Comparative Study of Hospitals’ Websites Construction

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Abstract. Objectives: To offer better solution to English hospital websites in China. Method: 10 top hospitals in China and English-speaking countries were selected respectively and comparative analysis was carried out. Results: The analysis of English website of 10 hospitals in China indicated the English websites are characterized by the lack of audience consciousness, audience-centeredness, language errors, and poor interaction of website discourse. Conclusion: English hospital websites in China can be improved by the following 3 aspects. Firstly, hospitals should attach greater importance to the construction of English websites by being patient-centered and user-friendly; secondly, linguistically, translators responsible for English hospitals website should have the intercultural communication awareness and enhance the readability of the translated, playing the role of being the facilitators, coordinator between the audience and the hospital culture; Thirdly, hospital English websites in China, culturally, need to enhance the interactivity between the website texts and the targeted audience.

1. Introduction

Translation serves an important role in promoting international and regional communication. Translation is not a simple conversion between languages, but the selection, transfer, exchange and regeneration of both linguistic and cultural information[1]. Scholars in China explored into translation for medical purpose by adopting diversified perspectives, namely, translation project management[2], standardization and professionalization of medical interpretation in China and Japan[3], public signs translation for medical institutions, translation of TCM hospital profiles from the perspective of Skopos Theory[4], English-Chinese translation of Sara plus medical equipment and instruments products manual[5], principles of medical interpretation[6]. In recent years, the correcting translation errors of public signs has attracted the attention of domestic scholars in China to seek for the standardization of public signs translation. Translation is not only a linguistic activity, but also an important cultural practice. Top hospitals English website in China representative of China is of great significance for meeting the needs of overseas patients' seeking for online access to medical and hospitalization information. Optimizing hospital website construction is important for improving hospital popularity. Domestic scholars within China have made a preliminary study on the construction of the English websites of 22 prestigious hospitals in Guangzhou [7], and of 50 top hospitals in Jiangsu Province [8] and of 8 traditional Chinese medicine hospitals in Beijing and 4 affiliated hospitals of Shanghai university of traditional Chinese medicine [9]. There are many problems in the construction of Chinese and English websites, which need to be further improved. In China, major researches have focused on pragmatic errors in translating public signs in medical institutions. However, few researches have been made on the theory and practice of translating texts in English websites of prestigious hospitals. As for the needs of hospitals English websites, The number of foreign permanent residents in China is increasing. The number of foreign permanent residents in Xi’an City amounts to 9066. The number of foreign permanent residents in Chengdu City, capital city of Sichuan Province amounts to 12,095. Gladly, Chengdu city attaches great importance to making life for foreign permanent residents more convenient. Chengdu has set up a multilingual service platform for foreigners, and promoted the revision of the website of the municipal government in English and French. Medical services intended for foreign permanent residents were provided in 17 hospitals, among which 5 hospitals were equipped with foreign clinic or international ward. The Chengdu municipal Emergency Service cooperates with professional
companies to provide third-party remote English language service and foreign permanent residents in Chengdu can seek for medical service under the assistance of Handbook of Medical Service. This research aims to offer suggestions for the standardized construction of hospitals English website in China thus to make it easier for foreign permanent residents in China and international patients to have easier access to medical information, medical care and even hospitalization.

2. Methods

In China the following 10 famous hospitals were selected, namely, Peking Union Medical College Hospital, West China Hospital Sichuan University, The Second Xiangya Hospital of Central South University, the First Affiliated Hospital Sun Yat-sen University, Xiangya Hospital Central South University, Zhongshan Hospital Fudan University, Xuanwu Hospital Capital Medical University, The Affiliated Hospital of Nanjing University, the Second Hospital Zhejiang University School of Medicine, Tongji Hospital Huazhong University of Science and Technology. Additionally, 10 famous hospitals from English-speaking countries include Heidelberg University Hospital, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Toronto General Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Karolinska University Hospital, The Johns Hopkins Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston Children's Hospital, Mayo Clinic, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

3. Findings

3.1 Lack of Patient-Centeredness or User-Consciousness

Based on the comparative analysis, it was found that most hospitals English websites in China are composed of such columns as introduction of the hospital, Medical services, education, research, news, international exchanges and cooperation, centered and departments, Key international partners and so on. Only Peking Union Medical College Hospital has the column named Medical care for foreigners. Strikingly, hospitals English websites in China aims at sharing its strengths and rankings instead of having patient-centeredness or user-friendliness. Hospitals English websites are intended for international users or patients. Comparatively, hospitals English website in English-speaking countries are composed of Patient care and health information, departments and centers, research, education, for medical professionals, about the hospital, records and privacy etc. characterized by establishing the communication between the targeted audience and the website contents. For instance, President, of Massachusetts General Hospital shares the hospital’s concept “Your support is vital to our ability to transform medicine today and tomorrow. In the delivery of our care, through our research and within our communities, Mass General is committed to the well-being of our patients locally and globally.” Heidelberg University Hospital present the wide range of medical treatment options available and provide information about our services for international patients.

