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厦门大学

硕士学位论文

中国文化译出去的听众期待研究
——基于“国家汉办孔子学院外方院长研修班
”同声传译用户调查

Interpreting Chinese Culture

--A User Expectation Survey of the Simultaneous Interpreting
Service for the Training Workshop for Confucius Institute

Directors

指导教师姓名:赵肖 助理教授

专业名称:英语语言文学

论文提交日期:2017年4月

论文答辩时间:2017年5月

学位授予日期:2017年6月

答辩委员会主席:_____

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2017年4月

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Abstract

The past three decades have witnessed the development of China. To realize peaceful rise, China should develop its soft power to win the hearts of people. Culture composes a significant part of soft power. China is resourceful with its glorious cultural legacy.

Translation and interpretation of the cultural content is an important step to take when it comes to the promotion of Chinese culture. Differences in cultural schema often result in cultural vacancy, pose challenge to translation and interpretation. Many researchers have discussed cultural elements in interpreting. However, most studies focus on the interpreter themselves or interpretation in general. The user's side has often been overlooked. User expectation survey in interpreting services, especially in simultaneous interpreting has been one of the most prolific and coherent line of study. Researchers have compared user expectations among different user groups. Yet user expectation of interpreting in cultural settings has rarely been explored. This dissertation aims to answer what kind of interpretation do users in conferences with cultural themes expect to get? By extension, how to improve the interpreting services knowing the user expectation?

This dissertation studies conference interpreting in the "Training Workshop for Confucius Institute Directors". As users of conference interpreting, Confucius institute directors are cultural ambassadors themselves. Hence they have higher awareness of the cultural content in the lecture compared with general audience. The author uses questionnaires to collect feed-backs and expectations of these users and interview some Confucius Institute directors. The results show that the parameters users care most are sense consistency, terminology accuracy and logical cohesiveness. During the interview, the interviewees emphasize that fundamentally, the interpretation

should make sense. They hope the interpreter could be more expressive and actively assimilate the interpretation into their schema. The findings also suggest that interpreters should foster higher cross-cultural awareness.

It is hoped that this study can fill a research gap through the analysis of user expectations of simultaneous interpreting services in communicative events with Chinese cultural themes.

Key words: user expectation; cultural setting; cultural vacancy; empirical studies

摘要

过去三十年见证了中国综合国力的发展。为了实现和平崛起,新时期的中国更要发展软实力,赢得人心。文化是软实力的重要组成部分,中国丰富多彩的传统文 化为发展软实力提供了丰富资源。然而在中国文化对外传播的过程不同文明背后的文化图式造成种种文化缺失,阻碍中华文化走向世界。

虽然许多研究探讨了口译中的文化因素,提出社会习俗,经济发展,意识形态的差异使得英汉互译往往会出现文化空缺,缺乏对等的意象。学者们提出一系列的翻译策略,并呼吁译员提高跨文化交际意识。然而这些研究都是聚焦于口译产品或者译员本身,却很少去分析文化类口译中听众想要什么样的口译服务。针对口译中用户期待的研究一脉相承,研究的口译形式以同声传译为主。学者们不仅研究单一的口译用户群体,还对比了客户、译员、主办方不同出发点的群体对口译质量的期望有何异同,探索了外交口译,科技口译,教育口译等不同类型会议中用户对口译质量的期望有何异同。相比之下,文化场景下的用户对口译服务的期待却鲜有人涉猎。本文旨在探讨在文化场景下,面对英汉双语背后两大片文化以及文化之间的文化空缺,什么样的口译才是用户所期待的。口译如何让中华文化跨越语言障碍赢得人心,走出去,实现进一步传播?

鉴于口译的跨文化的特点,本文以两期孔子学院外方院长研修班的会议口译为例,通过对外方院长的现场问卷调查和访谈,分析了文化场景下听众对口译质量的期待。由于孔子学院外方院长对于汉语和汉语文化都有一定了解,作为听众,他们对于会议口译中出现的文化空缺现象更为敏感,具有一定的用户期待,同时对这些文化信息的普遍接受度具有一定认识。作者以问卷调查的形式收集了文化交流场景下外方院长对于会议口译的用户期待和对此次译员口译效果的反馈,并以访谈的形式深入了解孔子。结果发现文化类口译的场景中听众对内容的重视超过形式,最重视的指标是忠实原意,术语精确和信息完整度。而在之后的访谈中,受访者亦强调译语应是有逻辑,易于理解的。受访者希望译员具备更强的表现力,

将译语意义进一步明示,译员需要表现出更多的主动性和跨文化交际意识以减小听众的认知负荷。

本文希望通过对孔子学院外方院长研修班的会议口译这一典型场景的用户研究与分析进一步了解用户期待,有利于中国文化在海外的大众传播与推广。

关键词:用户期待 文化场景 文化空缺 实证研究

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Research Background

China's international status has improved remarkably in the past thirty years. China has launched projects such as the One Belt One Road initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Silk Road Fund to underscore its abundance in resources, boost China's trade and economic volume, and spread China's "soft power".

