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On the Construction of International Communicative Power of Bashu Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Perspective of Translatology: Connotations and Strategies—Taking Changzhou Daoming Bamboo Weaving as An Example

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Abstract

Translatology extends its focus beyond linguistic translation to encompass the introduction and dissemination of culture. And translation and introduction serve as the foundation and a crucial component of international communication, with the ultimate goal of disseminating outstanding cultural heritage, bolstering cultural confidence, and enhancing cultural soft power. In this contex, based on translatology, the "5E" model is proposed herein to delve into the connotations and roles in international communication of the five key elements in the international communication of Bashu intangible cultural heritage (ICH), i.e. the executor of translation and introduction, the essence to be translated and introduced, the effective means of translation and introduction, the expected recipients of translation and introduction, and the effects of translation and introduction. The quality and strategies of the executor of translation and introduction influence the production and presentation of the essence to be translated and introduced. The choice of the effective means of translation and introduction determines the pathways and scope of information dissemination. The characteristics of the expected recipients of translation and introduction constrain the precision and acceptance of international communication, while the effects of translation and introduction provide comprehensive feedback and assessment of the entire process of translation and introduction. Chongzhou Daoming Bamboo Weaving, as a nationally representative ICH project, is analyzed as a case study to propose strategies for building the international communicative power of Bashu ICH based on translatology. The aim is to provide references for the international communication of Bashu ICH and to promote its global dissemination and inheritance.

Keywords

Translatology; Bashu intangible cultural heritage; international communicative power; Daoming bamboo weaving

1. Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage (hereinafter referred to as "ICH") refers to the various traditional cultural expressions

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passed down from generation to generation by the people of all ethnic groups and regarded as part of their cultural heritage, as well as the objects and places related to the traditional cultural expressions (1). Bashu region, located in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, is one of the important birthplaces of Chinese civilization. Among them, "Shu" mainly refers to the area of the western Sichuan plain, with Chengdu as the center of Shu culture; while "Ba" refers to the hilly and mountainous areas along the Yangtze River, with Chongqing as the center of Ba culture (Yao, 2015). Sichuan and Chongqing not only have a long history and numerous cultural relics, but also have rich intangible cultural heritage resources. In May 2022, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other departments jointly issued the "Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor Construction Plan" (2), which clearly stated that promoting the "going out" of Bashu intangible cultural heritage is of great strategic significance. As an important part of Chinese culture, Bashu intangible cultural heritage also contains profound national spirit. However, due to the lack of open thinking in Shu, the influence of Bashu intangible cultural heritage at home and abroad still needs to be improved.

Chongzhou Daoming bamboo weaving, one of the "Five Golden Flowers of Chengdu Intangible Cultural Heritage" (3), was selected as a national-level representative project of intangible cultural heritage in 2014. With a history of over 2000 years, it is a gem of Sichuan and Chongqing intangible cultural heritage, renowned internationally for its exquisite weaving techniques and unique cultural connotations. In the context of globalization, promoting Chongzhou Daoming bamboo weaving to the international stage is of paramount importance for promoting Sichuan and Chongqing culture and facilitating international cultural exchange. Translation, as a crucial link in international dissemination, plays a bridging role in the international dissemination of intangible cultural heritage. Therefore, building the international communication capacity of Sichuan and Chongqing intangible cultural heritage is an important issue that urgently needs in-depth exploration.

2. The Connotation of Building the International Communication Capacity of Bashu Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Perspective of Translation Studies

The concept of translation studies was proposed by the French comparative literature scholar Paul van Tieghem in Chapter 7, "Media," of his monograph Comparative Literature in 1931 (Xie, 2018). Translation studies approached translation research from the perspective of comparative literature. In its early stages, the main focus of discussion was domestic translated literature. Professor Xie Tianzhen, out of concern for the reality of Chinese culture "going global," based on the perspective of translation studies, noticed various factors beyond text and words, considered many constraints of the target language environment, and incorporated "translation activities into a larger social and ideological structural framework" (Geng, 2023). Through translation, he "observed the collision between a culture and other cultures, as well as the ways, categories, and processes by which a specific culture absorbs and transforms other cultures" (Xie, 2006), further revealing the essence of the translation of Chinese culture, "which is actually a 'reverse' translation behavior from a weak culture to a strong culture" (Jiang, 2023).

