



A Comparative Study on the English Translation of Tea Wares Names in *The Classic of Tea* from the Perspective of Translator Behavior Criticism

Chen Jiang

Gannan Normal University, Ganzhou, China

Email: jc26616@163.com

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Abstract

Tea culture is an important part of traditional Chinese culture. As the first monograph on tea, the English version of *The Classic of Tea* holds significant value in promoting Chinese tea culture to the world. As the most concentrated area of culture-loaded words, the translation of tea ware names directly affects the translation and introduction of this work. Guided by the theory of Translator Behavior Criticism, this paper selects the two English translations of *The Classic of Tea* by Carpenter and by Jiang Xin & Jiang Yi as research subjects. It focuses on the translation of the names of twenty-eight tea wares, compares and analyzes the differences in translation methods between the two versions, and employs the “Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining” Evaluative Model of Continuum to assess the translator’s behaviors. The study finds that Carpenter’s translation primarily uses free translation, leaning more towards the “utility-attaining” end of the continuum. The Jiangs’ translation comprehensively uses various methods such as free translation, literal translation, and transliteration with annotations, distributing between the “utility-attaining” and “semi-truth-seeking and semi-utility-attaining” poles. This research aims to provide a reference for handling culture-loaded words in the translation of Chinese classics and to facilitate the spread of Chinese tea culture.

Subject Areas

Translation Studies

Keywords

The Classic of Tea, Translator Behavior Criticism, Names of Tea Wares

1. Introduction

The Classic of Tea is a core classic of Chinese tea culture, hailed as the “Encyclopedia of Tea.” It not only systematically summarizes various aspects of tea affairs during the Tang Dynasty but also elevates the daily act of tea drinking into a spiritual pursuit. Tea culture integrates the three schools of Chinese thought—Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism—reflecting the spiritual pursuit of harmony between heaven and humanity [1]. Therefore, the translation and introduction of *The Classic of Tea* are of great significance for highlighting the universality of Chinese culture and enhancing its global influence.

However, the translation of classics must bridge both geographical-cultural gaps and temporal gaps, which must not only reproduce the native culture in a foreign language but also enable target language readers to appreciate the beauty of the exotic culture [2]. As an ancient classic completed over 1200 years ago, *The Classic of Tea* features concise and elegant language, containing a wealth of culture-loaded terms such as tea ware names, cultural images, and historical allusions unique to Chinese culture. These heavy cultural loads make translating this book an extremely challenging task. How to retain the cultural connotations as much as possible while conveying the original ideas has become a core issue in its English translation.

There are two main complete English versions of *The Classic of Tea*. One is published in 1974 by American scholar Francis Ross Carpenter. The other is translated by Professors Jiang Xin and Jiang Yi from Dalian University of Technology, published in 2009 as part of the “Library of Chinese Classics” project. As Jiang Yi points out in the review of the English translations of *The Classic of Tea*, Carpenter’s version “presents the translator’s own stylistic features”, while the Jiangs’ bilingual edition published in the “Library of Chinese Classics” series “fills a gap in the history of translating tea culture classics into foreign languages” [3]. The different nationalities of the translators result in markedly distinct translation styles and strategies between the two versions. This difference provides a valuable research sample for the comparative analysis of translator behavior in the translation of tea ware names.

This paper adopts the theory of Translator Behavior Criticism as its framework, selecting the two English translations of *The Classic of Tea* by Carpenter and by the Jiangs as research objects. It focuses on the translation of tea ware names in Chapter Four, comparing and analyzing the differences in translation methods, and uses the “Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining” Evaluative Model of Continuum to locate the behavior of the translators. This theory proposed by Zhou Lingshun, views the translator as a volitional entity possessing dual attributes: a linguistic being and a social being. It dynamically examines translator’s behavior through the two dimensions of truth-seeking and utility-attaining [4]. Through comparative analysis, this paper seeks to reveal the behavioral characteristics and patterns of the two translators in translating tea ware names, hoping to offer a new analytical perspective for the study of English translations of *The Classic of Tea* and

other Chinese tea culture classics.

