Coupling Relationship between International Image and Linear regression analysis of Signs Translation Practice in the Tourist Scenic Spots

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Abstract. Since China entered the WTO and successfully hosted the Olympic Games, the communication and exchange between China and other countries has become increasingly closer, and the international status has been improved greatly. With the rapid development of the tourism industry and further opening up to the outside world, more and more foreign tourists come to China for traveling, and the number of the bilingual signs and logos in the tourist attractions is gradually increasing, but there still exist a lot of mistranslation cases. As the signs in the public places and in the tourist attractions are the symbol of cultural soft power, translation accuracy of the signs has been of great significance. This paper mainly focuses on the spelling errors, grammar errors, standardizing the professional technical terms, rectifying the mistranslation behaviors, specialization degree and cultural differences of tourist attractions' signs to have statistical analysis. Based on the analysis of mistranslation cases, the statistical linear regression theory is conducted on the composite influence on the signs translation. Ultimately this paper presents some constructive ideas and suggestions on how to improve the translation practice of the signs and the logos, and to provide theoretical reference to enhance the international image of tourist attractions.

Introduction

China has a long civilization history of five thousand years, together with the green hills and clear lakes gracious hospitality, propelling the tourism industry of China to develop by leaps and bounds [1]. Since China entered the WTO and successfully hosted the Olympic Games, the Chinese culture has gradually been integrated with the world. Culture, representing the image of the country and the citizens, is a kind of soft power, many aspects of which may make visitors leave a deep impression on the country[2,3]. Now, more and more bilingual signs can be seen in many tourist areas, in which the problems of the signs translation frequently arise. As a famous tourist area known both at home and abroad, Hainan has many scenic spots whose errors of the signs translation are particularly severe, to a certain extent, seriously affecting the construction and development of Hainan International Tourism Island. Through the investigation and research, we have found that the errors of the signs translation in the tourist attractions in Hainan are related to such aspects as the spelling errors, grammar errors, wrong translation and Chinglish translation. The signs in the tourist attractions play a very significant role in guiding the foreign tourists to enjoy their traveling. The wrong translation will mislead the tourists and create a lot of jokes. Thus, to a great extent, such case badly impresses the foreign tourists. So it is of great significance to strengthen the practice research on the signs translation in the tourist attractions, so as to rectify and standardize the signs translation errors [4,5], to promote the internationalized development of tourism industry, and to simultaneously maintain the image of China's tourism culture.

Tнe cases of common errors in translation

The translation errors of the signs in the tourist attractions can be found in many tourist attractions and public places. This paper makes an analysis of the most common translation errors of the signs

in the tourist attractions by way of three aspects [6]. The three aspects of errors in the signs translation include the spelling errors, Chinglish translation and non-proficiency of Professionals.

A. Spelling Errors

The spelling errors are the most commonly-seen case of the tourist attractions' signs. Based on the following sign, we can analyze the main reasons for the translation error.
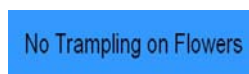

Figure 1.   Case of the billboard's spelling error

This problem can purely be considered to be the spelling error. "Park" is written as "Pank". The error is different from the size of spelling, and it is the direct error in spelling. The main reason is that the persons in charge do not know English or their halfhearted work. The departments concerned should organize the professionals to check and proofread the translation of the signs which will be set up and ensure that the translation is idiomatic and correct. The reasons why the spelling errors occur are caused by the irresponsibility of making the strict check. Such spelling errors seriously produce a bad effect on the foreign tourists, which makes it easy for them to be misguided. Moreover, this sort of errors also suffers from the ridicule of the foreign tourists. The occurrence of the spelling errors reflects the persons in charge are not proficient in applying English properly, thus severely influencing the local image of tourism.

B. The Chinglish Translation

The signs translation in Figure 2 is a typical Chinglish sentence without any meanings. There are such cases as "Little grass is smiling slightly, please walk on pavement", "show mercy to the green plants, don't trample on them", and so forth. In fact, the signs like those just remind people not to tread on the grass. In English there are some similar expressions. Therefore, any signs that warn people not to damage the flowers and plants can be directly translated into to "Keep off the grass", instead of simply listing the English words as Chinese expressions. The sign "Citizen Center" in the Figure can not be directly translated into "Shi Min Zhong Xin" by Chinese Pinyin. It is certain that this will produce much ridicule to the foreign tourists. It is also impossible for them to understand the sign's meaning or implication. If such cases are not likely to be prohibited, the international image of tourism in Hainan, even all over the country, will be greatly damaged bit by bit.

Case 1   Case 2

Figure 2.   Cases of billboards' Chinglish Translation

C. Non-proficiency of Professionals

The sentences of the signs in the following Figure 3 which contain grammar errors can also frequently be seen in many scenic areas or public places. The sentences are very short, but they have the marked grammar errors. In order to take the proper entrance or exit in scenic areas or public places, the tourists should follow the given signs with the provision of unerring information. If the signs can not transmit the accurate information, the tourist will get lost or take the wrong action. Actually, in accordance with the first case given below, the translated sentence "Please Enter Main Entrance" in Case 1 can be changed into "Please Take the Main Entrance" which is very easy for people to understand. The translated sentence "CHECK IN STOPS 5 MINUTES BEFORE TRAIN DEPARTURE" in Case 2 can be simply and clearly translated into "NO CHECk-IN WITHIN 5 MINUTES OF DEPARTURE". And the sentence "STOP CASHIER" in Case 3 can be just changed into "No Service". The three signs translation mentioned which is concise, idiomatic and easily understood can certainly enjoy great popularity from the foreign tourists. The above translation errors can directly reflect the non-proficiency of the translators, which gives rise to such errors in translation. As a result of this, more training should be offered to strengthen the English proficiency of the persons in charge or professionals. Meanwhile the composing and making of the bilingual signs should be strictly proofread and checked by the specialists. Only after having ensured that no errors are found can the signs be set up in the tourist attractions and public places.

