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'Not up to American standards': a corpus-based analysis of cultural differences between Brazil and the USA in travelers' reviews

Sandra Navarro

Abstract

This paper presents preliminary findings from a larger doctoral research currently undertaken at the University of São Paulo in Brazil.

The aim of this research is to investigate cultural differences between Brazil and the United States by means of a corpus-based analysis of TripAdvisor travelers' reviews, framing results within the theories of cultural orientations (Hall, 1976; Walker et al., 2003; Katan, 2004).

This study recognizes that culture operates in both conscious and unconscious ways (Hall, [1959] 1990). Our focus will be on the level below the surface of awareness, which consists of shared values, beliefs and meanings that play a major role in people's perceptions and worldviews. This level of culture is ultimately reflected in the language people use to describe personal experiences, opinions, needs and expectations. For this reason, travelers' reviews may be considered not only an important tourist text type, but also a gateway to accessing people's cultural values.

The study corpus contains a total of 10,000 hotel reviews equally divided into Brazilian Portuguese and American English. This data was analyzed according to the methodology proposed by Corpus Linguistics (Sinclair, 1996; Tognini-Bonelli, 2001; Manca, 2012), with the aid of software WordSmith Tools (Scott, 2007).

This paper discusses the analysis of the word 'standard', whose collocational profile in English and lack of equivalents in Portuguese could be interpreted in terms of different thinking orientations between the two cultures, evidenced by diverse ways of expressing impressions and judgments.

> "We don't see things are they are.
> We see them as we are."
> Anais Nin

1. Introduction

Advances in information and communication technologies have revolutionized practices in tourism. Tourists not only obtain all sorts of information to plan their journeys online, but play a more active role and create content by sharing their travel experiences in a whole array of social media.

Travelers' review websites, such as *TripAdvisor*, are a good example of this new reality. This online travelers' community gathers 20 million members from over 40 countries and receives an average of 50 million accesses per month[1] of people interested in reading or sharing opinions about hotel accommodations, restaurants and several other products in tourism. This type of user-generated content has become an important tourism text type, as it gives unprecedented insight into tourists' experience from their own perspective.

This paper is based on the assumption that when we give an opinion or describe a personal experience, we are also expressing our beliefs, values, needs, frustrations, expectations and perceptions; in other words, we are sharing part of our identity and worldview, which in turn reflect aspects of our culture, as Hall argues (1976: 16):

> Culture is man's medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves (including shows of emotion), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved […]. However, […] it is frequently the most obvious and taken-for-granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behavior in the deepest and most subtle ways.

Culture is a complex and diversified phenomenon that operates on different levels, both implicit and explicit, conscious and unconscious. Some authors have developed models to represent this concept, such as Hall ([1959] 1990) in his Iceberg Theory. According to this model, culture

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1 http://TripAdvisor.co.uk/ages/about_us.html Accessed in February 2016

comprises three different levels: technical, formal and informal. The technical level, or the tip of the iceberg, encompasses the more explicit manifestations of culture, such as art, music, food, architecture, institutions, and language. Right below, at the waterline, is the formal level, which includes elements that are still visible, but are less objective, such as traditions, rules, customs, procedures, etc. At the bottom of the iceberg lies the informal or out-of-awareness culture, which is linked to a world of values, ideas and meanings shared by a group (Walker *et al.* 2003, 39-40; Katan, 2004: 44-46). This is the level of value orientations and the focus of this research.

In this sense, the culture under investigation in this paper can be defined as "a shared system for interpreting reality and organizing experience" (Katan 2004: 26), which means that we are looking at culture "not visible as a product, but internal, collective and acquired rather than learned" (*ibid*). This shared system acquired naturally and unconsciously as a result of our socialization process makes up our thinking patterns or cultural frames, which influence our understanding of the world around us: "a cultural frame is the perceptual window through which an individual defines him- or herself, others and the world. The perceptions filtered through the cultural frame are highly selective because each frame contains those classifications, categories, values and expectations the culture determines to be necessary, relevant, and appropriate" (Walker *et al.*, 2003: 206).

If our culture influences the meaning we attribute to our perceptions of the world, we may reason that the language used to express our perceptions is a manifestation of our culture in all its levels. As Gladstone (1969: 114) argues: "Language and culture are inexorably intertwined. Language is at once an outcome or a result of the culture as a whole and also a vehicle by which the other facets of culture are shaped and communicated. […] Our language reflects and reinforces our cultural patterns and value systems."