2. Translator Behavior Criticism Theory

Translator Behavior Criticism is a native Chinese translation theory first proposed and developed by Professor Zhou Lingshun of Yangzhou University in 2009. The theory places the translator at the center of translation activity, viewing them as a “linguistic being” inside translation and a “social being” outside translation. By analyzing the traces of translator behavior, it explores the motivations and patterns behind such behavior. No translation can be produced without the translator’s participation, and the translator’s volition constantly influences the generation of the translation, ultimately reflected in the translator’s behavior. Translator Behavior Criticism is a translation criticism system constructed with translator behavior as the entry point for evaluation and translation quality as the exit point.

“Truth-seeking” and “utility-attaining” are the core concepts of this theory, jointly constituting the “Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining” Evaluative Model of Continuum. According to Zhou’s definition, “‘Truth-seeking’ refers to the translator’s behavior of seeking, wholly or partially, the truth of the meaning carried by the source language to achieve the goal of utility-attaining”; “‘Utility-attaining’ refers to the attitudes and methods adopted by the translator, based on wholly or partially seeking the truth of the meaning carried by the source language, to meet practical needs.”

“Truth-seeking” embodies the translator’s fidelity as a “linguistic being” to the source text, while “utility-attaining” embodies the translator’s service orientation as a “social being” towards the reader and society. Translation activity is never a pure language conversion but a dynamic process where the translator constantly weighs and chooses between the two poles of “truth-seeking” and “utility-attaining.” Due to fundamental differences between languages and cultures, absolute “full truth” is an unattainable ideal, and the translator’s “truth-seeking” is often only partial truth-seeking. It is precisely this limitation of “truth-seeking” that highlights the necessity of “utility-attaining”.

Zhou and Du elaborate on this model by subdividing it into five distinct levels along the continuum. The “Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining” Evaluative Model of Continuum is an evaluation spectrum that gradually transitions from “truth-seeking” to “utility-attaining.” [5] It can be subdivided into five levels: “Truth-seeking” means the translation maintains a high degree of correspondence with the source text, pursuing maximum reproduction of meaning and form. “Semi-truth-seeking” means insufficient fidelity to the source text, achieving only partial meaning transfer. “Semi-truth-seeking and semi-utility-attaining” means the translator simultaneously considers partial fidelity to the source text and partial accommodation to the reader. “Semi-utility-attaining” clearly favors the reader and social needs, with the correspondence between translation and source text gradually weakening. “Utility-attaining” is at the far right end of the continuum, where the translator tends to adopt specific strategies to achieve social or communicative

effects, and the constraining role of the source text is relatively reduced.

This evaluative model breaks the binary opposition of “faithful” or “unfaithful” in traditional translation criticism, examining translation behavior within a dynamic, continuous range. It acknowledges both the translator’s responsibility for truth-seeking towards the source text and the translator’s pragmatic response to social needs, providing an operational theoretical tool for objectively and systematically describing and evaluating translator behavior. As a significant achievement of native Chinese translation theory, Translator Behavior Criticism offers a direct analytical framework and strategic guidance for the practice of introducing Chinese literature and culture to the world. This study will use the core concepts and analytical framework of this theory to examine the behavioral differences between Carpenter and the Jiangs in translating tea ware names in *The Classic of Tea*, and to locate their positions on the Continuum.

3. Comparative Analysis of English Translations of Tea Ware Names in Chapter Four of *The Classic of Tea*

The source text of Chapter Four “Implements” in this study is based on Shen Dongmei’s annotated edition of *The Classic of Tea* (Zhonghua Book Company, 2010). This section will discuss Carpenter’s and the Jiangs’ translations of the tea ware names (see **Table 1**). A total of 28 tea wares and related auxiliary utensils are involved in this chapter. Among the three volumes of *The Classic of Tea*, the introduction of implements alone occupies an entire volume, which underscores its significance. This chapter will analyze the translation strategies adopted by Carpenter and the Jiangs concerning these tea wares.

Table 1. A complete list of the 28 tea wares and their English renderings in the two translations.