Case 1   Case 2   Case 3

Figure 3.   Cases of billboards' translation errors

Linear statistics of the factors' influence on the signs' translation

We have conducted a number of surveys and researches on the translation errors of the signs in different tourist attractions, and finally we used the Linear Regression model of SPSS to make the linear regression analysis of them. The core thought of multiple regression analysis is to consider the influencing factors of many variables, and to find the main factor in the influencing factors. Firstly we introduce the linear regression formula[7]:

$$Ei = \hat{E}i + Fi = a0 + a1\,xi1 + \cdots + anxin + Fi \quad (1)$$

In the formula, Ei consists of two parts, $\hat{E}i$ is the variable of estimated values and Fi is the residual.

The $(Ei - \hat{E}i)^2$ can be cumulated as the $\sum (Ei - \hat{E}i)^2$, and the least square method is used to get the minimum value, and the value is the model that we need. It has to make formula (2) have the minimum value[9].

$$D = \sum_{j=1}^{n} (Ei - \hat{E}i)^2$$

$$= \sum_{j=1}^{n} Ei - [(a0 + a1xi1 + \cdots + anxin)] \quad (2)$$

Based on the multivariate linear regression analysis, we can get the main factors that lead to the translation errors of tourist attractions' signs, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE I. STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE SIGNS TRANSLATION ERRORS

Reasons of the errors	Probability of the error
Spelling errors	21%
Literal translation errors	38%
Syntax errors	41%

From Table 1, we can see that the probability of the appearance of spelling phenomena is low, and the occurrence frequency of grammatical errors is the highest, and it involves the translation level of the persons in charge or professionals and the degree of their earnest work. Therefore, It is vitally important to strengthen their translation trainings.

Some improvement suggestions on how to strengthen the signs translation

In accordance with the Linear Statistics, it can be seen that the phenomenon of signs' mistranslation is more serious. If we don't stop such practice, the phenomenon of signs' mistranslation will spread unchecked, which misleads the tourists, and damages the tourism image as well. Therefore, this paper puts forward the following suggestions related to the signs' translation.

D. Doing a good job in the statistical survey

The local tourism commission, tourism association and other relevant departments should organize the professionals and specialists to make investigations and do the statistical survey on the signs translation. They should make unremitted efforts to carry out the timely rectification for the signs' mistranslation[8]. The signs that are not still set up should be checked and verified. Especially in the densely-visited areas, more statistical surveys should be well conducted to prevent the occurrence of signs' mistranslation from spreading in a large scale. Every relevant department should take the responsibility of managing the signs in the assigned areas, and the signs translation errors in the some places should be assigned to specific individuals. Therefore, the relevant trainings for the staff and professionals should be provided to enhance their translation abilities. The departments concerned should strengthen the communication and cooperation between the universities or colleges and translation organizations, so as to enhance the signs translation to a higher level.

E. Standardizing professional technical terms

The tourism commission should work in coordination with such departments and associations as the foreign affairs office, translation association, and Research institute of foreign languages to unify and standardize the signs translation. Some professional technical terms should be standardized to prevent different mistranslation [9]. It is without doubt that the standardization of the professional technical terms must be refined. This requires the staff and professionals to have a high level of translation. So at ordinary times it is very important to provide the training to the staff. On the one hand, the special training should be held at regular time, and on the other hand, it is essential to strengthen the communication and cooperation with the foreign affairs departments.

F.   Rectifying mistranslation behaviors

Putting the signs into use is a very serious business. It is suggested that the departments which are in charge of setting up the signs should make checks at all levels. Firstly, the departments concerned should sincerely request the professionals to carry out the typesetting and proofreading. Only after ensuring that there are not any errors on them can the bilingual signs be set up. If no one rectifies the mistranslation behaviors, the bilingual signs with errors will spread unchecked unprecedentedly. Whether the signs are correct or not involves the professional ethics of the staff and the persons in charge. So the relevant administration sections should give disciplinary warning or impose a fine to the relevant departments setting up the wrong signs, with the purpose of rectifying and standardizing the translation behaviors.

Conclusion

This paper firstly analyzes the phenomenon of signs' mistranslation, and the reasons of the signs' mistranslation from the aspects such as spelling errors and grammar errors, literal translation errors and so forth, in the tourist attractions. Then, combined with statistical linear regression theory, the statistical analysis of the phenomenon of signs' mistranslation is conducted scientifically. The comprehensive fuzzy evaluation has been carefully made on the synthetic influence of all aspects of the signs' translation. Ultimately some constructive opinions and suggestions are propounded to improve the signs translation practice. The signs' mistranslation first misguides the tourists, and then it makes the tourists leave a bad impression on the tourist attractions. The most important thing is that the foreign tourists may produce some doubt about the ability of translating culture in China. As a result of these, we should strengthen the researches on the translation practice of the signs and the logos in the tourist attractions and public places, and make great efforts to undertake the timely correction of the signs translation errors. Furthermore, we should increase the training of staff's translation ability. A sign is not only a beacon, but also even an image. So the translation of the signs and logos has still to be further improved and standardized.

Acknowledgments

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