

Transmission Problems and Synergism Strategies of Chu Lacquer Wares

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Received: 2 March 2021; **Accepted:** 22 March 2021; **Published:** 16 April 2021

Abstract:

Chu lacquer wares are regarded as the representatives of Chu culture and they are carriers to transmit Chinese culture during cross-cultural communication. Nevertheless, there are transmission problems of Chu lacquer wares. For Chu lacquer wares texts, the problems refer to incomplete structure, inaccurate English Language, and insufficient cultural factors. For transmission methods of Chu lacquer wares, it is noticed that the traditional transmission methods are still adopted most. Aiming at improving and solving these problems, synergism strategies on transmission of Chu lacquer wares are studied including complete structure, accurate English language and sufficient cultural factors of Chu Lacquer wares texts. Moreover, modern transmission methods about the online or live courses and theme events on Chu lacquer wares are discussed as well as the diversified traditional transmission methods. It is expected to improve the translation readable and acceptable and offer diversity strategies to transmit Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture.

Keywords:

Chu Lacquer Wares, Transmission Problems, Synergism Strategies

1. Introduction

As early as 2004, China and Romania jointly issued special stamps of “Lacquerware and Pottery” during the 23rd Universal Postal Union Congress. The Chinese pattern is from the picture of Chu lacquer wares (Figure 1) - “Drum with Phoenix Stands”. It has a history of more than 2,200 years and was unearthed in Jingzhou, Hubei which is an important musical instrument of the Chu State during the Warring States Period.

China is the birthplace of lacquer wares in the world. Lacquer wares sprouted in the Neolithic Age, and gradually developed during the Shang and Western Zhou Dynasties. Later, lacquer wares reached the peak in the Warring States Period and prospered during the Qin and Han Dynasties, which had a profound impact on later generation. According to archaeological findings, the vast majority of ancient lacquer wares in China were unearthed in the Yangtze River Basin, especially in the Chu State region of the Eastern Zhou Dynasty. At present, it is unearthed most in the ancient

capital of Chu -“Jinan” and its surrounding areas. Ancient lacquer wares played an important role in clothing, food, residence, transportation, and etiquette to serve human life in ancient China. Even a large amount of Chu lacquer wares are still unearthed from Qin Dynasty and Western Han Dynasty mainly because the popularity of the well-developed techniques of Chu lacquer wares [1]. The representatives of unearthed Chu lacquer wares are from Hubei province which is collected in local museums. To introduce and transmit Chu lacquer wares, the museum texts of Chu lacquer wares are always the irreplaceable carriers. As a part of museum texts, the cultural relics texts of Chu lacquer wares follow its definition and characteristic. What do the museum texts refer to? Louise Ravelli critically analyzed museum texts: both in the sense of conventional, written texts in museums, and in an expanded sense of the museum as a whole operating as a communicative text [2]. In her book *Museum Texts: Communication Frameworks* [2], there are at least two ways in which these phrase-museum texts can be understood: The first is that of texts in museums: the ‘texts’ with which visitors, and museum professionals, are very familiar. These might be called labels, extended texts, wall texts, catalogue entries, brochure descriptions. Meanwhile, ‘museum texts’ could mean museum as texts: the way a whole institution, or an exhibition within it, makes meaning, communicating to and with its public.

This paper is primarily concerned with the first layer of phrase-museum texts: labels, extended texts, wall texts, catalogue entries, brochure descriptions which visitors are very familiar. Specifically, the paper focuses on labels, extended texts, wall texts and website texts of Chu lacquer wares texts from Henan Museum, Hubei Provincial Museum, Hunan Museum and some museums from Chu cultural region and discusses the translation problems on Chu lacquer wares and synergism strategies on Chu lacquer wares. Because of the epidemic of covid-19, the data for the field research is quite limited. Through visiting some museums like Hubei Provincial Museum and Jingzhou Museum to obtain the first-hand labels, extended texts, wall texts and brochures of Chu lacquer wares and studying the bilingual websites (Chinese-English) of these mentioned museums above, we analyzed the Chinese source texts (ST) and English target texts (TT) of Chu lacquer wares texts to discover the translation problems. Then, the texts on Chu lacquer wares are classified into several categories according to the translation problems of texts. According to the each text, there is various common translation problems and distinct individual translation problems of Chu lacquer wares texts in museums.



Figure 1. Drum with Phoenix Stands.

2. Transmission Problems of Chu Lacquer Wares

Jingzhou Museum is the museum with the largest collection of Chu lacquer wares in China. The extensive use of lacquer wares in Chu region has developed from the initial ritual vessels to daily necessities, cultural and entertainment articles, and even

funeral articles. Among them, unearthed Chu lacquer wares from Jingzhou region are representatives like Tomb No.1 and No.2 of Tianxingguan, Tomb No.1 of Mashan, Tomb of Yutaishan, Tomb No.167 and No.168 Fenghuangshan and Tomb of Gaotai. Therefore, there are plenty of data from Jingzhou Museum more than other museums. Based on the data from the Jingzhou Museum, Hubei Provincial Museum and the bilingual websites of Hunan Museum, Henan Museum and museums of Jingchu region, there are translation problems on Chu lacquer wares.

