

# An Empirical Study of Linguistic Landscape and Language Services Strategies of Binzhou City and its Pedagogical Implications for English Language Teaching

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## Abstract

With the rapid development of China's economy and the ongoing process of urbanization, the prevalence of language service strategies reflected in the language landscape has increased. The primary objective of language services is to utilize the communicative function of language to convey information and facilitate interaction across various industries, thereby serving the needs of countries, social groups, or individuals. Furthermore, in the context of economic globalization, the language landscape is exhibiting an increasing trend toward internationalization. This paper examines the language landscape of Binzhou and the associated language service strategies, drawing on the framework of language landscape theory and Newmark's translation theory. The study analyzes the phonetics and structural aspects of diverse language landscapes, explores the naming conventions and characteristics, and offers valuable insights for the future naming of signage in Binzhou. In addition, this research contributes to the formulation of language planning policies and improvements in language services within the region. The empirical analysis of the language landscape also provides a foundation for the development of region-specific slogans and supports the standardization of language use in the area.

**Keywords:** Communicative Translation; Linguistic Landscape; Language Service

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## 1. Introduction

The academic concept of linguistic landscape may be unfamiliar to many, yet it encompasses everyday elements such as billboards, bus stop signs, street names, place names, and other informative slogans that surround us. Although these features differ from natural landscapes, they persist as an integral part of the urban environment. With the increasing scholarly attention and rapid development in the field of linguistic landscape studies, these elements also hold inherent aesthetic value. Linguistic landscape has emerged as a significant research area within sociolinguistics, focusing on the use and selection of language in public signage. Public signage is typically categorized into two groups based on its origin: official signage and private signage. Official signage is usually installed by local or central government agencies and reflects governmental stances, behaviors, and language policies; this is often referred to as top-down signage. In contrast, private signage, which is typically placed by individuals or businesses for commercial or informational purposes, is known as bottom-up signage or unofficial signage.

Binzhou, a prefecture-level city in the northern part of Shandong Province, boasts a rich history and is recognized as the birthplace of Yellow River culture and Qi culture. It is also an economically prosperous city, ranked among China's Top 100 Foreign Trade Cities. As Binzhou's economic and cultural profile continues to develop, its language landscape is inevitably evolving towards internationalization, prompting changes in complementary language service strategies. This study will involve on-site investigations of major commercial areas, street names, place names, and prominent tourist attractions in Binzhou. Through data collection and analysis, the research will explore how the language landscape and language services in the region are transforming under the influence of internationalization. Drawing on established theories and methodologies in linguistic landscape research, this paper focuses on street signs, building signs, shop signs, billboards, and posters in Binzhou. A field survey approach will be employed, capturing language data through photographs to facilitate analysis.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Definition of Linguistic Landscape

In 1997, Canadian scholars Rodrigue Landry and Richard Y. Bourhis introduced the concept of linguistic landscape, which refers to the visibility and prominence of language on public and commercial signs within a specific geographic area. This concept encompasses social public facilities, including street signs, billboards, street names, place names, shop signs, and government buildings. The linguistic landscape examines how languages are displayed in public spaces, such as street signs, billboards, and shop names, to analyze the linguistic dynamics of a region. The languages presented on these public signs collectively form the language landscape of a region or urban area.

Linguistic landscape research focuses on two primary types of signage: official signage, which is typically established by government authorities, and private signage, which is set up by individuals or businesses (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The language landscape serves two main functions: the informational function and the symbolic function. The informational function refers to the direct information that can be derived from the language landscape, such as navigational or commercial details. In contrast, the symbolic function relates to the ideological messages that the language landscape reflects within a given social context. While both functions are significant, the informational function is often the most prominent and familiar to the general public. In everyday life, people primarily engage with language landscapes to obtain practical information, whether from a bus stop sign or a street name. The symbolic function, however, is more evident in the underlying messages that designers intend to convey through their use of language in these public spaces.

### *2.2 Newmark's Translation Theory*

In the contemporary globalized environment, globalization is an inevitable trend, affecting not only economic dimensions but also various other aspects of society. The globalization of English, while facilitating the widespread use of the language, has also contributed to the rise of bilingualism in the linguistic landscape, gradually establishing it as a standard for development.

