

# Centering on the Audience and Constructing Identitification in Publicity Translation

Chunhua Shen

School of Foreign Languages, Wuhan 430023 Polytechnic University

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**Abstract:** International exchanges are becoming increasingly frequent in today's world, and successful publicity translation has become a bridge for communication, thus increasing understanding between China and foreign countries. Under the guidance of Burke's rhetorical view on the audience, this paper discusses 4 audience identification strategies in publicity translation, so as to tell China's stories well and spread China's voice better.

**Keywords:** Publicity translation; Audience identification

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## Fund Project:

About the Fund project: Discourse Reconstruction Research on the Translation of Current Political Publicity under the Rhetorical Perspective of "Audience" (Project number is 21D059), the Key Research Project of Philosophy and Social Sciences in Universities of Hubei Province in 2021. And this paper is One of the achievements of this research.

## Preface

As Burke put it in Motivational Grammar: "Only when you speak the same words, make the same gestures, have the same tone and word order, use the same ideas, attitudes, and opinions with another man, can you make him receptive to persuasion only when you identify your way with his." in order to enable the target "audience" to correctly interpret China, the translator needs to understand the audience thinking mode, logical reasoning and expression habits, to construct an "identification" with the audience, and to reduce the reading burden of foreign readers, and thus achieving high-level communication and dialogue, spreading the voice of China.

## 1. Adjusting the information order to construct audience identification of thinking mode

Robert Kaplan(1966) proposed that differences in cultural thinking mode would have different impacts on discourse patterns. Western thinking is linear and analytical, while Eastern thinking is circular and comprehensive. The purpose of foreign publicity translation is to accurately and faithfully convey the meaning of the original Chinese text in a language and expression that the audience is familiar with. For example, what is recognized as known information, what is considered the most important information or what is treated as the secondary background information? By adjusting information and word order, the reading comprehension burden of the audience can be reduced, the identity of thinking mode with the audience can be achieved, and the acceptability of the translation can be enhanced.

### Example 1

Songpan County just beneath Xuebao, the main peak of the Minshan Mountain with lush green forests, filled with fragrant flowers, singing births. and bubbling streams.

Example 1 is the translation of atypical chinese tourism publicity text with long sentence pattern and many parallel elements. Considering the characteristics of English thinking mode, the translator adopted the method of inverse in the translation, adjusted the sentence structure and information order, put the important information "One of Sichuan's finest scenic spots is Huanglong" ahead,

and the original parallel modification elements, like trees, flowers, birds and streams into a prepositional phrase “with lush green forests” and a past participle phrase “filled with fragrant lowers, singing birds, bubbling streams” to make the translation more in line with the thinking mode of foreign readers, thus reducing the difficulty of understanding and achieving the communicative purpose of publicity translation.

## **2. Omitting superfluous description to construct audience identification of key information**

Chinese tourism texts focus on calling for publicity, and use vivid and elegant words or phrases to describe scenery or state stories, bringing people into a picturesque fairyland. While English tourism texts often have objective and practical characteristics, which you may feel confuse, at first glance, but in fact, it is determined by the tourism itself. When foreign people come to China for tourism, they are not only unfamiliar with the environment, but also do not have a deep understanding of various customs and cultures. Therefore, the main intention of tourism texts is to accurately convey the local regional culture to tourists. Therefore, in translation, the redundant superfluous components of Chinese tourism texts should better be omitted, and only the key information is often retained. This not only enables visitors to get information quickly, but also impresses them.

Example 2:

It tears and boils along turbulently through the mountains, and at some places, flows on quietly with a sedate appearance and glistening ripples.

The original chinese of example 2 is a typical Chinese descriptive sentence pattern of “topic (Yellow River) + description (what is it like)”, which describes the appearance of the Yellow River in different reaches with gorgeous words and vivid images, while the English tourism texts are often more informative texts, which are usually simple with clear logic. Therefore, the translator ommit those superfluous and fancy decriptive words of yellow river in the original text and translate it into one English sentence only with few vivid verbs (tears, boils, flows) and an addition of the cohesion phrase (and at some places), helping the foreigners to identify the key information they need clearly and quickly.

## **3. Employing the diversity of sentences to construct audience identification of expression habits**

For English readers, the most effective sentences are the ones that are the most direct in their meaning, the smoothest in rhythm, and full of varieties which brings much pleasure in reading them. Such effective sentences not only clearly convey the idea, but also please the reader by the satisfying arrangement of its ideas with its sentence varieties, its balanced parts, etc.

Example 3

① The nearby Plum Blossom Garden, covering an area of 1,200 mus with 309 varieties of plum blossoms, tops the list of four major plumblossom gardens in the south of the Yangtze River. Currently, it has 152 species of the registered 262 plum blossoms worldwide, making it a research center of plum blossoms in China. ② Lotus Resource Nursery Garden in East lake, with 505 varieties of lotus and over 20 varieties of aquatic plants, is the site where Center for Chinese Lotus Research is located. ③ The Cherry Blossom Park, covering an area of 150 mus with 5,000 cherry blossoms, is one of the world’s three major spots to appreciate cherry blossoms (the other two being Hirosaki in Japan and Washington D.C. in the US). Other gardens include Osmanthus Flower Garden. Azalea Garden, Rose Garden and Water Plant Garden.

In example 3, the three gardens of Wuhan East Lake-- Plum Blossom Garden, Lotus garden and Cherry Garden -- are translated by employing three different sentence patterns: “Plum Blossom Garden, covering... , tops... , “; “ Lotus Resource Nursery Garden, with... , is the site where...” ; “The Cherry Blossom Park, covering an area of 150 mus with 5,000 cherry blossoms, is one of the world’s three major spots...”. Such flexible sentence patterns and beautiful rhythm are in line with the English language expression and aesthetic taste, which are appealing to the English travlers, thus easily realize the audience identification.

## **4. Paraphrasing the culture-speific words to construct the audience identification of culture**

There is a wide range of differences between Western cultures and Chinese Culture, such as lifestyle, way of thinking, moral norms, social etiquette, etc., all of which are reflected in the language. In order to handle the translation of a large amount of cultural information in tourism texts to achieve the target audiece identification, the method of “literal translation + interpretation” can reproduce the original content more accurately and convey cultural information.

Example 4

The main gate of Nanhai God Temple is the second parallel architecture with wood and brick. It consists of three sections with walls formed like the Chinese character “ba”, indicating “being steady and secure”.

In example 4, If the Chinese 4 character phrase “sipingbawen” in the original text were translated literally as “four equals and eight stable”, it will not only confuse the target language readers, but also fail to correctly convey the original meaning. In translation, the Chinese “ba” is retained here, and the subsequent explanation of “indicating being steady and secure” can make English readers understand the cultural connotation of the original text and realize cultural transmission.

## Conclusion

Language is the carrier of culture and plays an important role in enhancing our cultural soft power and cultural identity. From the perspective of “audience” rhetoric, this paper discusses four audience strategies to constructing identification with audience in publicity translation, so as to better tell Chinese stories and spread the voice of China, to improve the sense of identity of the international community, and to contribute Chinese wisdom to the development of the world.

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## About the author:

Chunhua Shen (1971.4), female, Han nationality; born in Yichang City, Hubei Province; working in School of Foreign Languages, Wuhan Polytechnic University, 430023; professor, Bachelor degree; Research Fields include translation, Rhetoric and Intercultural Communication.