2.1. *Incomplete Structure of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts*

According to Luo (2019), there are six components of the structural feature of Chu lacquer wares texts in museums: the picture of Chu lacquer ware; the name of Chu lacquer ware; the dynasty of the Chu lacquer ware; the unearthed place of Chu lacquer ware; the dimension and background introduction of Chu lacquer ware. If these six components are included, it is a relatively complete composition model, which can offer the basic information on cultural relics of Chu lacquer wares and can also meet the basic knowledge demands from visitors. Nevertheless, it is notified that a plenty of Chu lacquer wares texts in museums are incomplete. As the visitors can offer a closer look the cultural relics of Chu lacquer wares in the exhibition hall of the museum, the pictures of Chu lacquer wares could not be included in the labels, extended texts, and wall texts. Take the incomplete structure of Chu lacquer wares texts in Jingzhou Museum for example.

Table 1. Incomplete Structure of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts

Text Structure	Sum of Texts	Quantity of Source Text	Quantity of Incomplete Source Text	Quantity of Target Text	Quantity of Incomplete Target Text
Name	103	103	0	100	3
Dynasty	103	62	41	61	42
Unearthed place	103	61	42	61	42
Dimension	103	0	103	0	103
Background introduction	103	19	84	17	86

According to Table 1, after visiting “Gallery of Ancient Chinese Lacquer Ware & Wooden Artifacts” of Jingzhou Museum in Hubei, we collected and analyzed approximately 103 separate items of Chu Lacquer Wares. From Table 1, there are enormous Chu lacquer wares texts with incomplete structure and information. For the name of Chu lacquer wares, the quantity of source texts is 103 and there are no completed source texts; the quantity of target texts is 100 and there are 3 incomplete target texts. For the dynasty of Chu lacquer wares, the quantity of source texts is down to 62 and there are 41 incomplete source texts; the quantity of target texts is also 62 and there are 41 incomplete target texts. For the unearthed place of Chu lacquer wares, the quantity of source texts continue to drop to 61 and there are 42 incomplete source texts; the quantity of target texts is 61 and there are 42 incomplete target texts as well. For the dimension of Chu lacquer wares, all or almost all of the information of source texts and target texts are lacking. For the background introduction of Chu lacquer wares, the quantity of source texts fell to 19 and there are 84 incomplete source texts; dramatically, the quantity of target texts is 17 and there are 86 incomplete target texts.

2.2. *Inaccurate English Language of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts*

There are plenty of inaccurate English languages, such as misunderstanding of the texts, misinterpretation of the texts, under-translation of the texts, and over-interpretation of the texts and so on when translating Chu lacquer wares. Take an example of Jingzhou museum.

With error typesetting and printing on the name of the exhibition “猪形酒具盒 (Box Filled With Wine Object)”, the English text of the exhibition is “Shaft of Chariot” which actually indicates “战车轮轴” in China rather than “猪形酒具盒” (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Texts from Box Filled With Wine Object.

Furthermore, there are as many as nine misspellings and two grammatical problems in the background introduction of the cultural relics with a total of 81 words. From Table 2, the misspellings are avoidable, such as, the word “with” and “together”, rather than “wit” and “to gether”; the expression “the box’s surface” is a nominal not “the box’s. Surface”; the word “sculpt”, “and” as well as “two kinds” are correct instead of “sculpe”, “ang” and “two kind”. As an ancient book of China, the initials of “Shan Hai Jing (a famous book)” should be better in the capital form and italic type for international English text format without book title mark instead of “Shan Hai Jing (a famous book)”. Additionally, there are several proper nouns like “肥遗” and “楚人” should be “Fei Yi” and “Chu people” with capital form. More importantly, the grammatical problems could not be accepted. The sentence “这种器形和纹样在《山海经》中有多处记载，分别称为‘并封’和‘肥遗’” is the passive voice in Chinese language and the translation should be passive form more properly, that is to say, the two predicates would be “were recorded” and “were called”. Furthermore, it is a compound-complex sentence with coordinating conjunctions or semicolons, that means the main structure of the English sentence should be “This sculpt and decoration were recorded ..., and they were called...”. Therefore, the translation could be “This sculpt and decoration were recorded many times in Shan Hai Jing (a famous book), and they were called “Bing Feng” and “Fei Yi”.

Table 2. Translations from Box Filled With Wine Object.