	Tea Ware’s name	Carpenter’s translation	The Jiangs’ translation
1	风炉	The Brazier	The Wind Stove
2	灰承	receptacle for ashes	ash holder
3	筥	The Basket	The Charcoal Basket called <i>ju</i>
4	炭槌	The Stoker	The Charcoal-Breaking Stick
5	火夹	The Fire Tongs	The Fire Chopsticks
6	鍤(釜)	The Cauldron	The Wok called <i>fú</i>
7	交床	The Stand	The Supporting Stand called <i>jiaochuang</i>
8	夹	The Pincers	The Tea Tongs called <i>jia</i>
9	纸囊	The Paper Sack	The Paper Bag
10	碾	The Roller	The Tea Roller
11	拂末	brush	whisk
12	罗合	Gauze and Casket	The Tea Sieve and Tea Box

Continued

13	则	The Measure	The Measuring Spoon called <i>ze</i>
14	水方	The Water Dispenser	The Water Tank
15	漉水囊	The Water Filter	The Water Filter Pouch
16	瓢	The Water Ladle	The Tea Ladle
17	竹夹	The Bamboo Pincers	The Bamboo Whipping Chopsticks
18	盐簋	The Salt Dish	The Salt Cruet
19	揭	spoon	curette called <i>jie</i>
20	熟盂	The Heating Basin	The Hot-Water Calyx
21	碗	The Tea Bowl	The Tea Bowl
22	盂	The Basket for Cups	The Bowl Basket called <i>ben</i>
23	札	The Brush	The Cleaning Brush called <i>zha</i>
24	涤方	The Scouring Box	The Washing Tank
25	滓方	The Container for Dregs	The Dregs Bin
26	巾	The Cloth	The Washing Towel
27	具列	The Utensil Rack	The Utensil Cabinet
28	都篮	The Carryall	The Tote Basket

Before proceeding to the case analysis, the translation methods adopted in this study are divided according to the following criteria: free translation refers to a rendering that does not correspond to the source morphemes but conveys the utensil's primary function; literal translation maps each morpheme to an equivalent English word, preserving the compound structure; cultural substitution replaces the Chinese original with a culturally resonant Western equivalent; and transliteration with annotation provides the pinyin followed by an explanatory phrase.

3.1. Analysis of the Translation Methods in Carpenter's Version

In 1974, *The Classic of Tea: Origins & Rituals*, translated by Carpenter, was the first complete English translation. This section analyzes his translations of tea wares and summarizes several noticeable translation methods in this version.

In translating Chapter Four, Carpenter predominantly used a domestication strategy for most tea wares.

Example 1:

盐簋，以瓷为之。圆径四寸，若盒形。或瓶、或罍，贮盐花也。其揭，竹制，长四寸一分，阔九分。揭，策也。

The salt dish: It may be stoneware and if it is round, it should be four inches in diameter. It may, however, be in shape of a casket, or even a bottle or jar. It is meant to hold the salt. There is a spoon that goes with it, made of bamboo, and is four and one-tenth inches long by nine tenths of an inch wide. It is like chop-

sticks.

The term *cuo gui* (齎簋) consists of two characters: *cuo* (齎), meaning “salt,” and *gui* (簋), an ancient ritual vessel for holding food, typically characterized by a round belly and two handles. Lu Yu describes it in *The Classic of Tea* as “以瓷为之，圆径四寸，若合形。或瓶、或罍，贮盐花也” which means “made of porcelain, four inches in diameter, shaped like a box, or a bottle, or a jar, used for storing salt”. Hence, *cuo gui* refers to a porcelain container for salt storage, resembling a box, bottle, or jar in shape. Carpenter translates it as “salt dish,” which accurately conveys the meaning of *cuo* but deviates in rendering *gui*. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “dish” is defined as “a flat, shallow container for cooking or serving food,” which does not correspond to the box-, bottle-, or jar-like shapes described in the source text. However, a closer reading reveals that Carpenter later accurately translated “in shape of a casket, or even a bottle or jar,” indicating that he understood the shape of *cuo gui* yet still chose “dish” as an imprecise equivalent. The source of this deviation may lie in the absence of a direct lexical counterpart for *gui* in English culture. By opting for “dish,” Carpenter sacrifices fidelity to the object’s form and cultural connotation to ensure that readers immediately grasp its core function—namely, as a tool for storing salt. Although the cultural connotation is lost in this process, the translation achieves the effect of immediate comprehension for the target reader. In contrast, the Jiams translate *cuo gui* as “salt cruet.” The *Collins Chinese-English Dictionary* defines “cruet” as “a small bottle or glass container that holds oil or vinegar.” Compared with Carpenter’s “dish,” the Jiams’ translation more closely approximates the box-, bottle-, or jar-like shape of *cuo gui* as described in *The Classic of Tea*.

