

# Translation Problems of Anhui Chu Culture Museum Website

Fuling Zhang

School of Foreign Languages, Anhui University of Science and Technology, Huainan, Anhui, China

**Abstract:** Anhui Chu culture is an important part of Chinese civilization. With the Chinese culture “going out”, Anhui Chu Culture Museum is an important way of Chu culture dissemination. Anhui Chu Culture Museum website is to help international friends to understand the Chu culture of the mainstream media, but at present there are some problems with the translation of the relevant English text on the website. In this case, it is of practical significance to further rectify and optimize the translation of Anhui Chu Culture Museum website. The paper analyzes the English translation specification of the website of Anhui Chu Culture Museum, puts forward the problems existing in the writing specification and translation specification of its translation, and analyzes them, and finally puts forward some feasible suggestions and discusses them accordingly.

**Keywords:** Translation Problems; Anhui Chu Culture Museum website; Culture Translation.

## 1. Introduction

Anhui's Chu culture, an integral part of China's cultural heritage, dates back to the 11th-century BC and holds significant historical importance. Located in Anhui Province's Huaihe River Basin, prominent archaeological sites like Shouxian County showcase its rich cultural artifacts and relics. Founded in 1958, the Anhui Chu Culture Museum houses an extensive collection of over 10,000 cultural relics, preserving and presenting Chu culture. Amid globalization, the museum has gained international recognition, aspiring to enhance cultural outreach and foster global exchange and collaboration. In recent years, translation studies have moved from a linguistic level of concern for traditional text genres to a multi-symbolic level of concern for multimedia texts[1]. In the field of multimedia translation, web translation has become a topic of concern for researchers. A web page is a text, a multi-symbolic entity formed by the interaction of multiple resources, such as written language, images, diagrams and sound components, so that meaning is generated by the full range of verbal expressions and non-verbal symbols[2]. The webpage genre, characterized by verbal and non-verbal feature interplay, serves various communicative purposes. Therefore, enhancing language translation and interpretation on museum websites is crucial for promoting global understanding and appreciation of both Chu culture and China's historical and cultural heritage.

## 2. Translation Problems of ACCM Website

As China continues to internationalize, the museum website translation also continues to come into people's view. The English translation of the website of Anhui Chu Culture Museum not only facilitates international friends to understand the Chu culture, but also has some problems. This paper will analyze it from the three levels of vocabulary, syntax and discourse.

### 2.1. Vocabulary

The translated text exhibits several inaccuracies and imprecisions in the choice of vocabulary. For instance, the

phrase “筚路蓝缕，以启山林” is translated as “plowed with qi mountain”, which fails to accurately convey the meaning of the original Chinese idiom, signifying the pioneering and development of previously uncharted or undeveloped lands. Additionally, the translation reads “more than five thousand people” for “人口五千多万”, which is incorrect. The correct translation should be “over 50 million people”. Furthermore, the term “车千乘” is mistranslated as “car”, whereas “a thousand chariots” would be more appropriate. The phrase “江淮” is translated as “Yangtze river and huaihe River”, which is incorrect. It should be translated as “the region between the Yangtze River and Huai River”. Additionally, phrases like “Anhui, Tong, Qunshu, Chao, Liu, Liao, Zhoulai, Zhongli, Chengfu, Song, Xiao, hu” are transliterated rather than being translated or adjusted for English readers. Efforts should be made to provide English equivalents or explanations for such terms. Furthermore, “it never rains but it pours” is an inappropriate translation for “不鸣则已，一鸣惊人” which should be more accurately rendered as “silent but startling when spoken”. “Chinese jiangnan” appears to be an inappropriate translation of the term “立国江汉”, which should be more accurately translated as “The founding of the Chu state along the Jiangnan region”. Furthermore, phrases such as “jianghuai chu song” and “ShouChun” are not translated or provided with English explanations, which should be addressed to enhance comprehensibility for an English-speaking audience. Attending to these vocabulary inaccuracies is vital for ensuring a faithful representation of the source text's meaning.