ST	TT(Before revised)	TT(After revised)
猪形酒具盒	Shaft of Chariot	Box Filled With Wine Object
酒具盒是盛放酒具的盒子，出土时盒内尚有三个耳环。该酒具盒的造	There were three ear-cups in the box when it was excavated. The shaped of this box is like a pig	There were three ear-cups in the box when it was excavated. The shape of this box is like a pig with

<p>型为双首连体猪形器身，器表的主体纹样为一首双身龙纹。这种器形和纹样在《山海经》中有多处记载，分别称为“并封”和“肥遗”。这件艺术品反映了楚人对这两种神物的信仰和崇拜。</p>	<p>wit two heads joining to gether. The main texture decoration of the box's. Surface is like a dragon of one head with two bodies. This sculpe and decoration were record many times in <shan Hai Jing>(a famous book),they were called "Bing Feng" ang "fei Yi". This work shows that chu people adore and believe in this two kind of holy animals.</p>	<p>two heads joining together. The main texture decoration of the box's surface is like a dragon of one head with two bodies. This sculpt and decoration were recorded many times in <i>Shan Hai Jing</i> (a famous book), and they were called “Bing Feng” and “Fei Yi”. This work shows that Chu people adore and believe in these two kinds of holy animals.</p>
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2.3. Insufficient Cultural Factors of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts

The two problems had mentioned above of Chu lacquer wares texts are the common problems at a superficial level. At present, the translation of Chu lacquer wares texts from Chinese language to English language basically focuses on the equivalent translation of words, sentences, and passages in the traditional sense. Translation as a means of exchanging ideas conveys the information just on the language level and is needed to cover and explore the significant factors of Chu culture carried by these Chu lacquer wares.

The cultranslation theory looks at the bigger picture beyond translating the words, sentences, and passages as an integral part individually or faithfully reproducing the meaning of the source text on the linguistic level. In fact, it points out that translation is not only regarded as a process of language transference on the linguistic level, but also the interpretation of the original works to rewriting on the cultural level. It is believed that culture should be the translation unit, and only in this way can it can achieve synergistic and in-depth English translation so as to realize mutual exchanges between cultures.

Take the additional information “a famous book” of ancient Chinese book “山海经” for example which is mentioned from the text of the Chu lacquer ware “Box Filled With Wine Object”. Firstly, it is acknowledged that “山海经” is the oldest geography book on folk tales from the Pre-Qin period. It was generally acknowledged that *Pictures of Mountains and Seas* are illustrations to the *Scripture of Mountains and Seas* [3]. As an encyclopedia of ancient times in China, it has a wide range of contents, including religion, history, mythology, legend, folklore, etiquette, astronomy, geography, animals, plants, minerals, medicine, etc. And its value and significance are certainly worthless and multifaceted, especially for understanding the historical concepts, geographical concepts, folk customs, etiquette, mythology, and some related religious mythological thoughts and ways of thinking. The book has an irreplaceable important role [4]. Anne Birrell mentioned “This major source of Chinese mythology (third century B.C. to second century A.D.) brings together a treasure trove of rare data and colorful fiction about the mythical figures, rituals, medicine, natural history, and ethnic peoples of the ancient world. [5]” However, it is noted that the book is just translated into “*Shan Hai Jing* (a famous book)” in English language, and the additional information “a famous book” is too simple and abstract without any readability, which could not offer the equivalent information for foreign visitors.

On the other hand, the translation for the title of “山海经” can adopt several translation methods. Although it is a common method to translate names or places adopted by transliteration, this way does not convey the cultural messages of the book,

and the simplistic translation for the whole sentence is improper and would not be recognized by foreign visitors. In fact, there is the publicly published English book “*The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (Figure 3)” by Anne Birrell [5] based on the ancient Chinese book of the same name. So it is obvious that the title of this English book takes into account the original meaning of the Chinese title and it also conveys the main content of the book. Therefore, here the acceptance for the book “*山海经*” translated into “*The Classic of Mountains and Seas*” can be higher for foreign visitors. Furthermore, many scholars in China made a lot of research on the ancient book and their English translation for the title of the book can also be referred. In addition, the “Bing Feng” and “Fei Yi” mentioned in the text “*猪形酒具盒 (Box Filled With Wine Object)*” are the myths and legends of ancient Chinese Han people. This cultural knowledge is not well understood by the Chinese and there is no any comment or explanation on the cultures behind the cultural relic in the Chinese and English texts. It is believed that Chinese and foreign visitors are both full of doubts towards the Chu lacquer ware.