For other utensils, Carpenter’s translation method remains largely consistent. For instance, in the same passage, *jie* (揭), the accessory to the *cuo gui*, is rendered as “spoon” based on functional equivalence. According to Shen Dongmei’s annotation in *The Classic of Tea*, “*jie* is a salt-taking tool made of bamboo strips.” The character *ce* (策) originally referred to bamboo or wooden slips used for recording in ancient times, bound together into a book; Here it is borrowed to denote a flat, slip-like tool for taking salt. By translating *jie* as “spoon,” Carpenter does not faithfully represent the name of the utensil but retains its core function, enabling readers to understand it as a tea implement similar to a spoon used for scooping salt. Moreover, he adds “It is like a chopstick” in the description, further explaining its shape and compensating for the morphological information lost by the translation “spoon.”

Similar examples abound: *ju* (筥), a round bamboo container, is translated as “basket”; *huo jia* (火筴), fire chopsticks, as “fire tongs”; and *jiao chuang* (交床), a lightweight foldable stool, as “stand.” Although these translations do not preserve the cultural connotations embedded in the tea ware names, they accurately convey the functions, allowing target readers to grasp the purpose of these implements.

In addition to free translation, Carpenter also employs cultural equivalents from Western life for a small number of utensils, substituting them for the tea

wares appearing in *The Classic of Tea* with considerable effectiveness.

Example 2:

鑊，以生铁为之。今人有业冶者，所谓急铁，其铁以耕刀之起，炼而铸之。

The cauldron is made of pig iron although some of today's craftsmen use the so-called puddled-iron process to make them. They are usually made from old plowshares or scrap chains.

Fu (鑊) is synonymous with *fū* (釜), an ancient cooking pot. It has square ears, a wide rim, and a slightly protruding center at the bottom to concentrate the fire. Carpenter translates it as “cauldron,” a word that evokes rich associations for English readers. In Western culture, the cauldron carries deep historical and traditional connotations. In Celtic mythology, it symbolizes rebirth and regeneration and is an indispensable utensil in ancient religious rituals. It is also described as a sacred vessel that bestows great power, abundant life, and prosperity, as well as a source of wisdom [6]. By choosing “cauldron” to render *fū*, Carpenter replaces the Chinese tea-boiling vessel with a familiar and evocative image for Western readers. This cultural substitution allows English readers to immediately associate *fū* with the form of a large pot and its mystical overtones. Although the translation does not preserve the cultural connotations of *fū* as a Chinese tea ceremony utensil, it fosters cultural affinity for target readers and enhances readability.

Furthermore, Carpenter translates *tan zhua* (炭槌) as “stoker.” The character *zhua* (槌) originally means a horsewhip and can also be used as a verb meaning “to strike” or “to beat.” *Tan zhua* is a tool made of a hexagonal iron rod for breaking charcoal. Carpenter avoids common words like “stick” and instead chooses “stoker,” which refers to a person who tends a furnace on a steam train or steamship, or the mechanical stoker itself. By using “stoker” to translate *tan zhua*, Carpenter employs the image of a person or machine adding fuel to a fire to refer to the charcoal-breaking tool, vividly conveying its function. Although this translation does not capture the striking action implied by the original name, it clearly and concisely explains the tool's purpose.

The above examples demonstrate that Carpenter essentially adopts a domestication strategy in translating the tea ware names in Chapter Four of *The Classic of Tea*. Rather than faithfully transmitting the names themselves, Carpenter prioritizes accurately conveying their functions to target readers, thereby reducing unfamiliarity and enhancing readability. His translation as a whole leans more toward utility-attaining than truth-seeking. In contrast, the Jiangs employ different methods in translating these utensils.

3.2. Analysis of the Translation Methods in the Jiangs' Version

Given the long history of *The Classic of Tea* and its abundance of culture loaded terms, especially in Chapter Four, which introduces many tea wares unique to China, the vocabulary employed at the time has largely fallen out of use, creating considerable difficulties for translation. Consequently, the Jiangs also mostly adopted free translation, as exemplified by their rendering of *luo he* (罗合).

