

Optimization Path of Translation and Dissemination of Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Platform

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Abstract: Shaanxi Province has established a digital platform centered on digital museums, intangible cultural heritage databases, and management systems. However, the platform still faces prominent challenges in cross-language translation, including the transliteration of place names, lack of explanations for culturally loaded terms, absence of interactive translation functions, insufficient multilingual coverage of content, and a lack of mechanisms for evaluating the quality of translated media. This paper, based on a review of domestic and international theories and technologies for intangible cultural heritage translation, constructs an optimized framework of “localized governance + interactive translation”, and proposes systematic countermeasures at four levels. First, it establishes a unified trilingual (Chinese, English, Japanese) terminology database and translation standards, forming a translation memory (TM) to support batch updates. Second, it introduces large-scale models for machine pre-translation, combined with professional translator review; and implements real-time bilingual subtitles, terminology pop-ups, and AI-guided robots in video and VR/AR scenarios. Third, it implements a workflow for synchronous updates of multilingual content and incorporates intangible cultural heritage inheritors and expert databases into the platform’s metadata. Finally, it constructs user satisfaction surveys, dissemination effect factor analysis, and BP neural network prediction models to achieve dynamic monitoring and iterative improvement of translated media quality. Based on on-site research and analysis of the existing platform in Shaanxi Province and subsequent optimization, the overall consistency of terminology translation has been significantly improved after optimization. The average consistency rate of 11 projects increased from 62.9% to 92.6%. This paper verifies the feasibility and expected benefits of the above four-dimensional optimization path.

Keywords: Digital platform for intangible cultural heritage; Optimization of translation and dissemination; Translation memory; Machine translation

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1. Introduction

The cross-linguistic dissemination of intangible cultural heritage has become an important vehicle for building cultural confidence and international exchange. Shaanxi Province, as a region rich in intangible cultural heritage resources, has built a comprehensive platform covering digital museums, intangible cultural heritage databases, and management

systems. However, at the level of cross-linguistic translation, deep-seated contradictions have been exposed, such as the lack of standardized transliteration of place names, insufficient explanation of culturally loaded terms, and the absence of interactive translation functions. Although the platform's content has achieved digital storage and display, the uneven multilingual coverage and the lack of a translation quality assessment mechanism have limited the depth of understanding and willingness to participate among overseas users. This structural imbalance between technological accessibility and cultural comprehensibility has prompted academia and industry to re-examine the translation paradigm of intangible cultural heritage digital platforms.

This paper constructed an optimized framework of “localization governance + interactive translation”, breaking through the limitations of traditional translation research that focuses on text conversion, and incorporating terminology standardization, machine-assisted translation, multimodal content synchronization, and quality prediction models into a unified system. By establishing a trilingual (Chinese, English, and Japanese) terminology database and translation memory, the consistency challenge in batch updates is addressed. A process combining large-scale model pre-translation and expert review is introduced, balancing efficiency and accuracy. Real-time subtitles, terminology pop-ups, and AI navigation are deployed in video and VR/AR scenarios to enhance user interaction. A dynamic monitoring mechanism based on user satisfaction surveys and BP neural networks is constructed to iteratively optimize translation strategies. This interdisciplinary methodology provides a systematic solution to the translation problems of intangible cultural heritage digital platforms.

The innovation lies in embedding inheritor and expert resources into the platform's metadata management, shifting translation work from technical execution to collaborative cultural governance. The combination of expert knowledge graphs and review processes ensures the authenticity of cultural connotations. The application of BP neural network prediction models breaks through the bottleneck of traditional quality assessment relying on human experience. By quantifying the mapping relationship between translation strategy characteristics and dissemination effects, it provides data support for platform operation decisions, achieving a paradigm shift from experience-driven to intelligent decision-making.

