

A Study on the Current Status of Japanese Translation of Cultural Tourism Attractions in Nanbu County and Corresponding Translation Strategies

Zhulin Jiang

Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism, Nanchong 637400, China

Abstract

Nanbu County boasts abundant cultural tourism resources, with numerous renowned cultural tourism attractions such as Lifengguan Temple and the Cliff Carvings on Yuji Mountain. Meanwhile, the Nanbu County government is actively promoting the "Tourism Plus" strategy, aiming to innovate tourism development models and enhance the quality of tourism development. However, there are numerous issues in the Japanese translation and promotion of cultural tourism attractions in Nanbu County, which will significantly hinder the healthy development of the county's tourism industry. Therefore, this paper focuses on examining the current status of Japanese translation for well-known cultural tourism attractions within Nanbu County and proposes targeted translation strategies based on this analysis.

Keywords

Nanbu County, cultural tourism, Japanese translation, translation strategies.

1. Introduction

The proposal of the "Belt and Road" neo-economic strategy has presented a new opportunity for the further development and expansion of China's tourism industry. Against this backdrop, ensuring high-quality translation of tourism attraction texts is of paramount importance for cultural promotion and attracting tourists.

Japan stands as one of China's significant source countries for tourism, with its tourists showing an increasingly strong interest in China's cultural tourism resources. However, a literature review reveals that, at present, research in China on the Japanese translation of tourist attractions is relatively scarce. Existing studies predominantly focus on the translation of public signs at tourist spots, and the research objects mainly cover traditional levels such as words, sentences, paragraphs, and discourses. For instance, Qin Shimei et al. (2021) pointed out the current situation in Hebei Province, where the coverage rate of Japanese public signs in scenic areas rated 4A and above is low, and the Japanese translation of public signs in red tourism attractions is unsatisfactory. They subsequently proposed measures such as vigorously strengthening the Japanese translation work of public signs in scenic areas and avoiding mistranslations [5]. Zhang Guo (2022) explored papers related to the research on the Japanese translation of public signs, highlighting issues such as the simplicity of research methods, a narrow research scope, and the lack of support and construction from translation theories. Zhang also put forward prospects for gradually expanding the research scope and further enhancing the research depth [3]. Zhang Tuo (2024), through a field survey of Japanese public signs in the Dinghu Mountain Scenic Area, discovered problems such as numerous grammatical errors, Chinglish-style Japanese, and omissions of information in the translations. Zhang proposed optimization strategies, including strengthening the sense of responsibility among translators and ensuring accurate translations by referring to national standards [1]. Additionally, Zhang Yi et al. (2020), in their investigation of the current status of the Japanese

translation of the external publicity website for red tourism resources in Changsha, identified problems related to website construction and Japanese translation. They proposed countermeasures such as strengthening the construction of Japanese web pages and formulating detailed translation rules [6]. Guo Yue et al. (2021) pointed out that, under the background of the "Belt and Road" Initiative, the Japanese translation of tourism publicity texts in Fuxin is basically in a blank stage. They proposed translation strategies based on the linguistic, cultural, and communicative dimensions of eco-translatology theory [4]. Feng Qing (2023), in their research on the Qixingyan Scenic Area, found problems such as a small quantity of Japanese translations and Chinglish-style Japanese. Feng proposed that functionalist translation theories, with the principles of skopos, coherence, and fidelity as their main content, are conducive to the translation of tourism texts [2]. A review of the literature reveals that there is currently a scarcity of research on the Japanese translation of tourist attractions within Nanchong City. The existing studies have predominantly focused solely on the Japanese translation of public signs at tourist attractions. For instance, Liu Ziyang (2015) conducted an analysis of mistranslations in the public signs at Langzhong Ancient City from the perspective of cross-cultural communication and revised the inaccurate and non-standard Japanese translations [8]. Ge Huiling (2019), in her study on the Japanese translations of public signs within the Wanjuanlou Scenic Area in Nanchong, which were collected through fieldwork, pointed out issues such as low prevalence and verbosity in the Japanese translations of the public signs. She proposed countermeasures that necessitate collaborative efforts from the government, scenic area managers, and translators to bring about improvements [7].