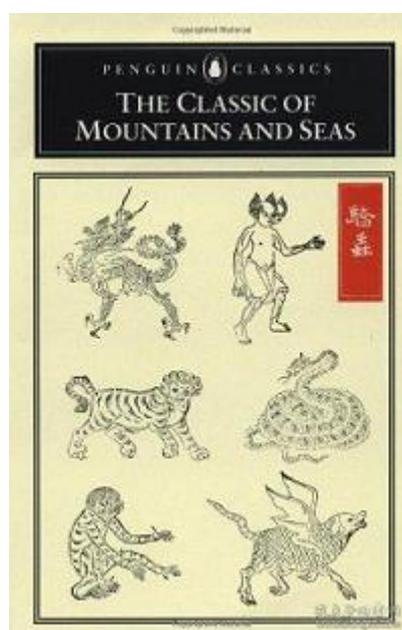


Figure 3. *The Classic of Mountains and Seas*.

2.4. Limited Transmission Methods of Chu Lacquer Wares

Due to the factors like time, space of exhibition and transportation, the museums as a platform for communication is limited. Through the museums, the transmission methods of Chu lacquer wares are also limited, mainly including the exhibition hall of Chu lacquer wares, like bilingual labels, bilingual extended texts, bilingual wall texts and even bilingual brochures; and bilingual website texts of Chu lacquer wares and the exhibition halls from some museums from Chu culture region.

Additionally, displaying these cultural relics to visitors through the Internet is another wonderful transmission method. Especially, there are Chinese official website and English official website for Chinese and foreign visitors. This means we can look and appreciate these cultural relics just by clicking.

Table 3. Chinese and English Official Website of Museums in Jingchu Region.

Museums	Chinese Official Website	English Official Website
Hubei	http://www.hbww.org/home/Index.aspx	http://www.hbww.org/home/EnglishIndex

Provincia l Museum		aspx
Henan Museum	http://www.chnmus.net/	http://english.chnmus.net/
Hunan Museum	http://www.hnmuseum.com/	http://www.hnmuseum.com/en
Jingzhou Museum, Hubei	http://www.jzmsm.org/yk/	No English official website
Yichang Museum, Hubei	http://www.ycbwg.com/	No English official website
Jingmen Museum, Hubei	http://www.jmmuseum.com/	No English official website
Xiangyan g Museum, Hubei	http://www.xymuseum.cn/home/index.html	No English official website
Suizhou Museum, Hubei	https://www.szbwg.net/	No English official website

From Table 3, it is observed that there are eight museums around the Yangtze River Basin in the study. There are bilingual websites among Hubei Provincial Museum, Henan Museum and Hunan Museum that are provincial museums. Maybe as the provincial museums, they can provide the human and financial resource to establish the English official website to be open to the world. Contrarily, the rest of five museums that are local museums only offer Chinese official website through Internet without English official website. Because of the limited official websites, especially the limited English official websites, the cultural transmission method with official websites is restricted.

Table 4. Collections of Chu Lacquer Wares from the Websites.

Museums	Collections of Chu Lacquer Wares from Chinese Official Website	Collections of Chu Lacquer Wares from English Official Website
Hubei Provincial Museum	131 pieces/sets	9 pieces/sets
Hunan Museum	37 pieces/sets	18 pieces/sets
Henan Museum	3 pieces/sets	3 pieces/sets
Jingzhou Museum	9 pieces/sets	0
Yichang Museum	3 pieces/sets	0
Jingmen Museum	4 pieces/sets	0
Xiangyang Museum	2 pieces/sets	0
Suizhou Museum	4 pieces/sets	0

From Table 4, compared to the Chu lacquer wares displaying in the museums, the collections displaying online are only a small portion. The amount of collections of Chu lacquer wares from the websites are both less than the Chu lacquer wares displaying in the museums. The Hubei Provincial Museum can offer 131 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares from Chinese official website while 9 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares from English official website. For the Hunan Museum, there are 37 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares from Chinese official website and 18 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares from English official website. From Chinese and English official website of the Henan Museum, there are only 3 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares. The rest of local museums could not provide any translation of Chu lacquer wares due to the absence of English official website. Actually, it is clear that we can discover only 30 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares on the English official website from the three

provincial museums. That means foreign visitors can receive translated information of only the 30 pieces/sets of Chu lacquer wares through the Internet. It is undoubtedly the amount of information is not enough to learn and study the Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture. Therefore, the transmission method with official websites is restricted and translated information of Chu lacquer wares is quite insufficient for foreign visitors.

With the international exhibitions and symposiums, it is possible to demonstrate the Chu lacquer wares to the world. The following table is a part of the international exhibitions and symposiums on Chu lacquer wares or Chu culture and lacquer art over the past five years.

Table 5. International Exhibitions and Symposiums.