2. Related work

The study of intangible cultural heritage translation has expanded from the language conversion at the text level to multiple dimensions such as discourse construction, multimodal communication and digital technology integration. The academic community has explored theoretical innovation, technical practice and cross-cultural adaptation, but the systematic optimization path still needs to be further clarified. Gu and Wu proposed that the academic community should also take into account the diverse composition of the global discourse system, take “interpretive translation” and “multimodal communication” as the starting point, promote the theoretical innovation of the translation and dissemination of the national foreign discourse system, and provide intellectual support for optimizing China's foreign discourse strategy ^[1]. Fan, based on the theory of multimodal translation and combined with the actual dissemination cases of Shaanxi intangible cultural heritage projects, recognized the application effects and limitations of multimodal translation in cross-cultural communication, and constructed an optimization path for cultural adaptability and international communication strategies ^[2]. Ren et al. translated and introduced the intangible cultural heritage of Chinese ethnic minorities to foreign countries, and the digital archive-style inheritance and development based on bilingual corpora and digital exhibition halls, which helped to activate the innovative value of traditional ethnic cultural industries and show the world the charm and aesthetic meaning of ethnic culture in Chinese intangible cultural heritage ^[3]. Ji used Halliday systemic functional grammar and Kress visual grammar as theoretical foundations to attempt to construct a multimodal discourse reconstruction analysis model for the translation and dissemination of cultural promotional films ^[4]. Zeng believed that in order to promote the translation and dissemination of Cantonese opera overseas, translators can apply the “four-life” concept of ecological translation studies to the whole process of Cantonese opera translation, which is to be driven by “life” and “life is endless”

[5]. Hou et al. outlined the latest models, projects and technical practices for promoting the digital life cycle development of intangible cultural heritage [6]. Prykhodko et al. analyzed cultural migration in translation and introduced the concept of “culture” by exploring innovative methods to preserve the cross-cultural characteristics of texts [7]. Lovtsova et al. explored the theoretical basis of pedagogy and, using the experience of children’s art schools as an example, demonstrated the necessity of adopting a competency-based approach when implementing supplementary education projects [8]. Gwerevende and Mthombeni explained how indigenous music, dance and language constitute an integral part of African cultural heritage and demonstrated the need to establish an interdisciplinary community model to protect them, treating them as part of the same cultural ecosystem [9]. Mathioudakis et al. introduced a platform designed to facilitate the collection of intangible cultural heritage data, the construction of narratives, and to present it to the public through web pages and mobile applications that provide augmented reality (AR) experiences [10]. While the above studies have made progress in theoretical interpretation and technological application, they generally lack a holistic solution to the translation and dissemination of regional intangible cultural heritage platforms, especially in the systematic construction of terminology standardization, dynamic quality monitoring, and localization governance mechanisms.

3. Current development and cross-linguistic challenges of Shaanxi ICH digital platforms

As of 2025, Shaanxi has initially formed a relatively complete digital ecology for the dissemination of intangible cultural heritage (ICH). Representative platforms include the Shaanxi Digital Museum built by the Shaanxi Provincial Administration of Cultural Heritage, which relies on a province-wide cultural relics database and provides virtual exhibition halls, digital thematic shows and 3D panoramic roaming; the Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum operated by the Shaanxi ICH Protection Center, which includes projects such as Qinqiang Opera, paper-cutting and shadow puppetry and offers text, images, audio-video and AR/VR experiences; the Shaanxi ICH Database jointly constructed by Shaanxi Library and the Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism, which provides structured retrieval of 164 ICH entries and serves research and teaching; the Shaanxi ICH Management System, which supports project application, list management and multi-level data sharing within the administration; as well as several research prototype platforms and cultural-tourism digital platforms that experiment with immersive technologies such as VR/AR and digital humans (Table 1). Overall, these platforms have laid a solid technical foundation, realized large-scale digital collection and online display of ICH resources, and significantly expanded public access channels.

Table 1. Overview of Shaanxi intangible cultural heritage digital platforms (as of 2025)

Platform name	Organizing body & developer	Launch time	Main functions and features	Access URL
Shaanxi digital museum project	Shaanxi provincial administration of cultural heritage (a provincial government cultural benefit project)	Launched in 2012, trial operation in 2011	1. A B/S system built on the province-wide museum collections database Includes five major sections such as a virtual reality gallery, digital thematic exhibitions, and selected cultural relic appreciation 2. Supports 3D display, panoramic tours, and online interaction 3. The total number of visits on mobile and desktop has exceeded 2 million, covering 122 countries and regions	https://www.sxfycc.com/

Table 1 (Continued)

