



Who cares about quality in audiovisual translation? Chinese-Spanish translators: an endangered species

2nd Understanding China via Translated Works. Audiovisual Translation
and Intercultural Communication Forum

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Outline

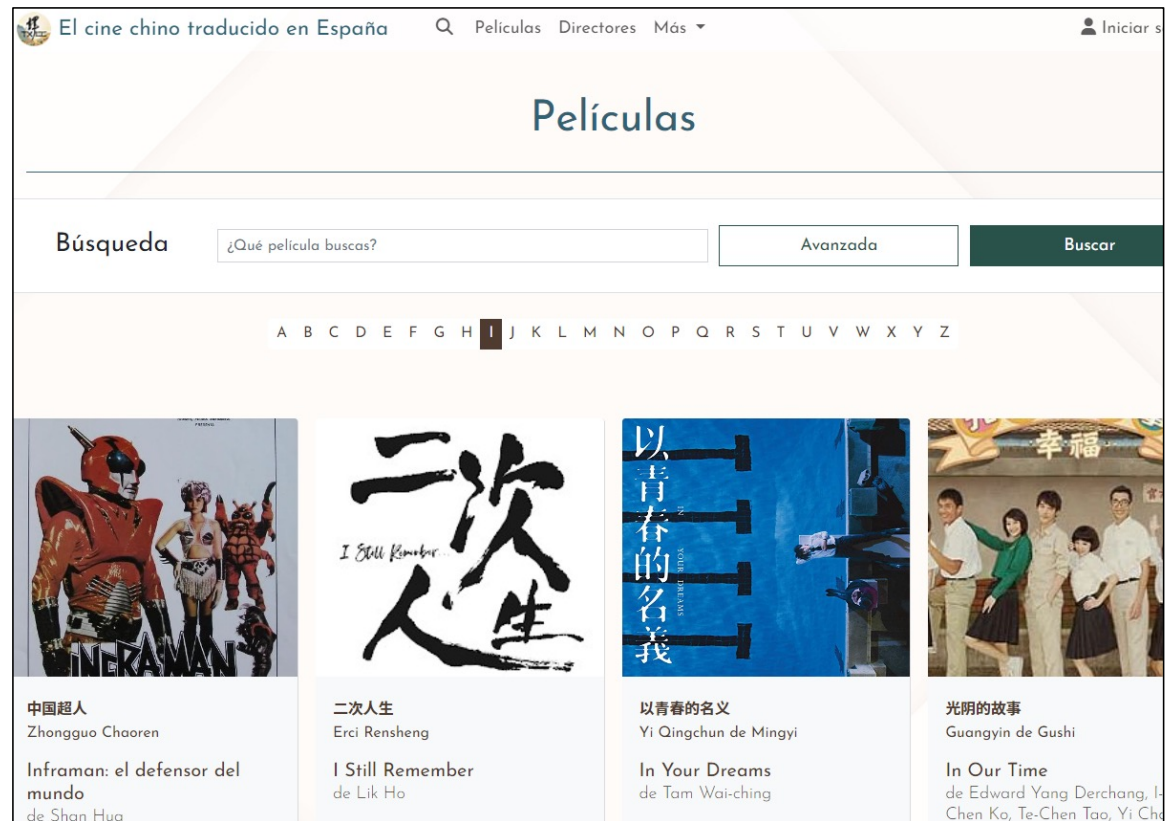
- Introduction
 - Objectives and research questions
 - Methodology
 - Database (#TXICCine)
 - Mixed approach
- Results
- Concluding remarks

Objectives & research questions

- Overview of the history of the translation of Chinese films in Spain, focusing on the most recent trends regarding selection, distribution, and translation.
 - How many and what kinds of films have been shown in Spain until 2021?
 - Which are the main channels and key agents involved?
 - Which is the translation process followed?

Methodology

- Database ([#TXICCine](#))
- >1,100 films
- 1972-2021
- Chinese language
- Screened in Spain



Methodology

- Advanced search
- [Annual spread sheets](#)

Adreça original de la base de dades: <https://dtieao.uab.cat/txicc/cine/>
Més informació: <https://dtieao.uab.cat/txicc/cine/informacion>
Ponència: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/241470>
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Versió -3 desembre 2021 560.6 KB



Versió 2 - desembre 2020 560.6 KB



Versió 1 - novembre 2019 483.2 KB

El cine chino traducido en España Q Películas Directores Más ▾ Inicio sesión

Películas

Búsqueda Básica Limpiar Buscar

Director	Género	Año
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="....."/>	<input type="text" value="...."/>
Idioma original	Formato	País/región
<input type="text" value="....."/>	<input type="text" value="....."/>	<input type="text" value="....."/>
Traductor	Traducida al	<input type="checkbox"/> Basada en novela
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Festival	Palabra clave	
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A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Methodology

