

Translation and Dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Context of Tourism-Culture Integration: A Case Study of Korean Translation of Langzhong Spring Festival Culture

Xiaohan Yang

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

Abstract

With the successful inscription of the Spring Festival on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and China's "Going Global" cultural strategy, the international dissemination of local festival cultures has gained new momentum. Langzhong, recognized as the "Hometown of Spring Festival Culture," possesses unique regional characteristics and cultural value in its Spring Festival traditions. However, its dissemination to Korean audiences faces challenges, including inconsistent terminology, weakened cultural imagery, excessive reliance on transliteration, singular dissemination formats, and insufficient integration with tourism. Using the "Korean Translation of Langzhong Spring Festival Culture" as a case study and drawing upon Medio-translatology theory, this research employs literature review and case analysis to examine the current status and issues of its translation and dissemination in Korea. It proposes optimization strategies focusing on "Culture-Language Adaptation," "Multimodal Dissemination," and "Tourism-Culture Integrated Development." This study aims to fill the academic gap in the translation of festive intangible cultural heritage (ICH) within the Korean linguistic context, enrich the theoretical framework of ICH dissemination, provide references for the international promotion of ICH and the development of the cultural tourism industry in Langzhong and Nanchong City, and offer new perspectives for local cultural exchanges between China and South Korea.

Keywords

Langzhong Spring Festival Culture, Korean Translation, Medio-translatology, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Tourism-Culture Integration.

1. Introduction

With the continuous advancement of China's "Going Global" cultural strategy, the international dissemination of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) has gradually become a focal point of national cultural strategy, garnering widespread attention from academia and policymakers. The "14th Five-Year Plan for Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection" and the "14th Five-Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development" explicitly call for promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of ICH, actively expanding its vitality and influence within the context of international communication [1]. Particularly against the backdrop of tourism-culture integration, how to effectively translate and disseminate ICH internationally has become an urgent and significant task.

On December 4, 2024, "The Spring Festival - Social Practices for Celebrating the Traditional Lunar New Year by the Chinese People" was successfully inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, signifying the increasing global recognition of China's festive ICH items [2]. Langzhong Spring Festival culture, as an important regional branch of the Spring Festival, holds significant cultural value and

dissemination potential. It is also a core resource for promoting the international development of the local cultural tourism industry.

Following China's visa-free policy for South Korean citizens implemented in 2024, enthusiasm for travel to China among South Koreans has surged, presenting new opportunities for disseminating traditional Chinese culture in Korea. However, significant shortcomings persist in the Korean dissemination of Chinese ICH regarding language conversion, cultural adaptation, and dissemination formats. Some cultural concepts risk being misunderstood or assimilated.

Therefore, this study takes "Langzhong Spring Festival Culture" as an example and, guided by Medio-translatology theory, explores its translation strategies and dissemination pathways within the Korean linguistic context. It aims to enrich the theoretical framework for the international promotion of ICH translation, address the research gap concerning the Korean translation of festive ICH, and expand the application of translation studies in the ICH field. On a practical level, the study proposes feasible optimization strategies for translation and dissemination, along with multimodal dissemination pathways, to provide references for promoting ICH culture, building tourism brands, and facilitating international cultural tourism exchanges in Langzhong and the Nanchong region. At the level of Sino-Korean cultural exchange, concerning the shared cultural element of the "Spring Festival," accurate Korean translation and dissemination can not only help highlight the uniqueness of the Chinese Spring Festival, eliminate cultural misinterpretations caused by poor translation, and enhance the international discourse power of Chinese culture, but also promote mutual recognition and understanding of shared cultural roots between the two countries, deepening regional cultural exchanges and cooperation.

2. Theoretical Basis and Research Status

2.1. Medio-translatology theory

As one of the few original theories in Translation Studies proposed by Chinese scholars, Medio-translatology has exerted significant influence in domestic and international academic circles since its emergence and establishment in the 1980s and 1990s. Initially focused primarily on how foreign cultures are "translated into" the local context, its research scope has gradually expanded to "translation out" with the growing demand for "cultural export," emphasizing how local cultures can be effectively output, understood, and accepted by target-language readers. Medio-translatology points out that in-coming translation and out-going translation are fundamentally different: in-coming translation is built upon a strong demand for foreign cultures, while out-going translation is an active cultural export where the target audience may not have an equivalent demand. Therefore, cultural export translation requires not only accuracy and fluency but also consideration of the target readers' reading habits, aesthetic preferences, ideologies, cultural concepts, and the disseminator's communication strategies [3]. ICH translation is not merely a linguistic conversion but a process of cultural dissemination and reconstruction. Many concepts in Langzhong Spring Festival culture possess distinct regional characteristics and lack direct equivalents in Korean. Simple literal translation can easily lead to cultural misinterpretation. Although Korean people are relatively familiar with the concept of the Chinese Spring Festival, their understanding of Langzhong's specific customs is limited. Consequently, Medio-translatology emphasizes that translation and dissemination involve not only linguistic transformation but also require multi-channel, multimodal communication, balancing translation quality with cultural adaptation. Compared to traditional translation studies centered solely on linguistic conversion, it provides a more comprehensive theoretical foundation for the translation and dissemination of Langzhong Spring Festival culture.