The goal of translation and translation studies is to achieve cross-cultural communication and promote the exchange of different national cultures through translation (Wang & Xie, 2013). However, if we only focus on the issue of "translation" such as how to faithfully convert the original text, and ignore the issue of "mediation" such as the reception, dissemination and influence of the translated text, it will be difficult for the translated text to truly enter the target language cultural system and thus achieve effective intercultural communication (Bao, 2015). Therefore, as a theoretical study of cross-cultural communication and translation, translation studies takes the idea of "creative rebellion" in translation as its theoretical basis, advocates the transformation of the translation process from a purely technical conversion of language symbols to a cultural shift in translation (Liang, 2022), and emphasizes the cultural dimension of translation activities and the important role of translators in cross-cultural communication. This idea not only enriches translation theory, but also provides new guidance and inspiration for the construction of international communication power.

The foundation of market competitiveness. The essence of communication power is the ability of the communication subject to achieve effective communication through various communication channels, including two aspects: communication ability and communication effectiveness. Communication ability emphasizes the breadth of communication, focusing on the selection of communication tools and the scope and speed reached. Communication effectiveness focuses on the accuracy and effect of communication. (Chen, 2017) It can be seen that communication power is a multi-dimensional concept, involving key elements such as communication subject, communication content, communication means, and communication effect. This is consistent with the "5W" model of communication studies proposed by the famous founder of communication studies, Harold Lasswell, namely: "Who", "Says What", "In

What Channel", "To Whom", "With What Effect" (LASSWELL, 2013) (as shown in Figure 1). The "5W" model provides a framework for analyzing the communication process, including communication subject, communication content, communication means, communication object and communication effect, which provides an important reference for the construction of international communication power of Bashu intangible cultural heritage from the perspective of translation studies. Translation studies and communication studies are closely related in the study of cross-cultural communication. They both focus on the process of information transmission from one culture to another. Translation is one of the foundations and key links of international communication. International communication is the destination of translation. One of its fundamental purposes is to spread excellent culture, enhance cultural confidence, and strengthen cultural soft power (Chen & Sun, 2024).

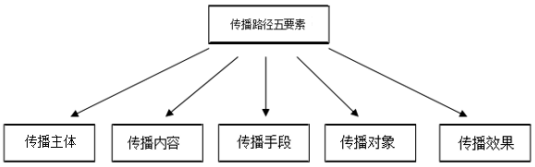

Figure 1. Lasswell's "5W" Model of Communication.

The translation subject, translation content, translation medium, translation audience, and translation effect constitute an interconnected and mutually restrictive system, namely the "5E" model (as shown in Figure 2). In the "5W" of communication studies, "Who" represents the communication subject, the sender of information. Similarly, in the translation process, the Executor of Translation and Introduction refers to the various subjects participating in the entire translation activity. They are the initiators and implementers of cultural translation and dissemination, playing a role at different levels to promote the dissemination and introduction of Bashu intangible cultural heritage from the source language culture to the target language culture. Unlike general communication content, translation content (Essence to be Translated and Introduced) needs to explore cultural depth, focusing on the core content of Bashu intangible cultural heritage that needs to be conveyed to the target audience through translation activities. This content not only needs to be translated into language but also requires in-depth cultural interpretation to meet the needs of cross-cultural communication. Effective Means of Translation and Introduction places greater emphasis on cross-cultural factors than general communication methods. It encompasses the various approaches, methods, and media tools employed to effectively disseminate Bashu intangible cultural heritage during the translation process. This requires ensuring accuracy in language conversion while fully utilizing modern technology and diverse communication channels to enhance the communication effect. Expected Recipients of Translation and Introduction refer to the different types of international audiences targeted by the translation activities, requiring a higher level of cultural adaptability. During the translation process, it is essential to understand their cultural background, interests, language abilities, and other characteristics to develop more targeted translation strategies and improve communication effectiveness. While communication effectiveness primarily focuses on whether the information is received, understood, and generates a certain behavioral impact, the effects of translation and introduction also consider aspects such as Bashu intangible cultural heritage recognition and cultural image shaping. It is mainly used to measure the actual impact of the translation activities on the target audience and needs to be evaluated from multiple dimensions to adjust translation strategies in a timely manner and continuously enhance the international communication power of Bashu intangible cultural heritage. The various elements of translation interact with each other in the international dissemination of Sichuan and Chongqing intangible cultural heritage. This intertwined and influential system can provide a comprehensive and in-depth theoretical basis and practical guidance for the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage on the international stage.

Figure 2. The "5E" Model for International Communication of Intangible Cultural Heritage from the Perspective of Translation Studies.