Based on the concepts outlined above, this paper aims at investigating the language of hotel reviews written by American and Brazilian travelers so as to gain insight into their linguistic and cultural patterns, comparing the findings in terms of cultural orientations.

2. Cultural orientations

Cultural orientations are associated with the idea of culture as "the way a group of people solves problems and reconciles dilemmas" (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 2000: 6). Similarly, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961: 341) define cultural orientations as "a generalized and organized principle concerning basic human problems, which pervasively and profoundly influences man's behavior."

The definitions above imply that there are universal issues or common human problems that every society must face, but for which each society develops its own set of solutions. Roughly these dilemmas revolve around, for instance, the relationship between people and nature, people and time, people and society, and so on. Answers to such issues reflect the culture's values and become patterns, or orientations, which tend to "give order and direction to the ever-flowing stream of human acts and thoughts" (Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, 1961: 341) and characterize a group of people as a culture.

Numerous researchers have proposed categories of cultural orientations (Kluckhohn (1961), Hofstede (2001), Hall (1976)). For the purposes of this research, we will focus on three orientations – *thinking* (deductive v. inductive; linear v. systemic), *individualism* (universalistic v. particularistic) and *action* (do v. be) (see Walker *et al.* (2003) and Katan (2004)). These orientations will be explained in the results section.

In order to show how cultural orientations play an important role in the way language is used and meanings are created, this paper also draws on the principles put forward by Corpus Linguistics.

3. Corpus Linguistics and the concept of meaning

Corpus Linguistics (CL) is a discipline that contributes to various research fields, including cultural studies. Research involving CL is concerned with the observation of natural language, or the use of language in real life (McEnery and Wilson, 2001). This is so because CL focuses on linguistic performance, on the observation of evidence attested through actual instances of language extracted from a corpus. This approach constitutes a perspective of language (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001) as a probabilistic system, in other words, even though there are a number of possible lexical choices

and combinations, they do not occur randomly or with the same frequency (Halliday, 1991).

This view of language as a standardized system is at the base of Sinclair's (1991, 1996) conception of meaning, developed in his *idiom principle*. According to the author, "words enter into meaningful relations with other words around them" (1996: 75), which is to say that the meaning of a word is not independent and fixed, but is dynamic and arises from its combination with other words in a given context. These word combinations do not occur randomly, but constitute single choices from semi-preconstructed phrases that are available to language users (1991: 109). Therefore, the primary unit of meaning goes beyond that of single words to encompass multiword patterns.

Tognini-Bonelli (2002) applies this notion of meaning to the study of equivalence across languages. In order to reach equivalence, the first step is to identify functionally complete units of meaning (node word and its collocates) in the source language and then the collocational pattern that conveys the same or closest meaning in the target language. Manca (2012) takes this methodology one step further and proposes the identification of cultural equivalents. This step consists of finding functionally complete units of meaning that are not only equivalent at the linguistic and pragmatic levels, but that also match in terms of underlying associations or cultural orientations.

This paper follows the same train of thought presented above and aims to be a further contribution to cross-cultural corpus-based studies in the area of tourism (Manca, 2012; Fina, 2011), extending the discussions to the Brazilian Portuguese and American English language pair. In order to do so, we have built a corpus of 176 travellers' reviews, which is detailed in section that follows.

4. The study corpus

The study corpus is made up of travelers' reviews extracted from the website *TripAdvisor* and originally written in English by American tourists and in Portuguese by Brazilian tourists. These reviews are equally divided into two categories in each language: Americans writing about hotels in the USA and hotels in Brazil, and Brazilians writing about hotels in Brazil and hotels in the USA. In numerical terms, the corpus is balanced, with 5000 reviews in each language; with 892,085 words in English and 499,094

words in Portuguese, totaling 10,000 reviews and 1,391,179 words. This information is summarized in the table below:

ENGLISH	PORTUGUESE
Americans in US hotels 2500 reviews | 478.864 words	Brazilians in Brazil hotels 2500 reviews | 248.740 words
Americans in Brazil hotels 2500 reviews | 413.221 words	Brazilians in US hotels 2500 reviews | 250.354 words
5000 REVIEWS 892.085 WORDS	5000 REVIEWS 499.094 WORDS

Table 1. Study corpus design.

