

Analysis of English Translation of Park Signs: Cuiping Mountain of Yibin City

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Abstract: As early as 2013, China has called for the construction of Belt and Road since keeping principle of reciprocity and mutual benefit. Nowadays, in the wake of quicken process of Belt and Road, population mobility is increasingly speeding up. The phenomenon of transnational study and tourism is becoming more and more prominent. Therefore, on the basis of this background, there is no denying that more scenic spots will be visited by foreigners beneath this premise. Among these spots, the precise use of English signs is of paramount importance. Accurate translation of public signs not only helps foreigners to learn for it, but shapes the image of a city as well. However, the accurate translation of signs in park areas doesn't attract high attention. Hence, this article will firstly denote these inappropriate translations by studying signs of Cuiping Mountain in Yibin City, following corresponding suggestions.

Keywords: Translation; English Signs in Park Area; Accuracy of English.

1. The Background Introduction

As an indispensable part in our life, public signs have four types of functions in practical use: indicative, suggestive, restrictive, and mandatory. The translation of public signs from Chinese to English requires the translator to consider both cultures' use of signs with similar functions in the same language. The "communicative translation theory," developed by renowned English translation theorist Newmar, emphasizes the accurate representation of the original text's content and context in a manner that aims at producing a reading experience and feeling similar to that of the source language readers when reading the original text. This paper will conduct a comparative analysis of park sign translations between Chinese and English from the perspective of "communicative translation theory". It is hoped that this study can promote the correct use of English park signs.

2. Research Significance

Cuiping Mountain is a popular destination for leisure and mountain climbing, serving as a prominent local scenic spot. Although public signs are ubiquitous in our daily lives, there are still some basic translation mistakes such as capitalization, punctuation, grammatical errors, etc. in Cuiping Mountain of Yibin City. This article will be helpful for the enhancement of signs accuracy with the aim of creating a positive impact on international visitors and providing a reference for other park areas.

3. Problems in the Introduction of Scenic Spot

3.1. Qianfo Temple

Qianfo Temple is so named due to Thousand-Buddha Platform (also Qianfo Platform). Thousand-Buddha Platform was firstly built in the Tang Dynasty and rebuilt and repaired in the Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties and modern times. The platform is more than three zhang (total about 10m), with one side besides a cliff and other three sides vertical. There are 1,131 relief Buddha statues of difference faces, vivid and life-

like. Huang Tingjian, a great poet of the Northern Song Dynasty, made a famous phrase "The mountain surrounds towers and platforms with the evening bell and drum sounds heard. There is an ancient temple in deep Cuiping Mountain".千佛寺因千佛台而得名。千佛台始建于唐代，重建、维修于宋、明、清和现代。千佛台台高三丈许，一方傍崖，三方垂立，上有浮雕石佛1131尊，千佛千面，栩栩如生。北宋大诗人黄庭坚曾在此留有“山绕楼台钟鼓晚，翠屏深处古禅关”的名句。

1) The above is the original translation of Qianfo Temple, and according to the observation, it is not hard to discover following problems. Firstly, according to the translation standard of social semiotics, the translation of scenic spots should pay attention to the distinction between the proper name and the general name, as well as the supporting meaning and the internal meaning. Qianfo Temple got its name because there are thousands of Buddha statues in the temple, the translation of "Qianfo" here loses the reference meaning of the scenic spot, which is supposed to be consistent with its following translation of Qianfo, complying with the standard of translation.

Suggestion: Qianfo Temple---Thousand-Buddha Platform

2) English translation of Chinese units of measurement: "zhang"

In Chinese, a zhang is equal to about 3.3 meters. Although there is a "total about 10m" after "three zhangs" as a supplement, it fails to point out that "Zhang" is a special unit of measurement in China. Appositive words or other ways should be used to supplement the explanation to avoid confusion. What's more, nowadays, it attaches great importance to spreading Chinese culture by using words with China's characteristics, therefore, above correction is necessary.

Suggestion: ...**zhang (total about 10m)--- Zhang (total about 10m), a special unit of measurement in China**

3) The word "repaired" is seldom used in such a condition, but uses in things like car, roof, road and television, etc.

Suggestion: repaired---restored

4) Preposition problem: "with one side besides a cliff"

The word "besides", which means "in addition to", can't be used in it to indicate corresponding Chinese meanings.

Preposition "beside" should be utilized to in place of "besides" to express that one side is facing a cliff.

Suggestion: besides-beside

5) In the "relief Buddha statues of difference faces", "relief" has already indicated the meaning of sculpture, thus, the addition of "statues" is repetitive. In addition, "difference" is a noun, and the adjective "different" should be used to modify "faces".