Example 3:

罗合，罗末以盒盖贮之。以则置合中。

The Tea Sieve and Tea Box:

After being rolled and sieved, the fine tea powder is stored in the tea box together with a measuring spoon called *ze*.

Luo he refers to a bamboo tea sieve and tea box. *Ze* (则) is a measuring tool, often made from clam shells or from iron, copper, or bamboo, shaped like a small ladle or slip. In the Jiangs' translation, they split the term into its two components, freely translating *luo* and *he* as "sieve" and "box," thus clearly presenting the functional orientation of each character at the level of the translated name. The method adopted by the Jiangs, though different in detail from Carpenter's, similarly relies on functional equivalents to enable readers to quickly grasp the basic uses of these utensils. In their subsequent description of *ze*, however, they not only explain its function as a "measuring spoon" but also supplement it with the Chinese pronunciation *ze*.

The above example shows that both translations prioritize retaining the practical functions of the utensils, relying heavily on free translation. Yet, in comparison, Carpenter is less constrained by the original word formation and does not deliberately convey the cultural connotations embedded in the utensil names; his primary goal is comprehension by the target reader. The Jiangs, while also using free translation, combine it with transliteration and annotation, striving to preserve some phonetic features on the basis of explaining the tea wares' purposes.

Take the translation of *jie* (揭, the salt taking utensil) as an example. The Jiangs render it as "curette." According to *Merriam Webster's Dictionary*, "curette" is defined as "a surgical instrument." By borrowing this medical term, the Jiangs accurately reproduce the elongated shape and scraping function of *jie* as a tool for scooping powdered salt. More notably, they further add the phrase "a curette called *jie*" in the text. In this way, transliteration preserves the pronunciation of *jie*, while the annotation clarifies its category and use. The target reader can thus intuitively grasp the utensil's form and function through a familiar medical term while also perceiving its original name and pronunciation in the source culture. This achieves the dual goal of functional transfer and cultural preservation.

Take further the translation of *fu* (镬) as an example. The Jiangs render it as "The Wok" and state at the beginning of the passage: "This tea-boiling wok is called *fu*." The word "wok" is defined in both *Collins Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "a large bowl-shaped pan used for Chinese-style cooking," referring specifically to the round-bottomed frying pan used in Chinese cuisine. According to scholar E. N. Anderson in *The Food of China* (1988): "Wok is a Cantonese word; the Mandarin is *kuo*. The wok appears to be a rather recent acquisition as Chinese kitchen furniture goes [7]". Thus, "wok" is a loanword from Cantonese. It is generally accepted in academic circles that the term is closely related to the Cantonese word *huo* (鑊) and gained popularity in the West along with the spread of stir frying, becoming a dedicated English term for the "Chinese

pan.” From the perspective of utensil morphology, the prototype of the wok can be traced back to the high-quality iron pans produced in Foshan, Guangdong, known locally as the “佛山广镬.” Based on photographs exhibited in the Chancheng District Museum of Foshan, the Guang wok, as the prototype of the wok, indeed takes the form of a wide-mouthed, deep pan, which bears a notable resemblance to the shape of *fū* as described in *The Classic of Tea* as “方形锅耳、宽口缘、脐部略长使火集中于中心(square ears, a wide rim, and a slightly protruding center to concentrate the flame.)” By borrowing this word, which has deep roots in the Chinese language, the Jiaings not only accurately convey the utensil’s function but also evoke cultural associations through the “Chineseness” inherent in the term itself. What is more noteworthy is that they add “called *fū*” after the translated name, preserving the original name through transliteration. It can be said that the Jiaings’ translation preserves the cultural authenticity of the source text while also attending to readability.

In addition to the two methods discussed above, the Jiaings also employ literal translation for some utensil names, thereby preserving the word formation. This is exemplified in their translations of *feng lu* (风炉) and *huo jia* (火筴).

Example 4:

风炉(灰承)

风炉以铜铁铸之，如古鼎形，厚三分，缘阔九分，令六分虚中，致其朽壤。

The Wind Stove (with its ash holder)

Such a stove, in the shape of an ancient cooking vessel, is made of bronze or iron. Its shell is 0.3 inches in thickness, and its rim is 0.9 inches, with 0.6 inches bending inward to form a chamber, which is plastered with a layer of clay.

