



On Translating Introductions of Shameen Attractions Based on Textual Information Types from the Perspective of Communication

Xuanying LU¹, Jie LYU²

¹*School of English for International Business, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, Guangzhou, China, E-mail: 849587009@qq.com*

²*Corresponding Author: same as above, E-mail: 1833904290@qq.com*

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Abstract

Communication researches how people communicate social information by signals. Since tourism translation is of significance for foreign-oriented publicity, it is reasonable to conduct research on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication. Generally, when translating introductions of tourist attractions, to better meet foreign tourists' expectations of different Textual Information Types that are in line with the Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle, it is suggested that translators not only remove redundancy from the source text by strategies like omission and condensation, but also reduce its noise combining amplification, omission, conversion, restructuring and so forth on account of differences between reading habits as well as the context of Chinese and Western culture; and particularly, strategies like literal translation, transliteration, free translation, and note, should be applied to translating cultural information according to foreign tourists' expected feedback.

Keywords: tourism translation, Textual Information Types (TIT), Communication, Shameen

1. Introduction

Tourism translation plays an influential role in foreign-oriented publicity and even international communication. However, the English translations of some tourist introductions in Guangzhou are of discouraging quality due to various mistakes, and need to be studied in that many of them fail to precisely convey the original Chinese texts or have received unsatisfactory response from foreign tourists. And to make tourism translation better function as a way of foreign-oriented publicity, it is reasonable to research it by applying Communication theory.

This paper intends to examine the English-translated introductions of tourist attractions from the perspective of Communication theory based on the case analysis of Shameen, a tourist attraction in Guangzhou. Merits and problems of the translated introduction of Shameen have been explored based on Textual Information Types in line with Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle. Finally, an attempt has been made to summarize the translation strategies applicable to different purposes of information processing as well as to different TITs.

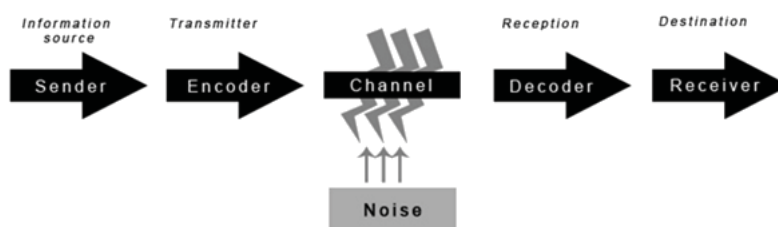
2. Applicability of Communication Theory to Tourism Translation of Shameen

If foreign tourists want to get the English introductions of Shameen attractions, they need to scan the QR code at the bottom of the sign of the attraction to enter the official website but not open to comments. As such, the translated texts serve as a static, one-way communication process, and matches the Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication as shown in Fig. 1.

In this model, Shannon and Weaver unprecedentedly brought forward the idea of "noise", which appertains to anything that clings to communication contents but is undesired by the sender in the process of conversion or acceptance of information. There are two kinds of noise: one generates from inside the information source, and the other one comes from outside the source (Hu, 2017, p.40). For Shameen, "noises" embody one that is generated from the attraction itself, for example, a load of architecture vocabulary in the text, which might make the introductions elusive. And the other one comes from external factors, such as foreigners' stereotypes of China. These noises could easily fuzz communication contents and hinder the

communication process. The receiver may not receive all the messages quite precisely – the expected communication effect will be weakened; even worse, the receivers' misconstruction could be caused (n.d.).

Redundancy conduces to reducing noise and by definition, is the repeated part of information. It doesn't threaten the integrity of information, but helps eliminate the uncertainty of and correct the information, benefiting audiences' perceiving information (Hu, 2017, p.41-42). As for Shameen, for instance, introductions of many attractions in there list quite detailed historical events of the destination, trying to impress tourists with the historical significance of each attraction. Descriptions of historical events in these introductions take nearly two thirds of all the contents, while much information seems trivial in the eyes of visitors as in the case of making a long name list of every U.S. consul general to Guangzhou, China. Such redundancy decreases the information amount that the introduction is capable to carry, and weakens the economical delivery of information, turning out to distance tourists from enjoying their visits.



SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Figure 1. Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication (n.d.)

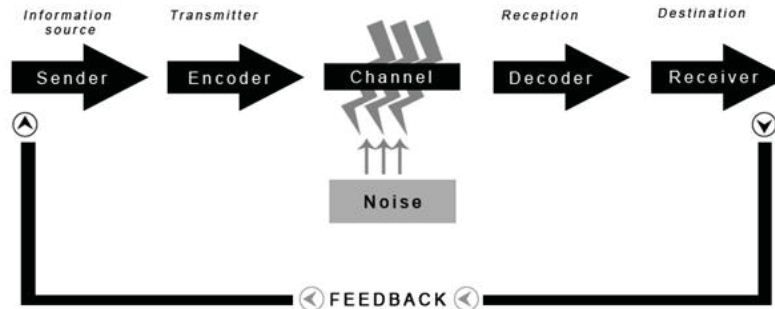
Generally speaking, in the process of communication, to ensure the communication effect, the translator is expected to navigate through noise, redundancy, and information amount. It is advisable that the translator reduces as much noise as possible with the least redundancy, and tries his best to accurately transfer messages through the limited amount of information. Certain criteria help manage the relationship. In the first place, response of the "audience" is a crucial element for evaluating the communication effect. In real life, the flow of information is not one-way. It is unwise for the sender to bombard their target audiences with contents merely on their behalf like what the Silver Bullet Theory suggests. Communication emphasizes more on the connotation of "together", "both sides" and "exchanging" (Hu, 2017, p.20). Translating introductions of attractions, if regarded as a communication process, should not be analyzed completely in accord with the original Shannon-Weaver's Model. The destination of communication contents is the audience, and the final purpose for communication is the identification or much further, the support from the audience. The audience's reaction is rightly a key element for evaluating the communication effect.

