

# Translating the Language of Tourism Across Cultures: From Functionally Complete Units of Meaning to Cultural Equivalence

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## *Abstract*

When translating, some text types, such as tourist brochures, are particularly complex: the main communicative function of advertising, in fact, is the desire to influence people's behaviours, by working at the level of personal values and beliefs (Katan 2004). For this reason, tourist translations should be effective not only in terms of communication but in terms of promoting. To do that, the identification of the phraseology typical of this type of language should not be separated from those aspects that are relevant for the particular culture we want to address.

This paper aims to combine two different methodological approaches: the Corpus Linguistics approach within the framework of John Sinclair's view of language (1991; 1996) and Tognini Bonelli's theories on functionally complete units of meaning and the Intercultural Studies approach based on Hall's ([1976] 1989), Hofstede's (1991; 2001) and Katan's theories (2004; 2006).

## **1. Introduction**

Equivalence can be defined as the ultimate aim of the techniques and strategies used by translators to convey meanings across cultures. Although this concept has been variously defined and applied within the field of translation theory, most theories of equivalence seem to show that equivalence is everything but a static and absolute concept. As Baker argues (1992: 5), "although equivalence can usually be obtained to some extent, it is influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors and is therefore always relative".

This paper starts from the assumption that equivalence is not a universal concept and that different levels of equivalence may be achieved depending on the text type, its function and the languages and the cultures being translated. In fact, different text types are

characterised not only by a different content and relationship between author and receiver but also by a different function, which will influence the way texts are organised and translated (Scarpa 2001). Tourist texts, for example, are mainly characterised by the vocative function, which aims, in some way, to induce a behavioural response in the addressee by appealing to personal values and beliefs (Katan 2004). This implies that translating tourist texts means both conveying meanings across two different languages and cultures and creating an equivalent source text effect which is successful in terms of advertising to the target audience. As Ulrych (1992: 41) suggests, in vocative texts, target language conventions should take pride of place and the type of equivalence that should be achieved is pragmatic. However, achieving a pragmatic effect on the TT readers is not an easy task for the translator because, as Halliday and Hasan (1985: 11) argue, texts are “an instance of the process and product of social meaning in a particular context of situation”. The context of situation in which the text unfolds is encapsulated in the text “through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand and the functional organisation of language on the other” (Halliday and Hasan 1985: 11). For this reason, in order to achieve the same effect on the target receivers as that of the source text on its source audience, this systematic relationship should be recreated in the target language.

House (1997), who adopts Halliday’s systemic functional model (see Munday 2001: 90) in her translation theory, argues (1997: 114) that the function of ‘covert translation’ is “to recreate, reproduce or represent in the translated text the function the original has in its linguistic framework and discourse world”. This obviously implies changes in the language as culture influences language and the way the message is organised. As she argues (1997: 142), cultural filters are a means of “capturing socio-cultural differences in expectation norms and stylistic conventions between source and target linguistic-cultural communities”.

For this reason, the type of equivalence proposed in this paper is based on a combination of two main theories: the theories of Corpus Linguistics on functionally complete units of meaning, together with the Intercultural Studies approach based on Hall’s ([1976] 1989), Hofstede’s (1991; 2001) and Katan’s theories (2004; 2006). The combination of the two approaches is achieved through a four-

step methodology which is an updated version of the methodology proposed by Tognini Bonelli (2001) and Tognini Bonelli and Manca (2002) and which will be described later in section 2 of this paper.

In order to exemplify our theories on equivalence in tourist texts, we will provide some examples of translations of sentences taken from British and Italian tourist websites. Functionally complete translation equivalents will be identified by analysing and comparing node words in the Italian Agriturismo Corpus (IAC) and in the British Farmhouse Holidays Corpus (BFC) and cultural translation equivalents will be identified by filtering corpus results through Katan's framework of cultural orientations.

The results of our analyses will show how the two cultures tend to adopt different types of promotion in terms of linguistic devices and features of description with important implications for the process of translation.

## **2. Functionally complete units of meaning across languages**

As anticipated above, our approach to translation is carried out by combining together Sinclair's theories on units of meaning (1996) and Tognini Bonelli's (2001) theories on functionally complete units of meaning across languages, and Intercultural Studies theories, particularly Hall ([1976] 1989), Hofstede's (1991; 2001) and Katan's theories (2004; 2006) on cultural orientations.