2.2. Current Status of Domestic and International Research

Currently, ICH translation has gradually become a key focus in cross-cultural communication studies. Relevant research has yielded certain results in theoretical frameworks, translation strategies, and dissemination pathways. However, research on festive ICH within the Korean linguistic context remains scarce.

In international academia, Li Hong (2018) argues that translation involves more than linguistic conversion; it must make culture comprehensible in new contexts [4]. QiaoJun Luo (2020) reviewed Korean translations of Chinese ICH promotional materials, pointing out that existing translations often rely excessively on literal translation, affecting audience comprehension and dissemination effectiveness. They recommend supplementing literal translations with cultural explanations and background information to enhance readability and acceptability [5].

Domestic research indicates that Tang Mei et al. (2023) consider China's ICH translation for international audiences still relatively weak, with uneven translation quality and poor dissemination results. They explored feasible strategies for translating local culture in the new media context, proposing strengthened cultural adaptation, audience interaction, and the construction of a multidimensional dissemination environment [6]. Yang Rui (2023) discussed the current status and challenges in translating and disseminating Shaanxi folk culture, noting that culturally loaded terms are difficult to translate directly, easily leading to the loss of core cultural values during dissemination. They suggest combining domestication and foreignization strategies while leveraging new media technologies to enhance dissemination effects [7]. Zhang Mengfan (2024) observes that current Korean translations often remain superficial, lacking in-depth cultural exploration, failing to utilize the advantages of new media platforms effectively, resulting in limited access for Korean audiences to Chinese ICH content [8].

In summary, current research on ICH translation for international audiences predominantly focuses on English. Research on festive ICH, specifically within the Korean linguistic context, is almost non-existent. Although the Chinese Spring Festival enjoys relatively high recognition in Korea, research on the Korean translation of its core cultural elements is scarce, often limited to simple literal translation or transliteration. This fails to deeply adapt to the cultural background and comprehension needs of the Korean audience and falls short of the requirements for the international development of local cultural tourism industries. Therefore, focusing on the translation and dissemination of "Langzhong Spring Festival Culture" to Korean audiences can not only fill an academic gap but also holds significant practical and innovative value.

3. Case Analysis of Korean Translation and Dissemination of Langzhong Spring Festival Culture

Langzhong Spring Festival culture features rich and diverse imagery, including sacrificial rituals for blessings, decorations, food customs, artistic performances, and social activities, constituting the core cultural resources for international translation and dissemination. While the successful inscription of the Chinese Spring Festival has significantly increased the attention of Korean media and platforms towards Spring Festival culture, existing cases reveal evident shortcomings in Korean translation and dissemination.

3.1. Translation Strategies

Inconsistent Terminology: Taking the "successful inscription of the Chinese Spring Festival" as a dividing point, before the inscription, mainstream media reports exhibited chaotic translations for the term "春节(Chūnjié, Spring Festival)", including variations like "춘제(설)", "춘제(설·10~17일)", "춘제(설날)", "춘제(春節·중국의 설)", "춘제(춘절)", "춘제(春節)",

"춘지에", and "춘절(춘제·Spring Festival)". These either associated the Chinese Spring Festival with the Korean Lunar New Year (설/설날, Seollal) through annotations or used phonetic transliteration alone, stripping away cultural connotations. The Korean edition of People's Online standardized its use to "춘절(春節·음력설)" in relevant reports [9]. This "Korean Hanja term + Traditional Chinese characters + Korean annotation" format represents a threefold improvement: terminology standardization by consistently using "춘절"; reinforcement of cultural symbols through traditional characters emphasizing cultural orthodoxy; and audience adaptation by linking to existing Korean cultural understanding via the annotation "음력설 (Lunar New Year)". However, this translation still carries a latent concern: the annotation "음력설," while aiding Korean comprehension, may reinforce the misconception that "Chinese Spring Festival = Korean Seollal," potentially weakening the distinctiveness of the Chinese Spring Festival. After the inscription, major Korean media outlets like Chosun Ilbo (조선일보), The Hankyoreh (한겨레), and Hankook Ilbo (한국일보) reported that "유네스코가 발표한 영문 자료에는 최근 논란이 되고 있는 '차이니즈 뉴이어'가 아닌 '스프링 페스티벌'이라는 용어가 쓰였다 (The English materials released by UNESCO used the term 'Spring Festival,' not the recently controversial 'Chinese New Year')." [10]. These outlets adopted the expression "춘제(春節·영문명 Spring Festival)" - a "transliteration + Traditional Chinese characters + English annotation" format. The foreignizing approach of "transliteration + Traditional Chinese characters" aligns with People's Online's logic in preserving cultural orthodoxy, while simultaneously using the official term "Spring Festival" to avoid cultural conflict, presenting a neutral alternative.