### 2.2. Syntax

The syntax of the translated text is characterized by convoluted sentence structures and a lack of coherence, impeding readability and comprehension. For example, the sentence “Ancestral Zhou Cheng king seal between the jiangnan” mixes several concepts without clear connections or proper punctuation usage. Moreover, there is inconsistent punctuation and capitalization, as seen in the phrases “Five Hegemons of spring and Autumn” and “Seven Warring States” that require proper capitalization for historical periods. Improving sentence structures and incorporating appropriate

punctuation will enhance syntactic coherence, facilitating clarity of the conveyed message. The sentence “In the early and middle warring States period, the region was destroyed and the Jianghuai region was unified” contains multiple clashing ideas, requiring clearer punctuation and phrasing. Another example is the disparity in formatting quotation marks in the phrases “it never rains but it pours” and “soothe the barbarians and belong to the summers”, which should maintain uniform punctuation structures. Revisiting such issues and simplifying sentence constructions will enhance syntactic coherence and contribute to better comprehension. The sentence “tell people the end of the middle of the spring and autumn and the warring states period in the process of ‘east in jianghuai’ activities within the territory of anhui” is convoluted, hindering comprehension. This sentence can be improved upon with clearer punctuation and separation of ideas into multiple sentences. Additionally, the text exhibits inconsistencies in capitalization, resulting in a less polished finished product. Addressing these syntactic issues will contribute to enhanced readability and coherence.

### 2.3. Discourse

The discourse aspect of the translation suffers from poor cohesion and a disjointed presentation of information. The text lacks a logical progression, with details about the Chu state’s geographical boundaries, military power, and population dispersed in a seemingly arbitrary manner. To enhance textual cohesion and comprehension, reorganizing the content to present all geographical details together, followed by the population figure and historical significance of the Chu state, would be advantageous. The historical account of the Chu state’s expansion and decline could be presented in one paragraph to help maintain a coherent narrative, while another paragraph could focus on the cultural aspects and their significance. Moreover, transitional phrases and thesis statements could be employed to better guide the reader through the text, thereby promoting cohesion and smooth progression of ideas. The terms “Display” and “Introduction” in the text are unclear in reference to their context in the exhibition, which could be rectified by providing more explicit descriptions and transitional phrases to guide readers through the text. Furthermore, maintaining a clear distinction between historical events, cultural significance, and the exhibition itself would contribute to a more coherent and cohesive organization of the content. Employing thesis statements and transitional phrases will help guide the reader and promote a smooth progression of ideas.

Human beings, in the process of cognition, tend to get the maximum effect with the minimum effort[3]. To achieve such an effect, attention must be focused on the most meaningful information. Research on people’s browsing of websites proves that readers do not really read when browsing web pages, but scan the pages to get the information they are interested in. The translated text of the museum’s website is disseminated through the Internet, so the characteristics of online media dissemination should be taken into account. The purpose of foreign tourists browsing the website is to find the information they are interested in. They rarely have the patience to read through long introductions, so the pages should not be overly long.

In conclusion, the analysis identifies multiple errors and areas of concern within the translated text concerning vocabulary, syntax, and discourse. By addressing these issues

through enhanced accuracy in terminology, improved syntactic coherence, and restructured discourse organization, the quality of the translation would be significantly elevated.

## 3. Reasons for Translation Problems of ACCM Website

Translation involves not only the exchange of diverse languages but also the interchange of distinct cultures. Several factors contribute to the prevalence of inaccuracies in the English translation of the Anhui Chu Culture Museum website.

One primary factor is cultural differences. The historical and sociocultural foundations of a nation are inherently complex and profound. Therefore, translators must possess a comprehensive understanding of their own culture. For example, regarding Chu culture, translators should be well-versed in particular terms’ cultural connotations and their associations with various historical periods. Translation goes beyond conveying the textual content of exhibits superficially; it is crucial to minimize errors stemming from cultural discrepancies. Striking a balance between aesthetic and intelligible translations while upholding the values of cultural heritage interpretation, preservation, and promotion is essential for effectively communicating the intricacies of Chinese culture.

Another contributing factor is the widespread use of mechanical translation. As the internet and technological advancements continue to evolve, artificial intelligence increasingly permeates various societal sectors. Consequently, reliance on machine translation has grown, with many industries and translators excessively depending on this technology. However, as machine translation is still in development, its quality remains subpar. Most machine translation approaches focus on word-for-word and sentence-by-sentence translations, often leading to significant grammatical and structural inaccuracies. Thus, machine translation capabilities require further refinement.