Sinclair (1996; 2004) asserts that the meaning of a word mainly arises from its immediate co-text. This explains why Sinclair defines (1996; 2004: 20) the unit of meaning as a lexical item which may consist of a single word but due to the strong influence of its co-text on the occurrence of a word, many lexical items consist of several words. He argues that:

The evidence suggests not only that words are *coselected* with other words to form complex lexical structures called lexical items, but also that the citation of a lexical item in its full form normally realizes just a single meaning, and therefore the process of incorporating relevant cotext into the item removes ambiguity (Sinclair 2004: 20, emphasis in the original).

The primary unit of meaning is, therefore, a phrasal unit more than a word and it has to be considered the basic unit of analysis in language. In Sinclair's view (1991: 108), most words do not have an

independent meaning but are components of a repertoire of multi-word patterns that make up the text. Language is seen, therefore, as a dynamic process, where words do not remain perpetually independent in their patterning but “begin to retain traces of repeated events in their usage, and expectations of events such as collocation arise” (1996: 82). The phenomenon of collocation, which accounts for the attraction of words from a lexical point of view, is considered by Sinclair as one step toward the definition of ‘units of meaning’. The other steps are colligation, that is to say grammatical attraction, semantic preference, which describes the attraction of a word with one or more semantic fields, and semantic prosody which describes the pragmatic meaning of an item and something close to its function (Louw 1993). The identification of these four types of attraction in the collocational profile of a node word leads us beyond the boundaries of the single word and contributes to the description of meaning as the sum of the word, its co-textual environment, its contextual use, and its pragmatic meaning. The unit identified through this four-step analysis is the “extended unit of meaning” (Sinclair 1996).

In line with Sinclair, Tognini Bonelli (2002: 73) postulates that these multiword units become available for comparison across languages or translation when they are ‘functionally complete’, that is to say when all the components that are necessary for the unit to function have been identified. Tognini Bonelli defines ‘functionally complete units of meaning’ as “multiword lexicogrammatical items that operate within well defined semantic platforms and perform specific functions at the pragmatic level” (2001: 131).

Units of meaning are composed differently in different languages. As Tognini Bonelli (1996: 199) points out, one of the first steps in the translation process should be constituted by the identification of a set of words and phrases which encode a unit of meaning in a source language, and another set of words and phrases, which will be inevitably different from the first set and that will yield a comparable unit of meaning in a target text. This first step, therefore, implies the identification of a network of meaningful correspondences across two languages. However, this apparently easy task often reveals more mismatches and points of non equivalence (Tognini Bonelli 1996: 199) since correspondences between source and target sets of words cannot be identified

only on a purely linguistic level. This happens because the formal features that can be observed in the co-text of a word or a phrase are dependent on the text and its socio-cultural context.

The contrastive approach used in the analyses reported in this paper is based on an updated version of the three-step methodology proposed by Tognini Bonelli (2001) and Tognini Bonelli and Manca (2002).

This methodology starts with the identification of functionally complete units of meaning in a given language (L<sub>1</sub>) through the analysis of the collocational profile of node words (Step 1); it then proceeds with the analysis of L<sub>2</sub> *prima-facie* translation equivalents of L<sub>1</sub> node words (Step 2). In cases of either partial or non-equivalence, equivalent functionally complete units of meaning in L<sub>2</sub> are searched for through the intercollocation of collocates, that is to say by analysing the linguistic behaviour of L<sub>2</sub> translation equivalents of L<sub>1</sub> node word collocates (Step 3).

However, linguistic translation equivalents do not take into account those constraints which are imposed by cultural orientations and which play a role of utmost importance in the way language is used and meanings are codified. For this reason, successful cross-cultural communication requires a further step, which will be named here Step 4, where linguistic translation equivalents are checked against the framework of interpretation of Intercultural Studies. The purpose of this four-step methodology is first the identification of equivalent functionally complete units of meaning and then the elaboration of cultural translation equivalents aiming to successfully convey source language meanings into the target language and culture.

Before moving to some practical examples, however, some details on the framework of interpretation used for Step 4 are needed.

### **3. Intercultural communication**

In the famous Iceberg Theory popularised by Hall ([1952] 1990), three different levels of culture are described: informal, formal, and technical. While the first two levels are hidden or semi-hidden, the latter constitutes what can be seen, the tip of the iceberg (see Katan 2004: 42-4). Technical culture has to do with music, art, food and drink, dress, architecture, institutions, visible behaviour and

language (Brake, Medina-Walker, Walker 1995: 39), it is scientific and analysable and can be taught by any expert in the field (Katan 2004: 45). However, in this paper we are interested in the first level of culture, the informal culture, which is represented as the basis of the iceberg well below the waterline. This form of culture is not learned but acquired informally and unconsciously and it is constituted by concepts defined as ‘orientations’. Orientations or thinking patterns are structured filters that direct us towards the solution of common human problems (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961: 4; Katan 2006: 5). The influence of these filters acts as a unifying element and groups people together as cultures.

