalents of toponyms and anthroponyms included in the names of wines or grape varieties, were found—when possible—either on a geographical map of Italy published by Sinomaps Press in 2016, or in a dictionary of proper names (Xinhua Tongxunshu Yiming Shi 2012).

A close reflection on these Chinese sources highlighted that the official language representing the Italian wine sector in China mainly depends on translations. Besides, most wine and grape names translations were based on phonetic

<sup>9</sup> On the importance of national standards in wine production and commercialization in China see Yang *et al.* (2015).



calques, often based on the English language as SL. Consequently, the terminology and lexicon attested in the field of oenology in China did not draw from a direct translation of the Italian linguistic and cultural heritage. In addition, the length of linguistic data collected from the existing sources seemed relatively poor compared to the number and complexity of the entries of the *Dictionary*. Therefore, the existing linguistic background testified to the interest and originality of the lexicographic project and highlighted several cultural and linguistic difficulties to be overcome throughout the compilation process.

#### 4.1. Standardizing grape varieties and wine names in Chinese

The translators first collected all the existing forms of names of Italian wines and of grape varieties in Chinese primary sources. Among the data extracted, the selection of the forms to be concretely inserted as headwords in the *Dictionary* was based on the principle of consistency between different sources, interpreted as a demonstration of the acquisition of the name in the specialized language of wine in China. All recurring names were therefore adopted, regardless of their form or their relationship to the original phonetics of the Italian name. ‘Barbera’, for example, is a grape name whose transcription was consistent in our sources, which proposed: *babeila* 巴贝拉. On the other hand, in the case of partial coherence between different sources, for example because of the choice of different sinograms to note the same sound, the translators favored the phonetic transcription that best mirrored the Italian pronunciation of the name. Accepting established translations in the *Dictionary* aimed at embedding the book in the target linguistic context and, hopefully, enhance its future dissemination in China.

Despite this process, the data collected still left significant translation gaps: most of the headwords in Italian were missing a Chinese equivalent. As the analysis highlighted phonetic transcription as the main source of lexical borrowings in the Chinese wine specialized language (Alleton 2001), missing headwords were created through the same technique. This led to the selection of the most appropriate sinograms to reproduce the pronunciation of Italian names, while respecting the graphic and symbolic significance of the characters in the Chinese cultural context.

During this phonetic transcription process, the main difficulties were the difference in phonetic structure between the two languages and the cultural density of the wine and oenological Italian tradition. The synergy between the Italian and Chinese language experts and their constant dialogue helped to mediate between cultures and languages. Throughout the translation, several strategies were systematically adopted, and general principles were applied to ensure consistency between dictionary entries.

In the absence of existing translations, as was the case for ‘Valpantena’, the phonetic transcription from the Italian name of the wine led to: *wa’erpantena* 瓦尔潘特纳. As showed in this example, the process often produced names of more than three sinograms, a length that does not characterize standard lan-

guage words in China (Packard 2004). This shortcoming was even worse when the wine name in Italian contained several words, resulting in a translated name difficult to read for a native Chinese speaker. Hence, where the character strings translating a wine name became too long compared to the standard in the TL, the name in Chinese characters was segmented by adding a hyphen to make the dictionary headword more readable. This is the case with ‘Delia Nivoelli’ wine: *dailiya – niwoleili* 戴利亚—尼沃勒利.

In some cases, hybrids were created. For example, when the names of wines contained toponyms or adjectives derived from them, these elements were anticipated to the left of the translated name. ‘Cerasuolo d’Abruzzo’ became: *abuluzuo – qielasuolo* 阿布鲁佐—切拉索罗, where *abuluzuo* is the toponym and *qielasuolo* a phonetic calque. Additionally, when the wine name contained a color, it was translated by its Chinese equivalent, placed on the left-hand side, in the position of determinant. However, each headword had to be examined with care, as colors in the *Dictionary* may refer to different characteristics. In the following examples, both the wines’ names contain ‘bianco’ (white), but the word has different meanings. ‘Greco di Bianco’ is a wine from Calabria, and here ‘Bianco’ is a toponym, hence the transcription had to be: *bi’anke – gelaike* 比安科—格莱克; in ‘Bianco Capena’, ‘bianco’ means white wine, for this reason, it has been translated in Chinese as *kapeina – baiputaojiu* 卡佩纳—白葡萄酒. Likewise, geographically related words inserted in wine names have been translated by their Chinese equivalents, such as *qiulin* 丘陵 for ‘hills’ or *hupan* 湖畔 for ‘the coast of a lake’, etc.