3. Strategies for Building the International Communication Power of Daoming Intangible Cultural Heritage Based on Translation Studies

3.1 Translation Subject Level

3.1.1 Talent cultivation and integration

Universities and vocational colleges should strengthen the construction of related majors and offer courses on the translation and introduction of Bashu intangible cultural heritage such as Daoming bamboo weaving. Through integration, the classroom format will be more diverse and the course content will be more distinctive, effectively transforming the classroom into a living classroom (Chen & Peng, 2019). This will cultivate compound talents with knowledge of intangible cultural heritage crafts, foreign language translation skills, cross-cultural communication capabilities, and the ability to use modern communication tools. The course content may include the history and culture of Bashu intangible cultural heritage such as Daoming bamboo weaving, related craft practices, translation theories and techniques, and case analysis of international cultural communication. At the same time, existing scattered talent resources should be integrated to establish a translation talent resource pool, promote exchanges and cooperation among talents in different fields, and form a professional and efficient translation team.

3.1.2 Collaboration between inheritors and translators

Inheritors and translators play their respective roles and work together through different channels of dissemination. For example, a communication and cooperation platform can be established between inheritors and translators, such as regularly holding workshops and seminars. Inheritors of Bashu intangible cultural heritage provide translators with detailed introductions to the characteristics, cultural connotations, and sources of inspiration for bamboo weaving and other crafts, while translators explain the requirements and trends of international cultural dissemination to the inheritors. Together, they explore how to accurately translate and disseminate bamboo weaving culture to the international market. Furthermore, inheritors can be encouraged to participate in some translation work, such as providing interpretations of the cultural connotations of bamboo weaving works and suggesting English names, thereby improving the accuracy and cultural relevance of the translated content.

3.2 Translation Content Level

3.2.1 Deeply explore cultural connotations and accurately interpret them

Cultural experts and scholars were organized to conduct in-depth research on the cultural connotations of Bashu intangible cultural heritage, exploring its intrinsic connections with Bashu culture and traditional Chinese culture, and integrating these cultural connotations into the translated content. For example, when translating introductions to bamboo weaving works, the cultural meanings of bamboo weaving patterns and designs were explained in detail. For instance, the "Ruyi pattern," commonly found in bamboo weaving, symbolizes good fortune and can be translated as "Ruyi Pattern, symbolizing good luck and happiness." At the same time, its origins and applications in Chinese culture were explained, enabling international audiences to deeply understand the essence of bamboo weaving culture.

3.2.2 Innovative content formats and targeted communication

Based on the characteristics and needs of different international audiences, we will innovate the format of translated content and conduct targeted dissemination. For audiences in Europe and America, we can combine Daoming bamboo weaving and other intangible cultural heritage of Sichuan and Chongqing with modern Western design concepts to launch home decorations and creative gifts featuring bamboo weaving elements. In the translation process, we will emphasize its unique value of being environmentally friendly and handcrafted, and adopt design styles and communication language that are easily accepted by Western audiences. For audiences in neighboring Asian countries, we can produce documentaries on bamboo weaving cultural exchange, showcasing the exchange and integration of Daoming bamboo weaving with local bamboo culture in the Sichuan and Chongqing region, in order to enhance cultural affinity and a sense of identity.

3.3 Translation Methods

3.3.1 Utilize diverse translation strategies flexibly

This approach employs a combination of translation strategies, including literal translation, free translation, transliteration, annotation, and rewriting, selecting the most appropriate technique based on the specific connotations and

cultural content of different Bashu intangible cultural heritage terms. For example, simple and universally understood bamboo weaving craft names, such as “织织” (weaving), can be directly translated as “weave,” while culturally rich terms, such as “竹报平安” (bamboo brings peace), can be translated as “Bamboo Brings Peace and Safety” with an annotation explaining its cultural allusions. When translating bamboo weaving product manuals, rewriting can be used, rewriting the content according to international product manual standards and styles to improve readability and practicality.

3.3.2 Technological Integration and Innovation Communication

Open up diversified communication platforms, focus efforts, and form a joint force. Make full use of modern digital technology and new media platforms to enhance the translation and dissemination effect of Bashu intangible cultural heritage. For example, use virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) technologies to develop Daoming bamboo weaving experience applications, so that international audiences can experience the bamboo weaving production process and artistic charm through mobile phones or VR devices, while providing multilingual audio guides and text descriptions. Utilize the social attributes of short video platforms to produce short video content such as bamboo weaving production skills and creative works, and add English subtitles and popular topic tags to attract the attention and sharing of international users. Build a “community” through cross-cultural interaction and communication with overseas audiences to achieve cultural identity of the audience (Zhou & Wang, 2024). For example, hold bamboo weaving design competitions, cultural knowledge Q&A sessions, etc., to increase the participation of international audiences and their interest in bamboo weaving culture.

