

‘I’ll have the lion’s head, burned’

Xu Chi

“CHICKEN without a sex life,” “red burned lion head” and “tofu made by woman with freckles” — English names like these have long perplexed foreigners at Chinese restaurants before they gather up the courage to order such a dish.

But these weird and sometimes scary translations could soon become a thing of the past in Beijing after the capital’s Foreign Affairs Office published a book giving the official English names of 2,158 Chinese dishes, aiming to correct the odd ones on restaurant menus.

Young and tender chicken will no longer be called “chicken without a sex life,” but “spring chicken,” with spring indicating young, the book says.

Foreigners who see “red burned lion head” on menus won’t now be thinking about complaining to animal protection organizations as the dish will become “braised pork balls in brown sauce.”

However, the freckled woman will still be making tofu — the book renames the dish as “*mapo* tofu.” “Mapo” is pinyin for “woman with pocks.”

“The book tries to translate Chinese dishes’ names in many ways, such as telling their ingredients, the way they are cooked,” an unnamed official with the city’s Foreign Affairs Office told Beijing Daily. “Some names are translated into

English by putting Chinese history, culture and the names of famous people relating to the dishes,” the official said.

The new English names are expected to help foreigners order Chinese dishes, and restaurants will be encouraged to use the proposed translations, but it would not be compulsory, the official said.

The book soon sparked controversy online.

Many people, especially some restaurant owners long troubled by the translations, welcomed the book and the official names.

Some cheered, while others regretted, that they may no longer be able to laugh at “four glad meat balls” (braised pork balls in gravy) or other such mistranslations. Others said that although the new names may be more understandable to foreigners, they’d rather they did not lose the Chinese dishes’ original meaning.

“It depends. Personally I favor ‘chicken without a sex life’ as it’s funny and helps me understand the dish, but ‘spring chicken?’ It still sounds confusing to me,” said Alexander, a 24-year-old American man.

“It’s understandable that many people just want Chinese dishes’ names in pinyin,” said Gu Xiaoming, a history professor with the Cultural Heritage Protection Department of Fudan University.

“When locals say ‘pizza’ and ‘ham-

Vocabulary

- perplex
困惑

Cause to be puzzled or bewildered over what is not understood

- controversy
争议

A prolonged public dispute, debate

- exotic
异国的

Of foreign origin or character.

burger’ in Chinese, they don’t call them ‘oven-baked, flat, round bread’ or ‘a sandwich consisting of a cooked patty of ground meat.’ They simply call them *pisa* and *hanbao*, which sound just like the English words,” Gu said.

He believed that good translations of dishes should keep “an exotic touch in a foreign land” and the translated words should bring people certain links to the food’s taste and its culture.

“Choppy chicken” is a good example, describing both what the dish looks like and how it is served, Gu said.

An official surnamed Zhang with the Shanghai Language Work Committee told Shanghai Daily that, so far, the official translations for Chinese dishes would not be introduced in the city.

“Chinese dishes’ names are too complicated,” he said.

This page is compiled and edited by Shanghai Daily.

Shanghai Daily
上海日报



Editor’s Note:

In this column we aim to offer insight to improve the English rendering of new Chinese phrases or terms popping up frequently in daily conversation.

Please check out more buzzwords at our Website: www.shanghaidaily.com

男闺蜜

Male besties

It refers to a male best friend with whom a woman can share secrets and gossip and who comforts her in times of distress. A typical example of a male bestie is Wang Xiaojian, a character from the blockbuster movie “Love Is Not Blind.” Wang depicts a woman’s bosom friend. Despite the intimacy between women and their male besties, this type of relationship is unlikely to evolve into romance.

好人综合症

Nice guy syndrome

Some young men are just so nice to women that they can never become boyfriends. They are always available when women need to vent their grievances or need a shoulder to cry one, or someone to pay the dinner tab.

炫苦

Flaunt hardships

The term means displaying all the troubles, hardships and distresses one has been through on the Internet to encourage oneself. Different from the second generation from the affluent families who often boast their luxury sports cars, designer handbags and extravagant lifestyle, these people post pictures of their sufferings and hard times to boost their morale.

