

Discussion of Alphabetic Words in Chinese

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Abstract. The emergence of alphabetic words in Chinese society is a noteworthy phenomenon. How can these words exist and evolve? What are the inevitability and rationality, what are the aspects in the use of alphabetic words that need to be regulated, and what attitudes should we have for these new words, these are the main issues to be discussed in this paper. The letter word refers to the words that appear in the modern Chinese vocabulary system and are written entirely in letters (mainly in Latin letters) or partially in letters. Most of these alphabetic words are foreign and some are modeled after these foreign words.

Keywords: Alphabetic words, Advantages, Norms, Tolerance.

1. The Advantage of the Letter Words

Ideographic accuracy, conciseness and intuitiveness, and international versatility are the outstanding advantages of letter words.

1.1 Ideographic Accuracy

For foreign words, by tradition, Chinese will do transliteration, free translation or semi-transliteration. The use of alphabetic words is what has been widely adopted in recent years. The biggest advantage of using alphabetic words, compared to traditional practices, is the greatly improved accuracy of ideology.

First, let's compare it with transliterated words. Since Chinese is generally a morpheme corresponding to a syllable, a word in a foreign language is then often represented by a string of Chinese characters, and these selected Chinese characters are themselves a combination of sound and meaning. We are using Chinese characters [1]. When translating a foreign word, we actually select its sound only discarding its meaning. For those who habitually communicate in Chinese, what first occur to their mind are, however, the images and meanings carried by this form [2]. the transliteration of foreign words is therefore often misleading, causing difficulties in the usage and understanding. Another problem with transliteration of foreign words is the diverse options the Chinese translators can have (because there are a large number of homophones in Chinese); the translators' subjective preference when translating then also cause confusion [3]. Especially in the translation of foreign names, this contradiction is more prominent. For example, Chomsky, the famous linguist, has at least three different Chinese translations: Chomsky, Hangshiji and Hangski [4]. People who have studied Western literature have probably felt this way. Different versions of textbooks and reference materials often have different translations for the same person, for example, Pushkin-Pu Geng, Division (S) Tangda - Division (S) Todai, Franklin-Franklin [5]. It often causes confusion for learners, especially beginners. When you see different transliteration foreign names, you often must give it a second thought: Hey, this is what the textbook says [6]. These are actually some unnecessary troubles caused by the defects of transliteration. With the alphabetic words, the troubles of foreign names can be reduced or avoided [7].

Second, let's compare it with the free translation. In order to correspond to foreign language words in terms of meaning, it is necessary to consider the different historical, political, economic and cultural conditions of different societies [8]. These make it often inaccurate in the process of free translation. The limitation of free translation was noticed by Xuan Zang in Tang Dynasty when he translated the Sanskrit scriptures, so he proposed the principle of "five nos" in translation, that is, the secret cannot be turned over ("secret"); do not turn ("including multiple meanings"); do not turn when there is no such thing ("this is no reason"); do not turn when using the ancient sound to translate the name ("Shun ancient"); for good results do not turn ("sheng good reason"). "Five non-turning" is actually to better

maintain the appearance of the original text. Under the conditions of the time, except for the free translation, only the transliteration can go [9]. However, our situation today is very different. For the above-mentioned situations, we can adopt another more accurate and complete method, that is, the use of alphabetic words directly.

1.2 Conciseness and Intuitiveness

The use of language consists of an economic principle, that is, if we can exchange the idea with one sentence, we will not use two sentences or more. From this point of view, the alphabetic words have an advantage in the use of Chinese [10]. As mentioned above, due to the characteristics of Chinese itself, be it transliteration or free translation, a foreign word often corresponds to a string of Chinese ones. What's more, many of the alphabetic words themselves are the abbreviated forms of foreign words, and their conciseness is self-evident, such as "RAM" (random access memory), these three English letters asks for five Chinese characters (随机存储器). Another example is "RAS performance" (three indicators describing the reliable operation of the computer, "R" for reliability, Reliability; "A" Availability, "S" is maintainability, Serviceability), each of the three letters requires three Chinese characters, and the Chinese translation also loses the concentration and generality of the original meaning. "Four Ps elements" (influencing the customer's purchase of goods, namely, product, Product; Price; Promotion; place of origin, Place) though with same English, carry very rich connotation, this simplicity dwarfs any other types of words in both form and content.