"Audience" is the collective name of all kinds of information receivers. They select the information that meets their cognition of reality consciously, manifesting obvious bias in their actions. During the process of communication, the audience would react to information sent by the sender, which is exactly "feedback". The translator, sending the information of the translated introductions, should likewise take readers' demands and reactions into account and take actions to direct their choices of information to a favorable one (Hu, 2017, p.43+226-228). A perfection of Shannon-Weaver's Model is like:

Two considerations are applicable to analyzing feedback. First is the value of information. There is a universal dislike for tedious, repeated, and intricate content among visitors from different cultures. The introduction of attractions, as a channel for information flow, is of limited capacity of information – the physical space for carrying information is limited. To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of communication, the translator must analyze the value of each TIT and decide on how to process those (Lyv & Pan, 2020). To this end, Zeng once proposed the Economical Conciseness Principle for foreign-oriented publicity translation: firstly, the translator conveys as much information as possible with as few words as possible; secondly, the audience be able to get the clearest and most fluent (as opposed to lengthy and cumbersome) information at the lowest cost (the time and effort made to process information) (2005b).

The second is the audience's cultural background. The audience's bias for selecting information, or "selective behavior", is closely connected with their rebelliousness. For tourism translation, western audiences may ignore or refute information that threatens their cognition, or even derogate the source of the information (Hu, 2017, p. 235). Tourism translation serve as a window for foreign audiences to understand China in the truest way. Therefore, when translating, it is suggested that the

translator endeavor to clear up misunderstandings caused by different cultures and ways of thinking, to increase the readability and acceptability of the translation, and to achieve the foreign-oriented publicity goal as well as the expected communication effect (Yang, 2010).



SHANNON-WEAVER'S MODEL OF COMMUNICATION

Figure 2. Shannon-Weaver's Model of Communication (n.d.)

It is worth noticing that, when processing information, the translator needs to not only “remove redundancy” from the text, but also “reduce noise” of the text – but both of which are not necessarily deleting information; due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and the knowledge gap between Chinese people and foreign tourists, sometimes the translator may have to add information that the original text had failed to deliver. At the same time, such awareness of audience's rebelliousness never amounts to blindly wooing the audience. Both Chinese cultural influence and foreigners' interests in Chinese culture continue to grow, discerning the “noise” and “redundancy” poses a much bigger challenge to the translator. The international status of the country should be taken into account, so as to meet the demands for international cultural communication of a country.

3. On Translating Introductions of Attractions in Shameen, Guangzhou Based on TITs

At present, the only theory that exactly for tourism translation is the Theme-Oriented Information-Highlighting Principle proposed by Professor Zeng Lisha. There is not a specialized system for tourism translation theory. In line with this Principle, TIT qualitatively summarizes the nature, function, characteristics, and value of different theme-bound tourist information, categories including factual information, descriptive information, evaluative and appraisal information, cultural information, vocative information, aesthetic information, stylistic information, and information of tips (2005a).

Shameen is a distinctive architectural complex that embodies European style and reflects Chinese modern history about the concession. All the introductions of attractions in Shameen come in 5 TITs: factual information type, descriptive information type, evaluative and appraisal information type, cultural information type, and stylistic information type. Each will be analyzed with examples.

3.1 Factual Information Type

Factual information makes up the largest part of most tourism profiles and provides readers with basic knowledge of the tourist attraction (Luo, 2009, p.32). This TIT is the most objective among all nine textual information types of the theory and carries the largest amount of information. Nevertheless, although factual information is objective, a smart translator should still cautiously discern the redundant information from all the objective facts to maximize the efficiency of communication. How to remove redundancy as well as reduce the noise of these two kinds of information depends on both the target audience's cognitive habit and, things like national condition, nation history, and cultural characteristics of a country where the attractions are in.

Generally, there are two subtypes of factual information: one about the present and the other about the past. Factual information about the present mainly introduces the current situation of the destination; common examples include a description of address, area, and other basic information about the destination (Zeng, 2005a). The detailed address of the destination is included in all of the introductions. Here is an example; parts to be analyzed are highlighted in bold and underlined (similarly hereinafter):

Translation Example 1

Source text: 沙面大街印度人住宅旧址，为广州沙面建筑群的组成部分，位于广州市荔湾区沙面街翠洲社区沙面大街16、18、20号（沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处）。

Source text Romanized: Shāmiàn dàjiē yìndù rén zhùzhái jiùzhǐ, wéi guǎngzhōu shāmiàn jiànzhù qún de zǔchéng bùfèn, wèiyú guǎngzhōu shì liwān qū shāmiàn jiē cuìzhōu shèqū shāmiàn dàjiē 16, 18, 20 hào (shāmiàn dàjiē yǔ shāmiàn yījiē jiāojiè de xīběi zhuǎnjiǎo chù).

Target text: The Site of Indian Residence is a part of Guangzhou Shamian architectural complex. It is located at No. 16, 18 and 20 Shamian Avenue, Liwan District, Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the Residence of India Nationals, No. 16, 18, 20 Shameen Street)

The only way for foreign tourists to read the English introductions of Shameen attractions is by heading for Shameen in person, and then scan the QR code at the bottom of the sign of each attraction for access to the corresponding website. That is, the tourists must be in Shameen, Guangzhou if they have scanned the QR code and seen the website. Therefore, the fact that site of the Residence of Indian Nationals “is a part of Guangzhou Shamian architectural complex” is redundant and leads to inefficient delivery of information.