Platform name	Organizing body & developer	Launch time	Main functions and features	Access URL
Shaanxi province intangible cultural heritage digital museum	Shaanxi intangible cultural heritage protection center	Launched successively in the 2020s	1. Aggregates provincial-level intangible cultural heritage items (such as Qinqiang opera, paper-cutting, shadow puppetry, etc.) 2. Provides texts, images, audio and video, 3D models, and AR/VR interactive experiences 3. Interconnected with the “China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum” to share data	https://www.sxfycc.com/
Shaanxi province intangible cultural heritage database	Jointly developed by Shaanxi provincial library and the shaanxi provincial department of culture and tourism	Officially opened to the public in 2021	Provides structured storage for 164 intangible cultural heritage entries (including project overviews, inheritors, documents, images, audio and video materials, etc.) Supports multi-dimensional retrieval by administrative region, category, time, and other criteria Provides data support for scientific research, teaching, and cultural & creative development	https://www.sxlib.org.cn/dfzy/feiwuzhi/ccr/
Shaanxi province intangible cultural heritage management system (b/s architecture)	Shaanxi provincial department of culture and tourism (lead authority)	2024	1. User registration, project application and review, directory management, inheritor/organization management, archives and resource management 2. Modules such as intangible cultural heritage map, policy information, statistical analysis, and system administration 3. Supports data synchronization and sharing across the provincial, municipal, and county levels	Provincial department of culture and tourism administration platform (internal access)

From the perspective of cross-linguistic translation and international communication, these platforms still exhibit several structural shortcomings. First, there are prominent issues in place-name rendering and cultural terminology. Transliteration of place names is often inaccurate or not internationally intelligible: place names such as “Shaanbei” or project names like “Shaanbei Daoqing folk narrative singing” are frequently rendered only in pinyin, without explanatory forms such as “Northern Shaanxi” or brief notes in the main text, which may mislead overseas users about their geographical meaning. Culturally loaded terms such as “Daoqing”, “Mianhua”, and “straw hat” are also commonly translated as a single word or brief phrase, without clarification of their artistic form, historical origin or production techniques, making it difficult for foreign audiences to grasp their cultural connotations.

Second, the quality and breadth of multilingual translation services remain inadequate. Many translations stay at the level of literal or fragmentary rendering, with weak textual coherence and limited contextual relevance; the text is rarely adapted to the audience’s cognitive background and expectations, nor enriched with supplementary explanations or transitional phrases, resulting in a fragmented reading experience. Moreover, multilingual support is often restricted to a Chinese–English interface, while systematic versions in other languages such as Japanese or French are absent. Although “multilingual platforms” are frequently advocated in academic and policy documents, in practice the scope and depth of multilingual services are still limited.

Third, there is an overreliance on generic machine translation and a lack of professional editorial control. Some contents targeted at external audiences are directly generated through online machine translation tools without thorough human post-editing by trained translators. This leads to inaccurate wording, stylistic inconsistency and lack of terminological uniformity across pages and platforms. At the same time, interactive translation functions are largely

missing: most platforms provide only static text blocks, with few real-time language-switching options, interactive subtitles for audio-video content, or contextual pop-up explanations for key terms, which significantly constrains user engagement and on-demand clarification.

Fourth, user feedback, data-driven evaluation and cultural contextualization is not sufficiently embedded in platform governance. Existing platforms seldom integrate users' comments or ratings on translation quality into a systematic evaluation framework, nor do they regularly analyze communication data to identify translation-related bottlenecks. As a result, problems that undermine dissemination effectiveness are hard to identify and correct in a timely, evidence-based manner. Meanwhile, the presentation of broader cultural background information remains relatively weak: content tends to focus on factual description and catalogue-style listing of items, paying insufficient attention to narratives that highlight historical context, social functions and value implications, so overseas audiences often see isolated facts and names rather than a coherent cultural ecosystem.

4. Method

To ensure methodological transparency and result validity, data for this study were collected through field investigation, platform log extraction, expert evaluation, and user surveys across 11 representative Shaanxi ICH projects. Key indicators, such as terminology consistency, translation quality, and user engagement, were quantified by combining expert judgments, questionnaire feedback, and anonymized system statistics. Additionally, a BP neural network model was trained on a subset of multilingual content units to explore predictive relationships between translation strategies and dissemination effectiveness.

4.1. Construction of terminology database and translation standards

The Shaanxi Intangible Cultural Heritage Terminology Database is implemented on a MySQL-based relational architecture. A total of 9,432 terms were organized into five hierarchical categories: place names (1,847 entries), personal names (923), craft names (3,156), material names (2,089), and artifact names (1,417).