The letter words are intuitive, which is not difficult to understand, as Mr. Liu Yongquan said: "In a combination Chinese characters and English letters, the readers will easily catch the letters, such as KTV, DNA, ISO, MBAs." In this way, these alphabetic words with strong intuitiveness can often give a deep impression because they can attract the attention of the readers. If these alphabetic words are converted into corresponding Chinese characters, the readers often cannot grasp the essence accurately, thus diminishing the effects of information exchange.

1.3 International Versatility

Most of the alphabetic words in Chinese adopt the internationally accepted Latin alphabet. We take the "Alphabet Dictionary" that Mr. Liu Yongquan has used as an example. Among the 2024 alphabetic words collected in the book, there are 1976 Latin alphabetic letters, accounting for 97.6% of the total, and the remaining 48 are Greek letters, 2.4% of the total. The convenience of adopting this internationally accepted form of writing in the process of international interaction is obvious. As China's development cannot be separated from the world, we therefore must work hard to ameliorate the mutual understanding between the world and China. This requires the agent of language, and language barriers will inevitably affect communication. As for the important bridge function of the alphabetic words in the process of China's going to the world, some scholars have realized it. So, we not only absorb the foreign alphabetic words to continuously enrich the vocabulary system of modern Chinese, but also actively use the Latin alphabet to transcend certain Chinese culture, such as "TEDA" (Tianjin Economic and Technological Development Zone), "CCTV" (China Central Television), "BJ" (Beijing), "GB" (national standard), "WSK" ("Yan Haiwei" network service provider, from Hanyu Pinyin Ying Hai Wei). These are the fruits of our creation by taking advantage of the international versatility of the alphabetic words.

2. Suggestions on Standardizing the Usage of Letter Words

Alphabetic words have the inevitability and rationality of their existence and development in Chinese society; it understandably will also have some problems in use, a lack of standard or rules of usage for instance.

2.1 Pronunciation Problem

1) How to read the alphabetic words has always been controversial, with the focus on the Latin letters. The author's opinion is that all of these alphabetic words can be pronounced according to the English alphabet, and this view is mainly based on the following two reasons:

First, the majority of Latin alphabet letters come from English. From the perspective of uniform norms, reading these alphabetic words with the pronunciation of English letters is the best solution. The author made a statistic on the distribution of alphabetic words from various languages collected in the Dictionary of Letters, edited by Mr. Liu Yongquan. The results of the statistics are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of alphabetic words in various languages

From what language	English	Chinese (Chinese Pinyin)	Greek	Other (Latin, Roman numerals, French, Russian, German, Italian, Japanese)
Number	1886	67	48	23
Proportion	93.2%	3.3%	2.4%	1.1%
Case	AIM, AIP, CI, CGA, DOS, SDH, WINDOWS	GB, GBK code, WSK, IRG, HB, SST management method	α particle, β ray, θ — theory, Ω , π	AM, PM, BID, TID, I, X, PH, KGB, F, DAAD, oz

Clarification:

(1) "Chinese" refers to all the alphabetic words transformed from Chinese Pinyin, excluding words like "BCTV" (Beijing Cable TV, from Beijing Cable TV) and "CCEE" (Great Wall Logo: China Electrical Product Certification Quality Standard, the part from Chang Cheng Electrical Engineering) which are formed partly by Chinese Pinyin and partly English.

(2) "Proportion" means that the percentage of alphabetic words from various languages as a percentage of the total number of 2024 letters collected in the book.

From Table 1, it can be seen at a glance that the alphabetic words from English overwhelmingly amount to a majority in all alphabetic words. Apart from the 2.4% of the Greek alphabetic letters, the pronunciation of the English alphabet is unified. It is the easiest and the most convenient manner for the circulation of alphabetic words.

Second, viewed from the perspective of the Chinese Pinyin system, the pronunciation of many Latin letters is different from the pronunciation of English letters, so there are two choices for the pronunciation of these alphabetic words converted from Chinese Pinyin: first, according to the reading of Chinese Pinyin, second, according to the reading of English letters. The author prefers the latter choice because the main purpose of these newly-created letters is to facilitate the integration of the international community, since these letters are in the form of English. It is also a matter of course to use the English alphabet to read the pronunciation of the letters, and only in this way can better achieve the purpose of the creation and use of this part of the alphabet.

