

A Study on Japanese Translation Strategies and Methods of Sichuan-Chongqing Tourism Promotion Texts from the Perspective of Cross-cultural Pragmatics

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Abstract: In order to support the building of the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor and the aim of turning it into a world-class leisure tourist destination, the quality of Japanese translation of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts urgently needs to be improved. Translation for external propaganda is a cross-cultural communication activity. During the translation process, the cultural differences between the source language society and the target language society must be fully considered. Based on the current situation of Japanese translation of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts, from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics, this study proposes four Japanese translation strategies for Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts: the distinction between domestic and foreign tourists; implicit expression strategy; text-centered; enhancing understanding. Under the guidance of these four strategies, this study puts forward specific Japanese translation methods for tourism promotion texts with different themes such as urban humanities, natural landscapes, and folk culture.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the study

In order to implement the national strategy of Construction of Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle, in April 2020, the Sichuan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the Chongqing Municipal Culture and Tourism Development Commission signed the *Strategic Cooperation Agreement on Promoting the Construction of Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle*. The agreement stated that Sichuan and Chongqing would promote the opening and sharing of cultural tourism resources and jointly build the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor. It further clarified that the two cities should take the similar cultural connotations and industrial forms as the common points, and focus on urban history and culture, Bashu culture, revolutionary culture, anti-Japanese war culture, Three Gorges culture, immigration culture, Yangtze River ecological culture, etc., to innovatively create a number of high-quality Bashu cultural tourism corridor routes [1]. In May 2022, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Chongqing Municipal People's Government, and the People's Government of Sichuan Province jointly issued the *Plan for Building Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor*. The Plan pointed out that by 2035, the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor will be built into a world-class leisure tourist attraction with international style, Chinese flavor and Bashu charm [2]. To create a world-class leisure

tourism destination and enhance Sichuan and Chongqing's attractiveness to international tourists, high-quality external publicity translations of tourism resources are indispensable.

Nowadays, foreign tourists generally adopt the "free travel" mode of tourism, and the official tourism promotion platform is undoubtedly the most direct way to show the city's appearance and cultural attraction to foreign tourists. After investigation, currently only a very few cultural and tourism websites, such as the information network sponsored by the Sichuan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism and the official website of the Chengdu Wuhou Shrine, have Japanese versions. On the other hand, although most scenic spot signs are accompanied by Japanese versions, the quality of the translations varies. In addition, Japanese versions of attraction manuals and intelligent audio explanations are rare. According to Ctrip's *2019 National Tourism Consumption Report*, Japan became China's largest source of inbound tourists in 2019 [3]. With the recovery of the global tourism industry in 2023, China's inbound tourism has also achieved rapid growth. In the context of the steady recovery of inbound tourism, the Sichuan and Chongqing regions, which are rich in tourism resources, will play an important role in promoting the development of inbound tourism.

As a member of RCEP, Japan has long been among the top ten foreign tourist source markets. However, the current lack of Japanese translation of tourism promotion texts and its low level will directly affect tourists' tour experience, which is not conducive to building the Bashu

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Cultural Tourism Corridor into a world-class leisure tourist destination.

1.2. Objective of the study

Under the national strategy of Construction of Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle and the historical background of Building of the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor, Sichuan-Chongqing tourism resources are abundant, but the Japanese translation of its tourism promotion texts is insufficient in both quality and quantity, which is inconsistent with the needs of realistic development. In order to make up for this shortcoming, this study will explore the Japanese translation strategies and methods of tourism promotion texts in the Sichuan and Chongqing regions from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics, with a view to providing translation reference for external promotion in the construction of the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor.

The objective of this study is to analyze the current situation and problems of Japanese translation of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts; to summarize the Japanese translation strategies of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics; to explore the Japanese translation methods of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics.

1.3. Significance of the study

The significance of this study is reflected in two points. First of all, the current research on Japanese translation strategies and methods of Sichuan-Chongqing tourism promotion texts from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics is almost a blind spot. This study innovatively applies translation theory to translation activities, reflecting academic originality. Secondly, when translating tourism promotion texts, all aspects of the nation's history, economy, food, customs, etc. will inevitably be translated. This is a cross-cultural and cross-psychological translation practice. The research on this translation practice will provide reference for the translators' translation activities, so that they can tell the story of Bashu well to the world, which is conducive to building the Bashu cultural tourism corridor into a world-class leisure tourism resort.

2. Literature review

Since the 1970s, with the rise of pragmatics, cross-cultural issues in pragmatic communication have attracted the attention of pragmatic researchers, and cross-cultural pragmatics came into being. After half a century of development, cross-cultural pragmatics research has achieved fruitful results in both theoretical and empirical research. Representative monographs include *Cross-cultural Pragmatic: The Semantics of Human Interaction* (A. Wierzbicka, 1991) [4], *Culturally Speaking: Managing*

Rapport through Talk across Cultures (H. Spencer-Oatey, 2004) [5], etc. The study of cross-cultural pragmatics in China began in the mid-1980s, when Z. R. He and Z. Yan published an article entitled *Pragmatic Problems of Chinese EL Learners with Native Speakers* in *Foreign Language Teaching and Research* (1986) [6], which marked the birth of cross-cultural pragmatics research in China.

