（5）坚持以人为本，构建和谐社会

Adhere to People-centered, Build a harmonious society

1.3.3　Classification in Terms of Information State

There is a common in stating a concept of moving in English and Chinese, so the formulation of stating can choose either static stating or dynamic stating. Because different public signs have various functions, the information states that the public signs display are distinct. So they can be divided into two types: the static and the dynamic.

1. Static Public Signs

Public signs often provide service, information and instructions by applying a great many nouns. They are usually used in block names, tourist places, commercial establishment, sanitary facilities, institutions concerning foreign affairs and educational organization, etc. We can call such public signs static signs. For instance, the signs in sanitary facilities "检验医学中心" (Clinical Laboratory) Medicine Center, "门诊手术室中心" (Outpatient Operation Center) and "社区卫生服务站" (Community Health Care Station) belong to static signs; the patients can easily acquire information and instruction they need. Here are more examples:

（1）消火栓　　　　　　　　Fire Hydrant
（2）旅行社　　　　　　　　Travel Agency
（3）天安门广场　　　　　　Tian'anmen Square
（4）青少年活动中心　　　　Youth Activity Center
（5）皇家天文台售票处　　　Ticket for Royal Observatory

2. Dynamic Public Signs

Different from static public signs, dynamic signs apply most words with dynamic meanings such as verb and gerund. Public signs with reminding, restrictive and directive functions have dynamic meaning. They are mostly applied to public transportation, social utility and urgent rescues, etc. For example, "请勿吸烟"（No Smoking），"请系好安全带"（Please Fasten Your

Seatbelt) and "紧握扶手"(Hold the Hand Rail), these signs all use gerund or verb to remind, restrict or direct people's behaviors. There are more signs with dynamic meaning as follows:

（1）此路封闭　　　　　　　　Road closed
（2）请勿与司机攀谈　　　　　Do not speak to the driver.
（3）装有警报，禁止入内　　　Do not enter, alarm operating.
（4）仅限紧急状况下使用　　　Emergency Use Only
（5）未经许可，禁止入内　　　No unauthorized access prohibited

Except for the above classifications of public signs, in terms of materials with which public signs are made, there are traditional and electronic signs. From the translation perspective, the present public signs can be classified into larger categories, which are the international public sings and the non-international public signs.

Public signs with static or dynamic meanings have different functions, according to their applied circumstances and situations.

1.3.4　Applied Scope of Public Signs

Public signs cover an extensive area, such as shopping, tourist destinations and so on. Since the public signs are applied very widely from travelling to shopping wherever we go, we can see the public signs which offer us necessary information and give us great convenient. Table 1.2 will show the applied scope in detail where public signs are usually used.

Table 1.2　Applied Scope of Public Signs

Applied Scope	Examples
Public Facilities	Gas station, subway, airport etc.
Public Traffic	Bus stop, terminal station, expressway, etc.
Tourist Attraction	Museums, scenic spots, historical sites, park etc.
Tourism Service	Tourist information, first aid for the tourists, etc.
Streets and Community	Avenues, district, roads, residential areas, etc.
Foreign-related Institution	Exit-entry administration, exist visas, etc.

Public Organizations	Consumer association, Red Cross, etc.
Commercial Facilities	Supermarket, restaurants, banks, hotels, etc.
Sport Instruments	Stadium, golf field, health center, etc.
Cultural Instruments	Cinema, theater, dancing hall etc.
Educational Instruments	University, schools, research centers, etc.
Sanitary Instruments	emergency center, Chinese medicine clinics, etc.
Religious Places	Church, temple, monastery, mosque, etc.

The above are the main fields, but not all the fields, where signs are used. These fields of signs share many common grounds yet each with unique demands on translation.
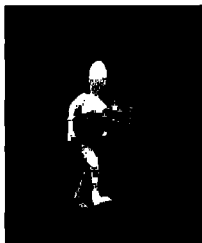
Chapter 2

Stylistic Features of Chinese and English Public Signs

Every language style has its distinctive language features, so do public signs. As a practical text and particular style, public signs now have been applied in common use and have played an indispensable role in every aspect of our lives. Meanwhile, they are usually short, brief, eye-catching and easy to understand, which gives people an open-and-shut impression. If we want to correctly translate the Chinese public signs to idiomatic English, the first important thing we should do is to have a good knowledge of the features of the public signs. This chapter will compare linguistic features of both Chinese and English public signs.

2.1 Features of Chinese Public Signs

Generally speaking, Chinese public signs perform the similar functions as those of English signs. But due to the linguistic and cultural discrepancies, the language style of Chinese public signs may display different features, which shape a contrast to those of English public signs.

2.1.1 Word Choice

1. Abundant Four-character Phrases

Chinese is a long-history language, with abundant four-character phrases, no matter in literacy or daily lives and there is no exception with public signs. Among Chinese public signs, especially in those descriptive texts, it is very easy to locate four-character phrases, most of them are just synonymous repetition or tautology. The source language producers compose such Chinese-style text just to cater to the aesthetic value of the source language readers, but not necessarily to the potential travelers from every corner of the world. For example

（1）票务处理	Ticket Problems
（2）高速公路	Exprssway/EXP.WAY
（3）薄利多销	More Sales at a Low Profit
（4）当日可取	Daily Service
（5）高压危险	Danger! High Voltage

2. Using More Dynamic Verbs

Chinese public signs are characterized by heavy dependence on the use of verbs. In his chapter of "C-E psychological contrast" in C-E CONTRASTIVE COMPENDIUM, Pan Wenguo pointed that "the theoretically verbs dominate in English, while in fact norms and adjectives are used than verbs. On the contrary, Chinese tends to use verbs other than norms[1]." This fact, departure from their

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① PAN WENGUO. C-E Contrastive Compendium [M]. Beijing: Beijing Language and Culture Universtiy Press, 1997, pp. 376-377.

own national public psychology, is decided by their linguistic features. That is because Chinese belongs to a non-inflectional language, the use of verbs in more flexible without confinement of morphological rules The dynamic feature of Chinese language determines the predominance of verbs in Chinese public signs. In addition, public signs face the public mostly in travel or in business. So it is suitable to use imperative structures and subjectless sentences as well.

（1）谢绝参观

（2）削价出售

（3）当日有效

（4）请勿打扰

（5）小心轻放

（6）注意行人

The mono-form of expressions-verb-centered patterns in Chinese signs makes a strong contrast with the diversified expressions in English signs, which involve the combined use of nouns, gerunds, verbs, as well as prepositions. There is a variety of expressions involving the use of gerunds, nominal group and imperative sentence, which are shown as follows:

（1）Smoke-free Campus

（2）Employees Only

（3）No Parking

（4）Caution: Maintenance in process

（5）Lift out of Order

（6）Please Watch the Steps

It can be seen from the above examples that the use of verbs does not prevail in the English signs. Considering the linguistic norms of the target text, verb-centered patterns in Chinese public signs, to some extent, have to be converted in translation. In that case, translation errors can be better avoided.

3. Frequent Use of Poetry Language

It is well-known that poetry is the gem of Chinese traditional culture. Chinese cultures unify the Chinese nation, while Chinese cultures are cultures

of poetry. In all culture-related areas, there are imprints of poetry. Chinese cultures, literature and arts are of poetic characteristics. Since public signs being a special practical language and a part of our social life, there is no doubt that poetry will be involved in public sign and have a special and significant place. A good public sign should be catchy and easy to remember, conveying a positive information. To achieve the purpose, poetry language is the best choice in Chinese public signs, for poetry is written in lines and rhymed. Poetry language can make a public sign be infectious and easy to be remembered. That poetic style of writing definitely is used to call forth vivid mental images and to get readers and viewers to understand the main information of public signs. The following public signs have a specific rhyme scheme of poetry.

（1）千里之行，慎于足下

（2）追求绿色时尚，走向绿色文明

（3）美丽三亚，浪漫天涯

（4）灾难无情人有情，大灾有大爱！

2.1.2　Sentence Structure

1. Preference for Rhetorical Devices

The language of Chinese signs shows strong preference for various rhetorical devices such as antithesis, metaphor, pun, rhyme, parallelism, personification, and so on. Most distinctive feature is the wide use of antithesis and rhyme, which makes the language vigorous in semantic force, vivid in image, balance in structure and appealing in sound. This is partly due to linguistic habits, partly due to the influence of Chinese aesthetic tradition of cherishing symmetry.　Here are some examples:

（1）青青小草　请勿打扰

（2）晴带雨伞饱带粮，事故未出宜先防

（3）知己劝宴千杯少，驾车饮酒一滴多

（4）宁走十步远，不走一步险

The use of antithesis and rhyme helps achieve vividness in expression and

"viyid" expressions seem exaggerating or even confusing to foreign readers, who prefer to express ideas in a simple, and plain way. Take the sign "晴带雨伞饱带粮，事故未出宜先防", in which "晴带雨伞饱带粮" is a Chinese proverb, which means it is wise to take precautions. But the literal translation may present difficulty in the target readers, receiving process because they lack the knowledge of the source culture. Most of them may never hear this Chinese proverb before. So the poetic language in the source text will not appeal to the target readers' aesthetic sensitivity. As a result, the literal translation of the sign may preserve some features of the source text, but may not produce similar appellative effect on the target readers.

It can be concluded from the above analysis of the Chinese sign that target readers' cultural background, expectations and previous knowledge should be taken into consideration in the translation process. Some rhetorical expressions in the source text may less likely be appreciated by target readers who have no shared cultural background with source readers. If the use of the rhetorical devices poses difficulty on target readers' comprehension, it is advisable to turn the expressions with heavy rhetorical color into plain ones in the target text so as to achieve expected communicative effect. In terms of text functions, the use of rhetorical devices makes some Chinese signs perform the poetic appellative function while the target text often functions, which may lead to translation problems.

2. Using More Slogan-type Signs

Due to the influence of ideology and Chinese culture, there is a large portion of slogan-type signs bearing peculiar Chinese characteristics. They play an important role in maintaining stability, enhancing mutual understanding and building a harmonious society. But the slogan-type signs show obvious ideological and political bias and involve some culture-specific terms which may not be comprehensible to foreign readers. We take Chinese slogans on politics as an example.

In different periods of times in history, there appeared different slogans

corresponding to current affairs. For instance, at the end of Qin Dynasty, the peasants were uprising with the slogan "大楚兴，陈胜王"; towards the end of Ming Dynasty, the peasants revolted with the slogan as "苍天已死，黄天当立". While Mr. Sun Zhongshan conducted on the revolution he put forward a slogan like "驱除鞑虏，恢复中华，创立民国，平均地权". All the slogans have encouraged the people concerned at that time to strive for their objects. Political slogans still can be easily found in many places, the content of these slogans are updated gradually in accordance with the policies of our country. Here are some typical examples of political slogans:

i. Some slogans inform people of the basic policies that China practices.

（1）建设社会主义新农村

（2）退耕还林，利国利民

（3）改革开放是强国之路，四项基本原则是立国之本

This kind of political slogans is comparatively long term and stable due to the nation's current situation. They are spoken and printed widely, even in the rural area so that they are familiar to the mass to the greatest degree.

ii. Some slogans call for people's cooperation.

（1）税收取之于民，用之于民

（2）崇尚科学反对邪教

（3）维护国家主权和领土完整是全中国人民的共同义务

This type of signs is directed at native Chinese speakers, aiming to publicize, educate or appeal to the public. In most cases, these signs carry no indicative meanings to foreigner readers. In view of text typology, the slogan-type sign texts mainly carry out the appellative function, provoking a particular reaction on the part of readers and inciting them to be engaged in specific actions. But due to the lack of the knowledge of the source-culture background, the appellative function verbalized in the source text may be in accessible to target-text receivers so that this type of signs is less likely to elicit a similar response in the target readers. Even if translated, these signs do not make much sense to foreign readers, but rather give rise to pragmatic or cultural errors. It is not easy to handle these culture-specific slogans in C-E

translation of public signs.