This creative effort resulted in the standardization in Chinese of the names of the grape varieties and of DOCG, DOC, and IGT wines of the Italian local tradition. Most of the choices made aimed to reduce as much as possible the roughness resulting from the distance between the SL and the TL, in search for a mediation that would make the *Dictionary* easy to use for the reader. The text would guarantee a sort of linguistic and cultural integration when possible or, at least, a dialogue. In this perspective, having selected a method of producing equivalents centered on phonetic calques, which above all favors the preservation of the sound of the original names, the use of the *Dictionary* headwords by native Chinese speakers would probably be driven by the charm of the exoticism of the product, of its cultural and linguistic ‘otherness’.

##### 5. DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions: translation as negotiation

The compilers of the *Dictionary*, a group of professionals constituted by both “professors and disseminators” and “communication mediators” (Cabré 2000), aimed at disseminating knowledge on Italian wine by tackling cognitive differences between the writer and the recipient of the message and overcoming linguistic differences in this process. Because of the terminological nature of the *Dictionary*, careful consideration of the Italian text was necessary in terms of elements such as the form, structure, and length of the lexicographical definitions. Given the diversity and complexity of the language varieties involved, as

described in the previous paragraphs, the translators acted as “a bridge... in a situation of disparity” (Cabré 2000) negotiating strategies to tackle difficulties at various levels.

As Eco (2003, 16) suggests, translation is a negotiation process in itself: the parties involved—the original text and the destination text, each with its own cultural framework—renounce something for the sake of overall satisfaction. The elaboration of the *Dictionary*'s Chinese text embraced this approach applying it to both the formal and content schemata (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). When reading the source text, the translator acts in a bicultural and bilingual frame: the syntactic, semantic, lexical, and orthographic elements—the formal schema—are interpreted as a basis upon which to form the content schema—an understanding of the text in terms of information and implications (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). The translator uses the content schema “to re-create the text into the framework of a new formal schema in the target language” (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). In addition, in the field of terminology, terms are themselves “units of form and content” (Cabré 2000). Thus, as the *Dictionary* shows, finding the correct equivalent terms and adapting grammar were important aspects in the translation process, but working on the formal schema, focusing on the syntactic structure of the target text before applying the content schema, was equally fundamental. This approach ensured “functional equivalence”, while at the same time, formal correspondence was also respected as much as possible. The process, in brief, shows continuous negotiation between the two long-debated concepts of form and content in translation (Ye and Shi 2009, 6–8).

Drawing on these notions, this paragraph focuses on the strategies adopted by the translators of the *Dictionary* to reach the end goal of transmitting specialized knowledge (Cabré 2000) by successfully mediating between the two cultural and linguistic systems involved. This required solving problems posed both by the nature of the specialized language of Italian wine and the specificity of the editorial product. Specifically, the paragraph describes the adaptation of the form of the DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions from the SL to the TL by identifying three areas as crucial: the overall structure of the definitions; syntax; and punctuation.

### 5.1 Overall structure of DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions

Layout and structure of the text are part of the formal schema (Pellat and Liu 2010, 12). As such, they needed to be taken into as much consideration as lexicon in the elaboration of the *Dictionary*. The length of the definitions, their immediacy and compactness, and most importantly coherence both between the target and source texts, as well as throughout the target text, were all aspects considered by the translators. Matters related to layout and structure were also negotiated with the editors based on the requirements of the physical print. The definitions appear as blocks headed by the name of the wine or grape variety in Italian. The transcription in Chinese characters and their transliteration in *pinyin* follow below. The indication of the region of production in Italian and

Chinese (without *pinyin*) is also added. Each lexicographical definition in Italian consists of invariable parts as well as parts that vary according to the wine or grape variety being defined. In the case of a wine, the characteristics used are: typology, that is sensorial qualities such as color (white, pink, red), residual sugar (semi-sweet, sweet, concentrated sweet, fortified), and presence of bubbles (lightly sparkling, sparkling); version, that is vinification and oenological techniques (classic, selection, reserve, superior, late harvest, traditional method, young, Vin Santo, Occhio di Pernice); and specification, denoting more limited geographical indications.

The elaboration of a standard model for the Italian DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions was systematic, allowing for the identification of recurring substructures: wine typology and version, production area, wine composition, and other specific characteristics. The same approach was maintained in the translation process. As a result, the definitions are specular in Italian and Chinese but vary in length and content in relation to the specific characteristics of the categories they belong to. These efforts were made to ensure that the *Dictionary* is visually well-organized, and its consultation easy in both the source and target languages, thus enhancing the efficiency of the definitions in fulfilling their communicative function.

