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English translation strategies for Bashu cultural tourism web publicity from the perspective of Skopos theory: a case study of *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan* for audiences in Australia and New Zealand

Liwen Xu, Yongfeng Guo*

Chengdu Technological University, Chengdu, China

*Corresponding Author. Email: yg2273@nyu.edu

Abstract. Grounded in Skopos theory, this study examines English translation strategies for Bashu cultural tourism web publicity aimed at audiences in Australia and New Zealand. Taking *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan*, published by the Chinese Cultural Centre in Sydney, as a case, the study adopts qualitative case analysis to investigate how the Skopos, coherence, and fidelity rules inform the translation of culture-specific expressions, historical references, and multimodal materials. The analysis shows that effective translation for international cultural tourism publicity should prioritize communicative purpose while maintaining coherence with target-language conventions and fidelity to the cultural meanings of the source text. In practice, explanatory translation, transliteration supplemented by concise annotations, narrative restructuring, and text–image complementarity can help bridge cultural and cognitive gaps and enhance audience engagement. On this basis, the study proposes practical strategies for improving the accessibility and communicative effectiveness of Bashu cultural tourism publicity for English-speaking audiences in Australia and New Zealand.

Keywords: skopos theory, Bashu culture, cultural tourism publicity translation strategy, Australian and New Zealand audiences

1. Introduction

Bashu culture, rooted in the Sichuan–Chongqing region, encompasses distinctive regional traditions, historical heritage, folk customs, and cultural practices. Its international dissemination depends not only on linguistic accuracy but also on the effective transmission of culture-specific meanings. In cultural tourism publicity, a literal reproduction of the source text may fail to convey the cultural associations embedded in regional expressions, historical references, and folk customs. Translation strategies should therefore be determined by the communicative purpose of the target text and the needs of its intended audience.

Skopos theory views translation as a purposeful intercultural activity and emphasizes the relationship among the Skopos, coherence, and fidelity rules [1, 2]. In addition, Nord's translation-oriented text analysis

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model highlights the importance of examining the communicative situation, textual factors, and target audience when analyzing translation activities [3]. Drawing on these approaches, this study takes *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan*, published by the Chinese Cultural Centre in Sydney, as a case. It examines how the English version presents Bashu cultural symbols, historical information, and folk customs for audiences in Australia and New Zealand.

Through qualitative case analysis, this study focuses on three aspects: the translation of culture-specific expressions, the restructuring of narrative patterns to meet target-language conventions, and the coordination of verbal and visual resources in cultural tourism publicity. On this basis, it summarizes the main translation strategies used in the case and discusses their applicability to the international communication of Bashu cultural tourism. The findings may provide a practical reference for improving the accessibility and communicative effectiveness of similar cultural tourism webpages.

2. Theoretical framework: Skopos theory

2.1. The Skopos rule

Skopos theory regards translation as a purposeful form of intercultural action. Vermeer [2] argues that the intended purpose of the target text should guide translation decisions. Reiss and Vermeer [1] further emphasize that translation strategies should be selected according to the target text's communicative function, intended audience, and communicative situation rather than formal similarity alone.

For cultural tourism publicity, translation should make regional culture understandable and appealing to the intended audience. Therefore, the English translation of Bashu cultural tourism webpages should not reproduce every linguistic feature of the Chinese source text mechanically. Instead, it may use explanatory translation, concise annotation, and other adaptive strategies to convey the cultural meanings relevant to the target audience.

2.2. The coherence and fidelity rules

The coherence rule requires the target text to be understandable and acceptable within the communicative situation of the target audience [1]. Nord's [3] translation-oriented text analysis model further highlights the importance of considering the source-text function, communicative situation, target audience, and textual features before making translation decisions. In this study, the coherence rule is used to examine sentence restructuring, the reorganization of historical information, and changes in narrative perspective.

The fidelity rule concerns the relationship between the source and target texts. It does not require word-for-word correspondence, but requires the target text to maintain a meaningful relationship with the source text while fulfilling its communicative purpose [1]. In Bashu cultural tourism translation, fidelity involves preserving core cultural information and symbolic meanings while allowing appropriate adjustments in wording, structure, and information distribution.

