

Strategies of Cultural and Tourism Text Translation from the Perspective of the "Cultural Turn"

Fuli Li*, Jun Chen and Xiaotang Lv

Faculty of Foreign Languages & Northern Jiangsu Development Research Institute, Huaiyin Institute of Technology, Huai'an 223001, Jiangsu Province, China
Email: 185075584@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Li, F. L., Chen, J., & Lv, X. T. (2025). Strategies of Cultural and Tourism Text Translation from the Perspective of the "Cultural Turn". *Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(3), 37-43. ISSN Print: 3104-4328; ISSN Online: 3104-4336. <https://doi.org/10.63313/SSH.9052>
Published: 2025-12-25

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Erytis Publishing Limited.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Abstract

Based on the "Cultural Turn" theory proposed by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, this paper adopts literature research, case analysis, and comparative study methods to sort out typical cases of cultural tourism (CT) text translation systematically. The overall analysis indicates that there are five core strategies, covering target orientation, strategy selection, subject composition, technology application and evaluation, that may help to optimize the translation of CT texts in practice. Aligning with the core tenets of the "Cultural Turn" theory, these strategies are more practical and effective in enhancing the quality of cross-cultural communication and CT text translation.

Keywords

"Cultural Turn"; cultural and tourism text; strategies; cross-cultural communication

1. Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization and the advancement of the "integration of culture and tourism" strategy, the CT industry has become a core carrier for cultural communication. As a key link connecting tourist destinations and international tourists, translation directly relates to regional cultural communication as well as international tourism. Academic attention to this field has been rising with the promotion of the "Belt and Road" Initiative.

"Cultural Turn" in translation casts light on CT translation since cultural transmission has been emphasized over "merely linguistic transfer". It emphasizes translation's role as a cultural intermediary, requiring a balance between the authenticity of the source culture and the context of the target culture. However, CT text translation still faces dilemmas: linguistic errors and cultural conflicts in scenic spot public

signs, superficial connotations in the translation of folk culture texts, and perfunctory application of digital tools, all of which restrict cross-cultural communication effects.

Existing research covers regional practice and theoretical integration, but suffers from scattered research areas, insufficient exploration of technological applications and lack of attention to emerging CT texts. Based on the "Cultural Turn" theory, this study combines the analysis of cases and trends to propose five systematic strategies to address practical issues in CT translation.

2. Literature Review

From the perspective of the "Cultural Turn", research on CT text translation has formed a pattern of diversified exploration, with core achievements focusing on three major directions: First, research on the translation practice of regional CT texts. Wu et al. [1] proposed strategies such as cultural compensation and transliteration plus annotation to avoid cultural default. For example, the translation of scenic spot names can adopt methods like "transliteration of specific terms + free translation of generic terms". Wang et al. [2] analyzed folk custom texts in the Beibu Gulf region of Guangxi and argued that the translation of CT texts should attach importance to culture-loaded words. Li [3] pointed out that it is urgent to address problems in scenic spot translation such as oversimplification, lack of rigor, and multiple translations for the same place.

Second, theoretical integration and strategy construction. Li [4] proposed that cultural translation practice requires both domestication and foreignization strategies based on the Skopos Theory and the Cultural Turn theory. Based on the translation practice of Beautiful Jiangsu, Jiang [5] verified that the application of the Cultural Turn theory can reduce barriers for target-language readers and improve the readability of translated texts.

Third, the expansion of research perspectives. Recent research has gradually shifted from the study of single text translation to the improvement of cross-cultural communication effectiveness.

By reviewing the Cultural Turn theory, combining case analysis of typical CT text translations in recent years and adopting methods such as vertical comparison, this paper aims to explore some referential and illuminating guiding strategies that may help translators optimize their translations in practice.

3. "Cultural Turn" Theory and CT Texts

3.1. Core Essentials of the "Cultural Turn" Theory

Bassnett and Lefevere [6] proposed in the 1990s, the "Cultural Turn" theory regards translation as a cultural practice rather than a mere linguistic transfer. It emphasizes translation's functions as a cultural intermediary and identity constructor, op-

posing "linguistic centralism" and "cultural hegemony". It advocates balancing the authenticity of the source culture and the adaptability of the target culture, building a bridge for equal cross-cultural dialogue. Therefore, translation practice should adapt to specific historical and cultural contexts related to cultural backgrounds and audience cognitive frameworks, and achieve a dynamic balance between cultural fidelity and communicative effectiveness. Thus, the theories of the Cultural Turn naturally provide core theoretical support for the construction of CT text translation strategies.

3.2. Characteristics of CT Texts

CT texts cover a variety of types such as scenic spot introductions, public signs, folk culture texts, tourist brochures, and tour guide scripts, with three major characteristics: first, CT texts contain a large number of unique culture-loaded elements such as historical allusions, folk customs and cultural images; second, the diverse requirements of different audiences, which may include tourism-oriented users who focus on practical information like transportation and accommodation, and cultural experience-oriented users who prioritize cultural connotations; third, the diversified communication scenarios range from print texts and digital media to scenic spot signs, which place high requirements on the adaptability of translation.

