

## Definition and Understanding of Cultural Differences in Translation

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### ABSTRACT

The article deals with the definition and understanding of cultural differences in translation. It is important to note that cultural differences are not static and can evolve over time, influenced by globalization, migration, technological advancements, and intercultural exchange. Therefore, continuous learning and engagement with different cultures are crucial for fostering intercultural understanding and promoting harmonious interactions in our increasingly interconnected world.

**KEYWORDS:** cultural differences, continuous learning, intercultural understanding, perspectives of different cultures, cross-cultural situations, individuals' behavior, communication styles, decision-making processes, and social interactions.

Cultural differences refer to the variations and distinctions in beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, norms, and practices between different cultures or social groups. These differences arise due to a variety of factors, including geography, history, religion, language, social structures, and traditions.

Understanding cultural differences involves recognizing and appreciating the unique characteristics and perspectives of different cultures. It requires acknowledging that there are diverse ways of perceiving and interpreting the world, and that no single culture is inherently superior or inferior to another. By gaining knowledge about different cultures, individuals can develop empathy, respect, and sensitivity towards people from different backgrounds.

Understanding cultural differences also involves recognizing that cultural norms and practices shape individuals' behavior, communication styles, decision-making processes, and social interactions. It implies being aware of the potential for misunderstandings, conflicts, and biases that may arise when people from different cultures interact. By understanding cultural differences, individuals can navigate cross-cultural situations with greater effectiveness, adaptability, and open-mindedness.

Cultural diversity is evident through varying beliefs held by people from different cultures. While some cultures may regard these beliefs as insignificant or trivial, others define their uniqueness based on a distinct set of beliefs that differentiate them from other cultures. This can be observed in religious and political cultures, where differing beliefs on matters such as bodily autonomy, personal freedom, and family values set them apart.

Cultural mores also contribute to the differentiation between subcultures. For example, skaters and surfers may not differ significantly in their fundamental beliefs, but they adhere to specific codes of conduct, rules, and norms that define their acceptance within their respective subcultures. All cultures and subcultures possess their own distinct cultural mores. Even if visual appearances do not immediately differentiate members of two cultures, their specific rules for inclusion and belonging make it clear that they are separate entities. "The actions and behaviors exhibited by individuals within a culture serve as significant indicators of their identity. For instance, Spanish speakers communicate in Spanish, skaters engage in skating, and surfers participate in surfing. Religious individuals partake in religious activities such as attending services, creating and visiting shrines, reading sacred texts, and observing holidays in specific ways. These examples demonstrate how cultural practices shape the actions of individuals and contribute to their cultural identity.

Communication plays a vital role in cultural differences, as each culture possesses its own unique communication system, which may be referred to as a language, code, slang, lingo, dialect, creole, patois, or even a system of musical notation."<sup>1</sup>

These communication systems enable cultural exchange and expression of ideas within a particular culture. While many cultures are geographically distinct, the advent of Internet cultures and subcultures has challenged the notion of physical boundaries. Online gaming cultures, for instance, exist as decentralized networks of players worldwide, transcending geographic limitations. However, restrictions on Internet access in certain countries may still influence the presence and development of these online cultures.

Cultural diffusion refers to the ways in which cultures spread and evolve. The speed and mechanisms of diffusion can determine whether a culture undergoes significant changes or remains relatively unchanged. Factors such as the strictness of cultural mores, the strength of beliefs, and ongoing communication between members can impact the degree of cultural transformation during diffusion. Migration of cultural groups may lead to cultural drift as individuals encounter new influences and make distinct decisions and modifications. Cultural differences exemplify the absence of a universal standard or norm in human culture. Attempts to eradicate or suppress cultural differences have been observed historically, such as during China's Cultural Revolution.

<sup>1</sup> Samovar, L.A., Porter, R. E. & Roy, C.S. Cross-cultural Communication [M]. Beijing: Peking University

However, cultural diversity tends to resurface over time, as old cultures persist and new ones emerge.