As Shen Rumei notes in her annotation, *feng lu* (风炉) is a major implement among the major utensils, designed by Lu Yu himself and inscribed with some of his philosophical ideas. *Feng lu* refers to a tea-boiling stove shaped like an ancient tripod (鼎 *ding*) and cast from bronze or iron. The Jiaings translate it as “Wind Stove,” using literal translation to map the two Chinese characters “风” (wind) and “炉” (stove) directly onto English. This preserves the morphological logic of the Chinese compound. Different from Carpenter, who employs “brazier”, the Jiaings choose to present the Chinese word-formation directly to the target reader. Unlike the cases discussed above, where free translation or transliteration with annotation was employed, the Jiaings chose literal translation for terms such as “wind stove”, which consist of common Chinese characters and remain intelligible to target readers. By doing so, they preserved the morphological structure of the compound. This flexible approach to translation actually reflects the Jiaings’ attitude of “truth-seeking”: they strive to retain the cultural elements embedded in the tea ware names to the greatest extent possible, without exceeding the limits of comprehensibility for the target reader.

In addition to “wind stove,” the Jiaings also adopt literal translation for *huo jia* (火筴). *Huo jia* refers to fire chopsticks, also known as *zhu* (筴 or 箸), meaning chopsticks. *Huo jia* is made of iron or wrought copper, round and straight in

shape. The Jiangs translate it directly as “fire chopsticks,” mirroring the structure by mapping “火” and “筴” to “fire” and “chopsticks.” Again, this preserves the word formation. This shows that when the source term is composed of common characters that have straightforward English equivalents, the Jiangs tend to use literal translation. By doing so, they not only retain the morphological structure but also enable target readers to visualize the utensil’s shape. In contrast, Carpenter translated *huo jia* as “fire tongs.” “Tongs” typically refer to a hinged tool for gripping, which preserves only the clamping function of the utensil but fails to convey the shape implied by the original name. From this contrast, we can observe that Carpenter prioritizes conveying the function of the tea ware, whereas the Jiangs devote more effort to transmitting the cultural imagery.

4. Comparison of Translators’ Behavior in the Two Versions

From the preceding analysis, it can be seen that Carpenter’s translation is primarily free translation, mostly function-oriented, allowing target readers to grasp the basic uses of the tea wares concisely. In contrast, although the Jiangs’ translation also relies mainly on free translation, it employs a more diverse range of methods: on the one hand, they use transliteration for some tea ware names, enabling target readers to perceive their pronunciation in the source language; on the other hand, for tea wares that have corresponding terms in English and whose literal translation does not hinder comprehension, they adopt literal translation to maximize the preservation of the source language’s morphological logic and cultural imagery.

4.1. Differences in Translation Methods

The author has reviewed the 28 tea wares listed in Chapter Four in the two translations of *The Classic of Tea* (including three auxiliary items: the ash holder, *jie* (揭), and *fu mo* (拂末)). Based on a comprehensive consideration of the translated names and related descriptions, the translation methods of the two translators have been further summarized. Overall, Carpenter chooses domestication strategies for translating utensil names, supplemented by occasional cultural substitution. In addition to the examples discussed above, such as *cuo gui* (磋簋) as “the salt dish”, *jie* (揭) as “spoon”, *ju* (筥) as “basket”, and *tan zhua* (炭柵) as “stoker”, other translated names not elaborated in the paper—such as *ze* (则) as “measure”, *shu yu* (熟盂) as “heat basin”, *shui fang* (水方) as “water dispenser”, and *fu mo* (拂末) as “brush”—also exhibit the same orientation. From these translated names, it is not difficult to see that while Carpenter’s translations pay attention to readability, which also leads to a certain loss of cultural imaginary and even use identical terms for different utensils in his translation. For example, both *fu mo* (拂末) and *zha* (札) are translated as “brush”. *Fu mo* is a utensil for gathering tea, made of bird feathers and used together with the mill (碾 *nian*); whereas *zha* is a cleaning tool made of bundled palm fiber, shaped like a large writing brush. The two utensils differ in material, but because their functions are similar, Carpenter

chooses the same word. In sum, Carpenter's translation is dominated by free translation. While this approach enhances textual readability, it inevitably brings about repetition and loss of cultural detail.