Soft power is a magnetism. If a country has strong soft power, people are likely to learn more about the country and admire what it has achieved. With such charm, a nation can achieve its foreign policy goals through willing support and cooperation from others rather than using 'stick and carrot'. To realize peaceful rise, the government of China considers soft power as an important tool to elevate its international status.

Culture is one of the major source that generates soft power. The Chinese government has augmented Chinese culture as an important element in international competition to attract other countries. National leaders have adopted the Chinese Culture Go-out Strategy. Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin(2002) has pointed out that culture plays an ever more prominent part in the global competition today. His predecessor, former President Hu Jintao(2005) made it clear that the increase in China's international status and influence will have to be demonstrated in both hard power and soft power. To improve China's soft power through cultural development has become an urgent task.

Even though China has been through remarkable growth of its national power, it still has a long way to go in terms of developing its soft power. "A poll conducted by the BBC in 2004 revealed that nearly half of the respondents held negative attitude towards China. Since 2005, positive views about the influence of China has suffered a

14 percentage drop. Another Global Attitudes and Trends survey carried out by the Pew Research Center in 2013 shows that China lags far behind the United States in terms of global image" (Lahtinen,2005:200-226). Hollywood movies, Broadway musicals, Wall Street, Silicon Valley, reality TV stars: these symbols of American culture have gone viral in the world and won global recognition. Many people covet the American Dream. People lead their lifestyle in a way that they consider as aligned with the "American lifestyle." In comparison, though China enjoys the richness of cultural resources, many people have superficial knowledge about China.

"The great and profound Chinese culture provides great potential for China to carry out public diplomacy. We are not short of public diplomacy and soft power resources, but lack the awareness and means to promote [them]" (Bapna et al., 2013). Beyond knowing what to communicate, it is also important to find the right channel to reach the target audience. According to what Bapna has stated, lacking the awareness means not having the audience in mind. Without such awareness, those publicity campaigns focus on what they would like the foreign audience to learn about China rather than what the audience wants to know. They were so eager to show the wisdom of the ancient saga and the cultural legacy that has been passed down throughout the history. On the other hand, the acceptance of the foreign audience has been overlooked. The difficult content, combined with the literal translation, might bore the audience or even scare them away.

China does not lack the means to communicate to the outside world. In New York's Time Square in the United States, a huge LED screen displays the advertisement of Xinhua News Agency, China's official state news service, day and night. Strong support from the government allows Chinese media groups to go out for the expansion of Chinese media presence overseas. China does not lack the channel to promote Chinese culture. Despite the media exposure, it is the thorough analysis of the audience and their preferences that calls for more attention.

The question arises of how to help other nations understand China better. Today,

English language serves as the most prevalent language in the world. Therefore, to carry out Chinese Culture Go-out strategy globally, knowing how to introduce China in English is the first step to take. Breaking down the language barrier will allow those soft power campaigns to have access to a larger audience group. The issue of translation and interpretation has grown in importance in promoting Chinese culture across the barriers of language and culture.

However, interpreting is not as simple as switching the linguistic code signal by decoding and encoding. It is an intercultural communication activity. According to the Interpretive Theory of Translation coined by Seleskovitch (1978: 11), "the interpreter, instead of rendering words, combines perceptual input with prior knowledge (of the situational context and the subject matter as well as of languages) to derive "deverbalized" sense." Yet, it is not easy for the interpreter to find the shape of such "deverbalized" sense in another language. The differences in the economic system, social customs history, ideology, etc., bring forth "cultural vacancy" between Chinese and English language. As a result, some words and expressions carrying Chinese traditional cultural element can not find equivalent in English (潘惠霞等, 2000; Pan Huixia et al., 2000). For people outside China, cultural vacancy adds charm and mystery to Chinese culture. However, it might cause difficulty and confusion in understanding. To date, there has been more and more cultural exchange events held to introduce Chinese culture to the world. Interpreting service is an integral part of this kind of cultural exchange events. It helps the audience understand the topic. In the context of conference with culture-loaded content; those cultural vacancies pose challenges to the interpreter. Therefore, bridging the cultural vacancy while maintaining the cultural characteristics becomes a sophisticated task for the interpreters.

Extensive researches have been carried out on cultural elements in interpreting (庄恩平, 1998; Zhuang Enping, 1998; 张燕, 2002; Zhang Yan, 2002; 詹成, 2010; Zhan Cheng, 2010; 蒋凤霞等, 2011; Jiang Fengxia et al., 2011). Many researchers study the cultural vacancy in interpreting from different theoretical perspectives, such as the Skopos theory (陈

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