

Analysis on Lexical Error of Russian Translation of Chinese Linguistic Landscape*

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Abstract—This paper explores the lexical errors of Russian translation of Chinese linguistic landscape from the perspective of language, including semantic errors, collocation errors, word order errors, lexical redundancy, cultural word errors, rigid translation, and illegible and rhetorically incorrect proper nouns. The study aims to reduce and evade various lexical errors of Russian translation, and provide convenience for Russian-speaking personnel. This research can provide a blueprint for the production of linguistic landscape of the nation, local government and corporate, promoting the spread of Chinese culture to the Russian-speaking countries.

Keywords—*linguistic landscape; Russian translation; lexical error*

I. INTRODUCTION

The signage language of public facilities such as street signs, billboards, street names, place names, shop signs and public sign language on government buildings together form the linguistic landscape of a region or a group of cities, and the main function is to convey information and symbolize something.

The research on Western linguistic landscape began in the 1970s. The study on "linguistic landscape" from the perspective of sociolinguistics was based on the paper "Linguistic landscape and national linguistic vitality — an empirical study" published by Landry & Bourhis in 1997. In 2015, the International Journal of Linguistic Landscape, launched by Netherlandish publishing group John Benjamins, marked the maturity of linguistic landscape research. The research theme focuses on the use of multiple languages, the implementation of language policies, the use of regional languages or minority languages, and the spread and diffusion of English. Russia only studied linguistic landscape from the perspective of linguistics. However, it started late.

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And there are not many documents. At present, there is no consensus on the name of the linguistic landscape. The expression is various, and it usually adopts общественные знаки. The study of Chinese linguistic landscape began in 1989 and flourished in the 21st century (Liu Lifan 2016:53). There are many papers studying the "public sign language", while the number of papers titled by "linguistic landscape" are 217 articles. Most of these papers are on non-empirical research. The research is wide, and the selection of signs is based on urban commercial areas and tourist attractions. These papers analyze Chinese-English bilingual public sign translations, and propose translation strategies and normative suggestions.

The linguistic landscapes of major cities in China are mostly Chinese or Chinese-English, and there are few other languages. According to the survey, the Russian linguistic landscape is mainly seen in the Russian border cities and the cities with the tourism or shopping by the personnel from Russian-speaking countries, such as Heihe, Wudalianchi, Suifenhe, Harbin, Manzhouli, Beidaihe, and Sanya. This paper selects nearly 600 linguistic landscapes taken in the above-mentioned cities as the corpus, analyzes the Russian translation of Chinese linguistic landscape from the perspective of language, and finds more than 100 linguistic landscapes with lexical errors, mainly including semantic errors, collocation errors, word order errors, lexical redundancy, cultural word errors, rigid translation, and illegible and rhetorically incorrect proper nouns.

II. LEXICAL ERROR

Vocabulary is a ready-made language unit that can be repeatedly used in the lexical system of a language. We have no way of evaluating whether it is right or wrong. For a vocabulary that enters a language dictionary, we can see whether it is used correctly in a specific language environment when it shows something and a phenomenon in a sentence. (Du Guizhi 2015: 9) In the Russian translation of linguistic landscapes, lexical errors mainly include: semantic

errors, collocation errors, word order errors, lexical redundancy, cultural word errors, rigid translation, and illegible and rhetorically incorrect proper nouns. Most of lexical errors are caused by the translator.

A. Semantic Error

Semantic errors mean that the vocabulary used is wrong in semantic content. The translator's understanding of the meaning of the words is incorrect, or the words are randomly selected without the meanings. The wrong words will convey the wrong information and cause misunderstanding (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:23).

Example (1): emergency shelter (предупреждение о землетрясении).

As shown in Example (1), if we don't consider grammatical errors for the time being, землетрясение means "earthquake". Emergency shelters refer to safe shelters used in cities to avoid major public emergencies such as fires, explosions, floods, earthquakes, and epidemics. Therefore, the "shelter" can be translated as убежище, and the "emergency shelter" should be translated as Убежище на случай чрезвычайных ситуаций. This kind of error is caused by the translator's little thinking and random choices. The first is the translator's attitude, and the second is the level of the translator. Semantic errors can also be divided into word meaning confusion, the misapplication of synonymy and homoionym, and incoordinate semantic range.