Information value can be evaluated by referring to parallel text in the target language (Lyv & Pan, 2020). As China covers vast stretches of land, to better reign over the whole country, rulers in the ancient time divide the country into many districts with several levels, and the way of administration division established in the Yuan Dynasty is still in use today. A complete description of address in China usually includes information of province, city, district, community, road, and number, while that of Western countries often presents name of city, road, and number only. For example, the British address is written in forms like “2 Drury Way, North Circular Road, London NW10 0TH”, or for American one it goes like “490 2nd Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California 94107”. Western people do not use “district” to describe address; they might even be perplexed by the word “district” since it means “an area of a town or country, especially one that has particular features².” It would be better to omit the description of “Liwan District”. And, the original translator already removed the redundant “沙面街翠洲社区”.

Moreover, the original author might have a strong willingness to make tourists learn thoroughly about the specific location of the site, thus expressly annotated that the site locates at “沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处” in brackets. But actually, foreign tourists are not scholars who specialize in Shameen architectural complex, or residents who settle in Shameen. It is of no use for them to know such detailed address information. It is laudable that the redundant parts of “（沙面大街与沙面一街交界的西北转角处）” have already been deleted in the original translation.

Apart from that, the diction for describing the address here also needs attention. Although there is no such convention in the United Kingdom, people in the United States use “avenue” for roads that run north-south and “street” for east-west ones. Since “沙面大街” runs east-west, it would be better to use “Street” instead of “Avenue” here in case of potential noise.

To summarize, an optimized translation should be like this:

Translation Example 1 (Revised Version)

Target text: The Site of the Indian Residence is located at No. 16, 18, and 20 Shameen Street, Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the Residence of India Nationals, No. 16, 18, 20 Shameen Street)

In addition, caused by different thinking modes of language, when translating a description of an area, redundancy can easily be created. An example is:

Translation Example 2

Source text: 面积约为0.39平方公里，曾是珠江“西十公里”的起点、老广州城的商业文化中心。

Source text Romanized: Miànjī yūē wéi 0.39 píngfāng gōnglǐ, céng shì zhūjiāng “xī shí gōnglǐ” de qǐdiǎn, lǎo guǎngzhōu chéng de shāngyè wénhuà zhōngxīn.

Target text: Covering an area of about 0.39 square kilometers, it used to be the starting point of the “West 10 Kilometers” of the Pearl River landscape belt as well as the commercial and cultural center of the old Guangzhou city.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

² Oxford University Press. (2014). District. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.594).

Chinese expression is far different from that of English, and this can easily lead to redundancy and noise in translation. Influenced by the thinking mode of the mother tongue, it is uneasy for the translator to recognize that (Pinkham, 2000). Hence translators have to pay much effort to learn and get used to the expression of the target language. Laudably, the translator converted “面积约为” into “covering an area of” to meet the reading habit of foreign tourists. Still, this translation embodies a typical Chinese thinking mode. The word “cover” means “to spread over the area mentioned³.” That is, “area” is the default object of “cover”; the word “cover” involves the meaning of “area” already. It would be better to omit the redundant “an area of”.

Translation Example 2 (Revised Version)

Target text: Covering about 0.39 square kilometers, it used to be the starting point of the “West Ten Kilometers” of the 30-kilometer Pearl River landscape belt as well as the commercial and cultural center of old Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Factual information about the past is for historical events related to the destination as well as the influence of these events (Zeng, 2005a). Examples include the history of the attraction, stories of celebrities who are in connection with the destination, or some other historical events that are indirectly related to the destination. Often, the original author will introduce some experiences of celebrities related to the attraction, aiming at tourists to obtain a deeper understanding of the destination. Still, if not handled properly, the noise would easily generate, or the passage might be sprinkled with redundant information that does not have a strong connection with the destination, like the following example:

Translation Example 3

Source text: 1847 年, 法国传教士牧若瑟违反清政府关于西方传教士布道的规定, 潜入山西。1854 年, 法国传教士孟振生潜入直隶, 都被当地官府查获, 解送广州法国领事馆。

Source text Romanized: 1847 nián, fǎguó chuánjiàoshì Mù Ruòsè wéifǎn qīng zhèngfǔ guānyú xīfāng chuánjiàoshì bùdào de guīdìng, qiánrù shānxī. 1854 nián, fǎguó chuánjiàoshì Mèng Zhènshēng qiánrù zhílì, dōu bèi dāngdì guānfǔ cháhuò, jièsòng guǎngzhōu fǎguó lǐngshìguǎn.

Target text: In 1847, the French missionary, Joseph Pastor, broke into Shanxi Province in violation of the Qing government’s provisions on the preaching of Western missionaries. In 1854, the French missionary Meng Zhensheng sneaked into Zhili and was seized by the local government and sent to the French Consulate in Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of the French Missionary Building, No. 42 South Shameen Street)

At the first glance, it seems that the names of the French missionaries have some connection to “the French Missionary Building”, while it does not make sense. There is no information about whether these two persons were once worked in this French Missionary Building or they were finally sent here after being arrested, and the lack of information generates noise – tourists might have no idea what the connection between the two missionaries and the building is after reading these two sentences. The translator should omit the two sentences, or search and add relevant information for clarifying the connection to reduce the noise.

Last but not least, Shameen had been the British-French Concession for nearly 90 years and more than ten countries used to set their consulates here. Shameen is, therefore, of significance in reflecting Chinese modern history about concession, and it would be laudable that relevant content is emphasized instead of being deleted as redundancy in translation.