To explore the emergence of additional language identities beyond the native language in the linguistic landscape, it is valuable to apply the translation theory proposed by Peter Newmark. In his work *Discussion on Translation Problems*, Newmark introduced two key concepts: communicative translation and semantic translation. Communicative translation prioritizes the feelings of the target language audience, focusing on the reader's perspective, while semantic translation centers on the author's intent, striving to convey the meaning of the source language accurately within the limits of the target language's semantics and grammatical structure (Newmark, 1981).

From the perspective of communicative translation, the English component of English-Chinese bilingual language landscapes is intended for foreign audiences who are familiar with English. In this context, the English signage should cater to the needs and perceptions of the English-speaking audience. In contrast, from the viewpoint of semantic translation, when reflecting Chinese local characteristics and culture in the English-language landscape, the translation should endeavor to maintain the original nuances and meaning of the source language as faithfully as possible. This ensures that the cultural essence is conveyed correctly, facilitating the promotion of Chinese culture. This approach aligns with a language service-oriented strategy aimed at cultural communication.

## **3. The Development of Language Landscape**

### *3.1 The Development of Language Landscape in China*

The study of the international linguistic landscape can be traced back to the 1970s, when scholars began examining public language signage, primarily focusing on language use and the implementation of language policies. For example, Rosenbaum (1977) conducted a study on the use of English in store signs along the Keren Kayemet commercial street in Jerusalem. He found that most store signs were in English, which conflicted with the official language policy that only supported the use of Hebrew. Similarly, Spolsky and Cooper (1991) selected Jerusalem as a case study and observed the use of English, French, Hebrew, and Arabic in street signage. However, these early studies did not use the term "linguistic landscape" (Spolsky & Cooper, 1991).

The concept of linguistic landscape was first formally introduced in 1997 by Landry and Bourhis, who studied the language landscape of Quebec, Canada. They defined linguistic landscape as the language visible on public signage, including street signs, billboards, place names, shop signs, and government buildings, within a specific territory or region. According to Landry and Bourhis (1997), the language presented on these public signs collectively forms the linguistic landscape of a particular area. Following its formal introduction, this concept was widely adopted and further explored by scholars, marking 1997 as the year when the study of linguistic landscape truly entered the academic research field.

### *3.2 The Development of Language Landscape in the West*

In contrast, the development of the domestic language landscape started relatively late. At present, it mainly focuses on the norms of bilingual use of public signage, and has not deeply explored the important topics such as policy, power and identity

behind the language phenomenon. Therefore, there is still a big gap between the theoretical depth and research methods and the international frontier language landscape research [5]. At the same time, the domestic language landscape research lacks a certain theoretical basis, and many foreign language landscape studies and other auspicious theories are used for reference, such as the Newmark translation theory adopted in the study of the Binzhou language landscape in this paper. On the other hand, the domestic language landscape is influenced by internationalization and presents a development trend of bilingualism. English signs are gradually added to the slogans of bus stops, road signs, tourist attractions, and commercial areas to meet the needs of English-speaking people for language landscapes, and at the same time create new language service strategies.

#### 4. Data Collection of Linguistic Landscape in Binzhou City

In this part, the paper analyzes the general situation of the language landscape in Binzhou city and the bilingual landscape problem.

##### 4.1 Data Collection

The language landscape collection in Binzhou took place from January to February 2022, spanning a duration of two months. The investigation primarily covered government signs, street signs, and bus stop signage in Bincheng District and Zhanhua District. Additionally, the study examined the language landscape at key tourist attractions, including the China Sun Tzu City of Art of War, as well as the language landscape in major business areas such as Binzhou Wanda Plaza. Signs within and around Binzhou Railway Station and Binzhou Dagao Airport were also inspected. A total of 160 language landscape photographs were collected, capturing these signs from various angles. These photos provide a comprehensive reflection of the current development and future trends of Binzhou's language landscape.



Figure 4.1 Ticket barrier at Binzhou Railway Station (Source: Binzhou Traffic Bureau website)

Binzhou Railway Station features bilingual signage in both Chinese and English at each ticket gate, with blue nameplates to assist passengers in locating the corresponding gates for check-in. As English is a global lingua franca, most countries incorporate both the local language and English in public services. In the waiting areas of the station, announcements are first made in Chinese, followed by an English translation. On the trains, the announcer similarly provides announcements in both languages to remind passengers of their upcoming stops. English signage is prevalent throughout the station, with train information—such as departure locations, terminal stations, and arrival times—clearly translated into English. The main service desk is staffed by personnel with proficient English skills, ensuring that foreign passengers who may be unfamiliar with station procedures receive timely assistance. Additionally, a store specializing in local souvenirs has been established at the station, with product descriptions in English that provide detailed information about the local culture and customs.