2.1.3 Pragmatic Feature

1. Focus on Image

Chinese people are inclined to imagery thinking. They prefer to express abstract concept in terms of concrete objects. This mode of thinking arises from centuries of direct perception of the nature. As a result, Chinese highlight intuition and image. There are many Chinese words or expressions making use of imagery analogy, which are vivid and striking in image. This feature is also reflected in the language of Chinese public signs, which involve multitudes of imagery expressions. The vivid image can arouse association and strengthen appeal of Chinese readers. But on the other hand, as imagery thinking stresses intuition which is based on individual experience to understand the world, this also results in another fact that Chinese tend to express feelings or ideas in an implicit and ambiguous way.

In contrast, westerners prefer analytical thinking, recognizing the nature of the objects by means of logical analysis. Everything should be certified by facts and deductive reasoning. British people, like other westerns, are better known for abstract and logical thinking, so English is exact in conveying ideas with its focus on functionality of the expressions.

In view of differences in modes of thinking, Chinese public signs bearing images may not be comprehensible to foreign readers, For example:

（1）不开带"病"车

（2）司机一滴酒 亲人两行泪

（3）实线虚线斑马线 都是生命护航线

（4）劝君莫开"英雄"车 君子总让君子行

Literal translation of the above signs will lead to pragmatic and cultural errors because those images are not coherent with the target receivers' situation. The pursuit of linguistic equivalence between the source and target texts will hamper the target readers' understanding of the sign, leading to the loss of the intended function of the sign. Sometimes, concrete images in the source text are

likely to make the information quite implicit and give a sense of ambiguity in meanings, thus causing confusion on the part of the target readers. Take the second sign for example. If the images "一滴酒" and "两行泪" in the source text want to be preserved, the sign may be rendered as " One drink of alcohol on the part of the driver can result in two lines of tears for his family". But such a translation is not concise enough so that it does not conform to the language style of English signs. Even worse is that the literal translation may be quite confusing to target readers who do not understand what the sign really means and what the relationship between alcohol and tears is. As a result the literally translated sign may lose the original appellative function. Therefore, the concrete images in Chinese signs have to be handled properly in translation so as to facilitate easy understanding on the part of target readers. In one word, accurate, concise and explicit translation may be more acceptable to the target-text receiver.

2. Serious and Direct Tone

Direct tone of Chinese public signs distinguishes itself from the polite and euphemistic tone of English signs. In order to bring about a clear understanding, an example is given to make a comparison. Chinese readers must be familiar with the sign "道路清扫 随时停车" written on the rear of road cleaning vehicles. The sign sounds a bit arrogant because it gives a sense that the cleaning vehicles should be given priority on the road while other vehicles have no choice but to give way. From the perspective of pragmatics, the addressees' negative face is threatened. But the corresponding English sign reads, "THIS VEHICAL MAKES FREQUEDNT STOPS. APPOLOGIES FOR INCONVENIENCE CAUSED TO YOU." It sounds more polite because the addresser makes apologies to satisfy addressees' negative-face want. The difference in politeness levels between the two languages is clearly seen from the comparison. The direct tone of Chinese signs seems acceptable to source readers but may be less polite or even offensive to target readers.

In terms of Chinese prohibitive signs, expressions like "严禁", "禁止" or "请勿" are frequently used, which convey a sense of undeniable authority. This

is partly due to the influence of hundreds of years of feudalism, which has cultivated a habit of obedience and advocated the absolute authority of the superior over the inferior. As public signs serve to regulate social behaviors, sign senders seem to claim more power or authority over addressees by making commands on them who are supposed to obey. The commanding tone of prohibitive signs is common to the Chinese readers, but seems bossy and offensive to English-speaking readers because their culture emphasizes equality among people That is why English signs tend to make requests rather than commands on readers by resorting to politeness strategies.

As degree or standard of politeness is different in the two languages, overuse of expressions like "...forbidden", or "...prohibited", as well as imperative in C-E translation will make an impression of rudeness, thus weakening acceptability of signs. Chinese is inclined to say something in a negative way, while English is used to speaking positively. For example:

（1）恕不找零	Please Tendr Exact Fare
（2）请勿撕招贴	Please Leave This Poster
（3）油漆未干	Wet Paint
（4）怕光	Keep In Dark Place
（5）未经许可，不得擅入	Authorized Personnel Only

2.2 Features of English Public Signs

As one of practical translation varieties, the language of English signs displays a set of stylistic features as for grammatical structures, the choice of words, visual presentation, etc. Since stylistic study helps achieve adaptation in translation, it is necessary and important to make a stylistic analysis of the language of English public signs.

2.2.1 Lexical Features

So far as the lexis is concerned, English public signs are characteristic of concise, accurate and normative language. As a special kind of style, English

public signs have its various features in choosing words and expressions. They are as follows.

1. Application of Nominal Groups

According to Pan Wenguo, the English language is verb-centered in theory while dominated by nouns in reality. As English belongs to an inflectional language, the use of verbs is confined to morphological rules while nouns enjoy more freedom and flexibility. That is why English public signs have a weighted preference of using notional words and kernel words. In addition to that, nouns and noun phrases usually do not bear specific instructions on people's behaviors. In many formal and important situations, in order to offer important information, but be polite at the same time, people tend to choose nouns and noun phrases in signs. Therefore, articles, pronouns and auxiliary verbs are often omitted. When stating the static function, especially directing function, the language of public signs prefers to use nouns and noun phrases, in which case service is usually supposed to offer. Moreover, sign English is also characterized by expanded noun premodification, which is clearly an effort to pack more information into a limited space while keeping it easy to understand. Look at the following examples:

（1）Alcohol Exclusion Zone

No Alcohol Consumption

（2）For Crew Use Only

（3）Disabled Badge Holders Only

（4）No Parking

Delivery Vehicle Accessoin

9 am –5 pm

2. Extensive Use of Verbs and Gerunds

A large majority of public signs in English are expressed by using verbs and gerunds, especially in restrictive public signs and mandatory public signs, whose aim is to draw people's attention to the actions that public signs require.

Except for verbs, gerunds are also widely used in English public signs. Using verbs and gerunds in English public signs can make the language direct, simple and most important of all, more powerful. The subjects and partial predicates of this kind of public signs are sometimes left out. Examples of this type are:

(1) No Overtaking on Bridge

(2) Warning: do not trespass on the Railway Penalty $ 200.

(3) Hot! Avoid Contact!

(4) Give Way

3. Using Normative Expressions

The language of public signs is quite different from other types of language because it aims to raise the public's attention and to produce public effect. The language we use in public signs should be standard and normative and try to avoid any kind of ambiguity. With long time of use, many common words have become normative expressions in English public signs. For example, words like "Caution", "Warning", "Beware" or "Danger" are conventionally used to remind people of some possible dangers. When people are required not to enter, occupy or approach a certain places like " Keep off", "Keep clear", "No admittance" or "No Entry" are frequently used. These set expressions are widely accepted by people of different ages, classes, sexes and educational levels. And they are least likely to cause ambiguity or misunderstanding among readers. Most of them are simple in structure and diverse in combination. They can effectively express the central meaning of public signs. Examples are as follows:

(1) Beware

Vehicles Reversing

(2) Caution

Uneven Surfaces

(3) Warning

Construction site

No unauthorized access

(4) Danger

Keep Off

4. Application of Simple and Common Words

Public signs, as its name suggests, are mainly shown to common public, well-educated people and not so well educated people as well. Therefore, the use of commonly seen words or phrases is strongly recommended. That is to say, we should mainly use those that have already been used for quite a long time and are widely accepted in the world. Therefore, many factors such as the readers' educational level, previous knowledge and cultural background should be taken into consideration. In the selection of the vocabulary of public signs, we should follow the principle that "language is accurate, easy to read and understand", and avoid such uncommon words and expressions as archaism, slang and jargons. Common words are easily comprehensible, so they are preferred in English public signs. Here are some examples:

(1) International Students House

(2) No Through Route for Pedestrians

(3) Closed Sorry for Any Inconvenience

(4) Lost & Found

The above examples are easy for the readers to understand and memorize. Look at the following groups of words:

attempt—try	facilitate—make
purchase—buy	antagonist—enemy
peruse—read	eliminate—save/get rid of
maintenance—care	employ—use/hire

Compared with the former words, the latter words prove to be of better choices, and the reason is that the latter words are very simple and common to understand quickly and easily.

5. Abundant Abbreviations

Language is developing with each passing day; so does the language of public signs. People gradually realize that there are certain types of words or

phrases that need not appear in their full forms because they are, in some cases, time-consuming. Especially those most commonly used ones, and those most commonly accepted ones, can be expressed in abbreviations. As a matter of fact, with the development of information technology, people are gradually getting used to abbreviations. Abbreviations are bringing our social life simpler and easier. Just name a few that we commonly seen in our daily life. There is no exception for English public signs in public facilities or services which are often exhibited in the simplest way—abbreviations, a shortened form of a word or phrase used chiefly in writing to represent the complete form. English public signs make wide use of abbreviations including clipped words, blends, initials and acronyms. There are some abbreviation examples:

（1）F&B   （Food & Beverage）
（2）CCTV   （Closed Circuit Televsion）
（3）50 yds   （50 yards）
（4）Hgvs   （Heavy goods vehicles）

These standard abbreviations help save space and facilitate quick reading but present no problem of understanding in the specific context. Employment of abbreviations makes signs succinct, which is consistent with the linguistic features of public signs.

6. Local Culture Embraced

As a special application of language, the language of public signs is unavoidably influenced by it's culture. To some extent, public signs are the product of cultural conventions and customs. Therefore, the language of some public signs may carry their own characteristics. English language has its own variants in America, Britain, Canada or other English-spoken countries. That is to say, public signs referring to the same thing may have different expressions from country to country. These differences can also be found in public signs. Table 2.1 will show us the differences between British and American public signs.

Table 2.1　Comparison between British English and American English

China	Britain	America
地铁	Underground	Subway
电梯	Lift	Elevator
药房	CHEMIST'S SHOP	PHARMARCY
售票处	Booking-office	Ticket-office
厕所	Toilet	Restroom
邮资已付	Post Free	Postpaid
小心台阶	Mind your Step	Watch your Step
请勿疲劳驾驶	Tiredness Kills, Take a Break	Stay Alert, Stay Alive

2.2.2　Syntactic Features

The English of public signs tends to exhibit striking grammatical features, which are closely related to their functions. The most important trait is the simple and direct syntax, which is shown in its preference for short sentences, frequent use of present tense, high incidence of ellipsis.

1. Preference for Simple and Short Sentences

As is demanded by their functional features as well as space limitations, English public signs tend to use simple and short sentences to call people's attention. Most sentences in public signs are short, some consisting only two or three words. In addition, very noteworthy is the frequent occurrence of verbless sentences, which are not only space-saving but also striking and powerful. Short and simple sentences facilitate quick reading and easy comprehension of the information transmitted in sign texts. Take the following public signs for example:

（1）Pay at Meter

（2）Fragile

（3）Give Way to Buses

（4）DANGER

　　　THIN ICE

2. Frequent Use of Present Tense

The present tense is a grammatical tense which locates a situation or event in present time. In English, the present tense may be used to express action in the present, a current state of being, an occurrence in the future or an action that started in the past and continues. When English public signs consist of sentences, the present tense is the only tense employed in the expressions. This rightly corresponds to the very nature and function of this kind of language: guide, promote, restrict and impel the public to behave. Take the following sentences for example:

Post No Bill

(1) Trespass on this site is a criminal offence.

(2) Switch off your engine. Don't choke Westminster!

(3) CAUTION

Vehicle Makes Frequent Stops

We Apologize For Any Inconvenience Caused

(4) Conference & Banqueting suite

Visitors to this car park do so at their own risk

All of these public signs use the present tense to direct, prompt, restrict and enforce public's present actions, so using present tense is another distinct feature of English public signs.