1) *Word meaning confusion*: Word meaning confusion refers to the use of incorrect vocabulary, and two words in their mother tongue or second language that have the same or similar morphologies but have very different meanings. In other words, the translator will catch the meaning of words literally from the context.

Example (2): Hongshun Hotel (отель); sweet Lulu (кофейня "ВЭНЬ СИНЬ").

As shown in Example (2), the "hotel" is mistranslated as отель. отель and гостиница both have the meaning of "hotel", however, they don't exactly refer to the same level of hotels. And the former is more expensive than the latter. In the subconscious of Russian tourists, отель reminds people of "leisure and vacation", and is a comfortable resort hotel that meets international standards and provides excellent service. "гостиница" reminds people of "journey and accommodation", that is, the accommodation for business trips. The mistake is due to the translator's poor basic skills in Russian, or he doesn't grasp the difference between the two words (the two words are very different in Russian). Example (3): кофейня (cafe) is confused with пекарня (bakery). Кофейня is a food store and a place for meetings and communication. The store sells drinks and sweets such as coffee, cakes, ice cream, black tea, green tea, juice, soft water and alcoholic drinks. Пекарня (the old word is калачная) is a small food company that bakes and sells a variety of breads and pastries, usually selling food at the production site. Пекарня means typical food categories, including a variety of breads, cakes, desserts and pies. According to the survey, "sweet Lulu" is a food chain that

sells bread and cakes. There are no leisure and entertainment facilities. Thereby, it is translated as ПЕКАРНЯ ВЭНЬ СИНЬ ЛУ ЛУ.

2) *The misapplication of synonyms and homoionym*: Synonyms refer to words of the same or similar meaning. Homoionym refers to words with substantially same meaning, however, they are different in color and usage. For the synonyms, the meaning and usage are exactly the same. For the homoionym, the meanings of words are only similar, not the same, and generally cannot be replaced by each other. The "difference" between synonym and homoionym is small. If it is used improperly, it will affect the information communication, causing ambiguity and misunderstanding (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:23).

Example (4): Russian Commodity Street (Улица русских товаров добро пожаловать)

As shown in Example (4), добро пожаловать is lexical redundancy that should not appear on street signs, and it should be deleted. The translator doesn't clarify the difference between русский and российский. русский refers to "Russian word collocation with customs, habits, lifestyles and linguistic features". российский refers to "Russian words" related to Russian national relationship, and it usually expresses political, economic, cultural and other aspects of word collocation. However, русский can be matched with товар. It refers to "products produced in Russia", not "Russian products" (from the national perspective). Then, we should use российских.

3) *Incoordinate semantic ranges*: Words of a linguistic vocabulary are semantically interconnected. These words together form a complete lexical system. This lexical system is the semantic field (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:23). Although some words are in the same semantic field, they can't be mixed in the specific context.

Example (5): Boda professional hairdressing (Магазин парикмахера)

As shown in Example (5), парикмахер refers to "barber", which does not match the basic function of the barbershop, and the correct word is Парикмахерская (barbershop). парикмахер and парикмахерская belong to the "haircut" semantic field. One is the person, парикмахер, and the other refers to a place. Both of them can't be mixed.

Some words in the language are relatively broad in concept, and the range of meanings is extensive. Some words have relatively narrow connotations, and the range of meanings is small. The words with extensive meanings belong to hypernym, and the words with small semantic range belong to hyponym. If the latter represents something that can be completely contained in the scope of the former, that is, the referential range of the former is larger than that of the latter. They will form the hyponymy relationship. (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:24) In actual use, if the hypernym and hyponym are used upside down, it is bound to cause incoordinate semantic range.

Example (6): Heihe Zhitongche optician (ОЧКИ МИР);

Example (7): Xinhua liqueur (Водка-самогон СНЬ Хуа);

Example (8): Jinying Department Store (У нивермаг Магазин).