2.3. Analytical framework of this study

The three principles provide a connected framework for the analysis. The Skopos rule determines the overall communicative direction; the coherence rule concerns the readability and acceptability of the target text; and the fidelity rule regulates the preservation and adaptation of source-text meanings. Based on this framework, the present study examines the case text from three perspectives: the translation of culture-specific expressions, the restructuring of narrative patterns, and the coordination of verbal and visual information.

These aspects correspond respectively to the communicative purpose, target-text coherence, and functional fidelity emphasized by Skopos theory.

3. The Australian and New Zealand audience context and translation challenges

Bashu culture includes distinctive regional symbols, historical references, folk customs, and cultural practices. When these elements are introduced to English-speaking audiences in Australia and New Zealand, translation involves not only linguistic transfer but also the adjustment of culturally embedded meanings to a target audience with potentially different cultural reference points. In this study, "Australian and New Zealand audiences" refers to English-speaking potential readers and tourists in these two national contexts. The term does not imply that all readers share identical cultural knowledge or reading preferences; rather, it identifies the specific target-market context of the publicity text.

Tourism translation is shaped by textual conventions, cultural distance, and the expectations of target readers [4]. It also contributes to the construction of a destination image by selecting and explaining cultural concepts for the target audience [5]. Therefore, the English translation of Bashu cultural tourism publicity should not simply reproduce the linguistic form of the Chinese source text. It should also consider whether Australian and New Zealand readers can recognize the cultural reference, understand its significance, and connect it with a possible travel experience.

From Hall's [6] encoding/decoding perspective, the source text encodes cultural meanings within a particular social and historical context, whereas target readers decode these meanings through their own cultural knowledge. When the two contexts do not sufficiently overlap, literal translation may result in incomplete or inaccurate interpretation. In the case of Bashu cultural tourism publicity aimed at audiences in Australia and New Zealand, three related challenges are particularly relevant.

First, culture-specific symbols may lack accessible equivalents in the target context. Dialect expressions, historical names, traditional festivals, folk performances, and local foods may be unfamiliar to Australian and New Zealand readers. Literal translation may preserve the surface form but fail to communicate the associated cultural meaning. The translator must therefore determine which terms should be retained, explained, or adapted.

Second, implicit cultural meanings may require selective clarification. Historical information, auspicious symbolism, and the cultural functions of folk activities may be self-evident to Chinese readers but less accessible to overseas readers. For the Australian and New Zealand target audience, background information may need to be reorganized or briefly explained so that the cultural meaning can be understood without excessive annotation.

Third, multimodal resources need to be coordinated for cross-cultural communication. A tourism webpage communicates through language, images, layout, and sometimes video. Visual materials may display the appearance of Bashu cultural objects, while written language explains their historical or symbolic significance. For Australian and New Zealand readers who may not possess the relevant cultural background, the relationship between text and image becomes especially important. Translation should therefore be assessed in relation to the communicative function of the webpage as a whole rather than at the sentence level alone.

These three challenges—cultural-symbol accessibility, selective explanation of implicit meanings, and multimodal coordination—form the analytical basis for the following case study. The subsequent analysis examines how the selected webpage addresses these challenges when presenting Bashu cultural tourism to audiences in Australia and New Zealand.

4. Case analysis: the English translation of *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan*

4.1. Corpus and analytical focus

This chapter examines *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan*, published by the Chinese Cultural Centre in Sydney on January 13, 2023. The webpage introduces Sichuan's historical figures, New Year customs, folk arts, local food, and tourist attractions through written descriptions and visual materials[1].

Although the webpage is published in Australia, this study treats its potential readers as English-speaking audiences in Australia and New Zealand. The two countries are not assumed to constitute a homogeneous cultural group. Rather, they represent the specific English-speaking target-market context examined in this study. The analysis therefore focuses on whether the translation provides sufficient cultural orientation, maintains readable English discourse, and presents Bashu culture as an accessible tourism experience for these audiences.

The analysis follows the three challenges identified in Chapter 3: the accessibility of culture-specific symbols, the explanation of implicit cultural meanings, and the coordination of verbal and visual resources.

4.2. Culture-specific symbols: retention with selective explanation

The webpage retains culturally distinctive names and expressions while providing brief explanations for readers who may not share the source culture's background knowledge. For example, Luo Xiahong is introduced as the "Father of the Chinese New Year", followed by information about the *Taichu Calendar* and its connection with the Spring Festival.