- Mixed approach
 - quantitative data from this database
 - qualitative data from interviews with 5 key agents
 - Stake-holders & programmers
 - November 2021 –March 2022
 - 8 hours

Interviewees

Director of Filmoteca de Catalunya

CineAsia co-founders

Member of the San Sebastian
International Film Festival Selection
Committee

Director of Culture and Exhibitions of
Casa Asia

Director of Festival Nits de cinema
oriental de Vic

Evolution of number of films shown in Spain until 2021

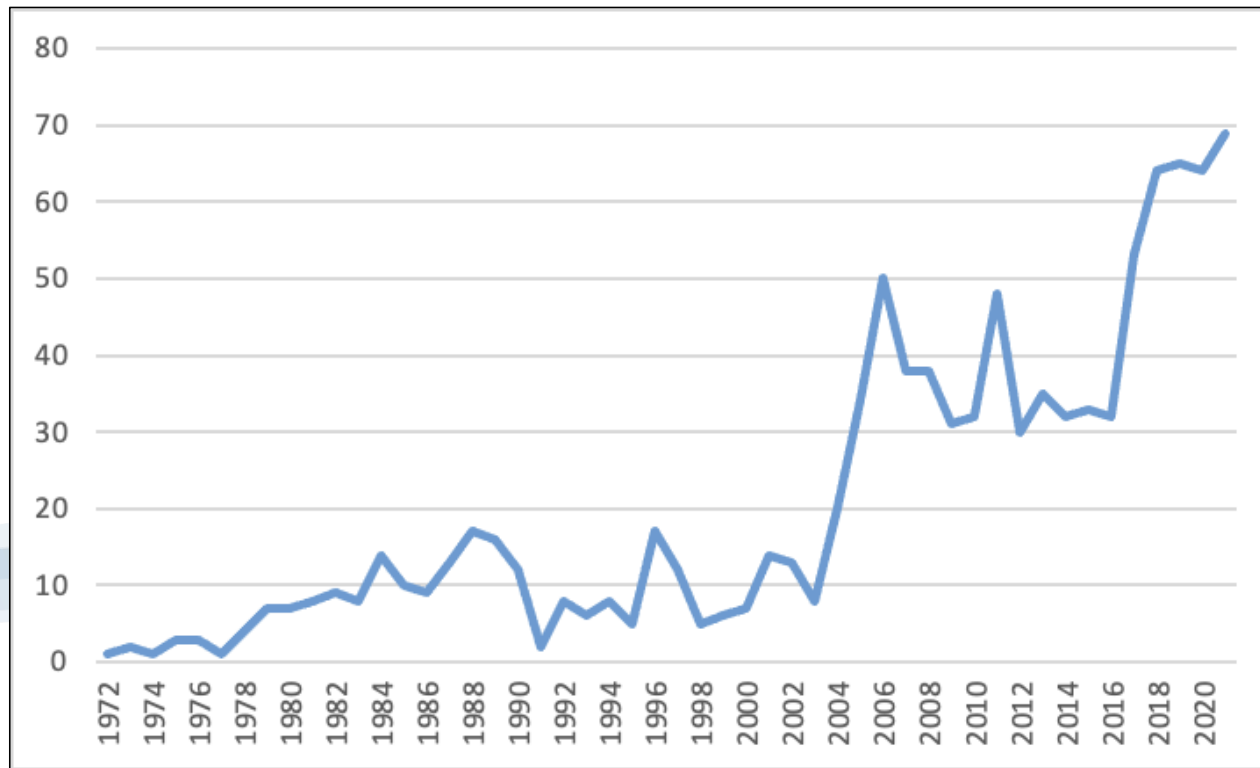


Figure 1 Years of Chinese films released in Spain

- 1st Chinese movie (1972) - *Four Moods* (Bai Ching-Zue, King Hu, Lee Shing and Lee Hang-Shiang) at *Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival of Catalonia*.
- Turning point in the 2000s when Chinese films began to make their way into film festivals (average number of 25 films/ year):
 - *Barcelona Asian Film Festival* (BAFF) → *Asian Film Festival Barcelona* (AFFBCN)
 - *Festival Nits de cinema oriental de Vic*
- 2017: the sum of old and new film festivals and the emergence of VOD platforms.
- Offer increasing exponentially → difficult to keep track of all the current offer of Chinese films.