4. Typical Case Analysis

4.1. Jiaozuo's Scenic Spot – a Model of Compound Strategies

Jiaozuo boasts scenic spots integrating natural and historical connotations. Early translations had problems such as "multiple translations for one place" and "cultural default", affecting international communication.

Based on the "Cultural Turn" theory, the local government formulated the Specifications for English Translation of Scenic Spots, adopting a compound strategy of "transliteration of proper nouns + free translation of common nouns + cultural annotation". For example, historical scenic spots there emphasize cultural origin tracing, natural scenic spots balance geographical characteristics and cognitive adaptability, while folk-custom scenic spots adopt thick translation. This strategy effectively improved translation standardization and the influence of cultural transmission, providing empirical support for scenario-based strategies.

4.2. Guangxi Bronze Drum ICH Texts – Cultural Transmission through Thick Translation

As a national intangible cultural heritage (ICH), Guangxi bronze drums carry the historical memories of the Luoyue people. Their core external communication texts need to convey cultural connotations accurately, so translators adopted a thick translation strategy. They implemented "transliteration + definition + function" annotations for terms, supplemented customs through footnotes, and used "functional

equivalence + cultural explanation" for folk concepts without corresponding vocabulary, effectively realizing the cross-cultural transmission of cultural connotations.

4.3. Dujiangyan Scenic Area - Innovative Practice of Technological Empowerment

Language barriers in the Dujiangyan Scenic Area affected tourists' experience. By introducing AI intelligent translation screens, the Dujiangyan Scenic Area constructed a collaborative model of "AI-based translation + human cultural optimization", which supports real-time multilingual mutual translation and adopts graphic multi-modal presentation for public signs. It effectively broke through the bottlenecks of translation efficiency and standardization, and tourists' experience has been improved thereby.

4.4. Yangzhou's Tourism Texts - Adaptation Based on Eco-translatology

Yangzhou's tourism texts are rich in Jiangnan cultural characteristics. Early translations had problems such as distorted cultural images and rigid expressions. Based on the "three-dimensional transformation" theory of Eco-translatology, translators adapted their works from several dimensions. The new versions not only supplement cultural connotations and practical information but also highlight the importance of differentiated audience adaptation, and even retain poetic expressions to fully convey the poetic connotations of the source text.

4.5. Summary

The above cases have demonstrated distinct advantages in practice: first, they emphasized the in-depth exploration and transmission of regional cultural connotations, avoiding the superficialization of cultural information; second, they adjusted translation approaches flexibly according to text types and audience requirements, breaking through the limitations of a single strategy; third, they focused on multi-agent collaborative participation, enhancing the professionalism and accuracy of translation. These advantages are a concrete manifestation of the core viewpoints of the Cultural Turn theory. In other words, these translations prioritized cultural context and served the purpose of cultural communication, which verifies the guiding value of the Cultural Turn theory for the practice of CT text translation.

5. Strategies for CT Text Translation

The aforementioned successful cases have not only effectively addressed core issues such as "imbalanced cultural transmission and rigid translation strategies" in CT text translation but also laid a practical foundation for corresponding strategy research. By extracting their core advantages and combining them with the key characteristics of CT texts – which feature a high density of cultural load, diverse audi-

ence needs and varied communication scenarios – the following five translation strategies are proposed to provide guidance for the practice of CT text translation.

- Goal orientation prioritizes the dual-effect integration of cultural transmission and practical guidance. CT texts possess dual functions of cultural carriage and tourism service, which determine that the goals of translation must balance "cultural transmission" and "practical guidance". Based on the above cases, precise goal orientation is the key to avoiding cultural imbalance. Therefore, for texts focusing on cultural transmission such as scenic spot cultural explanations, priority should be given to exploring the regional cultural core (e.g., historical allusions, folk connotations) to ensure the complete transmission of cultural information; for practical texts such as public signs and transportation guides, translators should focus on the clarity and comprehensibility of information to ensure audiences can obtain guidance quickly. Thus, cross-cultural communication can strike a balance between cultural transmission and practical functions.
- Dynamic selection of translation strategies adapts to text types. One of the crux of rigid strategies in previous practices is that CT texts are diverse in types with significant functional differences, so a dynamic adaptation system should be constructed in response to this characteristic. The domestication strategy should be adopted to simplify redundant cultural information in line with the language habits of target audiences to ensure efficient and precise guidance, such as for scenic spot public signs and accommodation instructions; regarding culture-loaded texts such as folk custom introductions and scenic spot allusions, adopting a blended strategy of "foreignization as the mainstay + domestication as a supplement" is a more rational choice. Specifically, transliteration combined with annotations that provide essential background context enables the retention of cultural uniqueness while reducing cross-cultural comprehension obstacles. When dealing with texts that feature dual attributes, translators ought to flexibly adjust the proportion of the two strategies to reconcile cultural transmission with audience acceptance. This practice conforms to the Cultural Turn's emphasis on integrating cultural context into translation, ensuring both the preservation of cultural specifics and the enhancement of communicative efficiency.
- Multi-agent collaboration constitutes the core of subject construction. The accurate interpretation of cultural elements in CT texts requires professional knowledge of regional culture rather than relying solely on a single translator. Given the high cultural load characteristic of the texts, a multi-agent collaborative model of "translator + cultural consultant + external publicity expert" should be a better choice for satisfactory translation. Translators are responsible for language conversion and text fluency, while cultural consultants oversee the interpretation of regional cultural elements to ensure precise cultural transmission; experts optimize the communication adaptability of translated texts in accord-

ance with cross-cultural communication rules. By clarifying responsibilities and establishing communication mechanisms, the advantages of all parties are integrated to provide professional support for translation quality.