3.4 Translation Target Level

3.4.1 Precise audience targeting and market segmentation

In-depth international market research was conducted to analyze the cultural background, interests, and purchasing power of audiences in different countries and regions, enabling precise targeting and market segmentation of international audiences. For example, Daoming bamboo weaving can be segmented into the high-end home decor market, the creative gift market, and the eco-friendly product market in Europe and America, with corresponding translation strategies and product promotion plans developed for each segment. For the high-end home decor market, the focus was on promoting Daoming bamboo weaving's exquisite craftsmanship and unique designs, positioning it as a high-end home decoration with artistic value and cultural connotations. For the creative gift market, the emphasis was on the personalized and customized characteristics of bamboo-woven gifts to meet the demand of European and American consumers for unique gifts.

3.4.2 Establish audience feedback channels and interaction mechanisms

Establish multiple audience feedback channels on international communication platforms, such as setting up comment sections on official websites and social media accounts, online surveys, and email feedback. Regularly collect and analyze feedback from international audiences to understand their opinions and suggestions on the translation, product design, and dissemination methods of Daoming bamboo weaving and other Bashu intangible cultural heritage. Adjust communication strategies and product designs promptly based on audience feedback; for example, adjust product color schemes based on feedback from European and American audiences regarding their preferences for bamboo weaving colors; and increase the translation of cultural stories based on Asian audiences' interest in bamboo weaving cultural narratives. Simultaneously, actively interact with international audiences, respond to their comments and questions, and hold online and offline exchange activities to enhance audience recognition and loyalty to Daoming bamboo weaving.

3.5 Translation and Dissemination Effects

3.5.1 Construct a scientific and comprehensive evaluation system

Establish a multi-dimensional evaluation system for translation effectiveness, including quantitative indicators (such as the number of promotional materials distributed, website traffic, social media follower growth, and product export volume), qualitative indicators (such as the accuracy of audience understanding of bamboo weaving culture, the proportion of increased cultural recognition, and the proportion of positive reviews in international media reports), and cultural influence indicators (such as participation in international cultural exchange activities, cooperation with internationally renowned brands, and receipt of international cultural awards). Employ a combination of quantitative

and qualitative evaluation methods, such as collecting qualitative data through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, and using data analysis tools to statistically analyze quantitative data, conducting regular comprehensive evaluations of translation effectiveness.

3.5.2 Continuous optimization and improvement based on evaluation

Based on the evaluation results of the translation and dissemination effectiveness, lessons learned were summarized, and problems and shortcomings in the international dissemination of Bashu intangible cultural heritage were identified. In response to the problems identified in the evaluation, timely adjustments should be made to the working methods of the translation and dissemination entities, the focus of the translated content, the application strategies of translation methods, and the positioning and interaction methods of the target audience. For example, if the evaluation finds that the audience in a certain region has a low level of understanding of the cultural connotations of bamboo weaving, efforts to interpret and translate the culture of that region can be strengthened; if the dissemination effect of a certain platform is found to be poor, the dissemination strategy can be adjusted or the platform can be changed. Through continuous optimization and improvement, the international dissemination power of Daoming bamboo weaving can be continuously enhanced, and its popularity and influence in the international cultural market can be expanded.

4. Conclusion

This paper conducts an in-depth analysis of the international dissemination of Daoming bamboo weaving, a typical representative of Bashu intangible cultural heritage, and examines its five key elements—translation subject, content, means, target audience, and effect—from the perspective of translation studies. The study reveals that the key to enhancing the international dissemination of Bashu intangible cultural heritage lies in the professional competence of the translation subject, the cultural depth and breadth of the content, the modernization and diversification of the means, the cultural sensitivity and acceptance of the target audience, and the comprehensive evaluation and feedback of the effect. Through the case analysis of Daoming bamboo weaving, this paper not only provides practical guidance for the international dissemination of Bashu intangible cultural heritage, but also proposes a “5E” model for the international dissemination of intangible cultural heritage from the perspective of translation studies, which can provide theoretical reference for the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage in other regions.

Building the international reach of Sichuan and Chongqing intangible cultural heritage is a systematic project that requires multifaceted cooperation and effort. Future research should further explore the cross-cultural communication mechanisms of intangible cultural heritage, strengthen the training of translators, optimize the presentation of translated content, innovate communication methods, deeply analyze the target audience, and improve the evaluation system for translation effectiveness. Furthermore, with the deepening of globalization and digitalization, the international dissemination of Sichuan and Chongqing intangible cultural heritage should actively embrace new technologies and platforms to more effectively connect with global audiences and promote cultural exchange and mutual learning.

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