The corpus is further subdivided to represent the classifications offered by *TripAdvisor*, regarding the nature of the trip (here only family and business), and the degree of traveler satisfaction with the stay – excellent, very good, average, poor, terrible. The table below shows this subdivision in the subcorpora of reviews written by Americans about hotels in the USA (AmUSA) and by Brazilians about hotels in Brazil (BraBR).

TYPE	CLASSIFICATION	OPINIONS	AmUSA	BraBR
Family	Excellent	250	30150	18248
	Very good	250	49886	20172
	Regular	250	55527	28595
	Poor	250	61939	32828
	Terrible	250	60052	35339
Business	Excellent	250	24671	15767
	Very good	250	37056	16963
	Regular	250	52701	21333
	Poor	250	53800	29327
	Terrible	250	53082	30168
	TOTAL	2500	478,864	248,740

Table 2. Categories within two subcorpora - AmUSA and BraBR.

This study corpus was explored with the aid of lexical analysis software *WordSmith Tools*, version 5 (Scott, 2007) and its main tools: wordlists, keywords, lists of collocates, clusters and concordance lines.

These tools are part of a corpus-driven methodology (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001) divided roughly into three main steps: a) identifying main collocations from recurrent keywords in English; b) searching for equivalent collocations in Portuguese starting from *prima facie* correspondents; c) interpreting results within the theoretical frame of cultural orientations (Manca, 2012).

5. 'Not up to American standards'

The purpose of this study was to investigate how Americans described their stay in Brazil and how this could be related to cultural orientations. The first step was to generate a keyword list by comparing the wordlists from AmBR subcorpus (Americans' reviews about Brazilian hotels) and AmUSA subcorpus (Americans' reviews about US hotels). By doing so, we could identify the words whose frequency was significantly higher in the AmBR subcorpus as compared to the reference AmUSA subcorpus. In this keyword list, the words 'Brazil' (535 hits) and 'Brazilian' (216) were top of the list.

The main collocates for 'Brazil' (AmBR subcorpus) included: 'hotel(s)', 'trip', 'stayed', 'first', 'business', 'best', 'stay', 'good', 'traveled', '*standards*', 'visit'. For 'Brazilian', the most frequent collocates were: 'breakfast', 'hotel(s)', 'good', 'side', 'typical', '*standards*', 'coffee'. The word 'standards' stood out for having appeared on both lists and for possibly indicating the Americans' views associated with Brazil and Brazilian.

The word 'standard(s)' occurs 132 times in the AmBR subcorpus; its main collocates include: 'hotel', 'American', 'Brazilian', 'Brazil', 'stars', 'international', 'rooms', 'good', 'average', 'European', 'world'. These collocates, along with clusters such as 'not up to', 'by American standards' and 'by Brazilian standards', point to the idea that hotels and rooms are being evaluated on the basis of some specific standards, such as Brazil/Brazilian, US/American. This could be confirmed by analyzing the concordance lines for 'standards', as exemplified in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Partial list of concordances for 'standards', aligned by collocate on the left (AmBR subcorpus).

The next step was to investigate the semantic prosody of each collocation with 'standards', in other words, we analyzed each context to see whether the collocation was perceived with positive or negative associations. Overall Americans considered the American, international and European standards mostly as positive or superior; in contrast, Brazilian standards were seen as negative or inferior in most instances, as shown in the following examples:[2]

    1) "American/US standards": mostly positive semantic prosody

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[2] Bold-types have been added here and in further examples to highlight the word/collocation under investigation.