3.2 Differences of Website Language

Xuanwu Hospital Capital Medical University sets its service concept as “awe with lifted and social commitment to assist the wounded and provide relief to the world, to respect hardworking and make contribution to your career.” The language errors of website contents resulted in poor interactivity between the website texts and the targeted audience. With the cultural shift of western translation studies and the rise of translation sociology in recent years, the relationship between translation and ethics has increasingly become an important subject for translation scholars at home and abroad, and has gradually become a new branch of translation studies[10]. The significance of translation ethics is of great significance for strengthening the construction of translation discipline, improving research attitude of translation studies, standardizing translation activities. The translators are responsible for the translated works. Research on translation ethics should be based on descriptive research and translation behaviors. The research aims to bridge the gap between translation of hospitals English websites and the top hospitals website from English speaking countries from the perspective of translation ethics.
3.3 Differences of Cultural Identity of Hospitals

The majority of hospital English websites of English speaking countries present their distinctive roles in terms of medical care. Mayo Clinic is a nonprofit organization committed to clinical practice, education and research, providing expert, whole-person care to everyone who needs healing. Mayo clinic establish columns of international patients and patient centers and share 23 patients stories on line. In the year of 2018, 130 0000 patients get medical care from 136 countries and regions. Mayo Clinic specifies its International patient services as “Here to guide you through your journey to health to ensure you and your family receive personalized care and cultural respect during a potentially difficult time in your life, in a place far from home”. Besides, Johns Hopkins Medicine Vision is “pushes the boundaries of discovery, transforms health care, advances medical education and creates hope for humanity. Together, we will deliver the promise of medicine.” The mission of Johns Hopkins Medicine is to improve the health of the community and the world by setting the standard of excellence in medical education, research and clinical care. Diverse and inclusive, Johns Hopkins Medicine educates medical students, scientists, health care professionals and the public; conducts biomedical research; and provides patient-centered medicine to prevent, diagnose and treat human illness. Aslo, Karolinska University Hospital in Sweden shares its vision “Patient first—together we create the best care.”

Toronto General Hospital with the vision A Healthier World offers 8 language assistance online and highlights such seven priorities as compassionate & caring, environments, operational excellence, partnerships, people & culture, quality & safety and technology. Next, Brigham and Women’s Hospital shares its vision as Helping our patients and their families get back to what matters most. The International Patient Center at Brigham and Women’s Hospital is a complete service for patients visiting the hospital from countries outside the United States, offering personalized Care & coordinating medical Care. Differently, the majority of hospital English websites in China stresses the informative of website texts instead of highlighting culture identity of the hospital itself. Of the ten surveyed only such two hospitals as The First Affiliated Hospital, Sun Yat-sen University and The second Affiliated Hospital Zhejiang University School of Medicine (SAHZU) offer the most user-friendly English websites. Th former shares its motto “Heal people’s body and soul in addition to treating illness; save the nation and the world in addition to saving lives.” The latter stresses its patient care being at the core of SAHZU’s mission, namely, spreading benevolence and saving People. Additionally, SAHZU follows the motto “We cure. We serve. We care.” 150 years of development not only gave SAHZU good reputation and so many renowned medical professionals to treat more patients and cure more diseases, also bred a culture of caring. As a comprehensive non-for-profit public hospital and JCI accredited academic medical center, SAHZU put patients and customers first all the time. Boston Children’s Hospital organizes the recommendation activity named the Best in Care Award by encouraging patient or family member of patient to nominate a staff member or volunteer who follows four key principles of patient- and family-centered care, namely, RESPECT(My family's beliefs and views were respected, heard, and incorporated into our experience), INFORMATION SHARING (Staff/Volunteers provided clear and helpful information during our visit which allowed me to meet my family's needs), COMPASSION (Staff/Volunteers were supportive, flexible and understanding about my family's needs), PARTICIPATION (I was encouraged and empowered to speak up and ask questions as a partners in my family's experience). The CEO Sandra L. Fenwick of Boston Children’s Hospital specifies concept as “For 150 years, families have come from around the corner and across the world, looking to Boston Children’s for answers. This is the place where the most difficult challenges are faced head on, where the impossible becomes possible, and where families in search of answers find them.”