Dates	Venues	Factors of Chu Lacquer Wares	The Theme of the Events
2015.9	Chengdu, China	Chu Style Lacquer Painting Technique; Exhibitions of Chu lacquer wares	The 5th International Intangible Cultural Heritage Festival
2016.2	Seoul, South Korea	Chu Style Lacquer Painting Technique; Exhibitions of Chu lacquer wares	Hubei Intangible Cultural Heritage Graphic Exhibition and Exquisite Physical Exhibition
2016.5	New Zealand	Chu Style Lacquer Painting Technique	Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition of Hubei Province
2016.9	Kazakhstan	Exhibitions of Chu lacquer wares	China Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition
2016.11	Jingzhou, China	Chu Culture	The 2nd Chu Culture International Academic Symposium
2017.5	Shenzhen, China	Drum with Phoenix Stands	The 13th China (Shenzhen) International Cultural Industry Expo
2017.6	Jingzhou, China	Chu Culture	Jingchu Cultural Foreign Exchange Association & Cultural Inheritance Base
2017.9	Jingzhou, China	Chu Culture	The 3rd Chu Culture International Academic Symposium
2018.11	Jingzhou, China	Lacquer Art	Dialogue between China, Japan and South Korea on Lacquer Art
2019.9	Ohio, America	Chu Culture	Sino-American Chu Culture International Academic Symposium
2019.10	Jingzhou, China	Chu Style Lacquer Painting Technique	2019 Jingchu Lacquer Art International Symposium
2019.10	Jingzhou, China	Lacquer Art	Lacquer Art Inheritance and Development Alliance
2019.12	Wuhan, China	Cultural Products on Chu Lacquer Wares	2019 Yangtze River Cultural Tourism Expo
2020.11	Jingzhou, China	Chu Style Lacquer Painting Technique	2020 Jingchu Lacquer Art International Symposium

From Table 5, for the last five years, international symposium had been held and international institutions had been established around Chu lacquer wares from different research angles. Apart from the International Intangible Cultural Heritage Festival, there were some established institutions related to Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture, like Jingchu Cultural Foreign Exchange Association & Cultural

Inheritance Base, Lacquer Art Inheritance and Development Alliance. Meanwhile, there were symposiums like Dialogue between China, Japan and South Korea on Lacquer Art in 2018, Jingchu Lacquer Art International Symposium & Annual Conference of Lacquer Art Inheritance and Development Alliance in 2020. And many competitions were held like National Lacquerware Production Vocational Skills Competition in 2020, Hubei Folk Craft Skills Competition & National Lacquer Art Invitational in 2019. Moreover, various levels of horticultural exposition were open to the public like the Hubei Horticultural Exposition in Huangshi in 2016, Hubei Horticultural Exposition in Jingzhou in 2019 and the World Horticultural Exposition in Beijing in 2019. Additionally, it is common way to extend Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture through various levels of international symposium on Chu lacquer wares, vocational skills competition for lacquer making, horticultural exposition in the world, etc. However, it is noticed that many more international intangible cultural heritage exhibitions than thematic exhibitions or thematic events. And these expositions, competitions and symposiums could be open to the world around the Chu lacquer wares with bilingual texts and bilingual communication.

Basically, the mentioned transmission methods of Chu lacquer wares and Chu lacquer wares texts are indeed limited. What are the synergism strategies on Chu lacquer wares?

3. Synergism Strategies of Chu Lacquer Wares

3.1. Complete Structure of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts

Complete structure of Chu lacquer wares texts can offer the basic information on Chu lacquer wares and can also meet the knowledge demands from visitors. From Table 1, there should be 103 source texts and 103 target texts for the name, the dynasty, the unearthed place, and the dimension and background introduction of Chu lacquer ware. As a matter of fact, the dimension of the source texts and target texts are both missing without any statements. The visitors could not exactly know how long, how wide and how high of each Chu lacquer ware and maybe have a rough idea of the dimension just through a glimpse of the cultural relic. The quantity of incomplete source texts and target texts of the background introduction are huge. In other words, the visitors could not get the enough information about the origin, the history, the story behind the cultural relic which is actually vital factors for the culture transmission. There are nearly half of the source texts and target texts are lacking for the dynasty and the unearthed place that are needed just like the birth certificate for a baby. The completed information of the Chu lacquer wares may be the first step for learning these cultural relics. So completed structure of Chu lacquer wares texts might be the significant step for transmitting Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture.

3.2. Accurate English Language of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts

Accurate English language of Chu lacquer wares texts is not a simple procedure to check whether the languages used are right or wrong. Accurate English language refers to the grammars, the spellings, the equivalent words and the equivalent meaning, etc. It is a demand of the competencies required for translators and interpreters. The following two requirements are commonly stressed: good command of English and sufficient translation practice [6]. The good command of English includes language knowledge, language output ability, pragmatic awareness and

bilingual skills, etc. [6]. It is the first requirement that translators and interpreters should master the proficient English language and Chinese language.