[Describing a 4-star hotel] "By **American standards**, some would consider this a budget hotel, but it's one of the nicer ones in the area." [AmBR_AVEBUS76]

2) "International standards": mostly positive semantic prosody
"The more I travel through Brazil the more I realize that outside of São Paulo, most hotels are not up to **international standards**." [AmBR_AVEFAM132]

3) "Brazilian/Brazil standards": mostly negative semantic prosody
"From what I understand, the resort was very nice by **Brazil standards**, but to me it felt a bit dated and really could have been cleaner." [AmBR_AVEBUS75]

In general, the standards described by Americans refer to three different aspects:

1) Americans use the word 'standards' to evaluate *hotel categories*. In this case, Brazilian hotel standards are mostly seen as inferior and 'not up to American standards'. More specifically, most five or four-star hotels in Brazil do not match the Americans' expectations for this kind of hotel. Similarly, the standard of international hotel chains in Brazil were seen as inferior as compared to the US and European countries. The following review exemplifies this use of 'standards':

"I am giving this 5 stars relative to other hotels I have stayed in Brazil. It would be a 3-1/2 to 4 stars by **European or American standards**. I found it using TripAdvisor for a convention we were attending in Curitiba (…)." [AmBR_AVEBUS67]

2) Americans also used the word 'standards' to refer to the hotel *breakfast*. Overall Brazilian standards were considered superior when compared to the complimentary breakfast offered in American hotels, as described in the review that follows:

"(…) The suite was clean, and reasonably comfortable (a very good value for the price we paid). The breakfast (included in our room price) was excellent even by **Brazilian hotel standards** (Brazilian travelers expect

much more from a free breakfast than Americans typically do).”
[AmBRA_EXFAM217]

3) The use of the word 'standards' by Americans is also related to sizes and dimensions. In this case, Brazilian standard dimensions were viewed as smaller when describing rooms, beds, bathrooms, etc.

 “(…) The lobby and public areas look very historic, but the rooms were very modern. They were small by **American standards**, but large compared to many I have stayed in Europe.” [AmBRA_AVEBUS67]

Table 3 summarizes the findings discussed above:

American/US standards			Brazil/Brazilian standards		
Positive	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Negative
29	6	0	8	5	16
World class/international standards			European standards		
Positive	Neutral	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Negative
13	0	0	4	0	0

Table 3. Semantic prosody of collocations with 'standards' (AmBR subcorpus).

Before discussing what these findings may reveal about American cultural orientations, let us take a look at how the words '*Brasil*' [Brazil] and '*Estados Unidos*' [United States] as well as '*brasileiro(s)*' [Brazilian(s)], '*americano(s)*' [American(s)] were used by Brazilians to describe their stay in the US (BraUSA subcorpus).

'*Brasil*' [Brazil] and '*Estados Unidos*' [United States] occur 43 and 11 times respectively. Their list of collocates showed no content words, featuring only grammatical words. Consequently we could not identify an equivalent collocation with 'standard(s)', such as '*padrão*' among the collocates. By analyzing each concordance line, 75% of the instances of '*Brasil*' were in general contexts, without reference to any kind of national standard, as in:

*“Por uma ligação para o **Brasil**, paguei 59 US$.”* [BraUSA_POBUS42]
[“For a call to **Brazil**, I paid 59 US$.”]

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Only 8 instances of '*Brasil*' implied some comparison between Brazil and the US. Two instances referred to the hotel breakfast, which is considered better in Brazil; the other instances referred to general issues (beds, beach, service).

> "*O café da manhã não é como o do* **Brasil**, *saudável. Mas isso pode ser devido à cultura americana."* [BraUSA_EXBUS192]
> ["Breakfast is not as healthy as it is in **Brazil**. But maybe this is due to the American culture.]

The few concordance lines (11) containing '*Estados Unidos'* [United States] also pointed to general contexts, without any explicit comparison of standards.

> "*Falando-se em* **Estados Unidos**, *onde tudo se faz de carro, o hotel fica bem localizado."* [BraUSA_EXFAM87]
> ["Speaking of the **United States,** where you drive everywhere, the hotel is in a good location."]

We then analyzed the word '*americano(s)*' [American(s)], which occurs 97 times (BraUSA). The main collocates refer to the type of breakfast, as in '*café da manhã estilo/padrão/típico americano*' [American style/standard/typical breakfast], but there were no recurrent comparison of standards.

> "*Café da manhã razoável* **estilo americano** *sem muitas opções."*
> [BraUSA_VGFAM14]
> ["**American style** average breakfast without many choices."]