## 5.2 Syntax

In the *Dictionary*, the syntax of the Italian text and that of its Chinese translation differ. From a syntactic point of view, Italian is a hypotactic language, while Chinese is a paratactic language, with propositions which are all on the same level and linked through punctuation or coordinating conjunctions. In the definitions, based on the characteristics of the Chinese syntax, single complex sentences in the source text are broken into simple or complex sentences in the target text. This process was carried out by identifying “blocks of information” in the Italian definitions—the aforementioned recurring substructures—and taking these units as a basis for the Chinese translation. Thus, the first simple sentence in the Chinese definitions translates only part of the complex sentence in Italian—the segment which could be called the “typology block”—as shown in Figures 1 and 2 depicting the entries Vermentino di Gallura (DOGC) and Montecarlo (DOC). When needed, the indication of the version(s) pertaining to every typology is also included in this block. While the SL uses a single complex sentence including both the unit indicating wine typology and version and that indicating the production area, these are kept separate in Chinese.

In all DOGC, DOC, and IGT definitions, the second sentence of the Chinese translation contains the indication of the Italian province and region of production. Because of the syntactic rules of the Chinese language, the order of province and region is reversed in comparison to Italian, with region (*daqu* 大区) appearing before the province (*sheng* 省). Moreover, in the Chinese text, the “production area block” can either end with a full stop or appear in a complex sentence together with the “wine composition block”. The two blocks are

included in the same sentence when the wine is produced in only one typology or in various typologies sharing the same ampelographic base (see Figure 1).



Figure 1 – In Bosc *et al.* 2019, 238.

Conversely, when the definition lists various wine typologies with their corresponding lists of grapes, as is the case for Montecarlo (see Figure 2), a third sentence—the “wine composition block”—is added to include the indication of the specific wine typology or typologies as the subject followed by the ampelographic base.


### 5.3 Punctuation

Part of the formal schema, punctuation is “perhaps the ‘minutest’ part of a text” (Pellat and Liu 2010, 12). As every language uses it differently, punctuation “needs to be mined for its meaning, so that the text and its component sentences can be appropriately restructured” when needed (Pellat and Liu 2010, 13). It can be argued that punctuation marks play a more important role in Chinese than Italian.

First of all, it is significant that in the People’s Republic of China the use of punctuation marks is regulated by an official document: the National Standard of the People’s Republic of China: General rules for punctuation (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guojia Biaozhun: Biaodian fuhao yongfa* 中华人民共和国国家标准: 标点符号用法). Secondly, punctuation is much more visible in Chinese, with every mark taking up a full typographical character space (Pellat and Liu 2010, 29). Its importance, however, lies in the fact that in a language that does not rely on morphological inflection, it expresses meaning (Pellat and Liu 2010, 29).

When translating the *Dictionary*, punctuation was perhaps the level that required the most complex attempt at negotiating between marks looking approximately the same in Italian and Chinese but conveying different meanings. For instance, in the “wine typology block”, in order to systematically deal with wines presenting multiple typologies and versions, an *ad hoc* punctuation and

conjunction scheme was developed. For five or more typologies, the scheme combines inverted commas and the conjunctions *he* 和 and *yiji* 以及: *ci kuan jiu you* 此款就有 type 1 (version), type 2 (version), type 3 (version) *he* type 4 (version), *yiji* type 5 (version) *wu zhong leixing* 五种类型. Generally speaking, the inverted comma, a “mid-sentence delimiter” that separates elements within a list (AQSIQ and SAC 2011), is used in the TL as a basic punctuation mark for elements in a list. Also called “sequence comma”, it is a punctuation mark unique to Chinese; the parallel items in the list (including a sequence of two) are noun phrases or verb phrases (Pellat and Liu 2010, 31).