Each entry contains six core fields: original Chinese form, transliteration, target-language translation, cultural annotation, frequency of use, and review status. On this basis, differentiated translation standards are applied to different types of terms. For example, place names such as “Huaqing Pool” are recorded and displayed in their conventional English form (“Huaqing Pool”); craft names such as “Qinqiang (Shaanxi Opera)” are rendered as “Qinqiang (Shaanxi Opera)” to combine the pinyin designation with an explanatory equivalent; and material names such as “Dangshen (*Codonopsis pilosula*)” are processed as “Dangshen (*Codonopsis pilosula*)” to preserve the indigenous term while providing the corresponding Latin botanical name.

These intertwined deficiencies reveal a clear imbalance: while Shaanxi's ICH digital platforms have achieved substantial progress in technical construction and resource aggregation, their cross-linguistic translation design, cultural explanation and governance mechanisms still lag behind, which directly constrains the depth and quality of international communication (refer **Table 2**).

Table 2. Classification statistics and translation processing parameters of Shaanxi intangible cultural heritage terminology database

Term category	Total entries	Pure transliteration (%)	Transliteration + semantic (%)	Avg. annotation length (chars)	Review pass rate (%)	Machine Pre-translation accuracy (%)	Manual revision time (min/entry)
Place names	1847	68.3	31.7	156	94.2	87.6	3.2
Personal names	923	89.5	10.5	98	96.8	91.3	2.1
Craft names	3156	12.4	87.6	287	88.9	73.4	8.7
Material names	2089	45.7	54.3	203	92.1	81.2	5.4
Artifact names	1417	28.9	71.1	234	90.5	78.9	6.8
Ritual names	856	15.2	84.8	312	86.7	69.1	9.5
Music piece names	1144	52.6	47.4	176	93.4	84.7	4.6

4.2. Integration of large-scale machine translation and professional post-editing

To address the trade-off between translation efficiency and cultural accuracy identified in Section 3, the second methodological step integrates large-scale neural models with a structured human post-editing workflow.

First, a domain-adapted machine pre-translation pipeline was established. Based on the trilingual terminology database described in Section 4.1, a set of custom translation models was configured on the platform's server. The source texts include project descriptions, exhibition narratives and metadata fields extracted from the Shaanxi Digital Museum, the Shaanxi ICH Digital Museum and the Shaanxi ICH Database. Prior to pre-translation, these texts are automatically segmented and tagged with term IDs from the terminology database, so that named entities, ICH item names and culturally loaded expressions can be recognized and treated as protected segments during machine processing.

Second, a professional post-editing and quality assurance workflow was implemented. For each batch of machine-generated translations, a team of trained translators and subject-matter experts perform multi-step review:

Linguistic post-editing, focusing on grammatical correctness, lexical choice and stylistic consistency across pages and platforms.

- (1) Cultural and factual verification, checking the accuracy of cultural references, historical details and technical terminology against the terminology database and expert knowledge.
- (2) Conformity assessment, ensuring alignment with platform-level translation standards, including the preferred rendering of place names, project titles and annotations.
- (3) Post-editing operations are logged and fed back into the system to iteratively fine-tune the domain settings of the translation engine, forming a closed loop of “pre-translation–revision–model adjustment”.

Third, on the basis of improved translation quality, interactive translation functions were gradually deployed in selected modules. For audio-video content, the platform now supports real-time bilingual subtitles (Chinese–English) and experimental Japanese subtitles. Subtitle lines are generated from the reviewed translations and synchronized with time codes, enabling users to switch languages during playback. For key terms such as “Daoqing” or “Qinqiang Opera”, contextual tooltips display short explanations, images or links to dedicated item pages when users hover over or click on the term. In pilot VR/AR scenes, an AI-based virtual guide is embedded, which can provide on-demand multilingual explanations for selected exhibition nodes and answer simple user queries.

Through this combined use of large-scale models, expert post-editing and interactive presentation, the platform moves

beyond static, tool-dependent translation and begins to form a hybrid pattern that is both efficient and culturally reliable.

4.3. Synchronized multilingual workflow and data-driven evaluation

The third methodological component focuses on workflow redesign and the incorporation of inheritor/expert resources and user data into platform governance.