Weakened Core Imagery: The "Spring Festival Elder" (春节老人) refers to the deified image of Luo Xiahong (落下阌), a folk deity bestowing blessings. Existing translations include "춘절의 아버지" (Father of Spring Festival) or "춘절 노인" (Spring Festival Old Man). These simple literal translations convey only age characteristics, failing to reflect his deified status and dual role as a blessing deity, easily leading to misinterpretation as an ordinary elderly person. It is recommended to use "춘절 노인(落下阌, 춘절에 복을 내리는 신령)", adding annotations for "Luo Xiahong" and "deity bestowing blessings during Spring Festival" to help Korean readers understand his unique status in Langzhong Spring Festival culture. Similarly, "Killing the New Year Pig" (杀年猪) was literally translated as "설이 다가오면 농촌에서 돼지를 잡는 것" ("When the New Year approaches, pigs are slaughtered in rural areas"). This mechanically explains the surface action without conveying its sense as a "New Year ritual." It could be revised to "설맞이 돼지잡이(춘절 전통, 새해 풍요와 가족 안녕 기원)", simplifying the verb form and adding context about "praying for harvest and family reunion" to emphasize traditional cultural significance. Furthermore, "You Bai Bing" (游百病, Warding off Ailments by Walking) was transliterated as "유백병 (游百病)". While Hanja annotation was added, it failed to convey the ritual function of "walking around the city after Lantern Festival to pray for health." Crucially, "유백병" could easily be misinterpreted in Korean as the name of a disease, completely distorting its essence of dispelling illness and praying for health. Given that Koreans have a custom of climbing mountains for blessings on the first day of the New Year (Seollal), "You Bai Bing" could be culturally bridged by translating it as "유백병 (游百病, 정월 건강 기원 산책, 한국 정월 대보름 등산과 유사)", adding the annotation "New Year health walk, similar to Korean mountain climbing on 15th day of the first lunar month".

Excessive Transliteration, Lack of Necessary Annotation: When translating culturally loaded terms, the core cultural meaning must be clarified first. For instance, "Liang Hua Xie" (亮花鞋, Displaying Embroidered Shoes) is a Spring Festival folk performance showcasing feminine charm and beauty, embodying the cultural imagery of "women being exempt from labor on the

second day of the New Year to pray for finding a spouse." Existing translations include simple transliteration "랑화혜(亮花鞋)" and an explanatory version "초이를 꽃신 장랑하기(亮花鞋, 양일간 여성들은 일하지 않고 꽃신을 신고 대회에 참가한다고 합니다)". The former, relying solely on transliteration, loses the cultural core. Therefore, the latter approach of "meaning translation + Hanja + annotation" is more appropriate. Similarly, "Laba Porridge" (腊八粥) is a porridge made with eight ingredients, and "Drinking Laba Porridge(喝腊八粥)" is a folk custom on the Laba Festival to pray for blessings. Existing translations transliterate it as "라바저우(腊八粥)를 먹다 (eating Laba Zhou)", lacking the cultural connotations of "Laba Porridge symbolizing abundant harvest and warding off evil spirits to pray for blessings." Thus, it could be revised to "라바저우(腊八粥, 다채로운 곡물 • 견과류로 만든 새해맞이 기원의 죽) 먹기", supplementing annotations about "rich ingredients" and "New Year blessings" to help audiences understand Langzhong's Spring Festival food culture.

3.2. Dissemination Formats

Singular Media Format: Existing dissemination cases rely heavily on traditional text-based formats like written reports, lacking new media formats aligned with current Korean audience browsing habits. Development of video content like short videos and live streams is insufficient.

Scarce Promotional Materials: Relevant content is scarce and infrequently updated on major Korean search portals like Naver and new media platforms like YouTube and TikTok. While some Korean media have reported on the Spring Festival, they focus on macro-level introductions of the concept, lacking elements specific to Langzhong's regional culture. Videos uploaded by Chinese media on platforms like YouTube often feature English subtitles but lack Korean narration and cultural annotations.