**Montecarlo**  
 蒙特卡洛   
 méngtèkǎluò

**TOSCANA 托斯卡纳大区**

Vino prodotto nelle tipologie bianco / passito bianco, nella versione Vin Santo / passito rosato, nella versione Occhio di Pernice / rosso, anche nella versione riserva, in provincia di Lucca (regione Toscana), ottenuto da uve provenienti dai vitigni Trebbiano Toscano (dal 30% al 60%), Pinot Bianco e/o Pinot Grigio e/o Roussanne e/o Sauvignon e/o Sémillon e/o Vermentino (dal 40% al 70%) per le tipologie bianco e passito bianco; dai vitigni Sangiovese (dal 50% al 75%), Canaiolo Nero e/o Merlot e/o Syrah (dal 15% al 40%), Cabernet Sauvignon e/o Cabernet Franc e/o Ciliegliolo e/o Colorino e/o Malvasia Nera di Lecce e/o Malvasia Nera di Brindisi (dal 10% al 30%) per le tipologie passito rosato e rosso. Il disciplinare prevede anche la produzione di vini monovarietali a base di Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sauvignon, Syrah, Vermentino.

此款酒有白葡萄酒、风干甜白葡萄酒（圣酒款）、风干甜桃红葡萄酒（鸢尾之眼款）和 红葡萄酒（也有珍藏款）四种类型。该酒产于托斯卡纳大区卢卡省。白葡萄酒、风干甜白葡萄酒由托斯卡纳一塔比安诺（30%至60%）、白皮诺、灰皮诺、珊瑚、长相思、赛美蓉、维蒙蒂诺（可选择任意品种或搭配，40%至70%）葡萄品种酿造而成；风干甜桃红葡萄酒、红葡萄酒由桑娇维赛（50%至75%）、黑卡纳奥罗、美乐、西拉（可选择任意品种或搭配，15%至40%）、赤霞珠、品丽珠、绮丽叶瑟罗、科罗里诺、莱切一黑玛尔维萨、布林迪西一黑玛尔维萨（可选择任意品种或搭配，10%至30%）葡萄品种酿造而成。根据葡萄酒法定条例，该酒也可由赤霞珠、美乐、长相思、西拉、维蒙蒂诺等单一葡萄品种酿造而成。

Figure 2 – In Bosc *et al.* 2019, 144.

One case was perhaps the most critical in terms of finding a suitable strategy to tackle the lack of an equivalent structure in the TL. In the SL, in the “wine composition block”, a comma appears between single grape varieties but there

are also grape groups within which the Italian structure “e/o” (and/or) is used to combine grapes. Single grape varieties and grape groups combine and each base component has its own percentage of use. The inverted comma is used to separate single grapes and within the grape group to separate its components, but the grape group is integrated with the use of the comma in its function as a marker of a pause inside a proposition (AQSIQ and SAC 2011). Thus, there is a visual and structural separation between the grape group and the list of juxtaposed grapes. In the grape group, the phrase, in round brackets, “*ke xuanze renyi pinzhong huo dapei* 可选择任意品种或搭配” substitutes the Italian structure “e/o”, making it clear that those grape varieties can be used together or exclusively. Similarly to Italian, round brackets are a punctuation mark used in Chinese to indicate the addition of a comment or a complementary explanation (AQSIQ and SAC 2011). The percentages of use for each grape variety or group of grape varieties also appear in round brackets in both languages.

Finally, in this block, the semicolon is used to create divisions in sub-units, on the basis of the wine typologies to which lists of grape varieties correspond. The semicolon is used because it is a “mid-sentence delimiter” marking two parallel phrases, especially if these contain commas (AQSIQ and SAC 2011).

## 6. Concluding remarks

This contribution has discussed, in an interdisciplinary perspective, different aspects of the negotiation of intercultural exchanges through translation, based on the experience of the *Dictionary*.

Starting from a historical approach, the popularization of Italian wine in the Chinese market has been linked to the consumption of grape wine.

In today’s China, locally-produced and imported grape wines are part of daily life, a trend that has changed social habits and cultural values. From a discursive perspective, the role of the specialized language of wine has become fundamental in the popularization, marketization, and consumption of national and international labels.

The *Dictionary* responds to the need to make available to experts and other consumers a tool intended to facilitate intercultural communication and exchanges between Italian and Chinese speakers in the field of oenology. Therefore, the compilation process paid particular attention to the needs of its prospective users and the goals of intercultural communication to be reached through a bilingual and specialized lexicographical product.

The standardization and translation choices discussed are representative of the set of strategies that needed to be implemented in the various linguistic areas in which the translators had to negotiate between the SL and the TL in order to successfully transmit specialized knowledge from one culture to another. Working within the structural limits posed by the SL, the translators were often faced with the necessity of elaborating Chinese translations which would result in being both in line with the Italian definitions and as clear and natural as possible in the TL.