In contrast, the Jiangs' version exhibits a different orientation. They translate *fu mo* (拂末) as "whisk" and *zha* (札) as "cleaning brush called *zha*". The word "whisk" carries the meaning of "lightly brushing or sweeping". Compared to "brush," it better captures the characteristic of *fu mo*. Although Carpenter's "brush" conveys the basic function of a brushing tool, it fails to reflect its material and usage. At the same time, the Jiangs' translation preserves the pronunciation of *zha* through transliteration and also explains its use. This treatment not only enhances the foreignness of the translation but also preserves the linguistic features of the source text to a certain extent.

4.2. Analysis of Translator Behavior Based on the "Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining" Evaluative Model of Continuum

As mentioned above, Translator Behavior Criticism proposes the "Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining" Evaluative Model of Continuum as a concrete model for measuring translator behavior, moving translation criticism beyond the simple binary opposition. By its very nature, the most authentic state of translation is the decoding and encoding; therefore, truth-seeking is a necessary condition of translation, inherent to the activity itself. However, as volitional beings, translators inevitably have utility-attaining goals and corresponding behaviors. Regardless of the type of translation, consideration of the reader naturally manifests as an expression of the translator's utility-attaining goal.

In concrete analytical practice, the positioning of translator behavior on the continuum should ultimately be determined through the specific translation methods identifiable in the target text. In other words, the methods a translator adopts in rendering each tea ware name constitute direct evidence for locating their behavior on the continuum. The present study aligns the different translation methods employed in the two versions with corresponding positions on the continuum: literal translation, which preserves the compound structure of the source term, is oriented towards the "truth-seeking" pole; transliteration with annotation, which retains the source pronunciation while supplementing a functional explanation, is situated at the "semi-utility-attaining" position; and both free translation and cultural substitution, which prioritize target-reader comprehension, are placed at the "utility-attaining" pole. In this way, the differing distributions of translation methods across the two versions serve as the operational basis for pinpointing each translator's position on the continuum.

Looking at the overall use of translation methods by the two translators, Carpenter's behavior leans more towards utility-attaining. For his translation of the 28 tea wares, he predominantly adopts free translation and, in a few cases, cultural substitution. Whether it is the functional equivalence achieved by rendering *cuo gui* (磋簋) as "the salt dish", the cultural substitution of translating *fu* (鍤) as

“cauldron”, or the use of the same word “brush” for both *fu mo* (拂末) and *zha* (札), it can be seen from his translations that Carpenter’s purpose is to enable readers to easily understand the functions and uses of these tea wares. This approach of sacrificing cultural connotations for the sake of target reader comprehension indeed greatly improves readability, but solely from the perspective of the translated names, it comes at the cost of simplifying cultural symbols to varying degrees. On the continuum, Carpenter’s translator behavior is highly concentrated; it can be said that his translation is dominated by utility-attaining, with truth-seeking playing a secondary role. Carpenter’s translation consistently prioritizes the transmission of function as its primary goal, while truth-seeking towards the source text is placed in the second position.

Unlike Carpenter, the Jiaings’ translation employs a more diverse range of methods, and consequently their behavior is more dispersed on the continuum. According to the author’s statistics, among this translation, 15 cases adopt free translation (pointing to the utility-attaining pole), 8 cases employ transliteration with annotation (pointing to the semi-utility-attaining position), and the remaining cases use literal translation (pointing to the semi-truth-seeking position). This distribution reflects the dynamic interaction of the Jiaings’ translator behavior between linguistic conversion and socio-cultural considerations, enabling them to seek a balance between “truth-seeking” and “utility-attaining.” The Jiaings’ combined use of literal translation and transliteration with annotation aligns with their own stated translation philosophy. As they argue in their earlier discussion on the translation of tea classics, “foreignizing translation should be adopted at appropriate times to deliberately preserve the local cultural imagery of the source language.” [8] The distribution is summarized in **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Distribution of translation methods and continuum positions in the two versions.