3. Application of Imperative Sentences

Language in public signs should be striking and impress, which is one of the most distinctive features to public signs as far as its functions are concerned. It is impossible to achieve the final goal of introducing these public signs if they are incapable of attracting the public's attention. Imperative structure can make public signs concise and easy to understand. Public signs are intended to prompt action, require or forbid readers to do something, thus carrying the tone of command or instruction. In that case, imperatives in both positive and negative forms are frequently used especially in warning and regulatory signs. Examples are as follows:

(1) Stop suspended

Please use previous stop
(2) Keep children clear of moving doors
(3) Warning: do not trespass on the Railway. Penalty $ 200.
(4) Press the Button for Exit

4. Application of Passive Structure

Another feature of English public signs is embodied in the use of passive structure, which puts the "patient" or "goal" of the action in the position of a subject, thus allowing the "personal" aspect of the action to be removed. Making the tone objective, indirect and impersonal, the use of passive structure softens the force of a command so that readers will not feel offended, especially by signs with restricting function.
(1) Visitors are requested to enter through the North Gate
(2) This building is monitored by CCTV
(3) DANGER

HARD HATS, SATETY BOOTS AND

HI-VIS CLOTHING MUST BE WORN
(4) PLEASE NOTE

THESE DOORS ARE ALARMED

5. Application of Ellipsis

Conciseness is the most distinguished stylistic feature of public signs, so the language of English public signs is most noted for its wide use of ellipsis. English signs often omit auxiliary verbs, predicate verbs, articles or pronouns for the sake of conciseness, quick reading and space economy. Meanwhile, punctuations reduced to such limited range that many signs are unpunctuated or punctuated only with a final period. Here are some examples:
(1) Beverage Included.
(2) Lift out of Order.
(3) Not Safe For Public Use
(4) Vehicle blocker in use

2.2.3 Graphological Features

Public signs aim to present information to a mass audience of different educational levels in simple, easy-to-understand language. Owing to the space limitation and the pressure for time on the part of readers, the need to convey the information in a clear, direct and concise way poses particular demands on the graphological design. Most signs have sharp graphological contrasts to achieve the best possible eye-catching effect.

1. Combining Words with Pictures or Symbols

It is the general practice to combine words with pictures or symbols in public signs. Vivid pictures or symbols can leave a deep impression on readers and promote easy comprehension. They serve as supplement to the words on the signboards and bring convenience for people with language barriers. Besides, color also serves as a further guide to the function of a sign. Conforming to international practices, red is usually reserved for prohibition signs; yellow for warning signs; blue or green for information and directing signs. All of these render signs more striking and impressive, increasing the memory value of signs. The following four figures may help illustrate how words and pictures or symbols in different color together in English public signs.

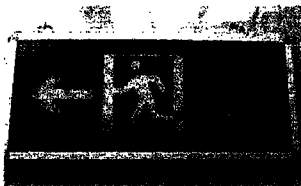Figure 2.1   Warning sign

Figure 2.2   Prohibition sign

Figure 2.3   Directing sign

Figure 2.4   Information sign

2. Capitalization

Most highly prominent for the writing of English signs is the use of capitals which can arouse readers' attention and make the public signs more conspicuous. Capitalization of public signs have the same rules of writing a title. Capitalizing all the letters or the first letter of each word, including words following hyphens in compound words, except articles, coordinating conjunctions, short prepositions and the "to" in infinitive sentence. There are four cases of capitalization:

i. Only the initial letter of the first word in the sign is capitalized, such as :
Please do not feed the fish.

ii. The initial letter of each word in the sign is capitalized, such as:
Valid Ticket Holders Only

iii. Every word in the sign is capitalized, such as:
PLEASE BEWARE OF FALLING ROCKS

iv. Words deserving much attention are capitalized for emphasis, such as:

This road will be
CLOSED
25th August 2007 for
THE MANCHESTER
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3. Use of Different Type and Layouts

Public signs are often printed in different shapes of types, which is a means of drawing readers' attention to particularly important places in a sign. A sign can be set in different types: some lines in italic lettering, some in roman lettering while others in bold roman capitals. In order to achieve eye-catching effect and easier-to-read effect, a sign is usually split into small units, occupying several lines. The layouts of signs take on a variety manifesting different visual effects. Some popular layouts are shown in the following figures, including centered forms, flush left, pyramid form and inverted pyramid form.
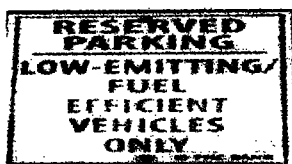
Figure 2.5　Centered form
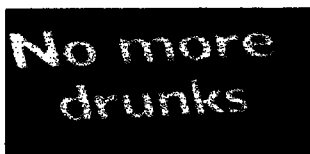

Figure 2.6　Flush left

Figure 2.7　Pyramid form

Figure 2.8　Inverted pyramid form

2.3　Similarities between Chinese and English Public Signs

Public signs, as a significant part of social language, play an essential role both in China and in western countries. Public signs, such as forbidden signs, traffic signs, health and safety signs, parking signs, perform the same function in China as they are used in English speaking countries. To some extent, Chinese public signs share much in common with English public signs in their general features on the whole. Public signs are unique in stylistic functions and language features. Although Chinese and English belong to different language families, both Chinese and English public signs share some unique characteristics because of the special functions in their applied circumstances.

2.3.1　Common Linguistic Features

1. Directness and Conciseness

Public signs are usually direct and concise no matter they are written in Chinese or English. The reasons are as follows: first of all, the text of public signs is usually written on a comparatively small piece of paper or a piece of metal or wooden board. The sign writer is required to use the least words to

convey the largest information to the public. Secondly, the public usually don't spend much time reading the public signs, nor do they go to the nearby to read them unless it really necessary to do so. The public always give a very quick glance to the public signs which may only last one or two second. It requires the sign writer to use the most easily accessible text to express their meaning. Thirdly, public signs serve to the people with different educational background. To ensure the public can understand the signs, the writer should get to the point directly. The diversity of readership requires public signs to be direct, simple and concise. For example:

（1）双层巴士　　　　　Double Deck Buses
（2）不收现金　　　　　No Cash Accepted
（3）小心滑倒　　　　　Watch Your Step
（4）不可回收　　　　　Non-Recyclable
（5）售票处　　　　　　Ticket Office

2. Conventionalization

The conventional feature suggests that there are standard ways of expression in public signs, which have been widely accepted by the source culture. During the use of public signs, Chinese and English have already formed their own norms or standard. If the staffs of the company want to use the sign to indicate that only certain amount of people are given to access to something, signs may write like this:"...+only", such as "staff only", "employee only", etc. Chinese public signs may also employ this kind of expression. Take Chinese prohibition signs as an example, Chinese prefer to use "严禁"or "禁止" in their signs to restrict readers' behaviors, such as "严禁停车", "禁止攀爬", etc. We can conclude that both Chinese and English public signs have conventional expressions of their own.

3. Conspicuousness

Because of the particular features and functions of public signs, they are needed to be designed conspicuous or eye catching. We have to pay attention to another thing that is the pictures of public signs are uniformly used all over the

world, so the pictures become more essential and helpful than letters or characters, particularly for foreign visitors. Therefore, writers or designers usually adopt a lot of methods to make them conspicuous, such as combining lettering and pictures, different bold styles, underlining, capitalization, or coloring. Sometimes these methods are employed together. We will take four figures to show that both Chinese and English public signs are conspicuous.

Figure 2.9

Figure 2.10

Figure 2.11

Figure 2.12

2.3.2 Application of Rhetorical Devices

Rhetoric is the study of the technique and rules for using language effectively, especially in public speaking. As any other types of text, sometimes public signs also use some rhetorical devices, which can make the public signs much more eloquent, flexible and persuasive. The appropriate use of the rhetorical devices can produce a kind of beauty that makes the readers feel much comfortable and interested in reading the public signs. The following will explore rhetorical devices are commonly used both in Chinese and English public sign, namely: simile, metaphor, personification, exaggeration, pun, duality and so on. These rhetorical devices can make public signs more vivid and interesting, while at the same time, they avoid stating public signs in a straightforward way and make them more attractive and thought-provoking to

the readers.

1. Use of Simile

Simile is an important artifice in the expression, and also an emphasis in rhetoric figures. It is a kind of rhetorical method connecting two different things which have some common features by using the words "as" or "like". In general, simile is a figure of speech that expresses a resemblance between things of different kinds. We often see many public signs which use simile to vividly highlight the basic information, and impress their readers. For example: "Safety is as simple as ABC – Always Be Careful", this public sign deliberately uses a simile to illustrate the importance of safety We all know in English "ABC" are three initial letters in the alphabet which means the common sense and the simple , basic truth. The sign writer wisely compares safety to ABC, which can make this public sign is persuasive and show the readers safety is a very simple thing only if we are always keep careful.

According to Samuel Johnson, a simile, to be perfect, must both illustrate and ennoble the subject, must show it to the understanding in a clearer view and display it to the fancy with greater dignity. From the examples above, we can find simile is a powerful device in description, explanation and persuasion. Public signs in which similes are used can make the language of signs more vivid and colorful and grab the readers' attention. Therefore, we can find many Chinese and English public signs with similes such as:

（1）Use a book as a bee does flowers.

（2）Beauty without virtue is like a rose without scent.

（3）火灾如猛虎，防范于未然

（4）国法如山，逃逸必捉

2. Use of Metaphor

Metaphor is another type of comparative rhetorical device, which is an implied comparison between usually unrelated things indicating a likeness or similarity between attributes found in both things. According to Elgin,

metaphor is the most powerful device available to us to change people's attitudes, quickly, effectively and lastingly. The appropriate application of metaphors in public signs can make the public sings more interesting and attract the people's attention. We will take a warning sign "Please Don't Throw Your Cigarette Ends on the Floor. The Cockroaches Are Getting Cancer" as an example. As we all know, "cockroach" is a kind of numerous chiefly nocturnal insects which arouses people's disgust or abhorrence. This sign uses the rhetorical device—metaphor, because "Cockroaches"can remind people of "nuisance". "Cockroaches"can imply that smokers are disgusting and that the cigarette butt is very dirty. "Cancer" indicates the bad effect of smoking on the health not only of smokers but also of non-smokers. "The Cockroaches Are Getting Cancer" uses "Cockroaches" everyone feels disgusted as the deixis. As the source domain of metaphors, "cockroaches" can remind viewers think of cognitive image, which is ugly, dirty, disgusting and spread of diseases. Here the cognitive image is projected onto the target domain "cigarette butt", which makes viewers acquire all shape and characteristics of the target domain are similar to "cockroaches". This metaphor brings the readers a lot of things no wonder this warning sign is a great success. In the following examples metaphor is also well used.

（1）Courtesy is the inseparable companion of virtue.

（2）Water—the source of life.

（3）森林：地球的衣服

（4）书是人类进步的阶梯，科技是文明进步的动力

3. Use of Rhyming

Rhyme has been defined as the similarity or identity of sound that exists between accented syllables which occupy corresponding positions in two or more lines of verse. Generally speaking, rhyme schemes are made up by alliteration, assonance and rhyme. However, rhyme schemes are not the monopoly of poets, they are also widely used in Chinese and English public signs to create ideal sound effect, to make the signs vivid, pleasing and lovely,

to impress the readers. Thus they can lead the readers into paying attention their actions. For example, the translation of the sign " 桂林山水甲天下" is "East or West, Guilin scenery is the best." From the translation, we easily find that the translator reshuffled the original text, which creates the beauty of the rhyme. This sign is "end rhyme", in which the ends of the words: East, west and best correspond in sound. Moreover, the translation applies an English proverb " East or West, home is the best." to inspire the tourists to visit Guilin. It is much easier to remember the rhyming signs than it is to memorize a correspondingly long stretch of words. Here are more examples:

（1）Lend a hand—Care for the land!　　　　　　（hand—land）

（2）Human and Nature; not Human end Nature.　　（and—end.）

（3）你谦我让，道路通畅　　　　　　　　　　　（rang—chang.）

（4）手握方向盘，时刻想安全　　　　　　　　　（pan—quan.）

4. Use of Repetition

Repetition is the deliberate repeating of a word or a phrase within a sentence or a poetical line with no particular placement of the words in order to emphasize certain emotion or meaning. It includes words repetition and construction repetition. Repetition in sign language could emphasize the effect, enlighten the information of the public sign, and play a transitive role. It meets the function of the public sign. For example, the sign "新滨海，新形象，新珠海" is translated into "New Seashore, New Image, New Zhuhai." This public sign is used to introduce Zhuhai to the tourists. Zhuhai is a beautiful city which attracts a great deal of tourists every year. The word "new" is repeated for three times, which make readers know about Zhuhai easier. Here are more examples as follows：

（1）Deliciously simple. Simply delicious.