蘑菇型白领

Sluggish white collars

The term refers to a group of white collars who are always passive no matter in work, or in personal life or study. They get used to dragging their feet in doing jobs and can’t concentrate. It’s difficult for them to have their own schedules and plans as they always scramble to meet a deadline.

初老症

Early-aging syndrome

Due to mounting pressure and fast-paced lifestyle, young people show symptoms of early-aging, especially psychologically. They become numb or fear new things and innovation, often recall the past days, hate frequent changes and easily get tired.

追孕族

Pregnancy pursuers

It is a nickname given by online citizens to the group of urban young women who have made great efforts to get pregnant, including in vitro fertilization, after marriage but have repeatedly failed for various reasons. This group are usually well-educated, have a well-paid job and have nurtured a great hope of starting a family.



Progress cited in search for elusive particle

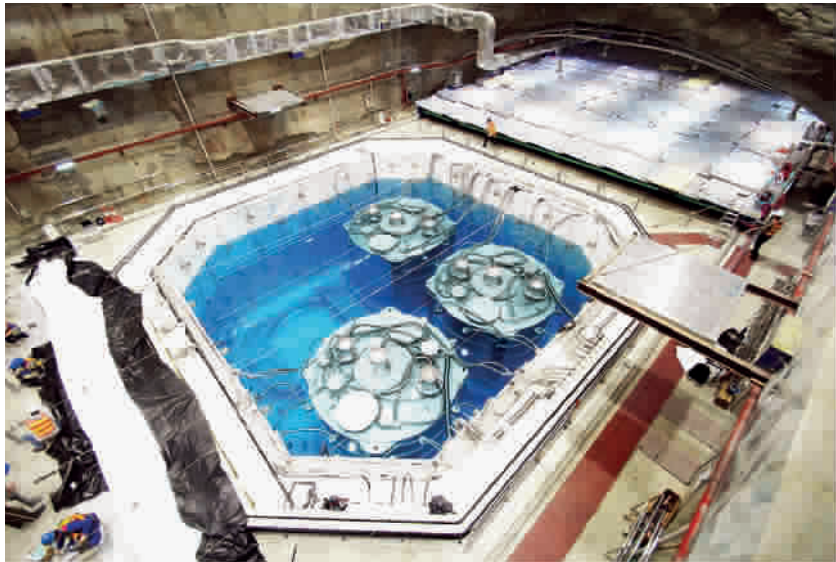
Liang Yiwen

THE first results of a search for the last, most elusive piece of a longstanding physics puzzle has been reported by the Daya Bay Reactor Neutrino Experiment, a multinational collaboration operating in the south of China.

The question scientists seek to answer: Why do neutrinos appear to vanish as they travel? The answer opens a gateway to a new understanding of fundamental physics and may eventually solve the riddle of why there is far more ordinary matter than antimatter in the universe today.

Based on data collected from nuclear reactors, multinational scientists have been able to confirm and measure a third type of neutrino oscillation, said Wang Yifang, a spokesperson for the experiment and head of the Institute of High Energy Physics of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Neutrinos, the wispy particles that flooded the universe in the earliest moments after the Big Bang, are continually produced in the hearts of stars and other nuclear reactions. They travel at close to the speed of light and pass mostly unhindered through everything from planets to people, responding only to the weak nuclear force and very weakly, to gravity. The challenge of capturing these elusive parti-



The Daya Bay Reactor Neutrino Experiment site in south China Guangdong Province plays a pivotal role in the study of neutrinos. A team of Chinese and American physicists have confirmed and measured a third type of neutrino oscillation. — Xinhua

cles has made neutrinos a mystery to scientists for decades.

The three basic neutrino “flavors” — electron, muon and tau neutrinos — mix together and oscillate. This activity is extremely difficult to detect.

Two types of oscillation — solar and atmospheric neutrino oscillation — have been confirmed previously and helped the discoverer win the Nobel Prize in Physics, while the third type of oscillation was not

detected until the Daya Bay experiment.

Starting in 2011, scientists in the Daya Bay collaboration observed tens of thousands of interactions of electron antineutrinos, caught by six massive detectors buried in the mountains adjacent to the powerful nuclear reactors of the China Guangdong Nuclear Power Group.

These reactors produce millions of quadrillions of elusive electron antineutrinos every second.