Figure 4.2 The name sign of the exterior building of Dagao Airport (Source: Binzhou Traffic Bureau website)



Figure 4.3 Boarding gate prompt sign at Dagao Airport (Source: Binzhou traffic WeChat public account, 2019)

Dagao The signage at Dagao Airport is concise and standardized. For instance, the terminal name is displayed in Chinese at the top, followed by English, making it easily comprehensible. The airport's language landscape design is notably user-friendly. Specifically, the airport provides bilingual signage for key boarding procedures. Additionally, bilingual signs are present in various areas, including drinking rooms and consulting rooms, ensuring accessibility for all passengers. The frequent international exchanges in the aviation sector are a significant reflection of the nation's growing global presence and comprehensive national strength. As a result, the airport staff possess a certain level of English proficiency, enabling effective communication with foreign passengers. English literacy is especially emphasized for flight attendants and announcers, who are required to meet high linguistic standards. Furthermore, both the lounges and dining areas are equipped with English signage, and English-speaking service staff are available to provide assistance, ensuring a satisfactory service experience for international travelers.

On the boarding pass, bilingual signage is used to display crucial flight information, such as departure details and estimated time of arrival. Notably, English magazines and periodicals are provided in the cabin, further enhancing the travel experience. This comprehensive approach to bilingual signage underscores the airport's commitment to offering a comfortable and accommodating environment for passengers, particularly those traveling internationally.

#### 4.2 The Development of Language Landscape in Binzhou City

##### 4.2.1 Characteristics of Language Landscape

Based on the field survey data analysis, it is evident that the predominant language in Binzhou's landscape is Chinese. The informational content of various language landscapes in the city is primarily conveyed through the national language, which serves to facilitate the transmission of information, cultural dissemination, policy advocacy, tourism promotion, and business interests. These aspects are central to the city's language service strategies.

In the context of globalization, especially with the increasing prominence of English, bilingual Chinese-English language landscapes have emerged in Binzhou. However, due to the relatively low number of English speakers in the region, the

adoption of these bilingual signs has been limited. Furthermore, some of these bilingual signs have been misrepresented, particularly in the form of "Chinglish" (a blend of Chinese and English). The widespread occurrence of such errors across various bilingual signs in Binzhou is a reflection of historical and social factors. Based on their characteristics and the potential for correction, these errors can be categorized as follows:

The first category includes Chinese-English translation errors, such as spelling and grammatical mistakes, which are the most easily identified. For example, a restaurant menu in Binzhou prominently displayed the word "Weicome" on its cover, which was a clear misspelling. The second issue concerns the mixing of English with Chinese pinyin, primarily seen on road signs. This inconsistency stems from the lack of unified standards. For instance, Shenghua Road is translated as "Shenghua Road" in English, but other road signs in the city use pinyin exclusively, resulting in a lack of uniformity and coordination.

#### 4.2.2 Bilingual Language Landscape Problems

With the ongoing development and modernization of Binzhou, its language landscape is continuously evolving. A noticeable trend in the domestic language landscape is the increasing use of bilingual signage in Chinese and English. However, the development of bilingual signage in Binzhou remains imperfect. During a two-month field investigation, several issues were identified in major public spaces across the city, particularly the absence of translations in certain areas. While most urban railway stations in China feature English translations beneath their station names, Binzhou Railway Station, for instance, only displays Chinese-language signage.

Moreover, during an inspection of Binzhou Dagao Airport, it was observed that some bilingual signs contained translation errors. Such mistakes could potentially lead to misunderstandings, particularly when travelers rely on these signs for important instructions, thereby undermining the efficacy of the language landscape in fulfilling its role in providing essential services.