（2）No shoes, no shirts, no service.

（3）问政于民、问需于民、问计于民

（4）珍惜健康、珍惜生命

5. Use of Pun

Pun is rather a play on the form and meaning of words. It is the humorous

use of a word that has two meanings or of different words that sound the same. According to American linguist Archilbald A. Hill, there are three elements in analyzing and composing a pun: a double context, a hinge and a trigger. Pun is one of the most commonly used rhetorical devices in English public signs, which adds attractiveness and the effectiveness to public signs. According to *English Writing and Rhetoric* written by Professor Wen Jun, pun can be classified into four categories of pun: homophonic pun, paronomasia, antanaclasis and sylleptic pun.

Homophonic pun is the use of words, which are identical in pronunciation but different in spellings and meanings. For example: More sun and air for your son and heir. This sign is a bathing beach advertisement and the producers cleverly use the sun-son, air-heir of the two homophonic words, so that the advertising is not only harmonious and melodious language, to read fluently but also quit funny, humorous and inspiring.

Paronomasia involves two words which have similar pronunciation but different meanings. As the beneficial advertisement says that "Drunk drivers often put the quart before the hearse". Here "quart" sounds similar to "cart", while "hearse" sounds like "horse". "Quart" is a vessel for alcohol and "hearse" is a special vehicle, which is used for conveying the dead to the grave. The double puns are conveyed to satirize the drivers that drunk driving is dangerous and to remind readers of the importance of safe driving.

Antanaclasis refers to a word used twice or more, but each time with a different meaning. For example, "Ask for More. No cigarette gives me More taste. I'm More satisfied." is a slogan for *More Cigarette*. The word "more" in the slogan have two meanings. One is the word itself "more" meaning "again and again, suck the cigarettes more"; the other is the cigarette's brand "More".

Sylleptic pun is similar to antalaclasis, but the word is used as a pun only once with two or more different meanings. With sylleptic puns, the sign can convey the information in fewer words. For example, "If you leave Managing Money alone, money will leave you alone." is an advertisement of the magazine *Managing Money*. In the slogan, "managing" has two meaning. One is the

meaning of managing – manage money; the other is the meaning of noticing which means if you don't pay attention to the magazine *Managing Money*, the wealth will leave you. The use of the pun makes the slogan pretty humorous and memorable.

In fact, like English public signs, Chinese public signs also make use of pun to reach the attractive, effective and easily memorable effects. Let's look at the following examples:

（1）民以食为天，食以安为先

（2）茵茵绿草地，足下请留"青"

（3）红灯停绿灯行，交通安全我能

6. Use of Parody

Parody is a literary or artistic work that imitates the characteristic style of an author or a work for comic effect or ridicule. It creates a humorous atmosphere to the readers and emphasis the main idea of the new and help the reader to understand the public sings correctly. Some public signs make use of some well-known saying or political terms and famous sentences from poems. Classical allusions and idioms are frequently changed and used in public signs.

For example, the traffic safety slogan "Better late than the late." is a great success, for it makes a clever use of "late" in the idiom "Better late than never" as a semantic pun. "Better late than never", as a traffic slogan for safety, is striking enough to warn the drivers against carelessness. However, the writer is so wise that he changes "never" in the original idiom into "the late", which makes the slogan more implicative as "the late" means "the dead" or "loss of life". On reading this slogan, no driver dares to drive carelessly any more. Public signs with this rhetorical device can be easily found both in Chinese and English, such as:

（1）To Print or Not to Print

（2）All roads lead to Holiday Inn

（3）鲜血诚可贵，助人价更高

（4）家事国事天下事，环境保护是大事

7. Use of Antithesis

Antithesis is a figure of speech which is a contrast of ideas expressed by parallelism of strongly contrasted words, generally for a tuneful rhythm and wisdom of brevity. It is the deliberate arrangement of contrasting words or ideas in balanced structural forms to achieve emphasis. The form of the expression is very important for effect, for the force of the emphasis and for contrast. This stylistic feature e reader a strong impression of the signs, because of its harmonious structure. So it is often used in public. Take the example of the sign "Yes to life, no to drugs". It's a commonweal advertisement on banning dugs. Here, "yes" and "no" form a strong contrast and the balanced structural form gives the readers a strong impression. What's more, as this sign is very short, it's easy to understand and remember. With antithesis this sign tells us that drug means we should value our life and keep away form dugs. Since drug means the end of your life, when it comes to drugs we must just say NO. Both in English and Chinese, there are many more examples with antithesis such as:

（1）A Moment of Careless, A Life Time of Pain.

（2）Big thrills, Small bills

（3）以节约为荣，浪费为耻

（4）开车多一分小心，家人多十分安心

8. Use of Hyperbole

Hyperbole is the use of exaggeration as a rhetorical device or figure of speech in order to evoke strong feelings or to create a strong impression. It is one of the most commonly used rhetorical devices in public signs. As a figure of speech, hyperbole is so powerful and widely-employed that it stretches its antenna to the field of public signs especially advertising medium. An example of hyperbole is "Mornings are golden with Eggo." It's a successful advertisement of "Eggo" biscuit. This example makes use of hyperbole to exaggerate that mornings are golden because of "Eggo" biscuit, while morning actually cannot be golden for this reason. Morning is the beginning of the day and people always attach great importance to breakfast. This advertisement is

just based on the fact that people believe good breakfast can keep one energetic for the rest of the day. Eggo, coined after "egg", is the brand name of the biscuit. It gives people novelty and reminds them of the nutrition of the biscuit with lots of eggs in it. Let's look at the following examples:

（1）The Sweetest Place on Earth. (Pennsylvania)

（2）One year's seeding—seven years' weeding.

（3）跳楼价甩卖

（4）维也纳森林别墅：真山、真水、真森林

From analyzing, we can prove that the figures of speech play an irreplaceable role in addressing a speech. With this tool of language, we will be able to decorate and polish our speech and language more skillfully and effectively. The appropriate of the rhetorical devices in public sings can make the expression of the language more accurate, striking, vivid and powerful, and both Chinese and English public signs can become more attractive and interesting. Therefore, in creation the words and expressions of public signs, the proper use of rhetorical devices and the careful choice of words and expressions are most important.

2.3.3 Common Language Style

As language activities take place in relevant extra-textual circumstances which are the situation of the speech event, there is an observable correlation between linguistic features and contextual factors. Just like any other speech event, the linguistic style of public signs has a relationship with the situation. Public speeches share similarities with both written language and spoken language. On most occasions, Chinese and English are written in advance and delivered in spoken form, so in many ways, they are more formal than daily conversation. According to the situation, in which public signs are used, we can discourse four types of language styles.

1. Colloquial Style

The styles mentioned here are colloquial expressions suited or practically

applied to various occasions, namely colloquial styles. Colloquialism is a colloquial expression which can be a phrase or single word common in daily. Meanwhile it has characteristic of spoken or written communication that seeks to imitate informal speech rather than in academic writing, formal speech, or in paralinguistic as well. Colloquialisms are at times collectively called "you know what it is language". The words that we come across in Chinese and Egnlish public signs can be divided into three types, according to a stylistic point of view: formal, common, and colloquial. As public signs are commonly applied in our daily life as an important information carrier, colloquialisms are often used in public signs to tell the public something by using only several words. Here are some public signs in our daily life which make use of colloquial expressions.

（1）WELCOME! OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

（2）SORRY NO VACANCY

（3）谢谢光临!

（4）请随手关门，谢谢!

By analyzing the above example, we can find that colloquial expressions are used both in Chinese and English public signs. Thus colloquial style of language is frequently employed in public signs of various service industries such as hotels, restaurants, supermarkets and banks, etc. With a colloquial expression, the public sign can have an easy-to-read and natural characteristic of oral style. Colloquial public signs are very important, because public signs can directly convey the information to the readers.

2. Expository Style

As a special applied text, public signs have directive and informative functions and manifests clear communicative purpose. Due to the constraint of physical space, the expressions used in public signs are usually succinct, conveying essential information in just a few words, such as "No smoking", "Open daily" and " Way out" and "Road closed". In order to efficiently convey information to the readers, there is no doubt that expository writing becomes

the best choice in public signs, for expository writing is the most widely used type. Exposition is a type of oral or written discourse that is used to explain, describe, give information or inform. Expository writing explains ideas so that the readers can understand them. The creator of an expository text can not assume that the reader or listener has prior knowledge or prior understanding of the topic that is being discussed. When we make use exposition in public signs, we should keep one important point in mind that is to try to use words that clearly show what they are talking about rather than blatantly telling the reader what is being discussed. Let's look at the following examples:

（1）PLEASE PRESS FOR ASSISTANCE

（2）Please stick the second copy of your ticket (s) on each piece of luggage.

（3）发现可疑情况，请拨 110 报警。

（4）乘客须知：发生火灾时，请用榔头击碎车窗玻璃逃生。

All the above signs make use of expository writing to inform the readers what to do and how to do it. Expository writing is the foundation of sign writing since its focus is to provide information to readers, assuming they have no prior familiarity with the subject. While expository is just a synonym for information, strict guidelines of the expository signs ensure that the information it contains is clear and concise. However, the expository sign is a totally objective composition. Differing from many other types of signs, the composer's job is to explain public signs and to make public signs understood easily without offering an opinion.

3. Advertising Style

Public signs usually appear in the striking position, with a window function, whose application is very extensive, involving almost all aspects of our life. When we watch these public signs, we can find that advertising style is employed in many of them. With the rapid development of the technology and the diversity of the mass media, advertising public signs have a great effect on us pervasively in our daily life. However, whatever the primitive strategies a public sign takes, language is the main carrier of message all along. Public

signs with advertising language form use a variety of language to reflect their language's innovative, diverse, and lively image. A successful advertising public sign is always brief and does not use a large number of words and sentences. As a commercial language, the advertising language must have the function of attracting attention with terse and lively language at once. To facilitate understanding and memory, the words of advertising public signs are often brief, and most of them are short words. Because of the average readers rarely spend a lot of time carefully studying public signs, adverting public signs must attract readers with little time, and quickly convey information to the readers. Advertising style is more colloquial and simple. It can take very short period of time to read, and these sentences are often declarative, interrogative and imperative. Meanwhile, out of this reason that simple sentence is very short and concise and elliptical, the advertising public signs have used lots of simple sentences and elliptical sentences. The composers often make the advertising public signs fine-sounding for getting readers' attention. An easy read adverting public sign is remembered clearly by readers, and arouses their interests. Here are some Chinese and English public signs:

（1）ENJOY OUR NATIONAL FOREST PLEASE!

（2）COME IN AND WIN

4. Legal Language

With the quickening process of globalization of the world economy and after China's WTO accession, public signs, as a special text, are progressing rapidly in our country which is surely having more links with other countries in the world. Undoubtedly, there will be more and more public signs that emerged in all aspects of our lives. However, public signs are constrained by many means such as physical, social legal or moral. As a particular expressing mode, legal language is one of the common language forms used in Chinese and English public signs. There are many specific words with special legal meaning emerging in public signs because of people's rights and obligations are stipulated by the law or statutory documents. For instance:

（1）You can be prosecuted for smoking in public. MAXIMUM PENALTY Hk $5,000.