According to Katan (2004: 230) a cultural orientation is “a shared meta-program: a culture’s tendency towards a particular way of perceiving. The orientation or meta-program influences how reality is modelled, i.e. which aspects are to be generalised, distorted and deleted”.

Cultural orientations have been variously classified by many authors (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck 1961; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner 1997; Inkeles and Levinson 1969; Brake, Medina-Walker, Walker 1995; Hall 1982, 1983, [1952] 1990; Hofstede 1991). The orientations listed below are an amalgamation of Brake *et al.*, Kluckhohn, Hofstede, and Hall’s classifications (see Katan 2004: 46). They are: action, communication, environment, time, space, power, individualism, competitiveness, structure, and thinking. For lack of space, we will describe here only the orientation of communication which plays an important role in the interpretation of our data.

### **3.1. Communication**

The orientation of communication is exemplified by the way in which High Context Cultures and Low Context Cultures tend to communicate (Hall and Reed Hall 1989: 6ff).

Communication depends on the context in which it takes place. If the sender and the receiver share much of the information being exchanged, the context of communication will be high and there will be no need to communicate through words and gestures. In high context cultures, how something is said is more important than what is actually said. Conversely, in low context cultures words are more important than the intended meaning. What is said is more

relevant than the context in which it is said. Communication can, therefore, be said to be high or low in contexting.

Katan (2006: 60-1), who has extensively and contrastively studied the British and Italian cultures, has elaborated a cluster where the features of British culture (LCC) are compared with the features of Italian culture (HCC) in a type of transactional communication.

TABLE I  
UK/Italian cluster for transactional communication

LCC (Low Context Cultures)	HCC (High Context Cultures)
Text (explicitness)	Context (implicitness)
Information (facts)	Communication (feelings, opinions)
Low information Load (small chunks)	High Information Load (large chunks)
KISS (keep it short and simple)	KILC (keep it long and complete)
Reader friendly (peer/peer)	Writer oriented (expert/non-expert)
Instrumental	Expressive
Linear (cause-effect, main points)	Circular (background, details)
Informal	Formal
Direct	Indirect

According to this framework, we may hypothesise that British tourist websites are more text-oriented and characterised by explicitness in the transmission of facts. Conversely, Italian tourist websites may tend towards a more context-dependent communication, where feelings and opinions will be mainly used to convey meanings (Manca 2008; 2009; 2011). These hypotheses, if confirmed by data, will influence the language used in the translated texts and the way concepts are described.

4. Translating the English and the Italian languages of tourism

In order to show how equivalence is influenced by both linguistic and cultural features as well as by the function of the text type being translated, we will consider some node words used to describe the surroundings in the British corpus of Farmhouse Holidays (BFC)

and the Italian corpus of Agriturismo (IAC). Details on the *corpora* used are provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
*Corpora used*

	Running words	Text types	Time span
Agriturismo Corpus	600,000	Italian websites of farmhouse holidays	from 2001 to 2006
Farmhouse Holidays Corpus	700,000	British websites of farmhouse holidays	from 2001 to 2006

Our analysis starts with one of the most frequently occurring nouns used to describe the surroundings in the BFC, that is to say *view/s*. The singular form occurs 71 times and is mainly used to comment on the pictures reported in the websites, such as *view of the front door*. The plural form is much more frequent, occurring 389 times and its collocational profile (Step 1) is characterised by a series of adjectives, such as *panoramic, spectacular, magnificent, wonderful, stunning, beautiful, lovely, breathtaking, superb, fine, outstanding, excellent, splendid, great, uninterrupted*. The noun also collocates with the verbs *enjoy, have, and command*, as shown below:

- (1)
- (a) *The double and twin room both enjoy great views over farmland ...*
- (b) *... Georgian farmhouse that has breathtaking views over undulating countryside ...*
- (c) *... Victorian farmhouse commanding magnificent views of the Cotswolds*

In Italian, the *prima-facie* translation equivalent of the word *view* is *vista*, occurring 156 times in its singular form (the plural *viste* is never used in the IAC), which is, however, used with a restricted range of collocates with respect to its English counterpart. In order to identify more Italian linguistic equivalents of *views*, we have also analysed the collocational profile of the Italian *prima-facie* translation equivalents of the qualifying adjectives collocating with *views* (Step 2). We have identified, via collocates, three more



linguistic translation equivalents of *views*, that is to say *panorama*, *paesaggio*, and *scenario* (Step 3).