Therefore, the Chinese text of the *Dictionary* constitutes the result of an experimental process of mediation and negotiation on different levels, such as language, culture, and compilation choices driven by the lexicographical genre. At times, the process proved to be challenging. Although some of the solutions adopted and models proposed may benefit from further refinement, the interest the *Dictionary* arose proves the need to broaden the study of food and wine terminology translation as a fundamental aspect of communication across cultures and languages.

## References

- Alleton, Viviane. 2001. "Chinese Terminologies: On preconceptions." In *New Terms for New Ideas: Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*, edited by Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung, and Joachim Kurtz, 15–34. Leiden: Brill.
- Bergenholtz, Henning, and Sven Tarp. 2010. "LSP Lexicography or Terminography? The Lexicographer's Point of View." In *Specialised Dictionaries for Learners*, edited by Pedro A. Fuertes-Olivera, 27–37. Berlin, New York: De Gruyter.
- Bosc, Franca, and Bettina Mottura. 2022. "Le Dictionnaire des vins et des cépages d'Italie, une œuvre terminographique italo-chinoise." In *Le vin et ses émules – Discours œnologiques et gastronomiques*, par Lavric, Eva, Feyrer, Cornelia, et Carmen Konzett-Firth, 491-514. Berlin: Frank & Timme.
- Bosc, Franca, Osvaldo Failla, Roberto Foschino, Natalia Riva, and Marta Valentini. edited by. 2019. *Dizionario dei vini e vitigni d'Italia (italiano-cinese) – Yidali putaojiu he putao pinzhong cidian 意大利葡萄酒和葡萄品种词典*. Roma: Gambero rosso.
- Brockman-More, Alice. 2019. "Chinese wine consumers step up." <<https://www.wineintelligence.com/chinese-wine-consumers-step-up/>> (2021-06-10).
- Cabré, M. Teresa. 1999. *La terminología, representación y comunicación: elementos para una teoría de base comunicativa y otros artículos*. Barcelona: IULA.
- Cabré, M. Teresa. 2000. "La terminologia tra lessicologia e documentazione: aspetti storici e importanza sociale." <<http://web.tiscali.it/assiterm91/cabreita.htm>> (2021-07-12).
- Cellar Asia. 2019. "Deciphering the Chinese wine market." <<https://cellar.asia/wine/china-wine-market-analysis/>> (2021-06-20).
- Cortelazzo, Michele. 1994. *Lingue speciali. La dimensione verticale*. Padova: Unipress.
- Counihan, Carole, and Penny Van Esterik (eds). 2013. *Food and Culture: A Reader, 3rd ed.* New York: Routledge.
- Eco, Umberto. 2003. *Mouse or rat? Translation as negotiation*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
- Edo Marzá, Nuria. 2009. "The generation of active entries in a specialised, bilingual, corpus-based dictionary of the ceramics industry: what to include, why and how." *Ibérica: Revista de la Asociación Europea de Lenguas para Fines Específicos (AELFE)* 18: 43–70. <<https://www.oalib.com/paper/2323073>> (2021-07-12).
- Faber, Pamela, and M. Carmen A. V. Claramonte. 2017. "Food terminology as a system of cultural communication." *Terminology* 23: 155–79. <https://doi.org/10.1075/term.23.1.07fab>.
- Garzone, Giuliana. 2016. "Cibo, terminologia, terminografia: il progetto 'Parole per mangiare/ Words for Food.'" In *L'Italiano del Cibo*, edited by Silvia Morgana, Domenico De Martino, and Giulia Stanchina, 213–31. Firenze: Accademia della Crusca.