（2）Warning: Drug free zone criminal, penalties are severely increased for the sale, possession, or transportation of drugs.

（3）为保障您的权益，索取并妥善保存发票。

（4）版权所有，翻印必究

2.4　Differences between Chinese and English Public Signs

Comparing Chinese public signs and English public signs, we can find both similarities and differences. Both Chinese and English public signs whose main points are prominent are brief and pithy and the language is succinct and concise. The contents are striking, and they all use figures of speech, to make signs more persuasive and comprehensible.

Mona Baker claims that "each language has its own patterns to convey the interrelationships of persons and events; in no language may these patterns be ignored, if the translation is to be understood by its readers."[1] As the two languages belong to two different language families, there are lots of linguistic differences between Chinese and English public signs. Having a good knowledge of these differences will surely do great help in Chinese-English translation of public signs.

2.4.1　Linguistic Difference

Chinese belongs to the standard Sino-Tibetan languages families, and English belongs to the family of Indo-European. Due to the different language families, there must exist a great number of linguistic differences between Chinese and English public signs. There is no doubt that a good understanding of linguistic differences between English and Chinese public signs will help to improve its translation.

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① BAKER, MONA. In other words: A Coursebook on Translation [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. 2000: 180.

1. Difference in Sentence Order

Word order is a one of the important grammatical means. As a language phenomenon, word order varies from one language to another. English and Chinese, as the most important languages in the world, differ in various aspects such as word formation, semantics and pragmatics. The differences in two languages are also reflected in word order. As thinking modes vary in two cultures, the centre of power reflected in Chinese and English is strikingly different.

The linguistic differences between Chinese and English may be displayed in sentence order. The language features of Chinese are indirect and often put the main point at the end of the sentence. While English always go straight and the main point is put at the beginning of a sentence. Thus the Chinese public sign is highly implicit by placing the focus at the end of a phrase. On the contrary, the English sign emphasizing the point at the beginning. Generally speaking, in Chinese the modifiers are always set before the head word, while in English the dependent structure such as modifiers always comes after the head word(head word refers to the center of the phrase). Take the sign "油漆未干" for instance. It is a common public sign in China and it can be translated as "Wet Paint" in English. We can see that the Chinese sign puts the important information "未干" in the end, while the English one puts "wet" at the beginning. There are also a lot of examples like this:

（1）对号入座　　　　　Seat by Number
（2）现金支付　　　　　Pay in Cash
（3）限停 30 分钟　　　 30 minutes Parking
（4）游客须知　　　　　Notice to Visitors

2. Difference in Word Diction

Diction is the choice and the use of words. Choosing the appropriate words is essential in expressing your ideas accurately and decently. The choice of words is the foundation of a good writing style. It can make a great difference in the effectiveness of a whole piece of writing. We can also see

differences in diction practice of Chinese and English public signs.

Firstly, when concerning about the sound difference, Chinese public signs tend to use gorgeous words while English signs have a vivid character of conciseness. Chinese people like to apply grand vocabulary to express their feelings and describe beautiful and moving image to the sound elegantly. In Chinese public signs, many high-sounding words can be found. For instance, the sign "心触一块净土，爱博一片蓝天" is an appealing public sign with Chinese characteristics. The writer adopts ornate and beautiful words with antithetical parallelism structure to express the simple meaning—appealing people to protect the environment of the area. This Chinese public sign is very effective in achieving its appealing function. However, if literally translated as " Heart touches a clean land, Love wins a blue sky", the target text would read too verbose and the target readers, who prefer receiving concrete information with simple words, might feel confused about the real meaning and intention of this sign. So, the proper translated version should be " Keep the environment Clean", which not only conforms foreigners, thinking patterns and linguistic features but also achieve its appealing function successfully.

Generally speaking, the Chinese language strives to pursue symmetry in structure, rhyme in sound, hence reading in a neat, implicit and musical manner. Chinese public signs frequently make use of four-character phrases, parallelism and antithesis to achieve rhyming, emphasis or neat structure. For example:

（1）护林防火，人人有责　　　　Fire prevention is up to you
（2）珍爱生命，远离毒品！　　　Yes to life, No to drug!
（3）创一流服务，迎四海嘉宾　　First class service to all guests.
（4）新北京，新奥运　　　　　　New Beijing, Great Olympics

On the contrary, the English language proves to be objective, factual and rational. As we know, English has meticulous stream of thought and logical relationship between linguistic units, concise wording and straight for word description. In a word, brevity is the soul of English. Abusing of florid language is forbidden in good English, for it is considered illogical and may affect the original meaning or communication.

Secondly, Chinese is referred to as a dynamic language while English static. Therefore verbs are usually employed in Chinese public signs to perform such functions as warning, restricting and compelling, whereas the nouns and gerunds quite common in English. For instance:

（1）严禁穿行	No Trespassing
（2）不收手续费	No Commission Charge
（3）电梯维修，暂停使用	Elevator Out of Service
（4）内部施工，暂停开放	Under Construction, Temporarily Closed

3. Difference in Mood

The mood refers to the various forms of the verb phrase indicating the speaker's opinions or attitudes towards what is said in the sentence. Since English and Chinese cultural backgrounds are different, the two languages have their own language habits and thinking patterns. Most English public signs are polite and friendly. For example, inside the Skytrain in Vancouver in Canada, a sign says: "Bus only picks up passengers at designated stops." Its implied meaning is that buses don't take passengers at non-designated stops. However, the original expression is more acceptable and understandable, and the passengers would make a queue at the designated stops. Another sign spotted in the Skytrain is "Priority seating for people with disabilities and seniors." This sign not only avoids mentioning the "old people" but also helps to build a harmonious society.

Euphemism, which the *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* defines as "a word or phrase used to avoid saying another word or phrase that is more forceful and honest but also more unpleasant or offensive", has a wide application in English public signs, whose important social function virtually reflects what a society values and up holds. However, the application of euphemism in Chinese public signs is not as wide-spread as that of in English ones. What are more frequently-used are the words or sentences which can express salutation or condescension, you-attitude, a style that looks at things from receptor's perspective.

Chinese signs are more direct and straightforward, even with a touch of authority. Most Chinese public signs use tone of voice such as "严禁…" or "不许", because it is nothing wrong in our Chinese opinions. But if it is translated into English is " do not…", the tone of voice seems to be gruff. We can express meanings in negative tone such as "No Fishing", "No Smoking", "Quiet, please" instead of "Don't fish", "Don't smoke", "Don't make noise", etc. Because English language lays more emphasis on the object of consciousness, indirect euphemistic expression. English signs often display the allowable aspect instead of aiming at the prohibited audience. Moreover, in many of English and Chinese signs, imperative sentences are also frequently used. For instance:

（1）严禁停车　　　　　　　NO PARKING

（2）送客止步　　　　　　　Passengers Only

（3）需要帮助，请按按钮　　Please Press for Assistance

（4）钱款当面点清，离柜概不负责

Complete Transaction before Leaving the Counter

4. Difference in Voice

The wide use of passive voice is considered to be one of the outstanding features of English public signs. Taking syntactic structure, rhetoric and style, etc. into consideration, it will take the place of active voice when focus is on the action or the subject is unimportant, unknown or can not be clearly stated, however, is who or what performs the action. (Jia Dejing, 2002: 118-120). However, the passive voice in Chinese public signs is less commonly used in comparison with English on account of the flexible syntax of the Chinese language. In Chinese public signs , in order to deal with the situation mentioned above, sometimes the subject will also be omitted but differently, the active form still remains, or the generic person such as "人们", "大家" will be adopted. Although there are similar usages in English like " It is believed that…" "It is said that…" and "It is well known that…", passive voice hasn't changed yet. Hence, when translating public signs, the translator should take into account the target reader's acceptability and identification. Let's look at

the following examples:

（1）车位已满　　　　　　　　Occupied

（2）禁止携带犬只入内　　　　Dogs Not Allowed

（3）保证干净舒适　　　　　　Cleanness and Comfort Assured

（4）戴好防护镜和安全帽　　　Safety Glasses & Hard Hats Required

5. Difference in Tense

Another prominent difference is that the Chinese language has no tense and people usually indicate the time frame of the past, the present and the future by means of adverbs of time or simply with no supplementary terms. However, the English language has tense and each tense indicates a different time frame. English public signs are inclined to frequently use present tense. If a tense is wrongly and inappropriately used during Chinese-English translation of public signs, the related message will be changed and the readers will misunderstand the intention of the original writer. So, when translating Chinese signs into English, special attention should also be paid to choice of tense. For example, when translating the Chinese sign "请将座位让给老弱病残" into English, the optimal version may be "You will be appreciated for giving the seat to the senior and infirm", in which a future simple tense is chosen, quite acceptable to the target readers. Here are some examples:

（1）废物入筐，违者罚款五磅。

　　　Any person not putting litter in this basket will be liable to a fine of ￡5.

（2）安全连着你我他　平安幸福靠大家

　　Together we can prevent accidents.

（3）我为人人，人人为我

　　Do something for nothing and you will get everything.

6. Difference in Sentence Structure

Jin Huikang compares the Chinese and English languages in details. In view of syntax, strict sentence structure English is an analytic language. English is an analytic language. Being informative texts, English introductory boards boast strict and logical sentences. For example, "CCTV" is the

abbreviation of "close-circuited television." Another example, "The hub of public life is the "Piazza San Marco" (St. Mark's Square) where tourists and citizens sit on the terraces of the famous Florian and Quadri cafes to listen to the music, dream and see the mosaics of St. Mark's glow under that rays of the setting sun." This example is a very long sentence introducing the charm of St. Mark's Square. It does not use very complicated sentence structures except an attributive clause beginning with "where". Long as it is, it does not sound lengthy. Moreover, the readers feel it pleasant to read it and can't help finding out the beauty of the place on their own.

However, Chinese sentence structure shows a topic-comment structure. A sentence or a sentence group focuses on a particular topic. The sentences tend to be quite loose and it is natural for the readers to detect the logic relations between the lines. Chinese sentence structure seldom focuses on one rigid point but moves according with the logical order and the changing rhythm. Chinese syntactic structures usually employ parataxis, while English adopts hypostasis. In translation, we must get rid of our own way of thinking, and arrange sentences conforming to the target rules and conventions. The following examples show these differences working in Chinese and English, and help us explore some plausible translation methods. We take an advertisement of the West Lake as an example:

境内西湖如明镜，千峰凝翠，洞壑幽深，风光绮丽。

The West Lake is like a mirror, embellished all around with green hills and deep caves of enchanting beauty.

Obviously, the original structure is changed in the target text. The structure of the Chinese advertisement is loose with some short clauses, whereas the English one breaks it into one sentence, which is centered on a verb, with modifiers of participle phrase, proposition phrase, and noun phrase around it. By doing so, the translation emphasizes the central meaning in the SV structure "The West Lake is like a mirror" and specifies the implied logical relationship in the surface form. Reflecting linguistic features of English language, the translation is a successful one in both content and function.

2.4.2 Cultural Difference

Language is an indispensable carrier of culture. Language, as the carrier of culture, reflects the culture; and culture, in turn, influences the use of language.

Without language, culture cannot be possible. Culture is defined as "the totality of spiritual, intellectual and artistic attitudes shared by a group, including its tradition, an intercultural communication". In order to achieve successful communication, the translator should be both bilingualism and biculturalism. Due to the different historical development, geographical locations and religious belief, Chinese and English cultures are entirely different. The distinctive features of culture have a great impact on cross-cultural communication. It is quite necessary to considerate the differences between two cultures when translating public signs from Chinese to English.

1. Different Ways of Thinking and Speaking

As what is stated above, each nationality has its own mode of thinking and perception. If the people of different languages are asked to describe one notion or referent, each language may have its own way of description. Although these

language forms refer to the same notion or referent, they may be attached with distinct characters of their culture. This, undoubtly, brings greater difficulties to cross-cultural translation.