Something interesting in terms of contrastive analysis can be found in the collocational profile of both *paesaggio* and *scenario*. The noun *paesaggio* occurs 115 times and shows a frequent association with geographical adjectives (*umbro*, *toscano*, *siciliano*,...) and with the word *immerso* and its declensions as shown below:

(2)

(a) ... *conduzione familiare immerse nel tipico paesaggio collinare della Toscana*

(b) ... *tra i monti e il mare, immersi in un paesaggio ricco di colori...*

(c) *Immerso in un paesaggio spettacolare tra mare e monti, l'agriturismo...*

The Italian word *scenario* occurs less frequently (21 times) and also collocates with *immerso* and some of its synonyms, such as *inserito* and *incastonato*.

A few words on the item *immerso* are needed here to understand an important difference between the two cultures under analysis. *Immerso* and its declensions are used to describe the location either of the farm buildings, or of the holiday advertised. It occurs 190 times in the IAC and it frequently collocates with nouns referring to the surroundings. This word and the patterns in which it is embedded are relevant for our analysis particularly because they do not exist in the BFC. *Immerso* and its declensions occur in the following phrases:

(3)

a) *immerso nel verde...*

b) *immerso nella natura...*

c) *immerso nella campagna...*

d) *immerso tra gli ulivi...*

e) *immerso nei boschi...*

f) *immerso nella quiete...*

g) *immerso nella tranquillità...*

h) *immerso nella pace...*

i) *immerso in un paesaggio...*

The idea of an immersion in the countryside, in the green, vineyards and olive groves is, according to our data, typically Italian and is used

metaphorically. In fact, the idea of immersion is linked to the concept of water and purification. For this reason, the frequent use of this pattern/metaphor contributes to a sort of fairyland atmosphere around this type of holiday. Furthermore, words such as *verde*, *quiete*, and *silenzio* refer to the semantic field of the five senses, which plays an important role in the description of the Italian holiday (Manca forthcoming). This reinforces the hypothesis previously made, that is to say that Italian farmhouse owners, more than simply describing the holiday they offer, focus on emotions and feelings, not by saying but by implying.

In the light of this data, we may assume that the Italian linguistic translation equivalents of the English *views* are *vista* and *panorama*, as they occur with similar collocates. *Paesaggio* and *scenario* could be considered cultural translation equivalents of the English *views* (Step 4). In fact, their frequent co-occurrence with *immerso* reflects a typical HCC description which translators should carefully translate into English. Indeed, the literal translation of the following sentence from the IAC:

(4)

*Immerso in un paesaggio spettacolare tra mari e monti, l'agriturismo...*

would literally read more or less as follows:

(5)

*Immersed in a spectacular view between seas and mountains, the farmhouse...*

and it would sound quite unusual to an English speaker, as data from the BFC confirm. Such a description is more aimed at engaging our feelings than at describing the location of the farm. British culture, which tends towards a LCC communication, would surely prefer to read more facts than feelings, as for example:

(6a)

*the farmhouse has stunning views of sea and mountains...*

(6b)

*the farmhouse is set in a commanding position over the sea and the surrounding mountains...*

thus replacing the metaphorical style with a more concrete description.

We will consider now some Italian sentences from the IAC containing the word *natura*, another item frequently used to describe natural surroundings. This item is neither linguistically nor culturally equivalent to its English *prima-facie nature* as shown by Manca (2004), who identifies the item *countryside* as its possible translation equivalent.

The following Italian sentence taken from the IAC may pose a number of difficulties to the translator both from a linguistic and a cultural perspective:

(7)

*Tra montagne e mari incontaminati è possibile assaporare il fascino di una natura intatta ed autentica, ricca di tradizioni.*