Gender expression has become a prominent and contentious aspect of subcultures in Western societies, surpassing the traditional male-female binary. Nonetheless, non-binary gender identities and expressions are not exclusive to the Western context. Many ethnic cultures worldwide have long accommodated more than two gender identities, such as the Bugis in Indonesia and the Muxes in Oaxaca. These cultures have developed intricate systems of gender recognition and roles, although they have also faced discrimination from external groups throughout history.

Cultural differences serve as distinguishing factors between various cultures. These differences encompass a wide range of aspects, including language, attire, body modifications, beliefs, societal norms, landscapes, and even specialized equipment or tools. Cultural differences emerge continually and are disseminated both through physical interactions as people migrate and through the influence of the Internet. While efforts have been made to eradicate cultural differences at times, they tend to resurface and regain prominence. This can be observed, for example, following significant events like China's Cultural Revolution.

In Western societies, gender expression extends beyond the traditional binary of male and female. This expanded view of gender is not exclusive to the West, as traditional cultures like the Bugis in Indonesia, who recognize five genders, and the mixes in Mexico, who represent a distinct third gender, also demonstrate diverse understandings of gender expression.

Cultural awareness, also known as cultural sensitivity, refers to recognizing the existence of cultural differences and similarities without passing judgment on individuals based on those differences. It involves adopting a non-judgmental mindset that allows for the observation of cultural distinctions without labeling them as 'good' or 'bad,' 'right' or 'wrong.' Cultural awareness does not require expertise in every culture; rather, it involves being open-minded and willing to seek information through questions rather than reacting impulsively to unfamiliar concepts.

In Australia, a highly multicultural country, people from various countries and cultures coexist, and their traditions are acknowledged and celebrated. It is highly likely that individuals will encounter numerous unfamiliar situations and interact with people from different cultural backgrounds.

Developing cultural awareness enables more meaningful interactions with others. It fosters respect, empathy, and appreciation for diverse individuals and their customs, while recognizing both the differences and commonalities. This mindset reduces the likelihood of treating someone differently based solely on their cultural or ethnic background.

Ways to cultivate cultural understanding and awareness “It can be easy to stick to what is familiar rather than seeking out encounters with people who are different from us. However, actively striving to understand and embrace cultural differences can open doors to enriching experiences. Here are some steps to take:

1. Become self-aware: Reflect on your own beliefs, values, and personal biases, including those related to your own

cultural background. This introspection allows you to consider how these traits may influence your approach to and understanding of differences.

2. Conduct research: Learning about different cultures is an excellent way to develop an understanding of cultural diversity. Explore foreign films, attend local food festivals, or utilize online resources to expand your knowledge. For example, resources like Common Ground provide insights into Indigenous Australian culture and history.
3. Engage in conversation: Take the opportunity to get to know someone from a different cultural background on a personal level. While you don't need to directly inquire about their culture, building a friendship or connection allows you to naturally learn more about their life experiences. Approach these interactions with curiosity and an open mind.
4. Utilize online platforms: If preferred, there are websites that facilitate connecting with international pen pals. This can be an enjoyable way to broaden your cultural understanding and even practice language skills if learning a new language. By actively embracing cultural differences and seeking to understand others, individuals can foster a more inclusive and harmonious society.

Cultural aspects, including religious differences, idiomatic expressions, historical and popular culture references, significantly impact the translation process. Translators must navigate these complexities, ensuring that the translated film title accurately reflects the original intent while resonating with the target audience. Previous studies have provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by translators in this domain, highlighting the importance of linguistic strategies, audience reception, and preferences. Understanding the cultural context and employing appropriate translation techniques are crucial for creating effective film titles that successfully bridge the gap between the source and target cultures.

We discussed in this article the definition and understanding of cultural differences and examined the cultural aspects that play a vital role in the translation process and highlighted the impact of religious differences on film title translation.

This underscored the necessity of cultural sensitivity and adaptation when translating film titles to ensure that they resonate with the target audience and maintain their intended meaning and cultural significance. The influence of culture on translating film titles cannot be understated. Cultural aspects, including religious differences, idiomatic expressions, historical and popular culture references, significantly impact the translation process. Translators must navigate these complexities, ensuring that the translated film title accurately reflects the original intent while resonating with the target audience. Previous studies have provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by translators in this domain, highlighting the importance of linguistic strategies, audience reception, and preferences.

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