Finally we investigated the use of '*brasileiro(s)*' [Brazilian(s)], with 57 hits (BraUSA). The list of collocates showed no content words, there were no recurrent clusters and the concordance lines pointed to very general contexts. We then analyzed each concordance line in order to assess the semantic prosody. Out of 57 concordance lines with "*brasileiro(s)*" [Brazilian(s)], 23 presented a neutral semantic prosody, referring to Brazilian staff or Brazilian restaurants, etc. Six of them were positive, in reference to the Brazilian breakfast. Surprisingly though 11 contexts had very negative semantic prosody, describing cases of humiliation tourists had gone through for being Brazilian, associated with words such as '*odeiam*' [hate], '*tratar mal*' [mistreat], '*deboche*' [mockery], '*descaso*' [neglect].

An example and possible explanation for this will be given in the following section, 'discussion of results'.

Summing up, when reviewing their hotel stay in Brazil, Americans frequently referred to some kind of standard – Brazil/Brazilian, US/American, European, international – as evidenced by collocations such as 'not up to American standards', which was used to express frustration and unmet expectations regarding hotel categories. Conversely, Brazilian reviews did not feature a significant number of occurrences of '*padrão*' [standard], which shows that the reviews were not based on comparisons between US and Brazilian standards, suggesting that Brazilians tend to express their opinions resorting to a different kind of communication strategy.

6. Discussion of results

The findings described above may be interpreted in terms of three cultural orientations.

Firstly, we identify a difference between Brazilians and Americans in terms of *thinking orientation* (Walker *et al.*, 2003). The American culture shows traces of *linear and inductive thinking*. This form of reasoning emphasizes the analysis of data, empirical observation, concrete facts, and precision. There is great concern with accuracy. Therefore, Americans tended to describe their experience in more concrete ways and express opinions based on a benchmark by which their impressions could be measured, judged, and justified. This orientation was illustrated by the collocations with the word 'standard': 'by Brazil/Brazilian standards', 'by/not up to American/US standards' and 'by European/International standards'.

In contrast, Brazilian cultural thinking shows characteristics of *systemic and deductive thinking* (*ibid*). The emphasis is on an integrated or holistic approach. This viewpoint focuses less on concrete facts and more on connections and relationships among the parts, with frequent use of analogies, metaphors, and similes. This orientation helps explain the lack of frequent references to any type of 'standard' as the starting point for evaluations in the Brazilian reviews, which were based more on general subjective impressions and less on concrete comparisons.

The use of precise standards in the American reviews can also be interpreted in terms of *universalistic orientation* as opposed to *particularistic*

orientation (_ibid_). Universalistic cultures, such as the American, value the consistent application of rules, processes, procedures, and laws. If the same product is produced in two different countries, it is expected to be identical, i.e., must comply with the same "standards". Take the classic example of the Big Mac. This orientation was evidenced by the many references to hotel chains and numbers of stars. In fact, American expectations were frustrated when a well-known hotel chain did not meet the same quality standard in Brazil as in the United States or other countries. The following review illustrates the American universalistic orientation:

> "Best Hotel in much too expensive Florianopolis, never ever a Sofitel, Ibis maybe.
> Being an Accor Platinum Le Club Member I actually would have expected more. (…). No executive lounge, just a bad welcome cocktail, smallll (_sic_) rooms, yes, the suite was small and smelt of cold smoke. This is at its best an Adagio hotel, never ever a Sofitel (...)"[AmBR_AVEBUS66]

Even though many international hotel chains are well known by Brazilians, their reviews were not frequently based on comparisons between local or international standards, which reflects a tendency towards particularistic orientation, i.e., exceptions are accepted, tolerated and even expected, the value is on particularity. The following review exemplifies the Brazilian particularistic orientation.

> _"Confortável, mas muito impessoal._
> _Este hotel fica próximo ao metrô e é muito confortável. Próximo a grandes lojas (Macy's) e a Time Square fica a uma distância tranquila de ser percorrida a pé. O quarto é pequeno, mas na medida certa para uma temporada de até uma semana. O único problema é que o hotel é muito impessoal, sem nenhum mimo ou detalhe que possa realmente conquistar o hóspede. Não é um hotel que eu voltaria, prefiro procurar outro que me encante."_ [BraUSA_AVESO29]
> ["Comfortable, but too impersonal.
> This hotel is close to the subway and it's very comfortable. Close to major stores (Macy's) and Time Square is within an easy walking distance. The room is small, but just right for a stay of up to one week. The only problem is that the hotel is too impersonal, without any kind of pampering or detail that can really win over the guest. It's not a hotel I would go back to, I'd rather look for another one that enchants me."]