Nanbu County boasts unique and abundant cultural tourism resources. Strengthening the Japanese translation and promotion of its cultural tourism attractions is of great significance for attracting Japanese tourists and facilitating the sound development of the tourism industry in Nanbu County. However, the current status of Japanese translation and promotion for cultural tourism attractions in Nanbu County is far from satisfactory, with numerous issues existing. Therefore, it is imperative to conduct in-depth research on this matter and propose effective translation strategies.

2. Current Status of Japanese Translation of Cultural Tourism Attractions in Nanbu County and Corresponding Translation Strategies

2.1. Current Status of Japanese Translations

Through on-site investigations of renowned cultural and tourist attractions in Nanbu County, significant disparities in Japanese-language promotional materials were observed among these sites. Take Nanbu Wenmiao (Confucian Temple) as an example. There is a notable absence of both Chinese and, more critically, Japanese introductions at the entrance of the site. Based on supplementary research, it can be noted that Nanbu Wenmiao, located on Wenmiao Street, Binjiang Sub-district, Nanbu County, Nanchong City, Sichuan Province, was originally constructed during the Hongwu period of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1398). The existing structures are remnants of a Qing Dynasty reconstruction, spanning an area of approximately 1,500 square meters. The temple follows a symmetrical layout along a central axis, featuring key structures such as the Dacheng Hall, two side wings, and the Panchi and Panqiao (moon-shaped pool and bridge), with a total construction area of 916.72 square meters. Nanbu Wenmiao stands as a hallmark of local cultural heritage in Nanbu County and is the sole well-preserved ancient architectural complex within the county's urban area.

In contrast, attractions like Lifengguan Temple and the Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings, despite having Chinese introductions, lack Japanese translations. The Chinese introduction to Lifengguan Temple is as follows: Lifengguan Temple is a Yuan Dynasty bracket-set architectural masterpiece, built in the 11th year of the Dade era (1307 AD). The temple is named after the

sweet spring water that once flowed from an ancient well on the ridge of Huanghou Mountain, known as Lifeng (Sweet Peak). Additionally, because the well was sealed by Li Xiong, the emperor of the Dacheng Kingdom during the late Western Jin Dynasty, and the temple was constructed atop the sealed well, it is also referred to as Lifengguan or Lifeng Temple. The building faces south, with a width and depth of 8 meters each. Lifengguan Temple is one of only seven extant Yuan Dynasty buildings in Sichuan Province. Despite enduring over 690 years, its main beam framework remains intact, offering invaluable physical evidence for the study of Yuan Dynasty architecture and carrying significant historical, scientific, and artistic value.

The Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings, recognized as China's first standing stone-carved Buddha, are designated as a national key cultural relic protection unit. The Chinese introduction to the Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings is as follows: The Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings depict Sakyamuni Buddha and date back to the late Tang Dynasty. Carved into the mountainside of Yuji Mountain, they are also known as the Yuji Mountain Giant Buddha. Standing at a towering height of 18 meters, the Buddha is carved using the round-carving technique. Its form, facial features, and garment folds are rendered with simple yet flowing lines, embodying the aesthetic charm of "Cao's water-emerging robes and Wu's wind-blown ribbons." The Buddha's expression exudes both solemnity and compassion, attracting a continuous stream of devotees over the centuries. Beneath the Buddha lies a spring that never dries up and is believed to possess healing properties, endearing it to worshippers. Due to its ancient origins, exquisite carving techniques, and unique posture, the Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings rank among the nation's finest, cementing Yuji Mountain's status as a pivotal Buddhist site in northeastern Sichuan and earning it the title of "the most sacred mountain under heaven."

2.2. Translation Strategies

In light of the current status mentioned above, to enhance the quality of Japanese translations for the promotional materials of cultural tourism attractions in Nanbu County, the following translation strategies can be adopted:

1. Establish a professional translation team: Invite experts and scholars with extensive experience in tourism translation and a profound knowledge of both Chinese and Japanese languages and cultures to form a translation team, thereby ensuring the accuracy and professionalism of the translations. For attractions like the Nanbu Wenmiao that lack Chinese introductions, professional personnel should first draft accurate and vivid Chinese introductions based on available materials before proceeding with Japanese translation.
2. Adhere to translation principles: During the translation process, it is imperative to strictly follow the principles of "faithfulness, expressiveness, and elegance." This means not only remaining faithful to the original content but also ensuring that the translation is smooth, comprehensible, and in line with Japanese expression habits. For instance, when translating the names and historical backgrounds of attractions, it is essential to accurately convey their cultural connotations. When describing the unique features of attractions, vivid and engaging language should be employed to capture the interest of Japanese tourists.
3. Pay attention to cultural differences: Take full account of the cultural disparities between China and Japan to avoid inaccuracies in translation due to cultural misunderstandings. For example, when translating content related to religion, history, etc., it is crucial to delve into the cultural backgrounds and cognitive habits of Japanese tourists and make appropriate adjustments and explanations.
4. Establish a review mechanism: After completing the translations, establish a rigorous review mechanism. Invite Japanese friends or Japanese language professionals to review and revise the translations to ensure their quality. Meanwhile, regularly update and refine the translated content to adapt to the ever-changing demands of the tourism market.

In addition, with regard to the Chinese introductions of the Nanbu Wenmiao, Lifengguan Temple, and the Yuji Mountain Cliff Carvings mentioned earlier, the author provides the following Japanese translation suggestions:

1. 南部文廟は四川省南充市南部県滨江街道文廟街に位置し、明の洪武年間（1368年-1398年）に創建されたものである。現存する建物は清代に再建された遺構であり、敷地面積は約1500平方メートルに及ぶ。その建物は軸線対称式の配置をとっており、主な建物には大成殿、両廡、泮池泮橋があり、建物面積は916.72平方メートルである。南部文廟は南部県の地方人文歴史の象徴であり、南部県城内で唯一、完全に保存されている古建築群でもある。

2. 醴峰観は、元代の闘棋建築の一つであり、大元大徳十一年（1307年）に建設された。その所在地である皇后山梁には元々古井戸があり、その井戸水は甘美で、古くから「醴峰（甘い峰の意）」と称されていたことから、醴峰観と名付けられた。また、この古井戸は西晋末の大成国皇帝李雄によって封じられたことがあり、観はその封じられた井戸の上に建てられたため、李封観とも呼ばれている。この建築物は北を向き南に面しており、間口は三間で、奥行も間口も共に8メートルである。醴峰観はわが省に現存する元代建築の七棟のうちの一つであり、690余年の歳月を経てもなお、その主体の梁架は良好な状態を保っている。これは元代の古建築を研究する上で貴重な実物資料を提供しており、重要な歴史的、科学的、芸術的価値を持っている。

3. 禹跡山の摩崖石刻造像は釈迦牟尼仏であり、晩唐時代の作品である。この造像は禹跡山の中腹に刻まれていることから、禹跡山大仏とも呼ばれている。仏像の通高は18メートルで、全体が円彫技法で彫刻されている。その形制、体貌、衣紋の刻飾りのラインは簡潔で流麗であり、円潤かつ逸々とした韻味を備え、「曹衣出水・呉帯当風」の神韻を現している。仏像の表情は静粛で威厳を帯びると同時に、慈悲深く寛大な様相を呈しており、千年にわたって香火が絶えず旺盛である。大仏の足元には泉があり、決して枯れることなく、病気を治し、体調を回復させる効能があるとして、信者たちに深く愛されている。禹跡山の摩崖石刻造像は、その古い年代、卓越した彫刻芸術、独特な彫刻姿勢により、全国でもトップクラスのものと評価され、川東北地域の仏教重鎮と「天下第一霊山」の地位を確立している。

3. Conclusion

The rich cultural and tourism resources in Nanbu County provide it with unique advantages for the development of its tourism industry. However, the issues existing in the Japanese translation of promotional materials for cultural and tourist attractions have constrained its ability to attract Japanese tourists. By conducting in-depth research on the current status of Japanese translation for cultural and tourist attractions in Nanbu County and implementing targeted translation strategies, the quality of Japanese translation for promotional purposes can be effectively enhanced. This, in turn, will strengthen the appeal of Nanbu County's cultural and tourist attractions in the Japanese market, thereby promoting the sound development of its tourism industry. Looking ahead, it is essential to continuously monitor market trends and tourist demands, and to consistently refine translation efforts, so as to lay a solid foundation for the internationalization of Nanbu County's cultural tourism.

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