- Technological empowerment improves scenario-adapted efficiency. CT texts cover various communication scenarios such as print media, digital platforms and scenic spot signs, with different requirements for translation timeliness and standardization in different scenarios. Drawing on the above successful cases, technological assistance can help adapt to scenarios accurately via corpus analysis. For scenarios such as scenic spot signs and digital CT platforms, a dedicated multilingual terminology database of CT can help generate rapid preliminary translations by combining with AI translation; the "AI preliminary translation + manual refinement" model may be necessary for highly culture-loaded texts, such as the translation of folk classics and historical stories. With AI technology assisting in the retrieval of cultural elements, manual work controls the conversion of cultural connotations and optimizes the presentation form of translated texts through digital technology, thereby enhancing the intuitiveness of cross-cultural communication.
- A closed-loop evaluation and feedback strategy optimizes cross-cultural effectiveness. Generally, CT translations are evaluated by translators or some experts, which leads to various problems related to language, culture and communication. Combined with their core attribute of cross-cultural communication, a multi-dimensional evaluation system can assess translated texts using indicators from three aspects: text quality (including accuracy and fluency), cultural adaptability (including no cultural conflicts and completeness of cultural information), and communication effect (including audience reading volume and cultural cognition feedback). Collecting feedback through a combination of quantitative statistics involving communication data and qualitative analysis involving audience interviews to establish a closed-loop consisting of translation practice, evaluation feedback and strategy optimization is more effective for continuously improving cross-cultural communication and the quality of CT translation.

In summary, leveraging the advantages of the cases, the five strategies can accurately adapt to the core characteristics of CT texts with a complete support system from five perspectives – orientation, strategy, subject, technology and evaluation – which can provide targeted and operable guidance for the practice of CT text translation.

6. Conclusion and Prospect

Based on the "Cultural Turn" theory and combined with case analysis, this study constructs five optimized strategies for CT text translation, including translation goals, translation strategies, multi-agent collaboration, technological empowerment and evaluation and feedback. By strengthening the paradigmatic transformation of

translation from "linguistic transfer" to "cultural communication and identity construction", the strategies are likely to solve practical cruxes and improve cross-cultural communication efficiency.

In view of the limitations such as limited cases and insufficient quantitative research, future research can expand to texts for immersive cultural tourism experiences and deepen quantitative tracking and cross-cultural comparison to promote CT text translation practically and theoretically.

Acknowledgments

Philosophy and Social Sciences of Jiangsu Province for financial support "Research on the Teaching of Chinese to English Translation Based on the Correction Network Platform" (2022SJYB1936).

Northern Jiangsu Development Research Institute for financial support "AI-Assisted Teaching Model and Practical Exploration of Jianghuai Culture Integration into College English"(2025GJ12)

References

- [1] Wurlitzer, T., & Li, H. M. (2025). A Research on English Translation of Scenic Spot Names in Jiaozuo under the Cultural Turn Perspective [J]. *New Legend*, (05): 22-24.
- [2] Wang, J., & Wei, C. X. (2022). A Study on English Translation of Folk Culture-loaded Words in Guangxi's Beibu Gulf under the Cultural Turn Perspective [J]. *Modern English*, (17): 59-62.
- [3] Li, L. (2023). On the Translation of Scenic Spot Names from the Perspective of the Cultural Turn [J]. *Culture Journal*, (04): 189-192.
- [4] Li, X. M. (2021). An Analysis of the Translation of Fujian's Maritime Silk Road Culture and Talent Cultivation Approaches from the Perspective of Skopos Theory and the Cultural Turn [J]. *Overseas English*, (14): 18-20.
- [5] Jiang, L. (2020). A Report on Tourism Text from the Perspective of Cultural Turn: A Case Study on Beautiful Jiangsu (Excerpts) [D]. Jilin International Studies University.
- [6] Lefevere, A., & Bassnett, S. (1990). *Translation, History and Culture* [M]. London/New York: Printer.
- [7] Fan, Y. G. (2020). Reconstruction of Aesthetic Research Paradigms from the Perspectives of the Cultural Turn and Digital Humanities [J]. *Social Sciences in Chinese Higher Education Institutions*, (01): 124-134.
- [8] Fan, R. E. (2024). From Cultural Turn to Historicist Turn: Re-examining the Cultural Turn in Translation Studies [J]. *Translation Research and Teaching*, (01): 89-96.
- [9] Chang, J. (2021). A Study of English-Chinese Subtitle Translation of Documentary Films from the Perspective of Cultural Turn [D]. Inner Mongolia University.