3.2 Descriptive Information Type

Descriptive information describes attributes or qualities with descriptive expressions to help readers better understand the characteristics of the factual information. This TIT combines both subjectivity and objectivity, because of which there might be some exaggeration in the source text. The translator should discriminate the textual information that has been exaggerated from the source text (Luo, 2009, p.32).

Exclusively, Chinese features four-character idioms. Using four-character idioms can make the text much tidier in rhythm and more flowery in language. It also strengthens the power and infectiousness of the text. As it is unique to Chinese, if being fully translated, problems including poor logic and excessive exaggeration could be caused, both of which create redundancy and generate noises, thus reducing the readability of the text.

³ Oxford University Press. (2014). Cover. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.470).

For introductions of Shameen attractions, descriptive information is mostly seen in the depiction of building characteristics. For example:

Translation Example 4

Source text: 正立面两层均为柱廊式，柱廊线脚简洁明快，整体建筑外观朴素清雅，与建筑周边的绿树、小花园结合，给人一种宁静淡雅之感。

Source text Romanized: Zhèng limiàn liǎng céng jūn wéi zhùláng shì, zhùláng xiànjǎo jiǎnjié míngkuài, zhěngtǐ jiànzhù wàiguān pǔsù qīngyǎ, yǔ jiànzhù zhōubiān de lǜshù, xiǎo huāyán jiéhé, gěirén yīzhǒng níngjìng dànyǎ zhī gǎn.

Target text: The front elevation is a corridor with pillars on both floors, and the corridor line foot is concise. The overall appearance of the building is simple and elegant, combined with the green trees and small gardens around the building, giving people a sense of quiet and elegant.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Czech Consulate, No. 1 North Shameen Street)

“Elegant” means being well-designed, pleasing, and graceful in appearance or style when referring to a person or things⁴⁵. It is obvious that this conflicts with the meaning of “simple”. Putting the two words together as coordination might lead to noise and bewilder foreign tourists. The diction here must be noticed: the conjunction “and” should be replaced for logical purpose.

Besides, “elegant” is not equivalent to the Chinese word “雅”, and it is also not the only meaning for “雅”. Reusing the same word “elegant” in one paragraph also creates redundancy. In the last phrase of the source text, the meaning of “淡雅” in “宁静淡雅” is similar to that of the previous “清雅” in “朴素清雅” in Chinese, and it would be better using another appropriate word to replace the repeated “elegant” in this paragraph when translating. The character “雅” has several aspects of meaning in Chinese; the original translator just misunderstood and failed to choose the correct one here. However it may be, there is one core connotation of “雅” – not being ordinary. As for how to extend it, the translator may refer to the context. In the last phrase, the source text emphasized the quiet and peaceful environment of places surrounding the building with the word “宁静”, intended to highlight the not being ordinary in such beauty. Therefore, the noun forms of adjectives likes “peaceful” can be used as a substitute for that of “elegant”.

Additionally, in Chinese, many words are symmetrical in structure for the passage being more energetic and infectious. But these words are often repetitive in meaning, like “绿树”. “Green tree” is not a popular expression in English-speaking countries. In a metropolis, most trees of the greenbelt are green; it is of no use to emphasize their color redundantly.

Together with free translation, amplification, conversion, and restructuring, the optimization should be like:

Translation Example 4 (Revised Version)

Target text: The façade of the first and second floors is designed in prostyle concisely. The overall appearance of the building is simple but elegant. The atmosphere of peace and quiet is made stand out by trees and small gardens around the building.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Czech Consulate, No. 1 North Shameen Street)

3.3 Evaluative and Appraisal Information Type

This TIT evaluates the factual information and its features. It is usually suggestive and inductive. Translators should properly deal with those overloaded expressions with the original author’s strong comments attached to the factual information to avoid being influenced by the subjective ideas of the original authors (Luo, 2009, p.32-33).

Chinese culture is a high-context one. In a high-context culture, communication tends to be imprecise; people assume a relatively high level of shared knowledge with the individual they are communicating with. To better understand the meaning, people need to pay more attention to their physical surroundings (Mitchell, 2009, p.20-21). That is, in whatever written materials or face-to-face conversation, messages are less literally and less directly conveyed. People have to look for more information from the context of a message, action, or event. It is the same for C-E translators when translating.

Translation Example 5

⁴ Collins Press. (January, 2022). Elegant. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/elegant>

⁵ Oxford University Press. (2014). Elegant. In *Oxford English Dictionary* (8th ed., p.661).

Source text: 沙面见证了广州近代史的变迁，留下了孙中山先生、周恩来总理等伟人的足迹，亲历了许多重大历史事件，成为我国近代史与租界史的缩影。

Source text Romanized: Shāmiàn jiànzhèng le guǎngzhōu jìndàishǐ de biànciān, liúxià le Sūn Zhōngshān xiānsheng, Zhōu Ēnlái zōnglǐ dèng wēirén de zújì, qīnlì le xǔduō zhòngdà lìshǐ shìjiàn, chéngwéi wǒguó jìndài shǐ yǔ zūjiè shǐ de suǒyǐng.

Target text: Shāmiàn witnessed the changes of modern history of Guangzhou, left the footprints of Mr. Sun Yat-sen, Prime Minister Zhou Enlai and other great men, and experienced many major historical events, thus becoming the epitome of China's modern history and the history of concession.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

First, exaggerations are usually used when Chinese people make comments. The reality might not be completely consistent with the literal meaning of those comments. It is not suggested that translate such comments word for word and sentence for sentence, but try to figure out the original author's idea and restructure the sentences so that unnecessary noise could be reduced. Both the first and the last sentences overstate the significance of the Shameen complex. The first sentence “见证了广州近代史的变迁” exalts that the Shameen complex witnessed the entire modern history of Guangzhou, and the last one “成为我国近代史与租界史的缩影” even likens it to the epitome of modern history (including the history of concession) of the whole country. Both sentences are biased towards the destination; diction here must be carefully treated when translating.