As shown in Example (6), очки refers to "simple optics for correcting vision or protecting the eye from various damages", and it represents the specific "glasses". The "optician" is not equal to glasses in the simple sense. It includes the entire optician process, such as optometry, lens selection, frame selection, polishing, assembly, etc.. The translator should use a word with wider range of meanings, *оптика*. *оптика* means "optician, optics, optical instruments / devices / equipment", etc.. In the optician (*Оптика*), people can get the right lenses, and make the optometry. Also, people can get contact lenses. Therefore, it is translated as *ОПТИКА* or *МИР ОПТИКИ*.

In Example (7), we don't consider the usage of punctuation and writing errors for the time being. *водка* refers to wine made from sorghum, corn, sweet potato and other foods or certain fruits, which are colorless and have high alcohol content. *Самогон* refers to home-brewed (made in the home), arrack, hand-made liquor. It can be seen that *водка* includes *самогон*. The translation can be changed to *Самогон Синь Хуа*. In Example (8), *магазин* refers to a place where goods are sold indoors. *Нивермаг* is a truncation noun of *универсальный магазин*. *Нивермаг* refers to shops selling clothing, utensils and daily necessities. *магазин* is the hypernym, and *универмаг* is the hyponym. Therefore, the translation can be changed to *УНИВЕРМАГ*.

B. Collocation Error

When words are matched, they are often limited by the meaning of words, rhetorical attributes, emotional colors, and grammatical features. Not all words can be matched with each other (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:24). Lexical collocation error of Russian translation of Chinese linguistic landscape mainly focus on the collocation such as adjectives- noun, noun-noun, verb-noun and some fixed usage.

Example (9): Weishu Ladies' Discount Store (женский магазин);

Example (10): banning to bring dogs into the park (Запрещение въезда собак)

As shown in Example (9), we don't consider the spelling mistake (женский), just look at the collocation of the adjective *женский* and the noun *магазин*. *женский* means "women's, ladies', female", and the common collocation is *женское движение* (women's sports), *женская нежность* (women's gentleness), *женский труд* (women's labor), etc.. The adjective *женский* can be grammatically matched with the noun *магазин*. However, it is semantically unreasonable, and it can not be matched. It should be translated as *женская одежда* or *магазин женской одежды*. As shown in Example (10), we don't consider spelling mistakes firstly (въезд - taking the line), and the subordinate-case noun *собак* is postpositive attributive to modify *въезд*. People will misunderstand the banning. The dog can ride some kind of vehicle go inside the park. The governing relationship of the

noun *вход*, куда, с чем should be used. This linguistic landscape belongs to the banning. The structure of "the noun + запрещается (запрещён, воспрещён)" can be used directly. The letters should be capitalized and translated into *ВХОД В ПАРК С СОБАКАМИ ЗАПРЕЩАЕТСЯ (ЗАПРЕЩЁН, ВОСПРЕЩЁН)*.

C. Word Order Error

Russian is the typical fusional language. Although the word order is flexible, the grammatical relationship among the words and sentences is mainly expressed by the morphological changes of words. However, as an important semantic-structural means, word order cannot be reversed at will. If we reverse it sometimes, it will cause changes in words and sentences (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:25). Russian linguistic landscapes are mostly phrases, and Russian phrases have three basic types: concord relationship, dominance relationship, and dependence relationship. The author will introduce the principle of word ordering. In the concord relationship, the fixed words (adjectives, verbs, directives, possessive pronouns, pronouns) are in front, the definite words (nouns) are behind. In the dominance relationship, the dominant words (verbs, adjectives, verbs, participle and nouns) are in front, and the governed word (noun) is behind. In the dependence relationship, normal words are preceded by meaning words (such as adverbs, deputy verbs, etc.), and the dominant words (such as verbs) are behind. The change in word order will change the logical semantic focus of the sentence. The word order errors include the order change of adjective - noun, preposition structure - noun, and so on.

Example (11): Dianchangbei Road (Дорога Северная электростанции);

Example (12): boutique 2 yuan (2 юаней товаров).