According to Toury [7], he considered that the development of translating as a skill is not reducible to a mere unfolding of the innate predisposition, but should be regarded as a function of the bilingual speaker's practice in actual translating, at least from the point where his translational behaviour can be characterized as communicative, that is, socially motivated and socially functional. This means that translation competence is different from the language competence. And the former focuses on the transfer competence between two languages. Apart from that, it is needed for translators to flexibly apply translation software and computer aided translation (CAT) tools.

Accurate English language of Chu lacquer wares texts could polish and improve the languages for translation with the profound knowledge about semantics and pragmatics, techniques and art, not to generate misunderstanding and mistranslation of the texts, under-translation and over-interpretation of the texts when translating Chu lacquer wares.

3.3. Sufficient Cultural Factors of Chu Lacquer Wares Texts

Cultural factors are striking characteristics of cultural relics. Translating cultural factors covers profound humanistic accomplishments from the translators. Basically, humanistic accomplishments refer to the knowledge on the humanities like ancient Chinese history and culture, history and culture of English-speaking countries, intercultural communication, Chinese classics, etc. Humanistic accomplishments are another requirement which is commonly stressed [6]. During the translation, it is a process to complete the task of translation from one language turning into another language, and it is also a process to act as a mediator and communicator of cultural misunderstanding and conflicts. Cultural transmission and communication seem more important and cultural factors could transfer among different cultures.

Chu State was founded for 800 years and made unique contributions to the development of ancient history and culture in China. From the reign of Xiong Yi onwards, the Chu people had been making hard efforts to develop their society and economy. In the Spring and Autumn Period, the King of Zhuang (the posthumous name of Xiong Lv) made Chu become one of the most powerful states in China. In the Warring States Period, Chu surpassed any other feudal states and the expansion of its territory. Chu people had achieved some of the best achievements at that time in the handicraft sectors such as silk weaving and lacquer. This point can be fully verified by Chu lacquer wares unearthed in the former territory of Chu. Each cultural relic with cultural symbols and factors could demonstrate its culture. Chu lacquer wares with striking cultural symbols and factors could show the Chu culture. Therefore, Chu lacquer wares texts with sufficient cultural factors can offer the abundance of background information to visitors and transmit the unique regional Chu culture.

3.4. Diversified Transmission Methods of Chu Lacquer Wares

3.4.1. Diversify Traditional Transmission Methods

i. Free-of-charge Exhibitions in Museums

The museum is a place to which visitors are supposed to go because by visiting it, they can have a general idea what the cultural history of a country or region is like [8]. In China, a trip round the museum was not free of charge until 2008. From that time on, the visitors can go to the traditional exhibitions of the museum for free so far and the public could get access to the opportunity to learn, to master and transmit the traditional culture. Therefore, the traditional free-of-charge visiting from museums especially in Chu region should continue to benefit the public, which is a main transmission method for Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture.

ii. Digital Exhibitions on Internet

With the popularity of Internet, a growing number of museums have been pushed onto the path of digitization. Today authentic Chu lacquer wares on a variety of subjects are only a click away. However, the first step should be the establishment of museum foreign languages websites. Displaying these cultural relics through the websites in foreign languages makes it possible to learn about the culture among foreign visitors. Moreover, there are some free applications (APP) and techniques are developed like electronic books and applications based on smart phone. For Hubei Provincial Museum, the official public account from We Chat was also launched in 2016 which got the basic functions to reserve tickets for visitors and obtain various guide information including video, audio, pictures, and texts, etc. Additionally, the products of augmented reality (AR) were displayed in Paris that is the first time that the provincial treasure has been exhibited abroad in AR technique. Later, the APP was designed as the first “Smart Museum” in 2018 to demonstrate the cultural relics of Hubei Provincial Museum with three-dimension techniques. Thus it can be seen that digital exhibitions on Internet based on digital techniques are convenient for visitors to learn cultural treasures including Chu lacquer wares from many perspectives.

3.4.2. Explore Modern Transmission Methods

i. Explore Online or Live Courses on Chu Lacquer Wares

From 2020, due to the epidemic of covid-19, the popularity of online courses or live courses is extended across the whole world. On the other hand, it is achievable to adopt the online ways to display the exhibitions of Chu lacquer wares, to demonstrate the techniques of Chu lacquer wares, to offer some cultural lectures on background information of Chu lacquer wares. With the social platforms at home and abroad, the video clips on Chu lacquer wares can be post online. In this way, people could touch the unfamiliar wares through the screen and they can watch them anywhere and anytime. Bilingual subtitles at least English subtitles are needed to match the information of Chu lacquer wares in the video clips. In other words, the English subtitles about Chu lacquer ware texts like the name of Chu lacquer ware, the dynasty of the Chu lacquer ware, the unearthed place of Chu lacquer ware; the dimension and background introduction of Chu lacquer war would be mentioned and should be correct and exact for foreign audiences to transmit Chu lacquer ware and Chu culture. Furthermore, there are a large number of audiences to watch and learn the traditional art. According to the Jingzhou Municipal People’s Government website, over 570,000 audiences watched the program of intangible cultural heritage including the Chu lacquer ware within one hour per day of the live webcast on 26th to 29th of March in 2020. Therefore, it is expected that there are a great quantity of audiences in the whole world who are eager to learn Chu culture and Chu lacquer wares. Explore online or live courses on Chu lacquer wares through the international platform like Facebook

and twitter for introducing and transmitting Chu culture and Chu lacquer wares to foreigners better.