Other issues were noted as well. For example, the "Business Reception Desk" at a mobile business office in Binzhou was inaccurately translated as "Business Reception Desk," when the correct translation should be "Business Reception." In some hospitals in Binzhou, the sign "Smoking Is Not Allowed In This Hospital" was deemed overly strict and inconsistent with the more simplistic nature of signage. A more suitable translation would be "Smoke-Free." Additionally, the investigation of certain areas revealed problems in the bilingual translation of store names, highlighting the ongoing need for more accurate and consistent bilingual language strategies in Binzhou's urban landscape



Figure 4.4 The bilingual name of the clothing store (Source: The author's photograph)

A sportswear shop in Binzhou City directly translated its Chinese name "快鱼" into "Fast Fish." However, in the context of the English language, this direct translation leads to semantic confusion. Most Chinese compound words cannot be translated literally into English without causing misunderstandings. The original Chinese term "快鱼" likely carries a brand concept, emphasizing the dynamic and energetic nature of the brand, with the metaphor of being as free as a fish. However, in English, the word "fast" typically refers to speed, while "fish" denotes a living creature. These two words, when combined, do not convey the intended meaning of the original Chinese phrase.

This phenomenon, where merchants use literal translation to convert Chinese words into English, is common in Binzhou City. Many businesses follow a similar approach, employing vocabulary, stylistic choices, and syntactic structures that align with the target language, but often fail to capture the intended cultural or conceptual nuances. As a result, these direct translations may not effectively communicate the intended message to English-speaking consumers, highlighting the importance of culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate translation strategies.



Figure 4.5 The bilingual name of a clothing store (Source: author's photograph)

Unlike the previous example, the translation of this store's name involves a transliteration issue. In this case, the shop owners first determine the correct Chinese pronunciation of the store's name, then identify English letters that closely resemble the sound of the original pronunciation, and use them for a comparative translation. As a result, the translation of "美都汇" became "MOEWE." Transliteration is one of the earliest methods of translation that most people encounter. It involves the transcription of spoken language into written form, based on the pronunciation of the original language. In this method, the goal is to find equivalent sounds in the target language that closely mirror the original pronunciation. Transliteration is commonly used for translating proper nouns, such as country names, company names, and place names. For instance, the popular Swedish furniture store "宜家" is transliterated as "IKEA," and the internationally renowned cosmetic brand "露华浓," favored by many women, is transliterated as "REVLON."



Figure 4.6 A bilingual translation of the name of a photo studio (Source: The author's photograph)

The original name of the store, "松果" (literally "pine cone"), could have been directly translated into English as "pine cone." However, the store owners creatively adapted the Chinese pinyin pronunciation and ultimately selected the name "so good," which closely resembles the original Chinese pronunciation. This English translation, used by the Binzhou photo studio, introduces a homophonic element, where the focus is on sound rather than meaning. In contemporary business practices, many companies employ various translation strategies when naming their stores in English. On one hand, such names can capture customer attention due to their humorous or catchy nature. On the other hand, they help create a distinct linguistic identity, making the business stand out. This approach subtly enhances competitiveness within the industry, while also facilitating the exchange and integration of multiple linguistic styles, which promotes broader communication across cultures.



Figure 4.7 The bilingual name of the clothing store (Source: author's photograph)

The examples provided above also illustrate the mistake of directly using pinyin instead of an English translation. This type of translation is not standardized and fails to accurately convey the store's intended information, which can easily lead to misunderstandings among non-Chinese speakers. Additionally, there are cultural differences in the translation of road signs within Binzhou City. In North America, "Avenue" typically refers to streets running in a north-south direction, while "Street" refers to those running east-west. However, in China, there are no strict directional planning requirements, and therefore, most street names in Binzhou use the term "street." Pinyin, a system used to represent the pronunciation of Chinese characters, is primarily a tool for marking Chinese syllables, distinguishing tones, and promoting the use of Mandarin. Given the simplicity of the Chinese phonetic syllable system, many businesses adopt the pinyin model for their store names for reasons of convenience and aesthetic appeal. However, there are clear differences between pinyin-based trademarks and English-language trademarks. English trademarks often have multiple corresponding translations for Chinese characters, whereas pinyin trademarks, despite their phonetic resemblance, may have very different meanings, apart from their visual similarity to the original characters. Therefore, it is important not to assume that pinyin trademarks are equivalent to English trademarks simply because they appear similar.

## 5. Discussion: Language Services Strategies Embodied in the Language Landscape

This chapter studies the translation of Binzhou City's language landscape to find out its characteristics and influencing factors in the process of translation.