Suggestion: relief Buddha statues-relief Buddha; difference-different

6) A poem written by the poet Huang Tingjian was quoted, which is a complete sentence, however, the word phrase is mistakenly used to replace the word sentence or verse, additionally, this verse is a complete and connected sentence, but when translated, it was divided into two sentences with a full stop, which is a punctuation misuse.

Suggestion: the word phrase-the word verse; changing the period to a comma

3.2. Three - River View Garden

The Three-River View Garden is located at the top of Cuiqing Mountain, with beautiful scenery. In a sunny day, you may overlook whole Yibin City in the garden and see that the Jinsha River and the Minjiang River converge to form the Yangtze River, so called the Three-River View Garden. 三江一览园位于翠屏山顶，景观优美。澈滢晴空，登高远眺，可俯瞰宜宾城全景，看金沙江、岷江汇成长江滚滚东去，故名三江一览园。

1) First of all, it fails to follow rules of translation, but it is matching words mechanically, and most importantly, English translation can't far catch up to the elegant and delicate diction. Besides, the word "overlook" is rarely used to convey the meaning intended by the Chinese, which also can't leave a vivid and direct experience. What's more, the subject is mostly objects rather than people when overlook is used to indicate the above meaning.

Suggestion: overlook-have a bird's eye view

3.3. Ne Zha Palace

Original text: Ne Zha Palace is located on the main peak of Cuiqing Mountain. The legend has it that after Ne Zha returned his bones to his father and his flesh to his mother, he appeared in the dream of his mother Ms. Yin, so Ms. Yin built this palace for Ne Zha to practice. Later, it was jointly certified by people from both sides of the Taiwan Straits as the ancestral temple of Ne Zha and was restored in 1991. With the Daoist architecture style in the late Qing Dynasty, Ne Zha Palace covers a land area of 2,200m² and a building area of 1,100m², mainly composed of Immortal Site Archway, Prince Hall, and Ne Zha Cave. The entire building is built along the mountain, with a reasonable layout, an ancient and simple shape, bucket arches, painted beams, cornices, and cloud-reaching roof crown. Since the opening of Ne Zha Palace, there has been a constant flow of tourists for pilgrimage and ancestor worshiping, and it receives more than 100,000 tourists from home and abroad every year. 哪吒行宫位于翠屏山主峰，传说是哪吒折骨还父、剔肉还母后，托梦给其母殷氏夫人，夫人为让哪吒修行而建。后来经海峡两岸人士共同认证为哪吒祖庙，于1991年修复。哪吒行宫为晚清道家风格建筑，占地面积2200平方米，建筑面积1100平方米，主要由仙踪胜迹牌坊、太子殿、哪吒洞组成。整个建筑依山就势，布局合理，造型古朴，斗拱雕梁，飞檐翘角，宝顶凌霄。哪吒行宫自开放以来，前来朝圣祭祖的

游人络绎不绝，每年接待海内外游客10万余人。

1) Generally, according to rules for using word "locate", the preposition used after word locate is "at" if the following is a small location, on the contrary, preposition "on" should be adopted.

Suggestion: on-at

2) One of the typical characteristics of English is its aversion to repetition, including the repetition of pronouns, which usually only replaces the whole with a part, or other substitutes or omissions, but the word "his" is repeated up to five times at a time in a sentence in the light of the above translation.

Suggestion:

3) The correct expression of units is also of great significance in English. However, the translation of square meters does not conform to English norms at all, which translates it into "m²", losing the its intended meaning.

Suggestion: m²-square meters/m²

4) In the sentence "there has been a constant flow of tourists for pilgrimage and ancestor worshiping", the subject-verb agreement is failed to achieve in translation.

The subject is word tourists, which is a plural noun, therefore, the predicate verb should be "have" rather than "has". The subject-verb agreement is the fundamental element for a correct and complete sentence; therefore, it can't be ignored.

Suggestion: has-have

4. Analysis of Translation Problems of Scenic Spot Signs

4.1. Consistency of Translation of Warning Signs: Take Warning Signs "Mind the Steps" and "Step by Steps" as an Example

the meaning of the two signs aims at reminding tourists to pay attention to the ladder to avoid falling, however, there are two completely different translations such as "Step By Step" and "Mind The Step", and even a completely meaningless translation, which is directly translated as "Mind the Step". What's more, according to the rules of English punctuation, articles the and prepositions are generally not capitalized.

Suggestion: Mind the Steps

4.2. The Accuracy of the Translation of Warning Signs: Take the Translation of "Slippery Road Surface" as an Example

"Slippery road surface" has two layers of meaning. Anti-skid asphalt pavement is the first meaning, the other is Slippery pavement. In order to improve the translation accuracy, "Caution! Wet Floor" or "Slippery, Caution" can be adopted directly.