At present, in China, research on cross-cultural pragmatics mainly focuses on pragmatic issues in cross-cultural communication and language teaching. The former deals with pragmatic errors and pragmatic strategies, while the latter studies teaching issues such as vocabulary, complex sentences, and discourse from a pragmatic perspective. With the vigorous implementation of China's Culture "Going Out" Strategy, related research on "cross-cultural pragmatics and translation for China's international publicity" has gradually emerged in the past decade. The existing research results are all papers, with a total of 44 articles, and the research objects of external publicity translation mainly include tourism resources, excellent traditional culture, literary works and classics, and national or regional images¹. Among these studies, research on the translation of external propaganda of tourism resources is the most common, accounting for 45.45%. In terms of language, these studies on the external promotion of tourism resources are all English translations. In terms of content, these researches mainly discuss the phenomenon of mistranslation of public signs in scenic spots and summarize translation strategies and methods.

To sum up, since cross-cultural pragmatics was introduced to China in the mid-1980s, its applied research was initially focused on pragmatic issues in foreign language teaching, and later expanded to pragmatic issues in various cross-cultural communication scenarios. In the past decade, under the background of vigorously promoting the national strategy of "going global" for Chinese culture, the study of external propaganda translation from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics has gradually emerged in China, among which research on external promotion translation of tourism resources accounts for the highest proportion. However, these studies are all English translation studies, and the research content is limited to the translation of scenic spot signs. This is to say, in the existing studies in China, there is no research that focuses on the tourism cultural resources of Sichuan and Chongqing regions and studies its Japanese translation strategies and methods from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics.

3. Theory and methodology

The theory adopted in this study is cross-cultural pragmatics. Regarding the concept of cross-cultural pragmatics, scholars explained it from different perspectives. Based on the purpose of pragmatic research, G. Yule (1996) believed that, "The study of differences in expectations based on cultural schemata is part of a broad

¹ Data were obtained through bibliometric analysis through CNKI and NDLC database searches. The search time is January 10, 2024.

area of investigation generally known as cross-cultural pragmatics” (p. 87) [7]. Z. R. He (1996) focused on the communicative function of language and stated that “cross-cultural pragmatics studies the pragmatic issues that arise when using a second language for cross-cultural language communication” (p. 46) [8]. Z. X. He (2007), valued the cultural attributes of language and claimed that “cross-cultural pragmatics is the study of communication between people with different cultural backgrounds, and its focus is the cross-cultural comparative study of language activities of different cultures” (p. 69) [9].

Based on the expressions of the three scholars, it is concluded that cross-cultural pragmatics focuses on the comparison of surface morphology, structural methods and discourse meanings of different languages, goes deep into the deep cultural connotation of language, and pays attention to cultural differences in dynamic pragmatics, and pragmatic strategies of pragmatic subjects. Under the framework of cross-cultural pragmatics theory, this study will emphasize the role of cultural factors in external publicity translation, as well as the cultural differences between the source language society and the target language society, so as to explore effective translation strategies and methods. The research thought and methods are shown in Figure 1.

(1)Statement of the problem. First, the study introduces the national strategy of Construction of Chengdu-Chongqing Economic Circle and the historical background of the Building of the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor. Second, through literature review and field research, it is pointed out that the current Japanese translation of tourism promotion texts in the Sichuan-Chongqing region has both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. And then, the research problem is stated. That is, in order to better tell the story of Bashu to the world and build the Bashu Cultural Tourism Corridor into a world-class leisure tourist destination, what Japanese translation strategies and methods should be adopted to translate tourism publicity texts with high quality?

(2)Analysis of the problem. At first, this study investigates the current situation of Japanese translation of online and offline tourism promotion texts in Sichuan and Chongqing regions. Then, it summarizes the current status and existing problems in Japanese translation of tourism promotion texts in Sichuan and Chongqing regions.

(3)Solutions to the problem. Based on the theory of cross-cultural pragmatics, this study focuses on the cultural differences in the translation of external publicity, and summarizes the Japanese translation strategies of tourism external publicity texts in Sichuan and Chongqing. Under the guidance of Japanese translation strategies, this study combines existing typical Japanese translation errors to analyze and summarize specific Japanese translation methods for tourism publicity texts with different themes in Sichuan and Chongqing regions.