2) Another prominent problem in the pronunciation of alphabetic words is the question of reading and reading. For those English words that are introduced in Chinese, they can be read directly in English, such as "WINDOWS" and "MINITEL". Those abbreviated words should be classified or spelled according to the pronunciation rules. Usually, individual letters such as "USA", need to be read separately, and long ones need to be read as one word, such as "UNESCO" (UNESCO). But there exist many exceptions. Besides, some of the words in the words are recombined but are similar to another English word that is irrelevant in meaning, such as "WHO" (World Health Organization, World Health Organization), "KISS" (online language, Keep It Simple, Stupid), these letters are undoubtedly spellable, but after spelling, they are homophonic with another word. People can write in large and small letters in writing Distinguish, but in the oral expression it is bound to cause some confusion. In view of this, for all these abbreviated alphabetic words, we can uniformly stipulate that

their readings are alphabetically read, and on this basis, they can be flexibly modified, for those who do not meet the spelling rules. Alphabetic words that are confused with other words can also have a spelling pronunciation based on the reading. These two readings can be paralleled, and the specific choice is determined by the user. In doing so, it is necessary to have certain rules, but it is not limited to this law and can be flexibly controlled according to different situations.

2.2 Alphabetic Words Should be Applied Accordingly to Varied Objects and Contexts

The contents of the alphabetic words are mainly concentrated on information technology, scientific terminology, and modern economic management. However, the proportion of alphabetic words used in daily life is not large, so the use of some alphabetic words varies depending on the object, the occasion, and the field. For those words that are not used by ordinary people and used only by higher and more professional people, you can use them with confidence. And the alphabetic words used by ordinary people in daily life are mainly popular and simple. Of course, the boundaries between such professional alphabetic words and ordinary alphabetic words are not clear, such as "B-ultrasound", "CT", which are medical terms but the people are familiar with it. The terms like "type B" ultrasound diagnosis, "X-ray computed tomography" may not be well understood by the public. These alphabetic words are widely accepted by people because of their concise and popular characteristics. After a long time, these professional terms naturally find their way into the daily vocabulary. Letter words like this can be used in both professional fields and daily life, but most professional alphabetic words are not directly related to the daily life of the people. Therefore, it is better not to use them in everyday language. It is difficult to understand and unbearable to the people without any distinction. This will inevitably lead to confusion in use and is not conducive to the norms of language. And it is not uncommon to use a vocabulary that is not the same level and the same color.

3. The Development Trend of Alphabetic Words and the Attitude we Should Take Towards Alphabetic Words

3.1 An Expanding Trend with Letter Words' Meeting the Needs of the Use of Language Society

1) Letter words have the ability to produce and flexibility in use, which is the internal reason for the expansion of alphabetic words. First, the letter word has the ability to produce. The alphabetic words we use are mostly abbreviated, except for the original words of the words directly introduced, but this is not the full source of the alphabetic words. In addition, the shape of the letter itself, the basic meaning of the letter itself, etc. can also be used. Words, like "A-line skirt", "C-type washer", "C-shaped clip", "D-shaped box", "H-shaped beam", "L-shaped antenna", are all using the shape of the letter. Because "A" is the first of the 26 letters, taking the first and the best meaning, it produces "4A level" (AAAA level), "3A level" (AAA level), "2A level" (AA Level). These letters are used to indicate the level of tourist attractions. We use the letter "ABC" to indicate basic knowledge or common sense as they generally stand for basics, which is very intuitive and easy to understand. In the alphabet, each letter has its own fixed, so we can also use the order relationship between the letters to express a series of related things, such as the student's grade, we can use A, A-, B+, B, B-... These letters are used to distinguish their grades. For example, the temporary residence permits issued by Beijing's foreign population are divided into three types: A, B, and C. For a period, it indicates different treatments for these different levels of migrants. Sometimes we don't use the meaning of the letters themselves but just use the form after the combination. "AA system", for example, deploys two identical letters together to mean "partner consumption and pay each bill", "The AB corner is an actor that aligns two different letters to refer to the same role in different versions". We can also express more meaning by adding a symbol to the letter, such as A, A-, B+, B, etc., which represent the student's grades mentioned above, "\$" is the sign of the dollar, and "S→" is a sign of sand and dust weather indicating that there is a "dust storm". We can use the letters from different angles. This is the first aspect of the letter words that is productive.