In Example (11), according to the concord relationship, the fixed word (adjective) is in front and the definite word (noun) is behind. Therefore, the street sign should be translated as *Северная дорога электростанции*. As shown in Example (12), we don't consider grammatical errors firstly (2 юаня). The store name means "2 yuan for each item in the store". Thereby, it should be translated as *Товары по два юаня*. Obviously, the change of word order causes inconvenience to the audience.

D. Lexical Redundancy

The use of extra words causes the translation to be duplicative and embarrassing.

Example (13): Heihe Taiheng Economic and Trade Co., Ltd. (Хэйхэская ТЭК с ОО "Тай Хэн");

Example (14): Square has covered free WIFI (Площадь покрыта бесплатным вайфаем wi-fi);

Example (15): No admittance except on business. (Посторонним лицам вход запрещён);

Example (16): Please do not swim when the wind is rough. (Сильные ветры и высокие волны плавание запрещено)

As shown in Example (13), с ОО is missing a capital letter О (ООО-общество с ограниченной ответственностью). The word order should be placed at the forefront of the company's signage, and the preposition с is purely redundant. ТЭК should not use the abbreviated form, which will cause inconvenience and misunderstanding to the audience. The adjective Хэйхэская should be represented by the corresponding noun, and it should be placed at the tail of the company's signage. The letters are all capitalized and highly visible. They are translated as ООО ТОРГОВО-ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ КОМПАНИЯ «ТАЙ ХЭН» г. ХЭЙХЭ.

As shown in Example (14), it can be directly translated as "бесплатный вай-фай". The translation belongs to Chinese Russian. According to the literal translation of Chinese characters, the direct translation leads to the increase of redundant information, which is contrary to the characteristics of the simple language. As shown in Example (15), we don't consider the orthographic error. посторонний means "other people, outsider, idler", and лицо means "person, character". The translation content is repeated and ambiguous. The letters should be capitalized and translated as ПОСТОРОННИМ ВХОД ЗАПРЕЩЁН (or ВОСПРЕЩЁН), or ДОСТУП ПОСТОРОННИМ ЗАПРЕЩЁН. As shown in Example (16), there is a linguistic landscape in Sanya, Hainan province. Сильные ветры и высокие волны is redundant. It should be deleted. Also, it can be directly translated as "КУПАТЬСЯ (or КУПАНИЕ) ЗАПРЕЩЕНО". плавание (плавать) refers to a skill and movement, the swimming. And купаться refers to bathing, swimming, playing in the water (bath, river, sea).

E. Cultural Word Error

Cultural word errors are caused by cultural vacancies. "Cultural vacancy" refers to the phenomenon that a certain national cultural element does not exist in another national culture, or that a certain national cultural characteristic cannot be expressed in another national culture, which is reflected in the language level, that is, vocabulary vacancies. Also, it can be cultural vacancies (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:25). In the Russian translation of the linguistic landscape surveyed, there are not many cultural errors.

Example (17): Liu Ji spicy hot pot (Малая Тан);

Example (18): Yunnan noodle (Л апша).

As shown in example (17), "spicy hot pot" is the most distinctive kind of food in Sichuan and Chongqing, and it is named by the taste of the diet. There is no corresponding expression in Russian. The translation "small тан" make people confused. The translation of cultural vacancies is usually transliterated. When first appeared, it can be supplemented by interpretation. The translation of the sign can adopt the Russian translation Суп "Малатан" or Сычуаньский Супчик. In Example (18), "Yunnan noodle" is the specialty snack in the southern part of Yunnan province, China, and there is no corresponding expression in Russian. "Yunnan noodles" refers to "rice noodles". "The rice and water are mixed into the slurry, filtering into the mass. Then, the slurry can be made into thin strips of food

that can be cooked." (Qi Guojiang, 2016:36). Лапша refers to the noodle, and the main ingredient of the "rice noodle" is rice. It is translated as Рисовая лапша "Гоцяомисянь".