Insufficient Tourism-Culture Integration: Existing dissemination content lacks deep integration with "Langzhong." Core elements of Langzhong's rich Spring Festival culture are not effectively translated into international tourism services. For example, online content emphasizes Langzhong's status as the "origin of the Spring Festival" but fails to link this to specific tourist itineraries or embed geographical tags, hindering actual tourist visits.

It is evident that at the translation level, simple literal translation or transliteration of core imagery is prevalent, leading to a loss of cultural context and regional characteristics; at the dissemination level, formats are singular, content is scarce, multimodal dissemination is lacking, and the practical needs of integrated tourism-culture development are unmet. While the Spring Festival's inscription has increased international dissemination opportunities for Langzhong's Spring Festival culture, its translation and dissemination to Korean audiences require significant improvement to effectively promote local cultural tourism industry development.

4. Exploration of Optimization Pathways for Korean Translation and Dissemination of Langzhong Spring Festival Culture

The core objective of translating and disseminating Langzhong Spring Festival culture to Korean audiences is to enhance its readability and impact within the Korean linguistic context while preserving its regional cultural characteristics, achieving the overall goals of "Culture-Language Adaptation," "Multimodal Dissemination Optimization," and "Tourism-Culture Integrated Development."

4.1. Culture-Language Adaptation

Translation Standardization: Unify the translations of terminology and core concepts to ensure translation consistency and cultural orthodoxy. For high-frequency terms like "春节" (Spring Festival), consistently adopt the "Transliteration + Traditional Chinese characters + annotation" format. This preserves cultural symbols while meeting the target audience's need

for conceptual clarity, reducing cultural conflicts arising from terminology confusion and mistranslation.

Adding Necessary Annotations: As analyzed in Chapter 3, core imagery in Langzhong Spring Festival culture often suffers from excessive transliteration, missing cultural annotations, and weakened regional characteristics in current Korean translations. Therefore, precise transmission of cultural symbols and connotations during translation is crucial. Necessary annotations must be added to avoid information loss caused by simple transliteration.

4.2. Multimodal Dissemination

Utilizing New Media Platforms: Fully leverage platforms like Naver, YouTube, and TikTok to create video content related to Langzhong Spring Festival culture, equipped with Korean subtitles and cultural annotations, catering to the browsing habits and needs of Korean audiences.

Building Multilingual Digital Platforms: Led by the Langzhong City or even Nanchong City Bureau of Culture and Tourism, establish a digital platform for Langzhong Spring Festival culture. Develop a multilingual website to systematically display the festival's calendrical origins, celebratory procedures, food customs, and tourism routes, enhancing the systematic nature of international dissemination.

4.3. Tourism-Culture Integrated Development

Collaborate with local Korean travel agencies to release promotional materials (e.g., short videos, brochures) for "Spring Festival Cultural Origin Tours." Embed geographical tags ("Langzhong - Origin of Spring Festival") and specific tourism itineraries to form a consumption chain of "cultural cognition, tourism interest, on-site experience."

In summary, optimizing the Korean translation and dissemination of Langzhong Spring Festival culture should be based on translation standardization, centered on adding necessary annotations, and implemented through multimodal dissemination. This approach aims to achieve effective dissemination of local ICH and propel the Langzhong cultural tourism brand onto the international stage.

5. Conclusion

The successful inscription of the Spring Festival has presented new opportunities for the international dissemination of Langzhong Spring Festival culture. However, as the preceding analysis shows, current translation and dissemination efforts targeting Korea still face issues such as inconsistent terminology, weakened core imagery, insufficient cultural annotations, limited dissemination channels, and inadequate tourism-culture integration. Based on the perspective of Medio-translatology, this study analyzed existing cases of Korean translation and dissemination for the core imagery of Langzhong Spring Festival culture, identified problems in the current Korean translation approach, and proposed holistic optimization strategies focusing on "Culture-Language Adaptation", "Multimodal Dissemination", and "Tourism-Culture Integrated Development".

Nevertheless, this study has limitations. Due to time and resource constraints, empirical investigation into the reception effects among Korean audiences was not conducted, lacking supporting questionnaire data. Furthermore, the case analysis primarily focused on translation strategies, with limited exploration of the mechanisms of dissemination via Korean new media platforms. Future research could conduct questionnaire surveys to analyze the dissemination effectiveness of different translation strategies; systematically explore dissemination pathways for Langzhong Spring Festival culture on mainstream Korean platforms, incorporating perspectives from communication studies; and integrate Korean translation and dissemination

with local cultural exchanges between China and South Korea to expand research depth and practical value.

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