The second aspect of the letter words has the ability to produce. Some letter words can also be abbreviated according to the abbreviation of Chinese vocabulary. For example, "KTV" can be reduced to "K room". In Chinese, we often associate some related things, take the same part, and use the form of "number + Chinese characters" for abbreviations, such as "four modernizations", "three represents", and the alphabetic words also have such abbreviated form: "3B" (refers to the three eternal subjects in the advertising image, these three subjects are Baby "baby", Beast "animal", Beauty "beauty"); "3R" (The former literacy standard, that is, "Read" is "read", "wRite" is "write", and "aRithmetic" is "calculated"). The environmental requirements for cash, namely "Reduce" is "reduction of waste", "Reuse" is "renewable energy", and "Recycle" is "recycling."); "5W news" (qualified news, including the five elements of news, namely What, When, Where, Who, Why). These alphabetic words combined with numbers and letters contain very rich connotations in a very simple form, and are therefore a good proof of the productive nature of the alphabetic words.

Third, the letter word has flexibility. Most of the alphabetic words are abbreviated from the first letter of the word. If both sets of syllables need to have abbreviated alphabetic words, and the two initials of the two syllables are identical, it can be flexible. Processing and selecting other letters from the syllable for abbreviations, it can be distinguished from another letter word and can meet the needs of use. For example, the Chinese names "ShanXi" and "Shaanxi", (ShanXi) need to have corresponding letters to represent, and the initials of each syllable of these two words are the same, so "Shanxi" takes two syllables. The first letter is abbreviated as "SX", and "Shaanxi" is chosen to distinguish the other two letters to form the letter "SN". It can be seen that when selecting the expression form of the letter word for a thing, we can adopt different methods according to actual needs.

In addition to the basic meaning of using alphabetic words, people sometimes deliberately "disambiguate" them to achieve a certain special rhetorical effect, which is similar to the "pun" in our Chinese rhetorical methods. For example, in the title of "IT is", the author skillfully interprets "IT" (Information Technology, Information Technology) as "Tomorrow of India" to remind readers that Indian IT is likely to lead the world. China's IT industry can't take it easy. Another example is "BBS", which means "Bulletin Board System". Some people have explained it as "Bye-Bye School" to show such a phenomenon: some college students are over-indulged in online life. As a result, the school was abandoned. From the simple use of the literal meaning of the alphabetic words to communicate and communicate, to the purposeful transformation of the alphabetic words to achieve some special effects, which shows the flexibility of the alphabetic words themselves and the acceptance of the alphabetic words, there is a greater improvement.

2) Chinese vocabulary words appear in their own words, which is a good proof of the expansion of the use of alphabetic words. Most of the initial alphabetic words in Chinese are foreign words. Now people in the Chinese society have created many alphabetic words in the form of these foreign words. As was mentioned above, these alphabetic words are created because of the need of international communication. In turn, it can be applied to various occasions in the Chinese society. Some of these homemade letters are used to express some new things in Chinese society in English, and then the abbreviation of them, such as "CCIB" (China Commercial Inspection Bureau), "CSDN" (Chinese society) China Social Decelopmen Network), "CTS" (China Travel Service). Some are transformed from Chinese Pinyin, such as "ZL", (patent, ZhuanLi), "GBK code" (national standard extension code, Guojia Biaozhun Kuozhanma), "ZRG" (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo, People's Republic of China). As China's influence in the international community expands, these self-made alphabetic words will certainly emerge more and better serve as a tool for China to connect with the international community.

3.2 The Correct Attitude Towards the Letter Word Should be Tolerant but not Connive

Being a new type of word, the letter word satisfies the needs of people in the Chinese society, so more and more letters are introduced into the Chinese vocabulary system. The homemade alphabetic words are added to this rank. We should treat these words with tolerance. The attitude of tolerance is conducive to promoting the richness of language, enhancing the vitality of language and contributing

to the healthy development of Chinese vocabulary system. The alphabetic words have a strong vitality in the Chinese society. There are both social reasons and reasons for the development of the vocabulary itself. "The survival of the fittest" should be the most appropriate explanation for the phenomenon of a large number of alphabetic words in Chinese.

But tolerance does not mean connivance. For some problems in the use of alphabetic words, we should also clearly understand that we should also guide and standardize the new usage of these new words as much as possible to make them better. The land is used by me, which is actually a kind of protection and support for the alphabetic words. If we take an irresponsible attitude and let it develop, it will not only cause confusion in the use of language, but will eventually make the alphabetic words lose their strong vitality and their advantages in the Chinese society.

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