Second, problems of lacking logic appeared frequently in this example. Actually, “changes of history” cannot be witnessed; a place can only witness things like events, phenomena, and so forth. Also, “Shameen” is unable to walk or leave footprints, or experience things like human beings; human beings leave footprints in this architectural complex instead. Moreover, for the fourth sentence, a place cannot become an example of history in terms of logic and it is better to describe a period of history or a historical event as the “epitome of history”. Translators must pay special attention to these kinds of expressions, and try not to be influenced by the thinking mode of the mother tongue. For the problems above, diction, omission, and conversion are feasible approaches to reduce noise.

Third, as the original author wanted to stress the historical importance of the Shameen complex here, what giants did when they stayed here had better be clarified either – giants had been to many places and where they used to stay does not mean anything in most cases – if things giants did are of historical significance. But after investigation, few events about both Mr. Sun Yat-sen and Shameen are found. Considering that “许多重大历史事件” covers those small events, omitting these redundant descriptions would be better, like:

Translation Example 5 (Revised Version)

Target text: Having witnessed many historical events in the modern times of Guangzhou, the Shameen complex is of historical importance for modern China.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Since “见证了广州近代史的变迁” and “亲历了许多重大历史事件” are similar in meaning, condensation and restructuring are also used in the above optimization.

Additionally, it is common that Chinese texts would like to make conclusions that can make the theme of the passage more sublime and magnificent. These conclusions are often empty and excessively exaggerated. Here is a typical Chinese conclusion of passage:

Translation Example 6

Source text: 沙面，不仅是广州的沙面，更是中国的沙面、世界的沙面。

Source text Romanized: Shāmiàn, bùjǐn shì guǎngzhōu de shāmiàn, gèng shì zhōngguó de shāmiàn, shìjiè de shāmiàn.

Target text: Shamian belongs not only to Guangzhou, but also to China and the whole world.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

Although it cannot be denied that Shameen is of significance for the history of architecture, it is still exaggerated to describe Shameen as being of the significant meaning to the whole world, especially when compared with well-known tourist attractions like the Leaning Tower of Pisa or the Forbidden City. Descriptions should be downgraded when being translated to be moderate in the lower context of English and to avoid misunderstanding.

Also, the expression of the source text typically embodies the phraseology of Chinese. The original author could have tried to highlight the value of Shameen in specific aspects. But limited to the thinking mode of Chinese, he made the conclusion

sublime using the Chinese rhetoric of parallel structure, sacrificing details. The original translator was then regrettably misled by such means of expression and could do nothing but translate the source text word by word, failing to understand what the original author means.

To reduce the noise of this example, translators should try to figure out what the original author wanted to express actually, and then restructure the information by a large amount. From Chinese thinking mode, the meaning of Shameen to Guangzhou, China, and even the whole world could be connected with its being architectural complex, or covering a wider range, being cultural heritage. Clarification should be extended with conversion if necessary then; the reason why Shameen is meaningful can also be added and amplified as a transition. To summarize, an optimized translation can be:

Translation Example 6 (Revised Version)

Target text: Considering its distinct architectural characteristics and historical meaning, Shameen is a valuable cultural heritage for not only Guangzhou, but also China, and even the whole world.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

3.4 Cultural Information Type

Cultural information introduces unique Chinese culture to help readers better understand China. This TIT can easily overload information, and the translator should carefully analyze foreign tourists' demand for learning about Chinese culture (Zeng, 2005a). When translating, it should be taken into consideration the exact meaning or reference of those culture-loaded words. To translate things unique to China, the translator can combine literal translation or transliteration and explanation, to better publicize Chinese culture (Lyv & Pan, 2020).

Usually, when translating tourism profiles, there is “non-equivalence at culture level” proposed by Christiane Nord, as cited by He & Tao (2010). The non-equivalence is more obvious in translating culture-loaded words. To overcome that, Zheng (2016) offered six strategies: transliteration, transliteration with notes, literal translation, literal translation with notes, the combination of transliteration and literal translation, and free translation. In the following of 3.4 *Cultural Information Type*, transliteration with notes and literal translation with notes will be mainly adopted for Chinese architectural terms.

Translation Example 7

Source text: 首层大厅宽5间，深4间，有后外廊。第二、三层沿街除楼梯间都设外廊，也有后廊。中间开天井并直通天面。楼梯设在东西入口，东梯只上二、三层，不能上屋顶；西梯不能进首层，但可上二、三层和屋顶。

Source text Romanized: Shǒucéng dàtīng kuān 5 jiān, shēn 4 jiān, yǒu hòu wài láng. Dì èr, sān céng yánjiē chú lóutī jiān dōu shè wài láng, yě yǒu hòu láng. Zhōngjiān kāi tiānjǐng bìng zhítōng tiān miàn. Lóutī shè zài dōngxī rùkǒu, dōng tī zhǐ shàng èr, sān céng, bùnéng shàng wūding; xī tī bùnéng jìn shǒucéng, dàn kě shàng èr, sān céng hé wūding.