Suggestion: Slippery road surface-- Caution! Wet Floor or Slippery, Caution!

5. The Mistaken Slogan of Internet-Famous Site

5.1. Original Sentence: I love YIBIN Prefer You in this City

The above sign, serving as an iconic location where visitors are sure to take photos, takes up an extremely large area of the wall. What's more, there are a host of pictures with this sign posted by tourists in the social media, but there aren't so many

people who care its accuracy of translation. Obviously, such a sentence does not conform to the English standard, it should be a complete sentence, but as a matter of fact, it doesn't punctuation and the use of conjunction word, including problems of capitalization of the letters.

Suggestion: I love Yibin, but prefer you in this city.

6. Guiding Signs

6.1. Bao Xi

It is a typical expression with Chinese Characters, but will bewilder the foreigners.

Therefore, we should use the corresponding English expression to explain so as to be clear to foreigners.

Suggestion: Bao Xi-Chartered Banquets

6.2. Sip Tea

The verb prototype is used at the beginning of a command or suggestion, the word sip here indicates neither of above meaning, therefore, it is necessary to change its expression.

Suggestion: Tea house

6.3. Guide Map of Cuiping Mountain Scenic Area

To start with, though it is a correct in the light of its structure and grammar, park map is used to replace with "Guide map" will be more concise, and map is a countable noun, so it should be preceded by the indefinite article "a". Additionally, it is also in accordance with the practical situation of this area. What's more, since there is more than one scenic area, changing the word "Area" into its plural form will be better.

Suggestion: Guide map—A park map. Area--Areas

6.4. Waters

According to the Collins Dictionary, the word "waters" is used to refer to a large area of sea, especially the area of sea that is near to a country and that is regarded as belonging to it. Obviously, the word "waters" used here does not comply with its actual meaning.

Suggestion: waters—water area

6.5. Tourists Walk Pace

According to its Chinese meaning, it is inclined to indicated that this is a walking area for tourists, nevertheless, its corresponding translation is not in accordance with it. "Tourists walk pace" leaves a first impression of the meaning that the speed at which tourists walk. Additionally, its structure also fails to achieve the translation standard of public signs. It seeks too many correspondent words between the Chinese and English translation, ignoring the expression as well as the precise translation of English.

Suggestion: Tourists walk pace--Walkway

7. Improper Placement of Slogans

" Don't climb over the seat " the sign is pasted on a wall without chairs. As a matter of fact, the wall is not high very much, even to a large extent it is low. Therefore, there is possibility that some tourists will climb over the wall at their convenience, it should be meant to convey the meaning "don't climb over the wall" but used incorrectly.

Suggestion: Don't climb over the seat--Don't climb over the wall

8. The Global Use of Warning Signs:

There are a host of signs that include crucial information such as tickets introduction, "no smoking" sign, warning signs of the depth of water and so forth, however, lacking of corresponding English translation is a big problem, which is difficult for foreigners to understand. Therefore, to globally apply relevant translation to the area, especially to some key information, is necessary.

9. Findings

The most prominent translation problems in this area can be classified into three types:

1. The translation layout is not well-organized. There is a host of key pieces of information that are left untranslated, such as the cable ticket price and warning signs. Additionally, In the Cuiping Mountain, the introduction in front of Zhao Yiman Memorial Hall is short of its corresponding English translation. All the information indicated here are in Chinese. Furthermore, there are inconsistencies in translating the same English phrases, such as the "Mind The Steps" and "Step By Steps". The small font size may also hinder tourists' reading experience.

2. In terms of sentence structure, Chinese is a kind of dynamic language with idiomatic short sentences while English favors long sentences connected by conjunctions. Therefore, translators are required to pay attention to these differences and ensure that appropriate conjunctions are used to enhance logical flow. Moreover, while repetition is common in Chinese writing style, it is less favored in English.

3. When it comes to content, some transliterations do not accurately convey their intended meaning in Chinese culture. Nowadays, it is emphasized in China to spread Chinese culture in English, so it would be beneficial to provide an accurate interpretation first, and then a transliteration within brackets can be followed to ensure foreign tourists can understand both aspects effectively and achieve the purpose of spreading cultural elements with Chinese characteristics.

10. Summary

The accuracy of translating park signs is crucial, as it not only reflects the overall quality of a city but also influences the impression that foreigners have of the city. Yibin was recently voted one of the most livable cities in China, and there has been a gradual increase in the number of foreign students in Yibin in recent years. Therefore, it is imperative for more attention to be paid to the current situation and for greater efforts to be made to improve it. This includes further improving the quality of translators and ensuring that relevant government departments and the public are involved in supervising public signs. By working together, we can enhance the overall appearance of the city.

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