The guest is writing about a three-star chain hotel (Wyndham), which

exists all over the US as well as in Brazil. In spite of the hotel's good location and comfortable rooms, the guest rates the stay as average and says she would not go back to this hotel. The main reason for the disappointment is not in terms of hotel category or brand standards, but the lack of personal attention; that is, the guest expected some kind of special treatment that would make her feel appreciated and unique.

Finally, the findings presented previously could be interpreted in terms of *action orientation (ibid)*. This orientation distinguishes between two forms of motivation *being* and *doing*. Cultures tending towards doing, like the American, do not find it difficult to separate between facts and personal feelings. This way, it is natural to criticize the action without necessarily implying a criticism of the person's identity. In contrast, in cultures oriented towards being, like the Brazilian, criticism is easily understood as an attack on the personal level of identity, causing more emotional reactions.

This difference could be identified in the way the words '*brasileiro'* and 'Brazilian' were used by Brazilians and Americans respectively. When criticizing the quality of Brazilian hotels, quite harshly at times, Americans drew on concrete facts (objective comparisons of standards, stars, chains). It is clear that what was being criticized is a market reality and not a nationality, that is to say, American hotel standards being superior to Brazilian standards does not imply one nationality is superior to the other in the American's view. However, for Brazilians, this distinction is not so clear, as illustrated in the following review:

> "Odeiam **brasileiros**"
> *Fora a localização, o hotel é péssimo, todos os funcionários extremamente grosseiros, mal educados, só respondem de maneira estupida, acho que eles odeiam **brasileiros**, além do check in ser as 16 horas, ainda cobram pelos pacotes entregues no hotel, sem o menor critério, 25 dólares, por pacote, mentem que o pacote não chegou, nos sentimos lesados e ultrajados.*
> **Brasileiros** *não fiquem neste hotel, eles são treinados para nos maltratar!"*
> [They hate **Brazilians**"
> Except for the location, the hotel is terrible, all the employees are extremely rude, impolite, always reply bluntly, I think they hate **Brazilians**, also check-in is at 4pm, they even charge for the packages delivered to the hotel, no criteria at all, 25 dollars per package, they lie to you saying the package hasn't arrived, we felt aggrieved and outraged. **Brazilians**, do not stay at this hotel, they are trained to mistreat us!] [BraUSA_TERFAM27]

The example above illustrates the Brazilian orientation towards being. The disapproval of the poor service was readily taken on a personal level

and associated with the guest's nationality ("I think they hate Brazilians"). While American reviews were mostly grounded on comparisons of clear standards, Brazilians tried to establish an emotional connectedness with the reader by making recommendations based on feelings and subjective impressions ("we felt aggrieved and outraged", "do not stay at this hotel, they are trained to mistreat us").

7. Conclusions

By investigating the language of travelers' reviews, this study attempted to demonstrate how cultural orientations operate in unconscious and subjective ways, affecting people's perceptions and consequently the language used to describe personal experiences.

The findings discussed above, while preliminary, are significant in at least two major ways. Firstly they demonstrate how a corpus approach can be used to investigate culture, which until recently has been rarely done (Bianchi, 2012: 28), and even less so for Portuguese-English. Furthermore these results add insights that uphold some of the claims found in the literature regarding cultural orientations. The study of 'standards' reveal the American tendency towards a linear and inductive thinking orientation, as well as universalistic and do orientations, evidenced by the frequent use of comparisons grounded on clear reference points or standards. The lack of equivalent recurrent collocations with 'standards' in Portuguese point to a different thinking orientation, systemic and deductive, as well as to particularistic and be orientations, with reviews characterized by subjective, general and emotional impressions.

This study may also be useful for related disciplines. Translation Studies, for example, could benefit from a pragmatic understanding of cultural differences, which is imperative to the notion of equivalence; Corpus Linguistics studies may profit from research that attempts to bring a cognitive explanation to the phraseological nature of language; the area of Tourism could apply cultural knowledge to improve the promotion of its products and services across cultures. For instance, hotel websites, hotel brochures and tourist guides could be translated and adapted, taking into account the importance of 'standards' on one hand and 'personal attention' on the other. Finally, research in Intercultural Studies may profit from the insights of an empirical linguistic study that contrasts cultures based on values and orientations.

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