For Chinese readers, the historical relationship among Luo Xiahong, the Taichu Calendar, and the Spring Festival may be relatively easy to understand. For Australian and New Zealand readers, however, the name "Luo Xiahong" alone is unlikely to provide sufficient cultural information. The translation therefore retains the cultural name but adds a concise explanation of his historical role. This strategy avoids replacing the Chinese cultural reference with an approximate Western equivalent, while still giving target readers a basic interpretive framework.

A similar strategy appears in the description of Dazhou's "fire dragons". The webpage explains that local people burn "fire dragons" during the Lantern Festival "to pray for good weather and good harvests". The expression "fire dragons" preserves the visual image of the folk activity, while the following phrase explains its ritual function. For Australian and New Zealand readers unfamiliar with this custom, the explanation helps transform an unusual cultural image into an intelligible social practice.

The webpage also explains the relationship between "fish" and "surplus" in Chinese culture by noting that the two words are homophones in Chinese. This information is important because the auspicious meaning cannot be inferred from the English word "fish" itself. The translator therefore makes the cultural association explicit without providing a lengthy explanation.

These examples illustrate a strategy of selective cultural explicitation. It is consistent with the Skopos rule because the translation prioritizes the communicative purpose of introducing Bashu culture to an overseas

[1] Chinese Cultural Centre in Sydney. (2023, January 13). Celebrating a happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan. https://cccsydney.org/2023/01/13/celebrating-a-happy-chinese-new-year-in-sichuan/

audience. It also corresponds to the cultural-conceptual approach proposed by Sulaiman and Wilson [5], which emphasizes the need to reconstruct cultural concepts and destination images for target readers.

4.3. Narrative restructuring: from cultural description to visitor experience

The webpage reorganizes historical and cultural information in ways that support comprehension and tourism promotion. In the section on the Temple of Marquis Wu, Zhuge Liang is introduced as the "Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Shu", and Shu is further identified with "present-day Sichuan". Only after this background information does the text describe eating local food, watching Sichuan opera, and visiting the market.

This arrangement is significant for Australian and New Zealand readers who may not immediately recognize the historical relationship among Zhuge Liang, the Kingdom of Shu, and Sichuan. The added identification of Shu as present-day Sichuan reduces the geographical and historical distance between the cultural reference and the target reader. It allows the site to be understood not only as a historical location but also as a possible destination for visitors.

The translation also adopts a direct and experiential perspective. Expressions such as "You can experience rich local culture in Sichuan" and "You are welcome to come to Sichuan" address potential visitors directly. Compared with a purely descriptive presentation, this form of address helps connect cultural information with travel experience. It is particularly appropriate for tourism publicity because the target text is not only informing readers about Bashu culture but also inviting them to imagine visiting the destination.

This restructuring reflects the coherence rule. As Kelly [4] notes, tourism texts are influenced by genre conventions and reader expectations. The target text therefore needs to organize information in a way that is clear and persuasive within English tourism discourse. However, the translation does not completely replace the source culture with a foreign promotional framework. It maintains the focus on Sichuan's historical and cultural resources while adjusting their presentation for the target audience.

4.4. Text–image complementarity in cross-cultural communication

The webpage combines written descriptions with images of Mianzhu New Year woodblock prints, Pingwu paper-cutting, Sichuan opera, lanterns, and local food. These visual materials are particularly important for audiences in Australia and New Zealand who may have limited prior knowledge of Bashu folk culture. Images can provide an immediate impression of colors, forms, materials, and activities, while written language can explain their cultural meanings.

For example, the text describes Pingwu paper-cutting through its patterns of the twelve Chinese zodiac signs and its auspicious imagery. The image presents the visual characteristics of the paper-cutting, while the written explanation identifies its cultural associations. This division of communicative functions prevents the text from merely repeating what the image already shows.

From the perspective of multimodal translation, the webpage should be regarded as a complete communicative product rather than a collection of independent sentences. Kress and van Leeuwen [7] emphasize that visual design participates in meaning-making. In this case, the images may attract attention and provide cultural immediacy, while the English text guides Australian and New Zealand readers toward historically and symbolically relevant interpretations.

This strategy also demonstrates functional fidelity. The English text does not reproduce every visual detail in words, but it preserves the core cultural meanings of the source material within the webpage's multimodal structure. Such adaptation is consistent with the purpose of tourism publicity and with the target audience's need for both visual access and cultural explanation.