The pattern containing the preposition *tra* and the conjunction *e* is very frequent in Italian. In the IAC, we find examples such as *un soggiorno tra storia e cultura* or *un soggiorno tra arte e natura*. These phrases are rarely used in the BFC. Similarly, the expression *è possibile* plus the infinitive form of the verb is frequently used in the IAC but its English counterpart, *it is possible to*, is rarely used in the BFC and when used, it occurs in expressions such as: *it is possible to have a fold out bed/a cot for a young child; it is possible to email us directly*. Furthermore, nouns and verbs referring to the five senses are almost never used metaphorically in the BFC as *assaporare* is in the above Italian sentence. Cultural challenges are also represented by abstract nouns (*natura*, *fascino*) and by the presence of a clear reference to past times conveyed by the phrase *ricca di tradizioni*, which is a very frequent concept in the Italian language of tourism but almost absent in the BFC (see Manca 2008; 2011). However, the reference to tradition cannot be eliminated because it is part of the typical Italian holiday and it may also be what foreign guests and visitors expect to find even if they belong to a culture with a different time orientation. In the translated sentence, *countryside* should be preferred to *nature* because the adjective *unspoiled* (*prima-facie* of the Italian *intatta*) is a collocate of *countryside* rather than of *nature*. Furthermore, the abstract noun *fascino* would be better expressed by a more concrete adjective, such as *beautiful*,

which is present in the collocational profile of *countryside* and similarly belongs to the semantic field of beauty. In fact, *charm*, the *prima-facie* TE of *fascino*, is only used with cottages and rooms and never collocates with items describing the surroundings. The unit *rich of* is not frequently found in the BFC and *local* is preferred as a collocate of *traditions*, as confirmed by the BFC. The unit *a memorable experience* is used to convey what the context in Italian seems to suggest; in fact ‘tasting the charm of the authentic nature’ seems to convey the feelings of a memorable experience. This unit can be found in association with *stay* in the BFC; this latter item has been included in the translated sentence in order to make the implied meaning of the Italian sentence clearer and more explicit. Thus, the Italian original from IAC:

(8)

*Tra montagne e mari incontaminati è possibile assaporare il fascino di una natura intatta ed autentica, ricca di tradizioni.*

becomes culturally equivalent to:

(9)

*Beautiful unspoiled countryside, mountains, sea, and local traditions will make your stay a memorable experience.*

The following sentence is taken from the BFC and it is the opposite example of the one provided above in that it shows a shift from text to context rather than from context to text:

(10)

*Although hiding amongst beautiful countryside, our cottages are easily located approximately 20 minutes drive from M20.*

The unit *beautiful countryside* cannot be translated with its literal translation equivalent *bellissima campagna* mainly because in the IAC we only find *splendida* as a beauty adjective occurring only 3 times with *campagna*. The translator may adopt *natura* as a cultural translation equivalent of *countryside*. As mentioned above, the choice of the abstract noun is made in line with HCC features which can also be the reason why the item *immerso* can be preferred to other less context loaded items, such as *situato*. The reference to the M20

has been eliminated and replaced by *principali vie di collegamento* in order to modify the English detailed description and also because the name of the road would not sound familiar to Italian people as it is to British people. An intermediate translation has also been provided below to make the reformulation clearer:

(11)

English original (from BFC):

*Although hiding amongst beautiful countryside, our cottages are easily located approximately 20 minutes drive from M20.*

(12)

Intermediate translation:

*Nonostante si trovino nascosti nella splendida campagna, i nostri cottage sono situati in comoda posizione a circa 20 minuti dalla M20.*

(13)

Cultural translation:

*I nostri cottage sono immersi nella natura ma allo stesso tempo si trovano vicini alle principali vie di collegamento.*

Another interesting English node word used to describe the surroundings is the noun *valley*. This noun occurs 256 times and its plural form occurs 31 times. An analysis of their collocational profile suggests the presence of qualifying adjectives such as *wooded*, *secluded*, *beautiful*, *picturesque*, *peaceful*, *tranquil*, *quiet*. In their co-text we also find the verbs *look* and *overlook* together with the prepositions *down* or *across* and the item *view*, frequently in the phrase *valley with panoramic views*.

Its Italian equivalent *valle* occurs 165 times and the plural *valli* has 25 entries. They are rarely qualified and the same can be said for their synonym *vallata*. *Valle* is very frequently used as part of a proper noun as in *Valle del Tevere*, *Valle del Po*. It occurs with the verb *dominare*, as for example in *domina l'intera valle* or with the verbs *affacciarsi* as in *si affaccia sulla valle e sul mare*. *Vallata* also occurs with *vista* and *panorama* as, for example, in *con una vista straordinaria sulla vallata*.

The mismatch in frequency and usage of the *prima-facie* translation equivalents *valley-valle/vallata* may be due to geographical differences between the two countries. What is interesting in terms of contrastive analysis is the association of *valle* with the verb

*dominare*, which seemingly describes more metaphorically the idea of panoramic views with a more poetic style.