For example, there is a big sign outside the window of MacDonald that captures all the customer's attentions, which reads "请勿食用非麦当劳食品!" This is a typical example of the difference in choice of negative and affirmative structures in public signs. In Chinese thinking model, this sign employs double negative structures for making requirements. However, from English people's mode of thinking, people prefer to adopt affirmative when asking others for the requirements. English may use "Consumption of MacDonald's Food" for the same idea instead of "Do not eat the food which is not belonging to MacDonald".

2. Different Centers of Power

Language is the symbolic representation of people and it comprises their historical and cultural background as well as their approach to life and their ways of living and thinking. As we know, Chinese and Americans have totally different concepts of value. Americans pursue "all men are created equal" and emphasize great individual respect and dignity in their culture. The center of power tends to express more concern with individual person. However, the center of power in Chinese culture tends to show more concern with collectivity because the concept of value in China is based on collectivism and consideration of overall situation. Such kinds of differences can be embodied in many public signs. For example, " 闲人免人" is a common Chinese public sign, in which we first see others and consider others, while for the English version they use Staff Only (Employee Only), in which they consider themselves first.
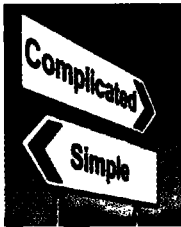
Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework in Public Sign Translation

Scholars at home and abroad have done a great many studies from many perspectives in the translation errors and its standardization. Though the systematic and academic study on public signs in China has a very short history, scholars have already gone further to take some measures on the sign translation strategies. According to the present literature collected, it can be seen that scholars in our country have done research on Chinese-English translation of public signs from different perspectives by using different related theories. This chapter will mainly introduce the following translation theories applied in translating Chinese public signs into English, which mainly include Peter Newmark's text-type theory, Hans Vermeer's Skopos theory, and Eugene Nida's functional equivalence theory.

3.1 Peter Newmark's Text-type Theory

Peter Newmark, a famous English translation theorist, who made a great contribution to common translation theories, studies translation theories by combing translation and language functions. His translation theory can be summarized into three types and two translation approaches, wherein, the three text types refer to the expressive text, the informative text and the vocative text, the two translation approaches communicative translation (CT) and semantic translation(ST). [1] According to his theory, different text types should correspond with different translation methods. This section attends to analyze the concrete translation of public signs in spirit of Newmark's translation theory based on text typology theory.

3.1.1 Concept of Newmark's Text-type Theory

Newmark's text typology comes to exist against the background of a heated debate between literal translation and free translation which lasts a long period of time in translation field. According to Newmark, the argument whether to translate literally or freely has been going on since at least the first century BC. The argument is theoretical: the purpose of the translation, the nature of the readership, the type of text, has not discussed. He admits that whether to be loyal to the original text or the translation text is a huge contradiction in translation theory and practice. But the contradiction could be mediated.

It is known that the process of translating involves a variety of influential factors rather than a simple "transformation" of language forms. Producing a reasonable and readable translation does engage a translator's various efforts in analyzing various factors that involved in the whole process. As various texts all have certain functional effects on the readers, text type and its function helps a translator in deciding the strategy on how to create reasonable

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① NEWMARK, Peter. Approaches to Translation[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press. 2001: 15.

equivalence between source language text (SLT) and target language text (TLT), and between their relevant cultures as well.

Based upon Buhler's classification of language functions and Reiss' text typology, Newmark latterly proposed a further definition of text type and. The core of Newmark's translation theory is his classification of the text type. All texts have aspects of the expressive, informative and vocative functions, with each type processing distinctive features in the aspects of author status, text emphasis, and language manner. [1] Table 3.1 below can give us a clear picture of the three text types.

Table 3.1   Newmark's text types

Text Type	Informative	Expressive	Vocative
Core	"truth"(situation)	writer	readership
Emphasis	target language	source language	Target language
Center	3rd person	1st person	2nd person
Typical texts	Scientific and technical reports, textbooks	Literature, authoritative texts	Notices, regulations, publicity, law, popular literature
Ideal style	objective, neutral	individual	Persuasive or imperative
Translation unit	medium	small	large
Maximum Minimum	sentence collocation	collocation word	text paragraph
New words or meanings	not permitted unless reasons given	mandatory if in source language texts	except in formal texts
Language type	factual	figurative	compelling
Loss of meaning	small	considerable	depend on cultural differences
Metaphor	give sense	reproduce	recreate
Length	slightly longer	approximately the same	no norms

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① NEWMARK, Peter. Approaches to translation[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001: 40.

3.1.2 Newmark's ST and CT

1. Background and Definition of ST and CT

Newmark argues that the success of equivalent effect is "illusory" and that faithfulness conflict, gap between stress on source and target language will always be the most essential problem in translation theory and practice. But the gap could perhaps be narrowed if those terms, i.e. literal, free, faithful or idiomatic translation, are replaced by communicative and semantic translations, which is illustrated by the following Figure 3.1:
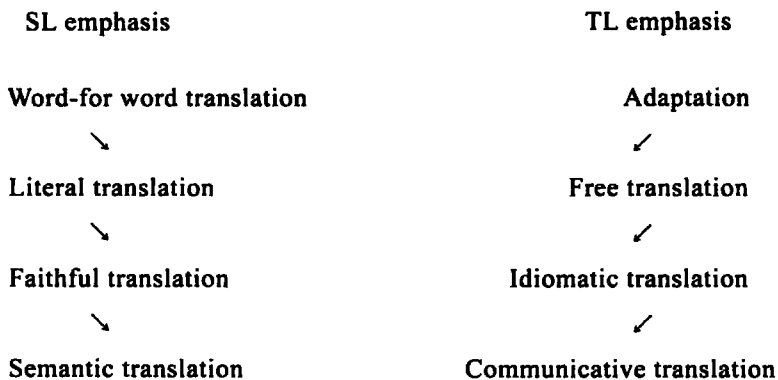
SL emphasis   TL emphasis

Word-for word translation   Adaptation
          ↘   ↙
Literal translation   Free translation
          ↘   ↙
Faithful translation   Idiomatic translation
          ↘   ↙
Semantic translation   Communicative translation

Figure 3.1: A Flattened V Diagram of Translation Approaches [1]

He prefers the terms of CT and ST, because he thinks this formulation has the advantage that the categories, as defined, cover more of the "middle ground" of translation practice. CT and ST were formulated in opposition to the monistic theory that translation is basically a means of communication or a manner of addressing one or more persons in the speaker's presence; that translation, like language, is purely a social phenomenon.

（1）Semantic Translation (ST)

Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning

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① NEWMARK, PETER. Approaches to Translation[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001: 22.

of the original. Semantic translation gives highest priority to the meaning and form of the source text, and is suitable for texts that have high status, such as religious texts, legal texts, literature, and so on. It tries to represent the style and tone of the source text precisely. Semantic translation is out of the restriction of time and local space and does not require cultural adaptation. Semantic translation is personal and individual, follows the thought processes of the author, tends to over-translate, pursues nuances of meaning, yet aims at concision in order to reproduce pragmatic impact.

(2) Communicative Translation (CT)

Communicative translation attempts to convey the exact context meaning of source language, making the content and language easy for the reader to understand and accept, and emphasize on the comprehension and response of acceptor. As is defined, communicative translation focus on interpreting the information of source language, stressing that meaning take priority on form. Communicative translation is functional and usually used for translating non-authoritative texts like booklet, tourist brochures, product instructions and advertisements. This approach focuses on factors as readability and naturalness, and suggests that the translated text should be suitable and comprehensive for the reader. According to Newmark, communicative translation requires a brave attempt to clarify and recognize the meaning, even including the correction of some errors in the source text.

2. Comparison between ST and CT

Vertical comparisons with other traditional translation methods exhibit some relative merits of Newmark's translation methods. In order to lend readers more concrete understanding of relevant knowledge about communicative translation and semantic translation, their mutual comparisons will be conducted.

(1) Differences between ST and CT

According to Newmark, the methods of communicative translation and semantic translation vary from each other in terms of the following aspects.

Objective

Communicative translation intends to present the essential of source language texts and emphasize the social value generated by the translation. Since it is a target language reader-oriented method, readers are right in a position to evaluate the quality of translation including the completeness of content and the intelligibility of language.

Semantic translation, serving for source language authors, gives a high priority to reflecting their thought patterns and stylistic characteristics.

Quality of the Translation

Communicative translation encourages translators to adopt appropriate adjustment such as clarifying the definitions, streamlining the grammatical structure, deleting the redundant information and even correcting the author's mistakes. So target language texts, judged by target language readers, are likely to be smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct and more conventional.

Semantic translation, pursuing the most possibly equivalent forms, requires translators to abide by the grammatical rules of source language texts rather than offending author's authority, so target language texts may seem to be more complex, more awkward, more detailed and more concentrated.

Attitude towards Source and Target Culture

Communicative translation is subject to target culture, which means translators should clarify those cultural elements in source language texts that may cause ambiguity or misunderstanding for target language readers, and thus some source language cultural elements may be sacrificed for the sake of easy understanding. The cultural elements transplanted from source language should be compatible with the target language culture.

Semantic translation is subject to source culture, which means that translators need to preserve cultural elements in source language texts as much as possible, such as figures of speech, idioms, slangs and so on, and give particular notes or explanations to those obscure or ambiguous cultural elements as necessary.

Emphasis on Effect or Content

Whenever the effect and the content of source language texts cannot be achieved at the same time, communicative translation put premium on producing the same effect on target language readers as that on source language readers, but semantic translation attaches emphasis to express content.

The Unit of Translation

The unit of translation is a term referring to the linguistic level at which source text is re-codified in target language, or the smallest unit of source language which has an equivalent in target language.

Communicative translation is carried out on the basis of big grammatical units like sentences or paragraphs, but semantic translation is carried out on the basis of small units such as words, phrases or clauses.

The General Table

In order to classify the differences between the communicative translation and semantic translation more clearly, Munday[1] illustrates the comparison between semantic and communicative translation as Table 3.2 shows.

Table 3.2   Differences between ST and CT

Parameter	Semantic Translation (ST)	Communicative Translation(CT)
Orientation	Author-centered Source-language biased	Reader-centered Target-language biased
Emphasis	The content	The force
Application	Expressive texts	Informative and vocative texts
Form of Target Language	More complex, awkward, detailed, concentrated, tendency to over-translate	Smoother, simpler, clearer, more direct, more conventional, tendency to under-translate
Relation to Source Text	Always inferior to source text; "loss" of meaning	May be "better" than the source text; "gain of force and clarity even if loss of semantic content

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① MUNDAY, J. Introducing translation studies: Theories and applications[M]. London and New York Routledge, 2001: 45.

Use of form of Source Text	If source text; language norms deviate, this must be replicated in target text: "loyalty" to source text.	Respect for the form of the source text; but overriding loyalty to target language norms
Focus	To render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures the second language allows, the exact contextual meaning of the original	To produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the reader of the original
Appropriateness	For serious literature, autobiography, "personal effusion", any important political(or other) statement	For the vast majority of texts, e.g. non-literary writing, technical and informative texts, publicity, standardized types, popular fiction
Key Issue	Messages and contents of the source texts take the first priority and equivalent effect can be sacrificed, if necessary.	Equivalent effect takes the first priority while messages and contents of the source texts can be sacrificed, if necessary.
Criterion for evaluation	Accuracy of reproduction of the significance of source text	Accuracy of communication of source text message in target text

(2) Similarities between ST and CT

In spite of the differences, the two translation methods share some similarities. They "may well coincide in particular, where the text conveys a general rather than a culturally bound message where the matter is as important as the manner". According to Newmark, the two are similar in translating these items: stock and dead metaphor, normal collocations, technical terms, colloquialism, standard notices, phaticisms, and ordinary language. Chinese scholar Liao Qiyi presented the following similarities [1] :

Firstly, communicative translation and semantic translation are rooted in

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① LIAO QIYI. temporary translation Theories in UK[M]. Changsha:Hubei Education Press, 2001: 188-190.

cognitive translation, in which translators convert SL grammar to its common TL transpositions by reducing figurative elements like idioms and colloquialism to plain and literal expressions. Both of them reflect the thinking pattern of the original texts and observe the grammatical conventions of target language.