4.5. Case summary

The case demonstrates three target-oriented practices. First, culturally specific names, customs, and symbolic associations are retained but supplemented with concise explanations. This approach helps Australian and New Zealand readers access unfamiliar cultural references without removing their Bashu identity. Second, historical information and cultural activities are reorganized according to English tourism-text conventions, while direct address connects cultural heritage with potential visitor experience. Third, images and written language perform complementary functions: images provide visual access to Bashu culture, while text explains meanings that may not be immediately apparent.

Overall, the translation prioritizes communicative accessibility for audiences in Australia and New Zealand while maintaining a meaningful relationship with the source culture. However, because this study is based on textual and multimodal analysis rather than audience surveys or reception experiments, these observations describe the translation's intended audience orientation rather than its empirically verified reception.

5. Translation strategies for Bashu cultural tourism web publicity aimed at audiences in Australia and New Zealand

5.1. Selective explicitation of culture-specific expressions

For audiences in Australia and New Zealand, the translation of Bashu cultural tourism webpages should distinguish between information that can be understood from context and information that requires cultural explanation. Tourism translation is influenced by textual conventions, cultural distance, and target-reader expectations [4]. It also contributes to the construction of a destination image by presenting cultural concepts in ways that are meaningful to the target audience [5].

For culture-specific expressions without direct English equivalents, explanatory translation can be used to convey the cultural meaning rather than simply reproduce the surface form. Historical figures, place names, traditional festivals, and folk arts may retain their Chinese forms through transliteration, while concise annotations provide essential background information. For customs with symbolic meanings, the cultural function should be made explicit when it cannot be inferred from the literal wording. For example, the association between "fish" and "surplus" should be explained because the auspicious meaning depends on a Chinese homophonic relationship that is not available in English.

This strategy may be termed selective cultural explicitation. It is not intended to explain every aspect of Bashu culture to Australian and New Zealand readers. Rather, it identifies the minimum cultural information necessary for readers to recognize the meaning and appeal of a cultural element. Concise explanations are particularly suitable for webpages, while more detailed historical or cultural information can be provided through hyperlinks, supplementary articles, or video captions.

The translator should also avoid replacing Bashu cultural references with supposedly familiar Western equivalents. Such substitutions may increase immediate readability but weaken regional identity and distort the cultural image presented to the target audience. A more appropriate approach is to retain the distinctive cultural form and provide sufficient contextual guidance.

5.2. Reconstructing narrative patterns for English tourism discourse

The translation should also take into account the textual conventions of English tourism publicity. Cultural information that is implicit or backgrounded in Chinese may need to be reorganized for English-speaking readers in Australia and New Zealand. Historical identities, geographical locations, and the functions of folk

activities should be presented in a clear order so that readers can understand the cultural information before being invited to imagine the travel experience.

The case webpage illustrates this approach by identifying Zhuge Liang as the "Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Shu" and explaining that Shu refers to present-day Sichuan. This information helps readers who may not immediately recognize the historical and geographical significance of the Temple of Marquis Wu. The translation also uses direct address, as in "You can experience rich local culture in Sichuan" and "You are welcome to come to Sichuan", thereby connecting cultural heritage with potential visitor experience.

Accordingly, translators may adopt the following adjustments: place necessary historical or geographical information before unfamiliar cultural activities; divide long descriptive sequences into clear English sentences; make implicit cultural functions explicit when they are important for interpretation; use a moderate visitor-oriented perspective to support the promotional purpose; and remove redundant modifiers without eliminating culturally significant information.

These adjustments should remain controlled. Australian and New Zealand audiences should not be treated as a homogeneous group with identical cultural knowledge or reading habits. The translator should therefore avoid unsupported assumptions and rely on textual clarity, contextual explanation, and genre conventions rather than stereotypes. The goal is to make the target text accessible without reducing Bashu culture to a simplified or exoticized image.

5.3. Constructing an accessible destination image

Tourism publicity translation does more than transmit information; it also shapes how readers imagine a destination. Sulaiman and Wilson [5] argue that tourism promotional materials should construct a favorable destination image on the basis of the target audience's cultural conceptualization. This insight is relevant to the English presentation of Bashu culture for audiences in Australia and New Zealand.