Translator	Free translation	Cultural substitution	Transliteration + annotation	Literal translation	Total	Position on the continuum
Carpenter	25	3	0	0	28	Utility-attaining
The Jiaings	15	0	8	5	28	Between truth-seeking and utility-attaining

Zhou Lingshun points out that “translation activity is never a pure language conversion but a dynamic process in which the translator constantly weighs and chooses between the two poles of ‘truth-seeking’ and ‘utility-attaining’.” The differences between the two translations are essentially the result of two different translation purposes. This can be observed from the prefaces of the two versions. Carpenter explicitly states his translation purpose in the preface: “This translation

has been undertaken in fond hope that its shortcomings will not prevent its adding a measure of understanding between the peoples of the East and of the West. The efforts of West, especially America in groping toward a new relationship with China will be attended with success only to the extent that we will achieve a friendship between both peoples founded on mutual respect” [9]. It should be noted that this translation was published during the period of Sino-US thaw in the 1970s, which provides a historical context for Carpenter’s emphasis on mutual understanding and friendship. By contrast, the Jiaings translated *The Classic of Tea* as cultural exporters. In their preface to the bilingual edition of *The Classic of Tea* as part of the “Library of Chinese Classics” series, they write: “各国人民的优秀文化正日益迅速地为中国文化所汲取，而无论西方和东方都需要从中国文化中汲取养分。正是基于这一认识，我们组织出版英汉对照版《大中华文库》，全面系统地翻译介绍中国传统文化典籍(the excellent cultures of the peoples of various countries are being absorbed into Chinese culture with increasing rapidity, and both the West and the East need to draw nourishment from Chinese culture. It is on the basis of this understanding that we have organized the publication of the bilingual edition of the Library of Chinese Classics to systematically and comprehensively translate and introduce traditional Chinese cultural classics)” [10]. This statement reflects their role as cultural exporters, who take it as their responsibility to introduce Chinese cultural classics to the world. Therefore, in their translation, they tried to preserve the local flavor of the source text as much as possible. Hence, their translation, on the basis of utility-attaining, also gives consideration to truth-seeking, striving for a balance between functional transmission and cultural preservation, allowing readers to both intuitively understand the function of the utensils through familiar words and perceive their names in the Chinese culture.

5. Conclusions

Guided by the theory of Translator Behavior Criticism, this paper takes Chapter Four of *The Classic of Tea* translated by Carpenter and by the Jiaings as the corpus, conducts a comparative analysis of the translation of 28 tea ware names in the two versions, and examines the characteristics of the translators’ behavior. The author draws the following conclusions.

First, there are clear differences between the two translations in terms of translation strategies. Carpenter’s translation is dominated by free translation; almost all of the 28 tea wares are rendered using free translation, with a few instances of cultural substitution. His translation takes the conveyance of the tea wares’ functions as its primary goal. Although this approach simplifies or replaces the cultural connotations carried by the tea wares, the translation is concise and easy to understand, making it relatively accessible to the target reader. The Jiaings’ translation employs a more diversified range of strategies, integrating free translation, literal translation, and transliteration with annotation. While ensuring reader comprehension, they preserve the original names through transliteration, approximate the names connotation through literal translation, and supplement cultural

information through descriptions of these utensils, striving to reach a balance between functional conveyance and cultural preservation.

From the perspective of the “Truth-Seeking-Utility-Attaining” Evaluation Model of Continuum, the translator behavior of the two versions also exhibits significant differences. Carpenter’s translation is highly concentrated at the utility-attaining end of the continuum; his intra-translation behavior takes functional equivalence as the highest principle, and his attribute as a “social being” dominates the translation orientation. The Jiangs’, in contrast, is distributed between utility-attaining and semi-truth-seeking and semi-utility-attaining. Their behavior shows varying degrees of truth-seeking across different utensils, through means such as transliteration and supplementary descriptions of the utensils, resulting in a distributional pattern that spreads from utility-attaining towards truth-seeking.

Of course, this study has certain limitations. In selecting cases, it focuses only on the tea ware names in Chapter Four and does not provide a comprehensive examination of the entire volume. The criteria for analyzing translation strategies are not entirely explicit, and the exploration of social factors such as the translators’ identities, historical background, and publication purposes still requires further depth. Nevertheless, tea ware names are an important component of tea culture, and the choice of translation strategy directly affects the effectiveness of disseminating Chinese tea culture in the English-speaking world. How to enable these utensil names, which carry a thousand years of tea tradition, to achieve both meaning conveyance and authenticity in cross-linguistic transmission calls for continued in-depth research. It is hoped that this paper may provide some inspiration for subsequent research on the translation of Chinese classics.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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