4. Suggestions for Hospitals English Website Construction

4.1 Audience-Consciousness Principle

In the web page of prestigious hospitals from English-speaking countries, totally the words “patients and patient” appears 311 times and the hospital highly value the availability of high
quality, humanistic care, thus to connect the souls. Chinese website of Mayo Clinic's features 23 patient stories. News center was set up to provide information on the prevention and treatment of diseases to highlight the synergy of offering high quality medical care of by doctors, medical teachers and researchers. Strikingly, Mayo Clinic highlights its cultural soft power by multidisciplinary team and patient-centeredness care, forming a complete service chain of "appointment—reception—medical guidance—medical treatment—follow-up". Next, patient care column titled Patient Care was set up in Karolinska University Hospital in Sweden. Karolinska University Hospital is characterized by offering health care, namely, online consultation services, with the vision of putting patient first. Boston Children's Hospital has the slogan that until every child is well by breaking boundaries and pioneering solutions to make the impossible possible, focusing on the rights of patients and their families, protect patient privacy, focus on patient decision-making and informed consent, and optimize pain management. Similarly, Addenbrooke's Hospital has set its hospital motto as Always care and takes pride in the quality of work and demonstrate respect and care for the wellbeing, health and safety of customers, people, and the world.

4.2 Building Culturally and Linguistically Competent Translation Team

The top hospitals' profiles not only provide foreigners access to know more about the hospital, but offer the hospital itself a channel to interact with the public. Importantly, the contents of English website of prestigious hospitals need to cover features, achievements, staff and professor, to enable the target readers to easily obtain related information from the translated texts, a great deal of work should be done and be improved in the translation. Importantly, translators should be audience-conscious and take consideration of source text and specification of the hospital English web page. Translation strategies for translating TCM hospital profiles were analyzed by comparing the hospital profiles of seven TCM hospitals in Beijing and Shanghai with those of 17 leading hospitals in US, namely, reconstructing information, domesticating translation and explaining the culture-loaded expressions in the light of Skopos theory[4]. Based on the key issues of why to translate, who to translate, how to translate and how to evaluate, a culturally and linguistically competent translation team needs to be built. Translation is an important medium for the internationalization of any industry. The development of translation is an important indicator of the level of regional social and economic internationalization. The translation history of science and technology in the Ming and Qing dynasties in Chinese history is the history of introduction of western science and technology to China. From the Donghan dynasty to the Tang and Song dynasties, buddhist scriptures translation and the translation of science and technology in the Ming and Qing dynasties and the translation of western learning in the May 4th movement contribute to the formation of groups of translators in Zhejiang Province, forming a distinctive historical picture of translation. From the perspective of regional culture, the development of Zhejiang translators group is the product of profound regional cultural accumulation, frequent foreign exchanges, thriving overseas education and church education. Zhejiang has 198 translators in different historical periods, ranking first in China. Li Zichao and Li Shanlan studied western science and technology and participated in the translation of science and technology, which contributed greatly to the exchange of science and technology between China and foreign countries[11]. Similarly, as early as in 1985 and 1987, Shanghai Society of Translators for Science and Technology and the Association of Translators for Science and Technology were established in Shanghai and in Jiangsu Province established respectively. There is a great demand for translation services of medical science and technology in China, and the construction of medical translation teams needs to be strengthened urgently. Currently, professional translation service organizations in China include Shanghai Translation Company, a large professional translation service agency approved by the government and Global Tone Communication Technology Co., Ltd. Currently, there are four branches in Shanghai, Qingdao, Chengdu and Xi’an, which fully indicates there is an increasing need for English language service.
5 Conclusion

The analysis of English website of 10 hospitals in China indicated the English websites are characterized by the lack of audience consciousness, patient-centeredness, language errors, and poor interaction of website discourse. English hospital websites in China can be improved by the following 3 aspects. Firstly, hospitals should attach greater importance to the construction of English websites by being patient-centered and user-friendly; secondly, linguistically, translators responsible for English hospitals website should have the intercultural communication awareness and enhance the readability of the translated, playing the role of being the facilitators, coordinator between the audience and the hospital culture; Thirdly, English hospital websites in China, culturally, need to enhance the interactivity between the website texts and the targeted audience. In terms of the availability of medical care for foreign permanent residents, on the one hand bilingual public signs need to be improved; on the other hand, standardized construction of hospitals English website needs to be improved. More importantly, the third party language service is necessary for clinical bedside interpretation. The interpreters should be culturally competent for symptoms description, consultation coordination, clarification of medical procedures, treatment concepts, cognition of health standards and even the privacy protection. Ideally, in the future, feedback from foreign permanent residents needs to be collected and make further improvement based on the response of the target readers for the translated. Gladly, some of the hospitals in China have the column of Foreign-related Health Service and Patents’ Obligations & Patients’ Right, Day Surgery Center, indicating the patient-centeredness and audience consciousness. Further, top hospitals in China should improve column classification, highlight the features of hospital and add appointment service to offer personalized care.

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