F. Rigid Translation

The translator can draw a Chinese word with a certain Russian word. According to the literal meaning of Chinese, it can be translated literally. It has Chinese characteristics. However, it should be Russian in form. It does not conform to Russian in terms of word matching and grammatical expression. Foreigners can understand the meaning, however, they cannot understand the expression. They can not accept the translation (Liu Lifen et al. 2018:25). This type of error is also known as Chinese Russian.

Example (19): Zhengjie computer (электронный мозг);

Example (20): Clothing-show (Яркие одежды мастеров)

Example (19) was translated as "charged brain" электронный мозг, which is confusing. To convert to Russian, the translator must follow the Russian rules, indicating its function. The translator can adopt КОМПЬЮТЕРНАЯ ТЕХНИКА Чжэн Цзе. The translator needn't have to translate the redundant information of "brain". In another Example (20), it is the result of word-by-word and rigid translation. The correct translations should be: ОДЕЖДА, СТИЛЬНАЯ ОДЕЖДА or САЛОН ОДЕЖДЫ. The translation of the linguistic landscape belongs to a special type of translation. The translator needn't translate every word. The most important method should be applying translation method (Liu Lifen, 2016: 56).

G. Identified Proper Nouns

The identified proper noun refers to the failure to accurately understand the form of proper nouns in translation, which leads to the mistranslation.

Example (21): Youth Activity Center in Aihui District (ДЕТСКИЙ ДВОРЕЦ РАЙОНА АЙХУЙ);

Example (22): Korean Goods (корейский моды универмаг)

Example (21): "Aihui" was mistranslated into Айхуй. The sign translation method is completely processed into Айхуй" according to transliteration, which makes the public unable to know which area is spoken. It is translated as ДЕТСКИЙ ДВОРЕЦ Р-Н. АЙГУНЬ. In Example (22), "Korean" refers to South Korean, not North Korean. The "Korean" on the signboard is translated into корейский (North Korean). The mistake is that the translator doesn't clarify North Korean and South Korean. Therefore, it should be translated as Модные товары из Южной Кореи.

H. Improper Rhetoric

In addition to the basic meaning, vocabulary also contains different rhetorical colors, such as the commendatory and derogatory, the writing and oral, the elegance and vulgarity. In translation, the translator must accurately grasp the rhetorical color of vocabulary and the

rhetorical meaning expressed in the context. There should be no deviation, otherwise there will be poor translation.

Example (23): Martyrs Tower of Soviet Red Army (ПАМЯТНИК ПОГИБШИМ ГЕРОЯМ КРАСНОЙ АРМИИ)

In Example (23), погибший refers to "the victim serving for the motherland, the people or some just cause". павший is an elegant term referring to "the dead, the victim, the martyr". The Martyrs Tower of Soviet Red Army should be translated as ПАМЯТНИК ПАВШИМ ГЕРОЯМ КРАСНОЙ АРМИИ.

III. CONCLUSION

In summary, there are various lexical errors of Russian translation of Chinese linguistic landscape. Lexical errors of Russian translation of Chinese linguistic landscape may also include: the misjudgment of parts of speech (non-proper noun is mistranslated into a proper noun; proper noun is mistranslated into a common noun; term misjudgment; mixed parts of speech), the misjudgment of homonym or near-homonym, the confusion between same-rooted words and homograph, the antonym confusion, the improper morphology, and so on. We should do a good job in the translation of linguistic landscape, and prepare the "Russian translation standard in the field of public service" as soon as possible. Then, the translators can follow the rules when they make the Russian translation of linguistic landscape, minimizing translation errors. This will not only help improve the social service function of the linguistic landscape, but also provide more convenient support for personnel from the Russian-speaking countries to facilitate their integration into Chinese society, and it will enhance China's international image. Thus, it will export Chinese concepts and Chinese culture through Russian language. Of course, if we want to truly promote the translation standardization and governance of linguistic landscape, we should strengthen cooperation with universities, set up specialized agencies and expert committees, set up special agencies to strengthen the supervision of linguistic landscape production processes, and improve the level of translators. Therefore, it is imperative to rectify and regulate the Russian translation market of linguistic landscape.

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