Lastly, inadequate oversight by relevant authorities is a notable concern. Insufficient attention is directed toward the Anhui Chu Culture Museum’s official website’s English translation accuracy, resulting in a lack of quality control over its content. Standardization of specific names concerning places and individuals remains unaddressed, further exacerbating the issue.

## 4. Suggestions on Translation Problems of ACCM Website

The language of a nation inherently reflects its rich history and cultural heritage. Considering the distinct historical development and evolution of English and Chinese, their cultural connotations naturally diverge. Differences in natural climate and social circumstances generate varying thought patterns and modes of expression among individuals. Distinct ethnic groups utilize language as a symbolic representation, encapsulating culture-specific nuances. Each linguistic term embodies multiple layers of sociocultural dimensions. Therefore, when translating into English, it is crucial to account for the intended audience’s sociocultural psychological structure and linguistic preferences from foreign contexts.

In the English translation of museum websites, recipients possess diverse cultural traditions, social backgrounds, cognitive, and aesthetic habits. Consequently, they may

selectively engage with, avoid, alter or misunderstand various information, resulting in asymmetry between source and target information, and loss of translation accuracy. Given that cultural groups of translated languages have differing expectations for communication statutes or text rules, translators must approach the original text through the perspective of the target culture's members, that is to say, adopt the strategy of "cultural filtering", so as to make the translated text conform to the expectations of the target readers [4]. In order to effectively disseminate any form of culture, one must initially establish a conduit facilitating communication between disparate linguistic and cultural domains of various nations. It is imperative that translators adhere to the norms and practices of the target culture when engaging in cross-cultural communication within the Chinese context. Considering the aforementioned translation challenges, this paper offers pertinent recommendations from three perspectives.

Achieving consistency in translation is essential for museum websites with similar content. Harmonizing translations prevents comprehension barriers and misinterpretations among foreign readers. Accurate translations must remain faithful to the distinctive features of Chu culture.

Improving translator competence is crucial for translation quality. Translators should convey the original text's meaning while establishing a communicative bridge between the author and reader. Engaging professional translators or specialized agencies, and enlisting experts for review mitigates translation errors. Implementing a trial period, wherein translators receive reader feedback, ensures public satisfaction and quality translations.

Establishing official translation standards is paramount. Although some Chinese cities have issued standards, similar regulations are lacking in other cities. Governments should develop national standards addressing specific concerns and drawing upon empirical investigations, enabling museum websites to effectively disseminate cultural contributions.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper begins by examining the background and objectives of research on museum text translation, specifically focusing on the Anhui Chu Culture Museum website. The analysis addresses issues at the lexical, syntactic, and discourse levels, and investigates the cultural and

psychological factors contributing to these translation challenges. Subsequently, the paper proposes corresponding countermeasures, including the unification of translation, enhancement of quality, and establishment of standards. It is important to note that this paper discusses only a portion of the English translation of the Anhui Chu Culture Museum website, rather than its entirety. In addition, the original text is only a source of information for the translation, and the translator cannot provide the same amount or the same nature of information as the author of the original text [5]. Hence, the translation of the Anhui Chu Culture Museum website should be targeted toward the readers of the translated language. By analyzing their needs and cognitive psychology, the translator should remove information lacking significance to the readers and include information that satisfies their needs and piques their interest. Emphasis should be placed on extracting key points and adjusting the structure to achieve the objective of international dissemination, rather than adhering strictly to the original text, thereby ensuring the translation's localization is maximized.

## Acknowledgment

This study was funded by Anhui University of Science and Technology Graduate Student Innovation Fund Project "A Study on the Translation of Political Literature from the Perspective of Skopos Theory" (2023CX2182) and Anhui University of Science and Technology 2023 Student Entrepreneurship Fund Supporting Project "Anhui Chu Culture Museum One-stop 'Experience Economy' Platform"

## References

- [1] Garzone. Describing E-commerce Communication. Which Models and Categories for Text Analysis? [J]. *Testus*, 2002(2):279-296, 40.
- [2] Kress, G & Leeuwen, T. *Multimodal Discourse: The Modes and Media of Contemporary Communication*[M]. London: Arnold, 2001.
- [3] Sperber and Wilson. *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* [M]. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995.
- [4] House, J. *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited* [M]. Günter Narr, Tübingen, 1997.
- [5] Nord, C. *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functionalist Approaches Explained*[M]. Manchester: St Jerome, 1997.