On the content management side, a synchronized multilingual workflow was built into the existing B/S-architecture management system. Any modification to the Chinese source text, whether adding a new ICH item, updating an inheritor's profile or revising exhibition descriptions, automatically triggers a translation task for the corresponding English and Japanese versions. Each content unit is assigned a status label ("pending translation", "under machine pre-translation", "under review", "published"), which allows administrators to monitor the progress and to avoid long-term discrepancies between language versions. Version histories of translations are retained, enabling traceability of revisions and accountability for major changes.

At the knowledge management level, inheritor and expert information is embedded into the platform's metadata. For each ICH item, structured fields record the names, roles and expertise domains of registered inheritors and consultants; selected experts are associated with specific segments of translations and annotations as reviewers. Based on these links, a lightweight knowledge graph is constructed to represent the relationships among ICH items, inheritors, regions, techniques and representative works. This graph is used not only to provide richer recommended content for users, but also to assist translators and reviewers in understanding the cultural ecosystem surrounding each item.

On the evaluation and optimization side, a data-driven mechanism was introduced. User interaction logs (such as page views, average viewing time, click-through rates of tooltips, subtitle usage and language-switching frequency) are collected and anonymized. Periodic user satisfaction surveys regarding translation clarity, cultural intelligibility and overall reading experience are embedded at the end of selected pages and media players. These quantitative indicators, together with expert assessment scores, form a multi-dimensional dataset for analyzing dissemination effectiveness.

To explore intelligent prediction of translation quality and communication performance, a BP neural network model was trained using a subset of items as samples. Input features include text length, proportion of culturally loaded terms, machine pre-translation quality scores, post-editing time, density of annotations and usage of interactive functions; output variables include user satisfaction ratings and key dissemination metrics. After parameter tuning and cross-validation, the model can approximate the mapping between translation strategy configurations and expected dissemination effects, providing a reference for prioritizing revision tasks and allocating human resources.

By combining synchronized workflows, embedded expert knowledge and data-driven evaluation, this method transforms translation from a one-off technical step into an ongoing process of localized governance and iterative optimization.

5. Results and discussion

To verify the effectiveness of the proposed optimization path, the study selected 11 representative ICH projects from the Shaanxi ICH Digital Museum and related platforms as pilot cases. These projects cover different categories such as traditional music, folk crafts, ritual practices and local specialties, and involve a total of 1,326 term entries and 214 pages of descriptive text across Chinese, English and Japanese interfaces.

After the implementation of the trilingual terminology database, the large-model-assisted translation workflow and the interactive functions, several notable improvements were observed.

First, terminology consistency improved significantly. Based on random sampling and expert scoring, the average consistency rate of key terms across pages and platforms increased from 62.9% before optimization to 92.6% after optimization. In particular, the variance in the rendering of place names and ICH item titles was greatly reduced, and the frequency of conflicting translations for the same term dropped by more than half.

Second, translation quality and user perception showed positive changes. Expert evaluations on a five-point scale (fidelity, fluency, cultural appropriateness and stylistic consistency) increased by 0.8–1.2 points on average across the 11 projects. User surveys conducted through embedded questionnaires indicated that the proportion of respondents who rated the English translations as “clear” or “very clear” rose from 54.3% to 81.7%; for Japanese translations, the corresponding figure rose from 47.5% to 76.2%. Users also reported that annotations and terminology pop-ups made it easier to understand culturally specific concepts such as “Daoqing” and “Mianhua”.

Third, interactive translation functions contributed to deeper engagement. Usage logs show that more than 60% of overseas visitors turned on bilingual subtitles when watching video content on the pilot pages, and about one third actively switched subtitle languages at least once. The click-through rates of terminology tooltips for key ICH items ranged between 18.4% and 32.7%, indicating a relatively strong demand for on-demand explanations. Average viewing time on optimized pages increased by 23.5% compared with the baseline period, suggesting that enhanced translation and interaction design helped sustain user attention.

Fourth, data-driven evaluation and prediction provided actionable insights for platform governance. Correlation analysis revealed that the density of cultural annotations and the availability of interactive subtitles were strongly associated with higher user satisfaction scores and longer viewing times. The BP neural network model achieved acceptable prediction accuracy (with a mean absolute error below 0.5 on the five-point satisfaction scale), and could roughly distinguish between high- and low-performing translation-content configurations. In practice, this allowed administrators to identify potentially problematic items in advance and to prioritize targeted revision and enhancement (refer **Figure 1 & 2**).