Target text: The first-floor hall is 5 wide and 4 deep. There are second floors and third floors along the street, except for staircases, with external corridors and back corridors. The stair case is located at the entrance to the east and west. The East staircase only goes up to the second and third floors. It cannot go up to the roof. The West staircase cannot go into the first floor, but it can go up to the second, third and roof.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

“开间”和“进深” are two concepts unique to Chinese traditional architecture. In a room, “开间” is the width of the side parallel to the door, and “进深” refers to the length of the side perpendicular to the door. According to the weights and measures of the Qing Dynasty, for “明间”, or, the main room of a building, one *jian* equals 6 meters, while those for “次间” and “梢间”, or room next to and room furthest away from the main one are shorter. There is no such corresponding architectural term in English, and translators commonly metricate this kind of measurement unit unique to Chinese culture, or foreign tourists would fail to understand them. Still, apart from converting the first sentence into “the first-floor hall is about 30 meters wide and 24 meters long,” the translator may also transliterate and annotate the two “间” as Zheng suggested, but the text can be much longer. To reduce noise, since Shameen is an architecture complex, and, more decisively, since “间” is a concept of Chinese traditional architecture, applying transliteration to “间” with a note helps highlight the characteristics of Eclecticism of this building, contributing to foreign tourists learning about Chinese traditional architecture. As for the note, it would be better to use both an annotation as well as a footnote, which can make the main body of the target text tidier and more concise.

Similarly, “有后外廊” and “中间开天井并直通天面”, not having been translated in the original translation though, well emphasize the characteristic of Eclecticism that it successfully blends Chinese and Western architectural styles, hence are recommended to be translated. And to translate the latter one, the translator has to first deal with the culture-loaded word “天井” – similarly to “间”, transliteration with notes (footnote here also) may suit. As courtyard means “an open space that is partly or completely surrounded by buildings and is usually part of a castle, a large house, etc.,” “天井” can be a small courtyard within a house that is surrounded by rooms, or rooms and wall sometimes. In addition, as *tianjing* itself has never had a roof, translation for “并直通天面” can be omitted in the target text, and “中间” could be amplified to provide audiences with a clearer image.

In addition, as tourists are not allowed to go into the building, foreign tourists do not have to learn about such full details as to where the East staircase and West staircase respectively go up. The last three sentences do not help stress the Eclecticism but create redundancy and are better to be deleted, like:

Translation Example 7 (Revised Version)

Target text: The hall on the first floor is about 5 jian (30 meters) in width and 4 jian (24 meters) in length with corridors outside. There are also external corridors along the street on both the second and the third floors, except for the side the staircase is on. Surrounded by the corridors and rooms, there is a *tianjing** on the second floor. The staircases are located near the entrance to the east and the one to the west.

*Note: ①Jian: a unit of length unique to Chinese ancient architecture; one jian equals six meters referring to the weights and measures of the Qing Dynasty. ②Tianjing: a small courtyard within a house that is surrounded by rooms, or rooms and walls sometimes; one house may contain one or more tianjings.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

In addition to Chinese architectural terms, *Fengshui* terms also characterize introductions of attractions in Shameen. First of all, *Fengshui* itself, a large proportion of whose ideas are at variance with materialism and Marxism, is inconsistent with Chinese social ideology. When dealing with issues – including translation ones – relevant to that, we have to differentiate the idealistic ideas and remove relevant descriptions from the text. To carry forward the positive part of such a culture, notes can be added to explain the reason why some ideas make sense or work. For Shameen, *Fengshui* terms appeared in almost every piece of the introduction, for instance:

Translation Example 8

Source text: 楼高四层，坐北朝南，平顶。

Source text Romanized: Lóu gāo sì céng, zuò běi cháo nán, píng dǐng.

Target text: The building is four stories high, sitting in the north and facing the south, with a flat roof.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

“坐北朝南”, or facing south, is a principle of house building following Chinese *Fengshui*. This is because most buildings in ancient China are low in height, few of which being with big trees, tall buildings, or high mountains surrounding. And, much of Chinese territory, especially in ancient times, is on the north of the Tropic of Cancer (23°26' N) – that is, for those regions, sunshine goes into houses from the south side. Consequently, a majority of house buildings in ancient China face the south to obtain better lighting, and at the same time, to take shelter from the north wind and keep the house warm.

Fengshui terms like “坐北朝南” “坐南朝北” can usually be seen in introductions to traditional house buildings in China. Really, in most cases, the “坐北朝南” can make domestic tourists understand the good location of a building, especially residential ones. Considering that foreign tourists are not familiar with Chinese *Fengshui*, when translating “坐北朝南”, the translator may add notes or annotations to explain its origin, meaning, and effect.

Translation Example 8 (Revised Version)

Target text: Facing south*, the four-storied building has a flat roof.

*Note: “facing south” is a Chinese *Fengshui* principle of house building, aiming at good lighting and keeping warm since much land of China locates on the north of 23°26' N; although Shameen locates at 23°10' N, “facing south” is still helpful for lighting in most seasons; and being in the Subtropics, Shameen possesses a warm climate already.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the former Administration Bureau of Broadcasting
of the Nationalist Government, No. 73 North Shameen Street)

Except for “坐北朝南”, the rest of this kind of description is better to be omitted, since locations like “坐南朝北”, “坐东朝西” and “坐西朝东” are true of no use to lighting or keeping warm or other else but cause noise.

The imperial era name originates from ancient China and can be also seen in ancient North Korea, ancient Vietnam, ancient Mongolia, and modern Japan. Since the Revolution of 1911, or the Xinhai Revolution, the monarchy being overthrown, imperial era name had been abolished in China. However, being a special and unique way of numbering years, it would be better not to omit the main part of the Chinese imperial era name, for reducing noise so that foreign tourists can learn more about Chinese culture. For example:

Translation Example 9

Source text: ……建于清同治四年（1865），重建于1920年。

Source text Romanized: ... Jiàn yú qīng tóngzhì sì nián (1865), chóngjiàn yú 1920 nián.