- Gu, Qiushi, Hanqin Q. Zhang, Brian King, and Songshan (Sam) Huang. 2018. "Wine tourism involvement: A segmentation of Chinese tourists." *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 35(5): 633–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1401031>.
- Hartmann, R. R. K., and Gregory James. 2001. *Dictionary of Lexicography*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Hong, Guangzhu 洪光柱. 2001. *Zhongguo niangjiu keji fazhanshi* 中国酿酒科技发展史 [A history of wine production in China]. Beijing: Zhongguo qinggongye chubanshe.
- Kjellgren, Björn. 2004. "Drunken modernity: wine in China." *Anthropology of food* 3. <https://doi.org/10.4000/aof.249>.
- Kupfer, Peter. 2010. "'Magnificent wine of grapes': New perspectives of China's wine culture in the past and the present." In *Wine in Chinese culture*, edited by Peter Kupfer, 3–26. Berlin: Lit Verlag.
- Liddicoat, Anthony J. 2016. "Intercultural mediation, intercultural communication and translation." *Perspectives* 24(3): 354–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2014.980279>.
- Ma, Yihan. 2021a. "Wine import volume in China 2012–2020." <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/791338/china-wine-imports-volume/>> (2021-06-15).
- Ma, Yihan. 2021b. "Wine consumption in China 2000–2020." <<https://www.statista.com/statistics/425098/china-wine-consumption/>> (2021-06-15).
- McGovern, Patrick E. 2003. *Ancient wine: The search for the origins of viniculture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Packard, Jerome L. 2004. *The Morphology of Chinese. A Linguistic and Cognitive Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pellat, Valerie, and Eric T. Liu. 2010. *Thinking Chinese Translation*. Oxon and New York: Routledge.
- Romagnoli, Chiara. 2019. "Mandarin for Wine Tasting: Terminology and a Pedagogical Application." In *Chinese for Specific and Professional Purposes*, edited by Hongyin Tao, and Howard H.J. Chen, 355–72. Singapore: Springer.
- Tang, Vicky C. M., Anat Tchetchnik, and Eli Cohen. 2015. "Perception of wine labels by Hong Kong Chinese consumers." *Wine Economics and Policy* 4 (1): 12–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wep.2015.02.002>.
- Tiefenbacher, John P., and Christi Townsend. 2019. "The Semiofoodscape of Wine: The Changing Global Landscape of Wine Culture and the Language of Making, Selling, and Drinking Wine." *Language & Communication* 62: 26–38.
- Trace, Jonathan, Thom Hudson, and James D. Brown. 2015. "An overview of language for specific purposes." In *Developing Courses in Languages for Specific Purposes*, edited by Jonathan Trace, Thom Hudson, and James D. Brown, 1–22. Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Xinhua Tongxunshe Yiming Shi 新华通讯社译名室. 2012. *Yidali xingming yiming shouce* 意大利姓名译名手册. Beijing: Shangwu Yinshuguan.
- Yang, Ye, and Angela Paladino. 2015. "The case of wine: understanding Chinese gift-giving behavior." *Marketing Letters* 26: 335–61.
- Yang, Hecai 杨和财, Li, Hua 李华, Li, Jiagui 李甲贵, Wang, Yabin 王亚宾, and Zhang, Yulin 张予林. 2015. "Zhongguo putaojiu faguitixi bu shiyong xiang fenxi yu tiaoshi jianyi" 中国葡萄酒法规体系不适用项分析与调适建议." *食品与发酵工业* 41(10): 226–9.
- Ye, Zinan, and Xiaojing Lynette Shi. 2009. *Introduction to Chinese-English Translation: Key Concepts and Techniques*. New York: Hyppocrene Books.

- Yi Xiang Guoji Putaojiu Yu Liejiu Jiaoyu 逸香国际葡萄酒与烈酒教育 (2004–2012): Yi Xiang putaojiu cidian 逸香葡萄酒词典 v.1.0.0. <<http://d.wine.cn/>> (2021-07-12).
- Yong, Heming, and Jing Peng. 2007. *Bilingual Lexicography from a Communicative Perspective*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Zhiliang Jiandu Jianyan Jianyi Zongju 中华人民共和国质量监督检验检疫总局, and Zhongguo Guojia Biaozhunhua Guanli Weiyuanhui 中国国家标准化管理委员会. 2005. *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guojia biao zhun – putaojiu 中华人民共和国国家标准—葡萄酒 Wines, GB 15037—2005*. Beijing: Zhonghua Renmin Zhiliang Jiandu Jianyan Jianyi Zongju.
- Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guojia Zhiliang Jiandu Jianyan Jianyi Zongju 中华人民共和国国家质量监督检验检疫总局 (AQSIQ) and Zhongguo Guojia Biaozhunhua Guanli Weiyuanhui 中国国家标准化管理委员会 (SAC). 2011. *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guojia Biaozhun: Biaodian fuhao yongfa 中华人民共和国国家标准: 标点符号用法 GB/T 15834 – 2011 GB/T 15834 – 2011* [The National Standard of the People's Republic of China: General rules for punctuation]. <<http://www.moe.gov.cn/ewebeditor/uploadfile/2015/01/13/20150113091548267.pdf>> (2021-07-12).
- Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Shangwubu 中华人民共和国商务部. 2015. *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo guonei maoyi hangye biao zhun – jinkou putaojiu xiangguan shuyu fanyi guifan 中华人民共和国国内贸易行业标准—进口葡萄酒相关术语翻译规范 Norm on Terminology of Imported Wines, SB/T11122—2015*. Beijing: Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Shangwubu.