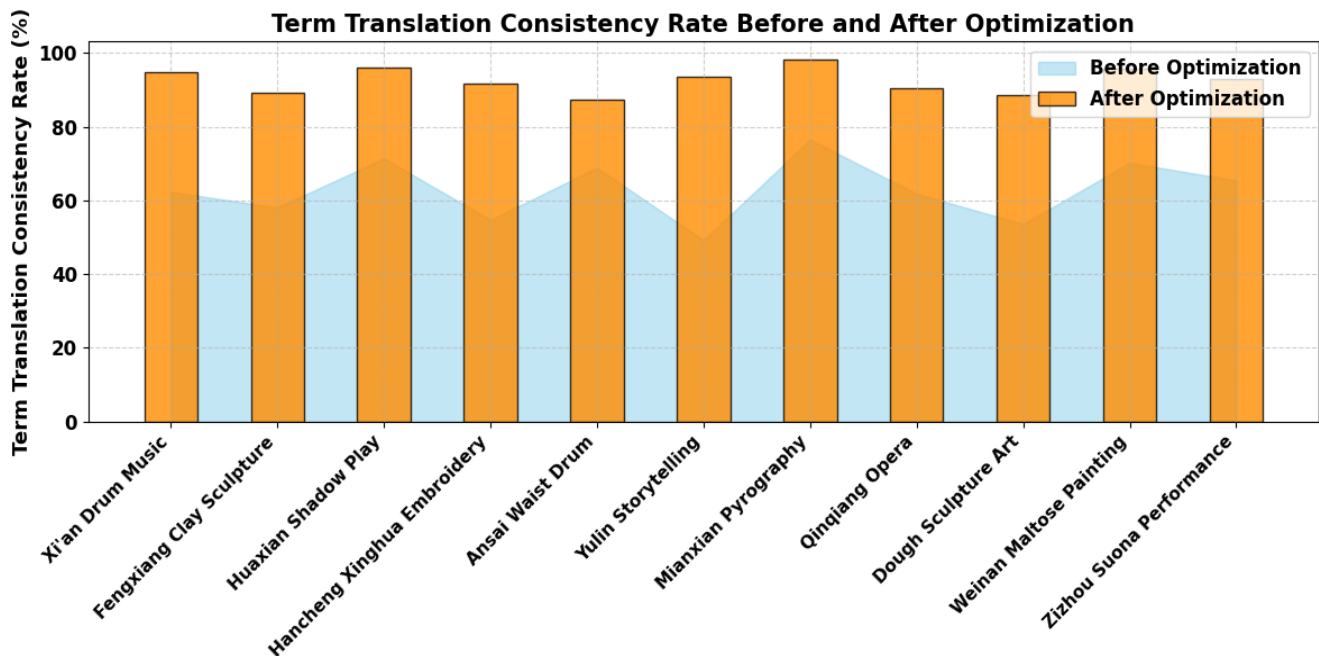


Figure 1. Translation consistency.