Target text: The building was first built in **1865** and rebuilt in 1920.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of HSBC, No. 54 Shameen Street)

To optimize, the literal translation and annotation should be like:

Translation Example 9 (Revised Version)

Target text: The building was first built in the 4th year of Emperor Tongzhi's reign in the Qing Dynasty (1865) and rebuilt in 1920.

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Site of HSBC, No. 54 Shameen Street)

There is not a commonly used pattern for translating Era name yet. Still, literal translation, relatively less information being missed, might be more suitable. Or, for descriptions like this example:

Translation Example 10

Source text: ……建于中华民国十三年（1924），……

Source text Romanized: ... Jiàn yú zhōnghuá mínguó shísān nián (1924), ...

Target text: Built in 1924, ...

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Dodwell & Co. Ltd.(British), No. 61 Shameen Street)

Optimization could be like this:

Translation Example 10 (Revised Version)

Target text: Built in the 13th year of the era of the Republic of China (1924), ...

(Excerpted from the introduction of the Dodwell & Co. Ltd.(British), No. 61 Shameen Street)

It is worth attention that, the feudal system had been overthrown before the Republic of China establishing. Therefore, the translator should be careful not to use the word “reign”, or additional noise may be created.

The last problem with translating cultural information is that, because of cultural non-equivalence, there is no corresponding word or expression for many appellations like ancient toponyms or government positions in ancient times. For instance, “总督” is the governor who is in charge of the military and political affairs of commonly two provinces. In English, the only word whose meaning is similar to it is “general” – a high-ranking officer in the armed forces, usually in the army⁶. These two words are not equivalent in meaning. If the translator wants to accurately express the meaning of “总督”, he must use phrases or sentences to explain the responsibility as well as the jurisdiction of this position in the form of notes.

The following is also representative of non-equivalence:

Translation Example 11

⁶ Collins Press. (March, 2022). General. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/general>

Source text: 明代在此设“华节亭”，管理外商货物进出；清代中叶在此建西固炮台，拱卫广州城池。

Source text Romanized: Míngdài zài cǐ shè “huá jié tíng”, guǎnlǐ wàishāng huòwù jìnchū; qīngdài zhōngyè zài cǐ jiàn xī gù pàotái, gōngwèi guǎngzhōu chéngchí.

Target text: Huajie Pavilion was set up here to manage the foreign trades; in the mid Qing Dynasty, Xigu Fort was built to defend the city of Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

The “亭” of “华节亭” is not an ornamental building in a garden or park⁷, and should not be translated as “pavilion”. For “亭”, there are 3 ways of interpretations that involve border or military affairs: military post set near the border for reconnoitering hostile forces; inn, courier station for resting and staying the night; or kiosk, usually sells articles of daily use. Referring to the context, the first interpretation is more suitable. The adaptation of translation having reduced noise can be:

Translation Example 11 (Revised Version)

Target text: In the Ming Dynasty, Huajie Post was set up here for administrating foreign trades; in the mid-Qing Dynasty, Xigu Casemate was built in defense of Guangzhou.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

3.5 Stylistic Information Type

Stylistic information refers to linguistic features conveyed through the style of the writer who uses effective devices to organize the text so that the text may be attractive to the audience. This TIT can influence the acceptability of the introduction. Its transferability is relatively weak; proper adjustments should be made in the process of translating (Luo, 2009, p.33-34).

In Chinese tourism profiles, stylistic information is distinguished by rhetoric in most cases, parallelism and antithesis in especial; some authors who excel at writing may even compose several lines of poetry. For this reason, stylistic information is usually flowery in language but inefficient in conveying messages. The information amount of it can be low if it were completely translated. Foreign tourists are probably unable to make out what the author is driving at after reading floods of ink either. The following one can be a typical example:

Translation Example 12

Source text: 文物还原，修旧如旧，露出真容；翠洲古楼，千米花街，古树衬映；完善公共设施，致力民生实事；创设防洪花堤，水患渐告远离；和谐三维视角，塑造文化主题，赢得各界好评。

Source text Romanized: Wénwù huányuán, xiū jiù rú jiù, lùchū zhēnróng; cuìzhōu gǔlóu, qiānmǐ huājiē, gǔshù chènying; wánshàn gōnggòng shèshī, zhìlì mínshēng shíshì; chuàngshè fānghóng huā dī, shuǐhuàn jiàn gào yuǎnlí; héxié sānwéi shìjiǎo, sùzào wénhuà zhǔtí, yíngdé gèjiè hǎopíng.

Target text: Cultural relics have been well restored to show their original charm; ancient trees, flowery streets and historic buildings benefit by associating together; public facilities have been improved to upgrade people’s livelihood; flowery dike has been renovated to protect Shameen from flooding. All these measures shape the cultural theme of Shameen, winning it praise from society.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

At first sight, the translation is like a jumble of ideas: cultural relics, trees, streets, buildings, public facilities, dike, and cultural theme, totally of seven subjects are mentioned with poor coherence and cohesion, making it hard for audiences to understand the connection among each subject. The heavy use of parallelism and antithesis does not help to communicate information clearly at all.