Most represented film genres

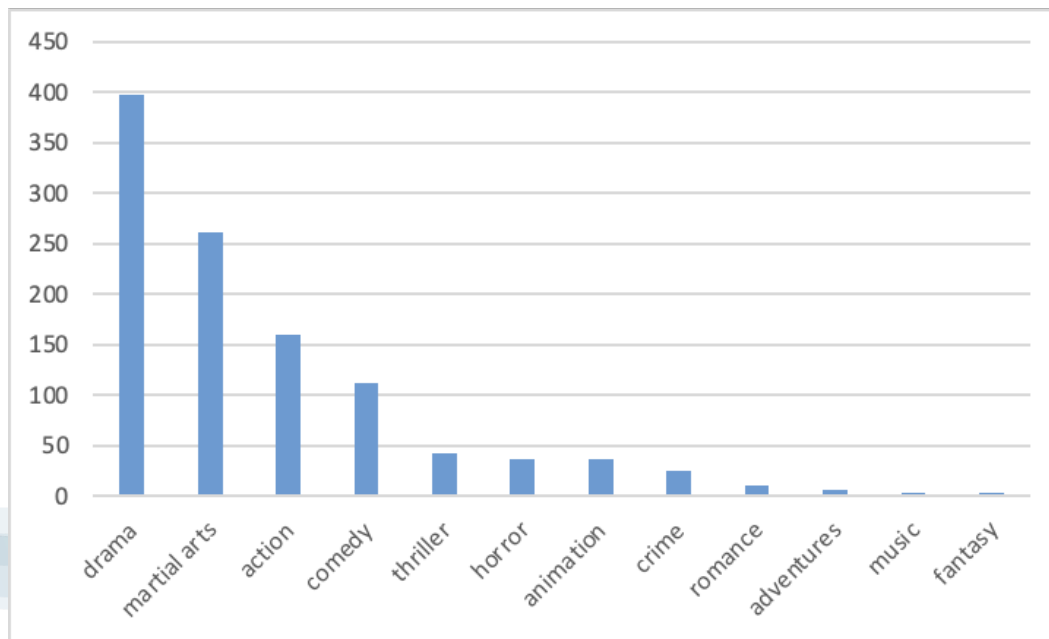


Figure 3 Number of Chinese films by genre (1972-2021)

- *CineAsia* (think-tank) makes up their own list of must-see films and suggest their screening to different venues (festivals, film archives or VOD platforms) according to their audience profile and interests.
- *The San Sebastian International Film Festival*: interested in independent cinema and films by unknown directors.
- *Festival Nits de cinema oriental de Vic*: focuses on popular cinema and with a special predilection for martial arts.
- *Casa Asia*: interested in the most recent films (corresponding to the last three previous years) and when they spot something interesting then try to negotiate a reasonable price with the distribution agencies.
- *Filmoteca de Catalunya*: the main criteria for film selection are cultural diversity, their suitability for given film cycles, price, and availability. As they are non-commercial, they screen films that cannot be seen elsewhere and that they exchange with other film archives.

Distribution channels 1

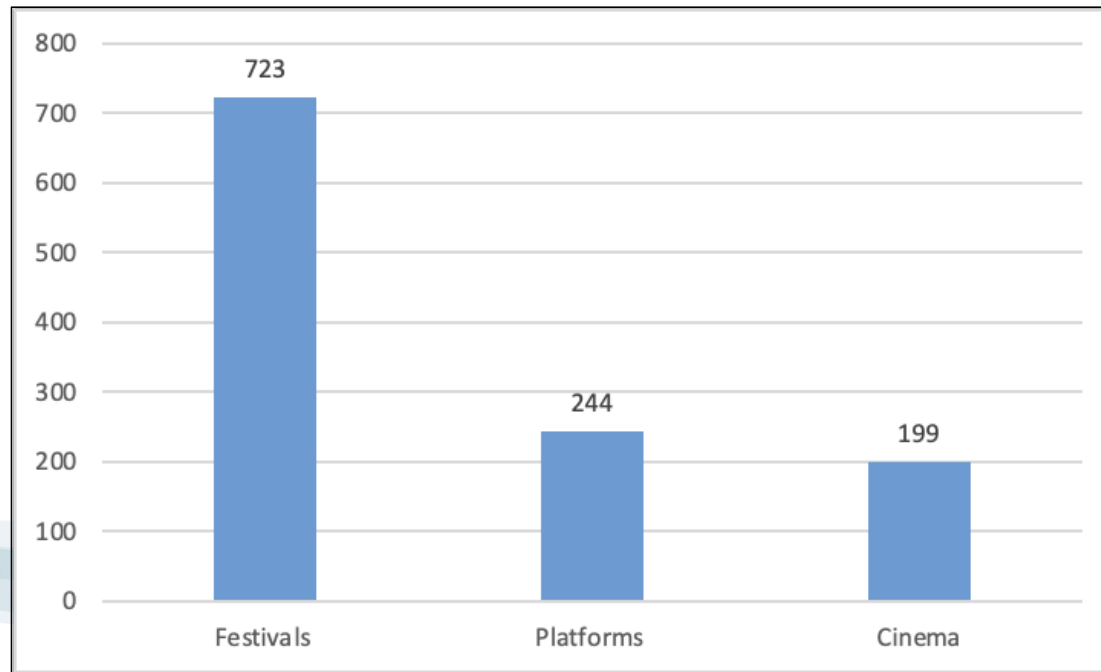


Figure 2 Distribution channels of Chinese films in Spain (1972-2021)