In practice, the translation should connect cultural heritage with concrete travel experiences. Historical sites can be presented not only as repositories of the past but also as places where visitors can watch performances, taste local food, or participate in seasonal activities. Folk customs should be explained in terms of their social or symbolic functions rather than presented as isolated spectacles. Local food can likewise be introduced through both its ingredients or preparation and its cultural associations.

However, constructing an accessible destination image does not mean adding exaggerated claims or replacing cultural description with commercial slogans. The translation should preserve the source text's cultural focus and avoid presenting Bashu culture as merely unusual or exotic. A balanced destination image should include regional distinctiveness, historical depth, everyday cultural practices, and opportunities for visitor engagement.

5.4. Coordinating text and visual resources

A cultural tourism webpage is a multimodal text in which written language, images, layout, and video work together to create meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen [7] explain that visual design participates in the representation of people, objects, actions, and social relations. Therefore, translation should consider what information is already conveyed visually and what information still requires verbal explanation.

For audiences in Australia and New Zealand who may have limited prior knowledge of Bashu folk culture, images can provide immediate access to colors, forms, materials, and activities. Written language can then explain historical background, production processes, symbolic meanings, or cultural functions. For example, an image of Pingwu paper-cutting can display its visual patterns, while the accompanying text explains its connection with the Chinese zodiac and auspicious symbolism.

This division of communicative functions reduces unnecessary repetition and supports functional fidelity. The written translation does not need to describe every visual detail if the image already presents it clearly. Instead, it should focus on cultural meanings that may not be immediately available to the target audience. The same principle can guide the production of short social-media posts, image captions, and video subtitles derived from the main webpage.

5.5. Maintaining consistency across communication platforms

The translation of Bashu cultural tourism should remain consistent across webpages, social-media posts, short videos, and image captions. The names of historical figures, festivals, folk arts, scenic locations, and local foods should be standardized before publication. A bilingual glossary can record the preferred English form, pinyin, concise explanation, and any forms that should be avoided.

Such consistency is especially important when communicating with audiences in Australia and New Zealand who may encounter Bashu culture through different media rather than through a single webpage. Consistent terminology can help readers recognize that different texts refer to the same cultural object and can gradually support a more stable understanding of the destination. At the same time, different platforms may require different levels of detail: webpages can provide background information, whereas social-media texts should highlight one or two cultural features in a concise form.

5.6. Summary

For audiences in Australia and New Zealand, the English translation of Bashu cultural tourism publicity should combine cultural specificity with contextual accessibility. First, culture-specific expressions should be selectively explained without removing their regional identity. Second, historical and cultural information should be reorganized according to English tourism-text conventions. Third, translation should help construct an accessible and culturally responsible destination image. Fourth, written language should complement visual materials, and key terms should remain consistent across communication platforms.

These strategies reflect a purpose-oriented approach to tourism translation. They do not assume that Australian and New Zealand readers form a completely uniform group, but they recognize the need to adapt Bashu cultural publicity to a specific English-speaking target-market context.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the English translation of Bashu cultural tourism web publicity for audiences in Australia and New Zealand, taking *Celebrating a Happy Chinese New Year in Sichuan* as a case. Based on Skopos theory and qualitative case analysis, it investigated the translation of culture-specific expressions, the restructuring of narrative information, and the coordination of verbal and visual resources.

The analysis shows that translation for this target context should prioritize communicative purpose while maintaining cultural specificity. Explanatory translation and concise annotation can make unfamiliar historical references, folk customs, and symbolic meanings more accessible to Australian and New Zealand readers. Narrative restructuring can improve the coherence of the English webpage and connect cultural heritage with potential visitor experience. In addition, the coordination of text and images can reduce unnecessary repetition and provide both visual access and cultural explanation. These practices reflect a flexible balance among purpose, coherence, and fidelity.

This study is limited by its reliance on a single webpage and qualitative textual analysis. It does not include audience surveys, interviews, or reception data, and therefore cannot directly verify how Australian and New

Zealand readers respond to the translation. Future research could examine a larger range of Bashu cultural tourism texts and combine textual analysis with audience-based methods. Comparative studies of webpages, social-media posts, and video subtitles could further explore how translation strategies vary across media and how effectively they support the international communication of Bashu culture.

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