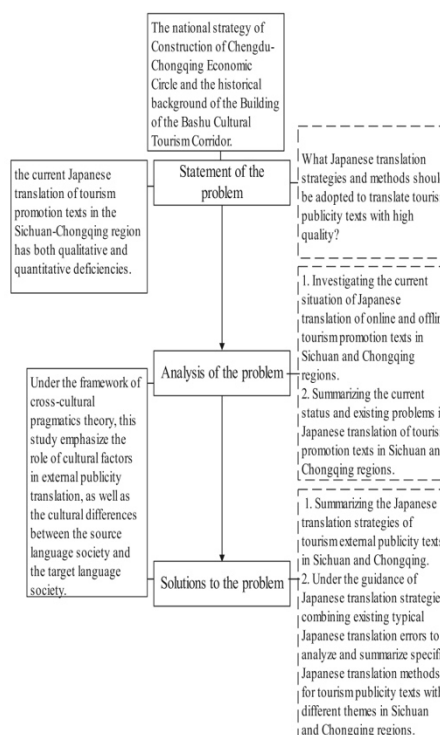


Fig. 1. The research thought and methods.

4.Results and discussion

(1)The current situation and problems of Japanese translation of tourism publicity texts in Sichuan and Chongqing regions. Online official cultural and tourism websites rarely have Japanese versions; offline tourist attraction signs basically have Japanese versions, but the translation quality varies, and there are almost no Japanese versions of attraction manuals and intelligent voice explanations. At present, the quantity of Japanese translations of tourism promotion texts in the Sichuan and Chongqing regions is obviously insufficient; the existing Japanese translations are in urgent need of improvement in quality. There are two main types of translation errors, one is intra-linguistic errors and the other is extra-linguistic errors. The former is due to lack of language knowledge, and the latter is due to ignorance of cultural differences.

(2)Japanese translation strategies of tourism promotion texts in Sichuan and Chongqing regions from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics. The first is the distinction between domestic and foreign tourists: there are great differences between Chinese and Japanese languages and cultures. In the process of Japanese translation, it is necessary to consider the expression differences between Chinese and Japanese in vocabulary, sentence patterns and discourse, and the cultural differences between Japanese and Chinese tourists. The second is implicit expression strategy: external promotion of tourism resources should be promoted in a subtle way, and avoid overstating and piling up adjectives, big words, empty words, and clichés. Instead, the tourists should be allowed to actively feel the charm of tourism resources from external publicity texts that are full of real content and yet still have a humanistic flavor. The third is text-centered: it is necessary to focus on

the text, and combine the specific situation and context to translate words, sentences and paragraphs. The fourth is enhancing understanding: the purpose of external publicity of tourism resources is to increase tourists' knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural landscapes of Sichuan and Chongqing, thereby attracting tourists. Therefore, when translating to Japanese, it is necessary to establish a concept that is oriented to the audience in the target country and fully respect the interests and reception methods of tourists.

(3) Japanese translation methods of tourism promotion texts in Sichuan and Chongqing regions from the perspective of cross-cultural pragmatics. The Japanese translation methods for tourism promotion texts with different themes are different. For the external publicity of Chengdu-Chongqing Twin Cities, the overall style of translation of historical and cultural texts such as Bashu culture and Three Kingdoms culture should be serious and elegant, and the more formal written form “である” can be adopted; When translating modern cultural texts such as cuisine and architecture of Chengdu-Chongqing, the overall style should be lively and vivid, and a more casual written style “だ” can be adopted. Besides, sentences of persuasion and rhetorical questions can be appropriately used to increase interaction with tourists. For the external promotion of natural landscapes such as mountains and rivers, the basic information of the landscape should be briefly introduced when translating into Japanese, so that the tourists can independently feel its charm while appreciating the natural landscape; At the same time, explanations of humanistic elements can be appropriately added to the natural landscape, such as the relationship between Tang poetry and mountains and rivers. In this way, the cultural soft power of Sichuan and Chongqing scenery can be increased through the Japanese people's love for Tang poetry. For the external promotion of Sichuan and Chongqing folk culture, the Japanese translation method of transliteration and explanation can be used for culture-loaded words. This not only satisfies tourists' need to understand the original folk vocabulary, but also provides them with a clear understanding of the folk custom content through detailed Japanese explanations.

5. Conclusion

At present, there are both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in the Japanese translation of tourism promotion texts in the Sichuan and Chongqing regions. Judging from the existing Japanese translation texts, the qualitative deficiencies are mainly reflected in two points: intra-linguistic errors caused by lack of language knowledge, and extra-linguistic errors caused by lack of cross-cultural communication awareness. The external promotion of tourism resources is a cross-cultural activity. In the process of translating for external publicity, the cultural differences between China and Japan must be considered. On the other hand, cross-cultural pragmatics emphasizes cultural factors in cross-cultural communication. Therefore, cross-cultural pragmatics is closely related to external publicity translation and can provide theoretical guidance for it. From the perspective of

cross-cultural pragmatics, by considering Japanese people's psychology, reading habits and other cultural elements, this study concluded that the Japanese translation strategies that should be adopted in tourism promotion texts in the Sichuan and Chongqing areas are: the distinction between domestic and foreign tourists; implicit expression strategy; text-centered; enhancing understanding. Under the guidance of these Japanese translation strategies, specific Japanese translation methods should be adopted for tourism promotion texts with different themes such as Chengdu and Chongqing cities, Sichuan and Chongqing natural landscapes, Sichuan and Chongqing folk culture, etc.

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