ii. Explore Theme Events on Chu Lacquer Wares

In the first place, we can explore thematic exhibition on Chu lacquer wares. As early as the March of 2016, the exhibition of MERAVIGLIE DELLO STATO DI CHU (WONDERS OF THE STATE OF CHU) (Figure 4) was held in Italy. There were 70 pieces/sets of cultural relics of great archaeological value, including the magnificent lacquer wares that are to transmit Jingchu culture and promote cultural cooperation and exchanges between two countries. The visitors were full of curiosity and interest in Chinese cultural relics and considered one of the top three “star cultural relics” is the Chu lacquer ware-Tomb Guardian. Later, in May 1st of 2019, the “EXHIBITION OF ELABORATE ANCIENT LACQUER (Figure 5)” was held in Jingzhou Museum in China, which attracted many local citizens and tourists from other places to watch. The exhibition is to display the 49 pieces (set) of treasures of Chu and Han lacquer wares from these collections and to taste the cultural charm of Chu and Han Dynasty. It is divided into four sections: lacquer wares for eating utensils; lacquer wares for daily life like comb, Lacquer Ji-armrest, screen; lacquer wares for entertainment and lacquer wares for funeral. The theme exhibition offers people a visual impact and unlimited reverie, marveling at the rich imagination and superb craftsmanship of the ancients. It is believed that the increasing similar thematic exhibitions would be open to the public to raise the enthusiasm on further learning the Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture.



Figure 4. *Meraviglie Dello Stato Di Chu.*



Figure 5. *Exhibition of Elaborate Ancient Lacquer.*

There is another way is to explore thematic cultural products on Chu lacquer wares. Based on exquisite Chu lacquer wares, thematic cultural products are made to be a fine artwork and the decorations. Like “Drum with Phoenix Stands” and “Box Filled With Wine Object”, these popular products can be demonstrated and sold during the offline theme exhibition or during the online shopping festivals for especial day like Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, even on the platform of shopping website on ordinary days.

As early as 2018, thematic exhibition activity was held in Frankfurt, German. This exhibition was on stationery and office supplies which are cultural and creative products. Among them, the three layers of set box called “和合(Hehe-Confucian

concept of unity and harmony) (Figure 6)” was specially developed and designed for the exhibition. It is a red and black based lacquer ware which presents the oriental elements and contemporary lifestyle. Each layer is equipped with the stationery: Four Treasures of the Study, tea ware-silver pots and glass tea sets and ornaments-silk scarfs and accessories. It is noted that the introduction and interpretation for the exhibition are both with bilingual texts and bilingual communication that is an efficient way to transmit the Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture in English language.

Later, in May 2020, the shopping festival for cultural relics replicas and tourist souvenirs during International Museum Day by Hubei Provincial Museum. Subsequently, there was a live webcast in June 2020 on Chu lacquer ware during Intangible Cultural Heritage Shopping Festival in Jingzhou. It is possible to display the cultural products on one open international platform. And English subtitles and English logo and labels can be added into the room for the live webcast to enhance the understanding of cultural products and the culture. As a matter of fact, integration of online and offline activities on cultural products with bilingual texts are practical ways to promote the transmission of ancient Chinese culture into the world.



Figure 6. Product of “和合 (Hehe)”

Furthermore, exploring thematic tourism with Chu lacquer wares is attracting. As thematic tourism gains popularity in the public in China, a variety of tourism like culture tourism, rural tourism, rural culture tourism, hot spring cultural tourism, culture tourism for historical figures, culture tourism for seasons like Autumn Cultural Tourism. For Chu lacquer wares, the first “JINGCHU CULTURE TOURISM FESTIVAL (Figure 7)” was held in the ancient city of Jingzhou in 2018. A series of activities including Jingchu “Intangible Heritage” Exhibition, Jingchu Cultural Relics Exhibition and 2018 China Dragon Boat Competition were held. What’s more, thematic tourism with Chu lacquer wares is along with special events like “Cultural and Natural Heritage Day”, “Hubei culture trip”, etc. In any case, it is still an efficient way to transmit Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture.



Figure 7. Jingchu culture tourism festival.