Let us consider the following Italian sentence from the IAC and its possible English cultural translation.

(14)

Italian original (from IAC):

*Inserito armoniosamente a ridosso di una collina il nostro agriturismo domina la vallata sottostante e l'incomparabile panorama che vi si gode abbraccia Umbria e Toscana.*

(15)

Intermediate translation:

"Harmoniously perched with a hill at its back, our farmhouse dominates the valley below and the stunning view that can be enjoyed comprises Umbria and Tuscany".

(16)

Cultural translation:

"Our farmhouse is set close to a hill and has beautiful commanding views over the valley below and over Umbria and Tuscany".

The English description of the farmhouse location has been made shorter and more text oriented as it describes the location rather than creating a fairylike atmosphere. In fact, the expression *harmoniously perched* has been replaced simply by *set* because the latter is frequently used to describe the location of the farmhouse, and both *harmoniously* and *perched* have no occurrences in the BFC. The verb *comprise* has been eliminated both because *view* is usually followed by the prepositions *of*, *over* and *to* and to make the sentence more linear according to LCC features.

Our last example focuses on the usage of *hill*, occurring 240 times, and on its plural *hills*, occurring 141 times. Their collocates are adjectives such as *steep*, *rolling*, *wooded*, *small*, *surrounding*, geographical names, verbs such as *situated*, *set*, *located* and the item *views*.

The Italian translation equivalent *collina* occurs 84 times and its plural *colline* has 186 entries. They occur with the following adjectives: *verdi*, *dolci*, *splendide*, *stupende*. The colour green occurs as a frequent adjective of *collina* and its plural but it also frequently occurs in noun phrases such as *nel verde delle colline*. Other frequent

collocates are the nouns *quiete* and *tranquillità* as in *nella quiete/tranquillità delle colline*, and the verbs *essere situato*, *trovarsi* and *dominare*.

It is interesting to notice that in the BFC hills are wooded whereas in Italian the same description is not conveyed through the literal translation equivalent *boscosi*, but by the more context-loaded *verdi colline* or *nel verde delle colline* which involve one of the five senses, sight.

Let us consider some examples of translation:

(17)

English original (from BFC)

*A little stream runs in front of the cottages and there are glorious uninterrupted views of the hills and grazing stock.*

(18)

Intermediate translation:

“Un piccolo ruscello scorre di fronte ai cottage e, a perdita d’occhio, c’è una magnifica vista delle colline e delle mandrie al pascolo”.

(19)

Cultural translation:

“Accompagnati dal mormorio del ruscello che scorre vicino, dai cottage potrete ammirare un infinito panorama sulle verdi colline circostanti punteggiate dalle mandrie al pascolo”.

In order to meet an HCC style, and as suggested by data from the IAC, a more metaphorical description has been used. The description of the stream has been modified involving the sense of hearing; the same happens with *colline* whose association with the adjective *verdi* plays a part in engaging the feelings of the potential customer. The reference to the sense of sight is reinforced with the phrase “punteggiate dalle mandrie al pascolo”. What the potential customer perceives are sounds (the sound of the stream), and colours (the green of the hills dotted with stock), which may induce the potential HCC customer to book the holiday. Other alternative translations may obviously be proposed.

## 5. Conclusion

The translated texts provided above can be considered pragmatically equivalent to their source texts in that they perform the same effect,

that is to say they try to convince potential customers to book the holiday advertised. As the results from our corpora suggest, this pragmatic effect is achieved differently by the two cultures. The frequent use of abstract nouns, which is typical of the Italian language in the context of tourism promotion, contributes to the creation of a poetic atmosphere where opinions and feelings are the hot buttons used to attract potential customers. Abstract and overarching descriptions also contribute to this atmosphere. Conversely, a use of language frequently characterised by concrete nouns in the British websites of farmhouse holidays reflects the tendency of British culture to focus more on facts and on the content of the message rather than on how the message is conveyed. British farmhouse owners attract visitors by giving detailed and explicit descriptions of what a holiday in their farmhouse can offer. The style is plain and descriptions are linear.

For this reason, the type of equivalence which should be searched for when dealing with tourist texts is a target-culture oriented equivalence where the source message would be reformulated according to the stylistic conventions and orientations of the target language and culture.

This is not possible if translation equivalents are sought only at the language level; functionally complete units of meanings become available for the translator only when the constraints imposed by culturally specific thinking patterns are also considered.

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