Secondly, the common information or message without cultural restrictions can be translated with semantic or communicative translation method because it is equally important on both the manner and method. When the original texts are about religion, philosophy, art or science, the two translation methods could produce the similar effects as the knowledge is quite familiar to SL readers and TL readers as well.

Thirdly, a complete communicative translation or a complete semantic translation would do no good. Instead the combination of the two should be the best. In fact, semantic translation and communicative translation may coincide in specific texts. There is no clear line splitting a SL text into one half for communication translation and the other half for semantic translation. Instead, the two methods are cooperative and complementary in coping with specific problems in translation. It is quite difficult to decide to what extent communicative translation should be more frequently applied than semantic translation, or vice versa.

All in all, a translation can be more or less semantic or communicative, but without complete division. Only if translators kept the two methods in a kind of harmony, would translation be successful.

3.1.3 Contribution of ST and CT to C-E Translation of Public Signs

According to the text typology proposed by Newmark, different types of texts perform different functions, and thus require different translation approaches. ST and CT methods have already been recognized as Newmark's most influential achievements in translation studies. Taking into account other important factors of translation, such as the translator's purpose, the nature of readership and text typology, he proposed two methods of translation that are

appropriate to any text. He indicates that it is impossible to only use semantic translation or communicative translation in translating a text. That is to say, a translation can be more or less, semantic or communicative, even for a particular sentence or section. The translator should be clear of the type of the original texts he deals with, and then decides suitable translation methods accordingly. It is the same true for the translation of public sign.

1. Applying ST to C-E Translation of Public Signs

i. Expressive Public Signs

This kind of public signs are written under the guidance of formal literary principles requiring rhetorical devices to serve for producing esthetic effects, and the way authors express their ideas weighs as much as the ideas themselves. Their content is mostly the expression of the source text without paying much attention to the reaction of the readers. In translation, translators need to put more emphasis on source language than target language because authors are the central factor of the texts. In a word, the translator should follow "Author-First" principle, centering on the author of the source text by being faithful to both the original thoughts and linguistic features. Author's thinking process, style and language manner are comparatively of more importance in expressive public signs, and the focus moves to the authority of the author or the organization that display such a sign. In addition, the cultural elements and artistic in the original texts should deserve translators' seriously attention. According to Newmark's text typology, semantic translation is suitable for expressive public signs. Public signs of this type are as follows:

（1）颐和园又成为逊帝溥仪的私家园林。

English Version: The Summer Palace became the last Emperor Puyi's Private garden.

（2）本收银机临时关闭，因此给您带来的不便我们深表歉意。

This cash register is temporarily closed. Please accept out apologies regarding this inconvenience.

（3）中关村企业亮眼 2009 届国际消费电子大展。

High-tech companies in Zhongguancun bright 2009 International CES.

（4）全国优秀旅游城市桂林欢迎您！

Welcome to Tourist City Guilin!

（5）热烈祝贺北京申奥成功！

Congratulations on Beijing's Successful Bid for the 2008 Olympics.

Expressive signs usually objectively state a fact or a case by explaining the current situation or introducing statement like history. They help the reader to get detailed comprehension and instruction. They are relatively a small part of signs, but indispensable, which usually appears in many scenic spots or some institutes offering service.

ii. Informative Public Signs

Public signs of this type constitute a great part of public signs, and are usually "Authenticity First" and try to realize the directing function, which are the most widely used signs in public places. The ultimate purpose of informative signs is to transmit information to receiver; their language is logical and the core is the subject matter or topic. They help foreigners identify their location, find way of doing something, and make sure the purpose of their behavior under the direction of the information. Semantic translation is suggested to translate signs of this type, which converts the SL grammatical constructions to their nearest TL equivalents but translates the lexical words singly, out of context. Purely informative signs can be translated with the method of semantic translation. Examples of informative signs are abundant, and usually can be categorized into road signs, names of places, services and institutions and the like all give directions or information about something or some places.

1）Directing Public Signs of Public Utilities

These public signs give directions or information about the purpose of some utilities in public places. The directing signs only provide information service. Thus they usually show the content of the service but do not ask the information receiver to take action. Some examples are given in the following:

地铁   Underground

机场休息室	Airport Lounge
总服务台	Reception Desk
残疾人设施	Facilities for disabled persons
票务与旅游中心	Ticket & Travel Center

2）Place Names

Place names contain names of places like tourist attractions, cities, residential quarters, provinces and so on. They just give directions to the places without direct readers to take certain actions. Here are some examples:

四川省	Sichuan Province
郑州植物园	Zhengzhou Botanical Garden
北京酒店	Beijing Hotel
甘孜藏族自治州	Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Ganzi
陕西省博物馆	Hunan Provincial Museum

3）Road Signs

Road signs, named for the purpose of directing the public to the right place they want to go, exist in all the cities, in nearly all the roads, bridges, highways, and so on. Therefore, it becomes easy for the reader to get familiar with surrounding and identify where they are and whether they have arrived at the destination. For example:

春熙路	Chunxi Rd.
西湖大道	West Lake Avenue
成都火车北站	Chengdu Northern Railway Station
京港澳高速	JINGGANG'AO Expressway
北京地铁	Beijing Metro

4）Names of Shops and Institutions

Managers of many department stores, organizations and institutions that provide service usually have their names or logo printed on a board and fixe them on the top of or outside their buildings. These signs intend to inform the public of the commodities sold, the scope of the business, and the services provided. The following are the names of some shops and institutions:

| 邮局 | Post Office |

百盛购物中心	Parkson Plaza
中国翻译协会	Translators Association of China
工商银行	Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
武夷山自然保护区	Wuyishan Nature Reserve

5) Banners for Conferences or Events

These banners for conferences or events inform readers of the topic of events or conferences, the organizing parties, the participants, the time and place they are held and so on. Semantic translation of these banners is able to convey the information effectively to the foreign readers. Here are some examples:

第四届"21世纪杯"全国英语演讲比赛

The Fourth "21st Century Cup" National English Speaking Competition

第十届国际互联网大会

The 10th International World Wide Web Conference

武汉大学110周年庆典

The 110th Anniversary of Wuhan University

当代教育改革与发展

Educational Reform and Development

6) Service Signs

This kind of public signs is intended to provide visitors with information about the service of a place. For example:

<center>海事博物馆</center>

模拟器票价于本馆茶座收银处有售，可同时载两人。票价：每次澳门币十五元正。

<center>Maritime Museum</center>

Tickets for the simulator are available at the snack bar. Price: MOP$ 15.00 for a ride of 2 persons.

This informative sign provides visitors with information about the service of the museum: visitors may buy tickets to ride on simulators; the tickets are sold at the snack bar; the simulator may accommodate two persons one time and the price for the ticket is MOP$15.00 one ride. It is logic, neat and

emphasizes on the information. Semantically translated, the information is transmitted to the readers intact and the concise feature of the sign is retained.

The translations of these examples are related to the original meaning of them. At the same time, the translation itself is vivid and exact, which illustrates that semantic translation is a favorable method for those kinds of texts. The main job for informative text is honestly and smoothly delivering the information of the source text to the readership. The core of the informative function of language is external situation, the facts of a topic, reality outside language, including reported ideas or theories. Newmark definites the informative text-types are "a textbook, a technical report, an article in a newspaper or a periodical, a scientific paper, a thesis, minutes or agenda of a meeting".[1] Those types often have one of the any topics of knowledge, and texts about literary subjects are more likely towards "expressiveness". Semantic translation is often used to translate informative public signs, because it has the tendency of the source text and source culture.

2. Applying CT to C-E Translation of Public Signs

Vocative type of signs constitutes the majority of public signs. The vocative signs play an essential role in the formation of public signs, whose true essence is embodied by their vocative functions, by which these signs can also perform their prompting, restricting and compelling functions successfully. Most importantly, signs of this type are "Reader-First", since their main concern is to make the reader think, feel or to stimulate readers to take or not to take certain actions, thus the information is usually dynamic. This type of public signs provokes the readership to act, think, or feel authors, intention rather than conveying information. Newmark suggests that vocative public signs can be rendered by communicative translation because this method is aimed at smoothing communication between source language authors and target language readers and prompting readers' reaction to source language texts. By

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① NEWMARK, PETER. Approaches to translation[M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001: 40.

using the communicative translation approach, the translator has much freedom in the way of explaining source text, in adjusting writing style, elimination ambiguity or even correcting the author's mistakes in order to realize the purpose of communicating. Furthermore, they have much more freedom dealing with the original syntax to retain the vocativeness of source language texts. In this way, the translated text will necessarily break the restrictions for the fixed target reader, who is the focus of this approach; the translator may remove obstacles and difficulties as much as possible for the readers to make sure the smooth communication.

i. Prompting Public Signs

Prompting public signs are used to remind the readers to pay attention to them before they are to take an action. As far as the informative function concerned, the prompting pubic signs are similar to the directive ones. The difference between the two categories is that the readers of the prompting public signs can know what they had better do. For example: The sign "110, 一拨就灵" is semantically translated as "110, one touch is available". As a matter of fact, what "110" refers to here is very likely to puzzle the foreign readers. If translated into "For Police Call 110" with the method of communicative translation, it will not only offer help simply and clearly but also perform the vocative function well. More examples:

（1）售完   Sold Out
（2）预留座位   RESERVED
（3）前面修路   Road under Repair
（4）易爆物品   Explosive
（5）免费入场   Admission Free

ii. Restricting Public Signs

Public signs of restricting are used to restrict or constrain people's behaviors. It requires straight-forward expressions, but the tone of speech should be polite and friendly, instead of being strong and offensive. This restricting public signs is exclusively applied to a certain group of people. For example, the public sign " 1.2 米以下儿童免票" often appears at the bus

station; the English version is " FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 1.2M". The sign informs people that you must buy tickets if you want to board the bus, but the children under 1.2 meter are free of charge. Obviously, communicative translation is used in translating the public signs, which can produce the same effect on target language readers as original readers obtained in source language texts. It tends to present the accurate contextual meaning of the original. It also aims to establish the communication between source language authors and target language readers. More examples:

（1）残疾人通道   Handicapped Only

（2）凭票入内   Ticket Only

（3）慢速驶出   Slow Out

（4）限速 60 公里/小时 60km/h

（5）紧急呼叫电话 Emergency Phone

iii. Compelling Public Signs

Public signs serving the function of compelling require or forbid people to do something. The languages used by this category are tough and forceful, and there is no compromise at all. Imperatives with negative words like "no" are preferred to serve the compelling function. The readers must observe the regulations conveyed by the public signs of this kind, or they will be punished or incur bad consequences. Communicative translation is often used to translate this type of public signs. For example, the public sign "禁止通行" on a road indicate effectively that passing is forbidden here, and you need detour, otherwise some negative results will be caused, such as injuries or even life-threat. The English version uses communicative translation "No Passing". Apparently, communicative translation is better than the semantic translation "Don't Pass". More examples:

（1）禁酒区   Alcohol Free Zone

（2）桥上严禁超车 No Overtaking On Bridge

（3）儿童严禁入内 No Minors Allowed

（4）非机动车禁止入内 Motor Vehicles Only

（5）施工现场 禁止入内 CONSTRUCTION SITE KEEP OUT

iv. Advertising Public Signs

Vocative signs also include advertisement of shops, stores, supermarkets and some commercial places, publicity materials of scenic spots and educational or government institutions, slogans in public places, etc., which are not listed as examples in the kinds mentioned above because on the one hand, they tend to be relatively long, sometimes in form of a passage or a small pamphlet; on the other hand, it is not so appropriate to define the language of these texts restricting or compelling, because instead of restricting, they tend to provoke readers to act; instead of a tough tone, they are persuasive in an appealing way. In the following are some examples:

（1）装修前大甩卖　　CLOSING DOWN FOR MODERENIZATION
（2）厂家特价直销　　Deal Direct with Manufacturer at Special Prices
（3）八折优惠　　　　20% Off
（4）开业纪念特卖　　Anniversary Sale

From the above analysis, we can also get the conclusion that vocative signs are "Reader-Centered". What's more, most of the public signs are vocative, so translators should concentrate on the nature of readership. Communicative translation tends to emphasize target text and target language. It mainly stresses the reaction of readers to the target text is as same as the reaction of readers to the source text. The stress of communicative translation approach is based on the language, culture, and ways of communication of target language, to convey the information, instead of being faithfully to the words of source text as much as possible. Nevertheless, if the translator only focuses on the delivery of information and totally ignores the style and rhetoric color of the source text, the translator turns to the second writer of it in the end. At this time, the style no longer exists and the translation becomes meaningless.