Additionally, it is popular to explore thematic poll on cultural relics. With an ever-flowing river of information and communication, a majority of polls can be conducted through the traditional letters, email, online voting, etc. Certainly, the poll on cultural relics could follow this way. “What are the top ten treasures of cultural relics from the museum?”, “Why do you think the treasures are the top ten?”, “Do you know the background information of the treasures?” These questions are raised to arouse people’s awareness of Chu cultural relics and its culture. In 2020, there was a similar poll held by Hubei Provincial Museum which referred to the cultural relics of Chu culture. Before the poll, the Hubei Provincial Museum introduced 20 pieces of treasures one by one with texts and videos on its website. Among them, there are three pieces of Chu lacquer wares: “Painted carved wooden screen with small bases” , “Drum with Phoenix Stands (Figure 8)” and “Painted Figures and horse-drawn carriage (Figure 9)”. Later, the poll attracted more than 2,350,000 netizen to choose the top treasures from many collections during one month. As a result, two pieces of Chu lacquer wares are elected to be the top treasures: one is the “Drum with Phoenix Stands”, the other is the “Painted Figures and horse-drawn carriage”. The former of Chu lacquer ware highlights the romance and magic of Chu culture while the latter of Chu lacquer ware is regarded as the earliest “comics” in China. It is possible to transmit Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture by more thematic poll on cultural relics, and it is considered to explore more in-depth interpretation on the carriers of culture.



Figure 8. Drum with Phoenix Stands.



Figure 9. Painted Figures and horse-drawn carriage.

Last but not the least, exploring thematic literature and art works on cultural relics is a possible practical way to introduce the culture. In 2014, the People’s Literature Award of China was announced, and the famous writer Liu Xinglong [9] won the outstanding novel award for “Pan Hui” which revolves around the plots of “zun and pan-a national treasure” from the Tomb of Marquis Yi of Zeng. He said that as an exquisite bronze, the cultural relic not only inspires himself, but it is amazing about its

history and its past. Later, in 2016, the monograph “(Bianzhong from Marquis Yi of Zeng” became the National Cultural Heritage Excellent Book for its great academic value. Based on the scientific reports, background materials and research results of “Bianzhong from Marquis Yi of Zeng”, it is written to fully reflect the cultural outlook of bronze bells from many fields such as archaeology, history, musicology and acoustics,.

With the mysterious cultural relics, including Chu lacquer wares, it is expected that exploring the stories behind these cultural relics by novels or other forms of literature would greatly show the wisdom of the ancients and the ancient Chinese civilization to the public. And it is believed that brilliant writing needs excellent translation to show the ancient Chinese civilization to the world. Similarly, the national treasures of Chu lacquer wares could be the original inspiration of the writing language, the singing language, the film language even drama language. With the bilingual languages for the literature and art works, we can share these national treasures of Chu lacquer wares with the world.

4. Conclusions

As the one of the representatives of Chu culture, Chu lacquer wares are studied among Chinese scholars from various perspectives. The paper is to elaborate the four problems of Chu lacquer wares in the transmission and their solutions. Apart from the common languages’ problems in the translation, evidently this paper takes the transmission methods into account which are disordered and unorganized. Therefore, there is a necessary to put file in order and put forward to strategies. Especially, the period of epidemic covid-19 spreading across all around of the world in 2020, it is surely worth to explore transmission methods of Chu lacquer wares and Chu culture through the Internet.

Compared to the limited traditional transmission methods because of the epidemic prevention and control, there are more modern transmission methods discussed. Theme activities and events on Chu lacquer wares like thematic exhibition, thematic cultural products, thematic tourism, thematic poll and thematic literature and thematic art works on Chu lacquer wares would be the major transmission methods while they are beginning to rise in the recent years.

Additionally, the Internet has made Chu lacquer wares learning easier. Visitors used to be obliged to spend their time in the museums looking for the information printed on the wall or labels that help them understand the culture. It was very inconvenient due to the limited time and space of the museums. In other words, it plays the vital important role in transmitting cultures. An increasing number of people could learn cultures and their representatives via the Internet, like the pictures, the figure and the background information, if you put some key words on Chu lacquer wares in the search engine. Today authentic content on a variety of cultural relics is only a click away. Furthermore, Chinese and English official websites of museums in Jingchu region are preparing and establishing. It is predicted that foreign language websites would be finished in the near future. Meanwhile, online or live courses on Chu lacquer wares posted online are attracted the young audiences to click and discuss the traditional lacquer wares and ancient culture.

Because of the strict and scientific requirements for epidemic prevention, there are some museums only visited online not in person, that means the first-hand materials are limited. It would be the further research to explore the abundant and lively data

and texts on Chu lacquer wares to examine the results and conclusions in the paper. And the discussions on the modern transmission methods are expected to be practical in the future research.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This work was supported by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Program of Hubei Provincial Department of Education, P. R. China (Grant No.19G126).

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