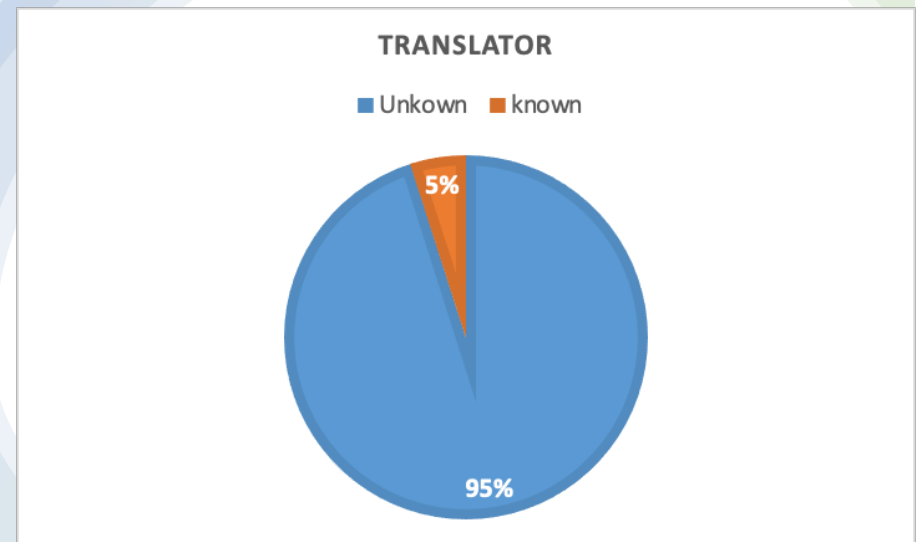
- Film festivals are nowadays by far the most important distribution channel.
- There are >50 film festivals in Spain, but only 4 are the most important in terms of Chinese cinema:
 - *Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival* in Catalonia (113 Chinese films screened since 1972)
 - *San Sebastian International Film Festival* (97 Chinese films since 1987).
 - 2 festivals specialised in Asian cinema:
 - *Asian Film Festival BCN* (AFFBCN): 286 films (1999-2021)
 - *Festival Nits de cinema oriental de Vic*: 153 films (2005-2021).

Distribution channels 2

- The remaining festivals, specialized in other topics, occasionally include Chinese cinema in their offer, screening films that have already been shown in other film festivals or venues.
- 2 other key agents in the programming of Chinese cinema:
 - Confucius Institutes (mainly Barcelona's)
 - public film archives: Filmoteca de España in Madrid, (100) and Filmoteca de Catalunya in Barcelona (50).
- The other film archives, located in smaller cities, usually screen films by already very famous directors such as Zhang Yimou, Hou Hsiao-hsien or Wong Kar-wai, or martial arts films, and their role is clearly more modest.

Translation process

- Lack of data regarding translation
 - Direct or indirect translation
 - Translation modality
- 5% films with translator identified
 - 54% direct translations
 - 3 translators ZH>ES
- 100% subtitling in film festivals
 - TV: dubbing
 - Platforms: both



Indirect translation

- All the interviewees confirmed that the translation process is made mainly via the English pivot translation.
 - Practical & economic reasons
 - Lack of importance given to translation
- In some cases, programmers resort to proof-readers to guarantee a minimum quality and faithfulness to the original.
- It has been proven that mistakes occur when translations are not done directly from Chinese (Casas-Tost and Bustins, 2021).

Translation paradoxes

- It is the time when
 - more Chinese films are screened in Spain
 - more and better training in translation from Chinese into Spanish is available
- Film festival programmers know that the audience that attends their festivals is very loyal and includes people that study or understand Chinese.
- However, almost no films are translated by professional Chinese-Spanish translators (opposed trend to literary translation).

Chinese-Spanish translators

- One programmer referred to the key role of the professional US translator (Darcy Paquet) in bringing Korean films to international audiences.
- However, they still do not translate from Chinese.
- Are we going to have our own Darcey Paquet in Spain or are ZH>ES translators rather an endangered species?

Concluding remarks

POSTIVE TRENDS

- The number of films has grown exponentially
- Diversification of genres and the standard viewer profile
- Leading role of film festivals and platforms

NEGATIVE TRENDS

- Translation is completely undermined despite being key and having more and better trained professionals

In sum, the effects of globalization and evolving audiovisual consumption patterns have proven to be a double-edged sword. While they have expanded the availability of Chinese films for the Spanish audience, they have also compromised the significance of translation and its quality, raising concerns about cultural preservation and linguistic accuracy.

References

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谢谢大家!



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