3. Combining ST with CT

Newmark proposes his own text typology based on Buhler's classification of language functions. He mentions three main functions of language, that is, informative function, expressive function and vocative function. But in fact,

texts are usually a mixture of the informative, expressive and vocative functions. One text will not always be dedicated exclusively to a single function. In actual practice there are constant combinations and overlapping of several functions. Just as Newmark states few texts are purely informative, expressive or vocative, most of them include the three functions with an emphasis on one of them. This phenomenon is the textual hybrid nature. It makes the translators not label one function on a certain text or choose one corresponding translation method. However, the text type is determined by one dominant function, so the hybridization could not eliminate the validity of text typology. The dominant function determines the source language texts; therefore, translators should handle the coexistent problem with flexible methods. Semantic and communicative translation can be adopted to deal with different functions. Semantic translation can present the source language authors' stylistic characters and communicative translation can convey the exact information in source language texts to target language readers. In this case, semantic translation and communicative translation coined; combining semantic translation with communicative translation is also an important way of translating signs.

i. Public Signs with Vocative Function and Informative Function

In some public signs, there is the co-existence of vocative function and informative function. In this type of public signs, the informative function is explicit, while the vocative function can be explicit or implicit but remains the predominant function. Some directing public signs, notices, advertisements and publicity materials belong to this type of public signs.

Directing public signs seem to provide information only but more importantly to call upon the public to act. As a matter of fact, they not only give directions to the places, services or institutions but also direct readers can identify their location, manner of doing something, or the purpose of their conducts. Signs with directing function are used widely in public places to provide referring to the information provided by these signs, readers can easily find the places or institutions where they intend to go or where they can get the service they need. For example, the directing sign "售票处" in the train station

informs the passengers where they should go to purchase the ticket. On the surface, such a sign is only giving static information, but actually it is intended to tell the reader "if you need to buy tickets, please come here." Comprehended in this way, it can be seen that signs with directing function are still to perform the vocative function, which is to call upon the reader to take certain action. Therefore, it is translated " Ticket Office" by combing semantic translation with communicative translation, which not only focuses on the information of source text, but also is concise and confirm to the code of the target language. translation of informative signs, not only the information must be focused on, but also the translation should be concise and confirm to the code of target language. Thus the target readers can achieve a correct understanding. More examples will be shown in the following:

（1）失物招领处　　　　Lost and Found
（2）汽车修理站　　　　Car Breakdown Service
（3）老弱病残专座　　　Courtesy Seats
（4）请用现金　　　　　Cash Only
（5）门诊部　　　　　　Out-patient Department

Notices remind readers of something. The informative function of these public signs is explicit while the vocative function may be implicit. For example, "如果你需要帮助，请拨打 114"is translated as "If you need help, please telephone 114." The English version is grammatically correct, but it's a bit redundant. What's more, the important information which needs being emphasized in this sign is to call 114, and this is the immediate action the readers should take when they are in need of help. Therefore, it is suggested to combine semantic translation with communicative translation, thus the better translation is "Call 114 for help", which is self-evident and highlights the focus of the information by putting the verb "call" at the beginning. More examples will be shown in the following:

（1）前方学校　　　　　School Ahead，Slow Down
（2）前方施工　　　　　Building Work Ahead
（3）只供私人使用　　　Private Function Only

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（4）垃圾在此投放，烟头切勿投入　　Garbage only, no for cigarette butt

Some advertisements and publicity materials also have both informative function and vocative function. When translating such public signs, the translators are suggested to combine semantic translation with communicative translation. For example, a standardized menu translation was revised. For example, Chinese people favor "叫化鸡" (Beggars Chicken). Using the semantic translation method, it would be confusing to foreigners who want to eat in the restaurant; however, "baked chicken", using the communicative translation method may make it a simple home-style dish. Using either of the individual translation methods will not provide an appealing description to the diners, which is not acceptable to restaurant owners. The combined application of semantic translation and communicative translation will be more effective in providing descriptions to increase people's desire for food. The dish is advised to be translated as "Beggars Chicken (Baked Chicken)", an original and clear name for the dish. Another example, in the advertisement, "凭此宣传品优惠 15%", the information is quite explicit, but the main purpose is to persuade consumers to buy their products rather than transmit the information. Thus, the translation of it is " 15% off with this flyer", in which semantic translation and communicative translation are both applied. More examples will be shown in the following：

　　（1）免费送货　　　　　　Free Delivery
　　（2）进门赢大奖　　　　　COME IN AND WIN
　　（3）夏季新款 半价销售　　HALF PRICE Summer Styles Reduced
　　（4）畅销海内外　　　　　Enjoy a Good Market at Home and Abroad

ii. Public Signs with Vocative Function and Aesthetic Function

In some public signs, vocative function and aesthetic function co-exist. According to Newmark, aesthetic function is one of the three minor functions of language which are the phatic function, the metalingual function and the aesthetic function. The aesthetic function of language is used to please the senses of reader. Through the thyme, sound effect and the rhetoric employed in public signs can add more charm to the public signs. The aesthetic function of

the public signs can attract and touch the heart of the audience with nice language and satisfy the readers by the conciseness and vividness.

For instance, the Chinese slogan in Hongkong, "提高生活素质，迈向美好未来" is translated into "Better living, Brighter Future". Apparently, semantic translation and communicative translation are both applied in the English version; semantic translation focus on the core of the information of the source text, while communicative translation creates the same effect on target language readers as on the original readers in translation. The target text and the original text are symmetrical and parallel in structure and rhythmical in cadence. But the aesthetic function of the slogan also serves the vocative function of it. The slogan intends to encourage the Hongkong citizens to work hard for the bright future of Hongkong. Thus it can be seen that in this type of public signs, the vocative function remains as the dominant function and the intention of text is to call upon the readers to act rather than appreciate the beautiful language.

The following are more examples of advertisements and slogans of both vocative function and aesthetic function:

（1）一册在手，纵览全球

The Globe brings you the world in a single copy.

（2）大刺激，小花费　　　　　Big thrills. Small bills.

（3）钻石恒久远，一颗永流传　A diamond lasts forever. （De Bierres）

iii. Public Signs of with Vocative Function and Expressive Function

Some vocative signs are multifunctional in that its predominant function is vocative while it is of expressive function at the same time. Many Chinese vocative signs are expressive in that they are skillfully written and create sound effect and eye-catching effect by means of rhyming, using four character expressions, idioms, figures of speech and so on. According to Newmark, expressive text should be translated with semantic translation. But the dominant function is vocative; therefore, the dominant approach should be communicative translation. On the one hand, the force is transmitted into the target language; on the other hand, the flavor or the expressive effect is retained

in the transmission. In this case, combining semantic translation and communication is suitable for such public signs.

For example, "智慧演绎，无处不在" is an advertisement of MOTOROLA. If we just translate the advertisement semantically, it can be translated into "智慧无处不在" which seems less forceful than the translated version "智慧演绎，无处不在" because Chinese four characters expressions sound more powerful and more attractive to Chinese people. Therefore, the original text is translated successfully through the two translation methods with more emphasis on CT by changing the original form and adding some information. Therefore, it is translated into "Intelligence everywhere", which is more attractive and more easily be remembered by the readers. Hence, in this advertisement the translation employs ST to keep the expressive function of the original sign and the original language style and the original writer's thinking, and at the same time, the vocative function is successfully represented by employing CT. There are many other examples：

（1）新元素 尽享新鲜美味　　Element fresh, Enjoy fresh food

（2）货物出门，概不退货　　All sales are final.

（3）找零请当面点清　　Please check your change before leaving.

Thus it can be seen that the main aim of public signs is not only to transmit information but more importantly to call upon the public to take some actions. It seems difficult for translators to choose appropriate translation methods because of the co-existence of different functions in the same text. A good English translation of public signs should match needs with possibilities, giving consideration to both culture transmission and receptors' understanding. In this sense, the combined application of semantic translation and communicative translation is necessary. In theory, there are wide differences between the two methods, but in practice, they are combined harmoniously and work properly.

3.1.4　Summary

The text category theory proposed by Newmark is a wonderful theory in

translating. Newmark divides the text into three types on the basis of its functions, translating different texts with different approaches, which arouses a new train of thought in solving translation problems. And his supplements and completion to the translation theory also have a strong enlightenment and directive significance to our modern translation theory and translation practice. As a guideline and general principle for C-E translation of public signs, CT and ST shouldn't used separately. A translation may be more or less semantic, or more or less communicative, without complete division. Only if translators keep the two translation methods harmoniously, would the translation be successful.

3.2 Hans Vermeer's Skopos Theory

The Skopos theory is a theoretical model of translation developed by the German translation theorist Hans Vermeer. The theory focuses on the choice of a variety of purposes in the translation process, to make up for the inadequacy of traditional translation studies. According to the Skopos theory, translation is a complex action designed to achieve a particular purpose. Under the guidance of Vermeer's theory, translating public signs is kind of purposeful activity. That is to say, the purpose of translating public signs determines the translating strategies and methods. Thus when we translate public signs, we should abide by Vermeer's three rules of Skopos.

3.2.1 Overview of Skopos Theory

Functionalists point out the idea that translation is a purposeful activity and focuses on the function of translation. It is represented by Vermeer's Skopos theory, or the theory of Skopos applied to translation. There are various theories putting the priority of translation on the source text throughout the history, in contrast, Skopos theory shifts its attention to the target text. In this part, the definition of Skopos theory and three basic rules of Skopos theory will be introduced.

1. Concept of Skopos

Skopos is a Greek word for "aim" or "purpose". Skopos theory is a theory of purposeful action. According to Skopos theory, the prime principle determining any translation process is the purpose (Skopos) of the overall translational action. This fits in with the law that intentionality is part of the very definition of any action. Usually, the term Skopos refers to the purpose of target text.

Apart from the term Skopos, Vermeer defines related words *aim, purpose, intention and function,* which he considers to be equivalent and subsumes them under the generic concept of Skopos:

Aim is defined as the final result an agent intends to achieve by means of an action.

Purpose is defined as a provisional stage in the process of attaining an aim. Aim and purpose are thus relative concepts.

Function refers to what a text means or is intended to mean from the receiver's point of view, whereas "aim" is the purpose for which it is needed or supposed to be needed.

Intention is conceived as an "aim-oriented plan of action" on the part of both the sender and the receiver, pointing toward an appropriate way of producing or understanding the text. The term intention is also equated with function of the action.

Most translation actions allow a variety of Skopos, which may be related to each other in a hierarchical order. The translator should be able to justify their choice of a particular Skopos in a given translational situation.

2. An Account of Skopos Theory

Hans J. Vermeer's theory is known as Skopos theory (Skopostheorie). The word "Skopos" then is a technical term for the aim or purpose of the translation, which is derived form a Greek word. As the foundation of the German functionalism, Skopos theory reflects that translation has become more functionally and socio-cultural orientated rather than linguistic orientated[1].

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① BAKER M, SALDANHA G. Routledge encyclopedia of translation studies[M]. London: Taylor & Francis Books Ltd., 2010: 116.