A translation would be acceptable provided that it conveyed the necessary message of the source text and brought the effect that conforms to the cultural context of the target language to readers successfully, even though there might be some differences between language styles or contents of the two texts (Li, 2012). To translate the above stylistic introduction, the translator needs to remove redundancy by recapitulating and condensing key messages, and reduce the noise by toning down

⁷ Collins Press. (March, 2022). Pavilion. In *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* (5th ed.). <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/zh/dictionary/english/pavilion>

the stylistic expressions of the original author as well as restructuring key messages, also improve coherence and cohesion by conversion, to make the text more logical and more readable, like:

Translation Example 12 (Revised Version)

Target text: The government well restored the cultural relics, improved public facilities, and beautified the environment of Shameen, all of which helped show the cultural charm of Shameen and make it enjoy great popularity.

(Excerpted from the overall introduction of Shameen)

4. Summary of Translation Strategies

In this paper on translating the introduction of Shameen attractions based on TIT from the perspective of Communication, translation strategies including literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, free translation, amplification, omission, condensation, diction, conversion, restructuring, and extension are involved.

Generally speaking, Chinese tourism profiles focus more on flowery language, abundant rhetorical devices, emotional expressions, etc., which are hard for foreign tourists to comprehend and bring about redundancy and noise. It can be seen in the previous analyses of the nineteen examples that, probably, though not necessarily, redundancy is of a stronger connection with contents like human geographical characteristics and social identity of the destination, which Chinese, the source language features; while noise is more closely related to language style or in-text logic influenced by the thinking mode of mother tongue.

According to Li, when composing tourism profiles, English writers prefer to objectively describe concrete objects with fewer rhetorical devices, emphasizing more on providing audiences with a specific image of the scenery of the destination. While, Chinese writers often pay more attention to the social identity (e.g. social significance, stage of development) and human geographical characteristics of the destination, depictions excerpted from histories or literature accounting for a large proportion of the whole introduction in especial; all these might make the destination seemed more appealing to domestic tourists, still, for foreign audiences with a different cultural background, such contents can be redundant or hardly understood (2012). For removing redundancy, there are mainly two strategies: omission and condensation. Both of them are not only used for removing content that contributes nothing to audiences' learning about things like geography and infrastructures of the destination, or their understanding of Chinese culture, but also for improving wording that looks powerful and infectious in Chinese but is repeated in meaning in English sometimes.

Still, when composing tourism profiles, Chinese writers are accustomed to reinforcing a personal perception of the beauty of the destination, then making the scenery attractive and alive in tourists' imagination and resonating with audiences through description and rhetorics like exaggeration and metaphor. Hence Chinese tourism profiles are usually filled with flowery language and useless content, causing noise in the process of communication (Li, 2012). To reduce noise, more strategies, including literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, amplification, omission, condensation, diction, conversion, restructuring, and extension, are involved. If there were more corpora, not limited to Shameen in other words, free translation, and even all the above translation strategies, might be also involved in the translation of the five or even all TITs. And, different translation strategies need to be flexibly combined and applied when translating, to remove redundancy as well as to reduce noise, especially the latter one, helping achieve a better communication effect.

Grouping the strategies by TIT, there are also interesting discoveries: there are connections between the selection of translation strategies and the information amount carried by the TIT. Strategies of free translation, amplification, omission, conversion, and restructuring, are applied to the translation of almost every TIT. Particularly, diction should be paid more attention to when translating TITs that are with a relatively large amount of information, factual information, descriptive information, and cultural information often included. While extension and condensation are more frequently used in the translation of TITs carrying a relatively small amount of information, including descriptive information, evaluative and appraisal information, and stylistic information in terms of this paper.

Table 1. Translation Strategies for TITs Based on Goals of Processing Information

| TIT | Information Amount Carried | Translation Strategies | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--|
| | | Removing Redundancy | Reducing Noise |
| Factual Information | large | omission | free translation, amplification, omission, diction , conversion, restructuring, |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|---|
| Descriptive Information | relatively large | omission | free translation, amplification, omission, diction , conversion, restructuring, extension |
| Evaluative and Appraisal Information | relatively small | omission, condensation | free translation, amplification, omission, condensation , conversion, restructuring, extension |
| Cultural Information | large | omission | literal translation with notes, transliteration with notes, amplification, omission, diction , conversion, restructuring |
| Stylistic Information | small | omission, condensation | free translation, amplification, omission, condensation , conversion, restructuring |

5. Conclusion

There are differences between the languages and aesthetics of Chinese and Western cultures, Chinese and English tourism profiles being good embodiments. To overcome problems caused by the differences and to achieve a better communication effect, the translator needs not only to “remove redundancy” from the text, but also to “reduce noise” of the text – both of which are not necessarily deleting information. Due to the differences between Chinese and Western cultures, the translator may add information or explanation sometimes, or even make changes to the original contents, to fill the gaps in knowledge about Chinese culture of Western tourists that the original author did not take into account. At the same time, the translator should not only beware of the rebelliousness of the audience but also avoid simply catering to the audience’s preferences – as Chinese cultural influence continues to grow, what should be defined as “noise” or “redundancy” should be considered carefully.

In reality, according to Melvin L. Defleur, noises exist in every part of the communication process, and all these noises might affect the receiving of information and could have an influence on the communication effect (Hu, 2017, p.104, 106-107). In contrast, Shannon and Weaver considered elements and relationships among them in the communication process unchanged; they also segregated the process of communication from the society and neglected social influence like political and economic factors. In this way, this research can still be extended.

Shameen is an architectural complex that is of significance in reflecting modern China. This paper, studying translating introductions of Shameen attractions, can help enrich research on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication and fill in the gap that there is no research on tourism translation of Guangzhou with TIT being applied. Analyses as well as conclusions drawn in this paper are not perfect and need to be polished and completed yet. Still, this paper, hopefully, may shed some new light on studies on tourism translation of Guangzhou, and even studies on tourism translation from the perspective of Communication.

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