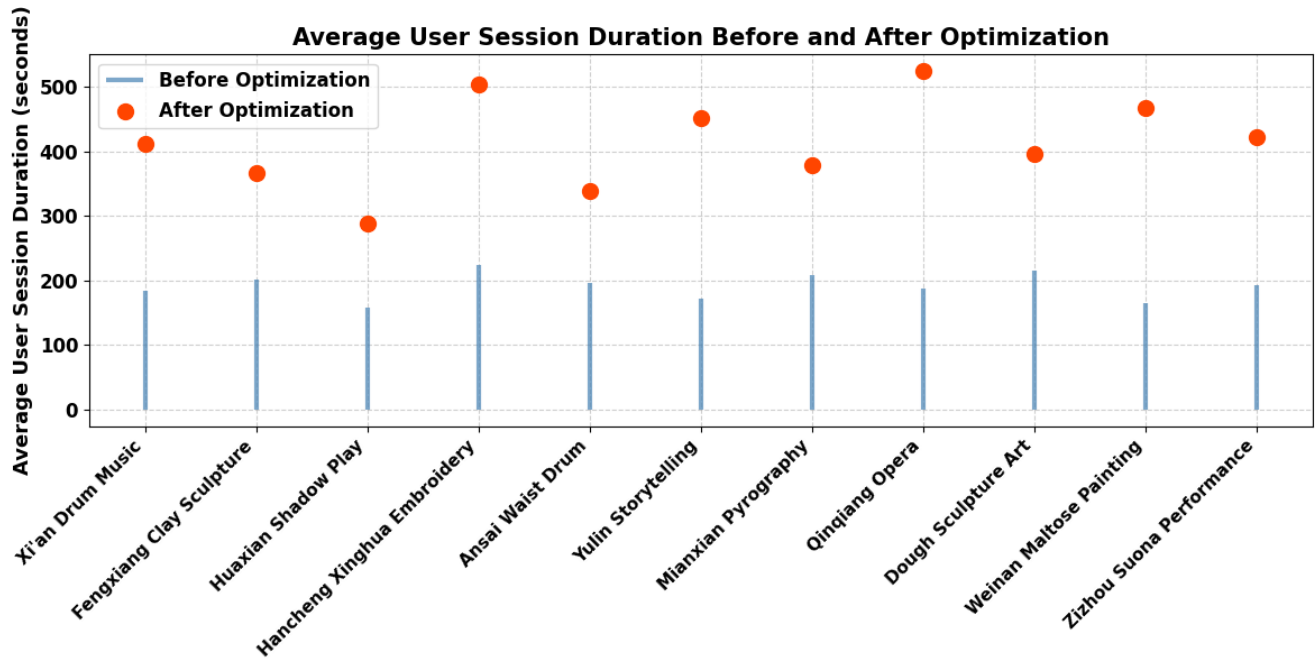


Figure 2. User dwell time.

Overall, these findings suggest that the four-dimensional optimization path, combining terminology standardization, large-model-assisted translation, synchronized multilingual governance and intelligent evaluation, can effectively alleviate the structural deficiencies of Shaanxi's ICH digital platforms in cross-linguistic translation. At the same time, the results also highlight several limitations: the current pilot scope is still restricted, the Japanese interface remains less mature than the English interface, and the BP neural network relies on relatively small training samples. Future work needs to expand the sample size, refine feature engineering and explore the applicability of this optimization framework to other regional ICH platforms.

6. Conclusion

This study has examined the translation and dissemination problems of Shaanxi's intangible cultural heritage (ICH) digital platforms from a cross-linguistic and governance perspective, and proposed a four-dimensional optimization path under the integrated framework of "localized governance + interactive translation". On the basis of field investigation and platform data, the paper first revealed structural deficiencies in place-name rendering and cultural terminology, multilingual coverage, machine-translation dependence, interactive functions and data-driven evaluation. These problems indicate that the existing platforms, while technologically mature in terms of digital collection and display, still fall short in enabling accurate, intelligible and engaging communication for overseas users.

In response, the study constructed a systematic methodology consisting of:

- (1) Building a trilingual terminology database and translation standards, supported by a translation memory
- (2) Integrating large-scale machine pre-translation with professional post-editing and interactive translation functions
- (3) Embedding synchronized multilingual workflows, inheritor/expert resources and knowledge graphs into platform governance; and
- (4) Establishing data-driven evaluation and BP neural network-based prediction models for continuous monitoring of translated media quality.

Empirical results from 11 pilot projects show that this optimization path significantly improves terminology

consistency, enhances expert and user evaluations of translation quality, increases user engagement with multilingual content, and provides decision-support tools for administrators through intelligent prediction.

Theoretically, the research contributes to the translation of ICH by extending the focus from text-level language conversion to a platform-oriented perspective that integrates terminology standardization, multimodal interaction and data-driven governance. Practically, it offers an operable framework and technical route for upgrading the translation and dissemination capacities of regional ICH digital platforms, and may be replicable in other provinces or cultural domains.

Nevertheless, the study has several limitations. The pilot scope and data samples remain relatively constrained; the Japanese interface is less mature than the English interface; and the BP neural network model is still at an exploratory stage and depends on limited feature sets. Future research can expand the number and types of platforms involved, incorporate more target languages, refine feature engineering and model selection, and compare the effectiveness of different intelligent evaluation approaches. In this way, the optimization path proposed in this paper can be further validated, generalized and refined, contributing more broadly to the international communication of Chinese intangible cultural heritage.

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