### 5.1 Information Transfer

As introduced earlier, the concept of "language landscape" may be unfamiliar to some, yet it is omnipresent. The primary function of the language landscape is the transmission of information. Street signs, for example, communicate road names, orienting individuals and guiding them to their destinations. For instance, if the destination is Binzhou Library, located at No. 662 Huanghe 12 Road, Binzhou City, a pedestrian who encounters the "Yellow River 12 Road" sign will be able to assess the distance to their destination and make informed decisions regarding their route. Similarly, bus stop signs convey location-specific information, helping passengers determine which bus to take and at which stop to disembark, thereby facilitating effective information transfer. For example, in investigating the commercial language landscape of Binzhou Department Store, taking the second bus from Binzhou City can further enhance the commercial interests associated with the language landscape, thus serving *its purpose in information transmission*.

### 5.2 Cultural Dissemination

Chinese culture, with its rich and profound history, spans over 5,000 years. Unlike the nearly extinct cultures of ancient civilizations like Egypt or India, Chinese culture has continuously evolved, nurtured by both time and its inherent ability to adapt. Various cultural elements have developed simultaneously, often complementing, learning from, and influencing one another. The Yellow River, which flows through Shandong Province, is central to the development of Chinese civilization and has made the province a significant cultural hub. During the Warring States Period, Shandong was under the jurisdiction of the Qi State, which gave rise to Qilu culture—a tradition that continues to play a prominent role in the cultural fabric of

the region.

This rich cultural heritage is evident in the language landscape of Binzhou City, where local road names serve not only as geographical markers but also as carriers of cultural meaning. For example, the naming of "Yellow River Twelve Road" reflects both the geographical positioning and the cultural significance of the Yellow River, a symbol of Chinese civilization. The use of the Yellow River in the road name serves to transmit cultural information and enhances the effect of cultural dissemination.

In addition to incorporating symbols and elements of Chinese culture into road names, another key aspect of the language landscape's role in cultural dissemination is through its aesthetic presentation. This is particularly evident in the language landscape associated with Sun Tzu's Art of War tourist site in Binzhou City. The fonts used for signs at this location differ from those found in public facilities such as street signs and bus stop signs. Rather than modern printed fonts, the signs feature lettering on plaques, which enhances their aesthetic appeal and reflects the ancient art of Chinese calligraphy and lettering. This unique presentation serves not only as a visual tribute to Chinese cultural heritage but also contributes to the broader goal of cultural dissemination.

### *5.3 Policy Advocacy*

Although there is no unified definition of language policy in academic circles, it is clear that the formulation of a country's language policy aims to achieve specific interests, with the national language serving as a symbol of the country and its people. The "Hanyu Pinyin Plan," implemented by China in 1958, established regulations regarding the phonetic transcription of proper names, including those of persons, places, ethnic groups, and institutions.

In 1979, the United Nations Secretariat issued a "Notice on the Adoption of Chinese Pinyin," which mandated that Hanyu Pinyin be used as the standard for transcribing personal and place names in the People's Republic of China. This decision meant that Hanyu Pinyin would become the "foreign language version" of Chinese names and place names. In 1982, Hanyu Pinyin was formally recognized as the international standard (ISO 7098: Chinese Roman Alphabet Spelling). According to this standard, all countries and regions using Chinese must employ Hanyu Pinyin when transcribing Chinese names and place names. The "Hanyu Pinyin Scheme" thus became a unified standard for the Romanized spelling of Chinese names, place names, and documents, especially in contexts where Chinese characters are impractical or unavailable.

Additionally, Xue Guang (2017) reports that, in the more than 30 years since 1978, the National People's Congress, the State Council, and relevant state departments have issued a series of regulations, totaling ten, with the central theme being the promotion of "Chinese Pinyin." Furthermore, six regulations explicitly prohibit the use of English spelling and Chinese phonetic spelling for Chinese place names, though these are not discussed here due to space constraints. These regulations highlight that, despite the increasing trend of internationalization and the push for bilingual language landscapes (especially in Chinese and English), the state continues to emphasize the use of Chinese in official signage. This reflects the state's ideological priorities, as the language landscape serves both as a medium for information transmission and as a tool for propagating state policies.

Furthermore, the role of language landscapes in promoting public health awareness has been increasingly evident in recent years. For example, during a field survey of the language landscape in Binzhou City, the researcher observed the presence of banners displaying epidemic prevention slogans at major public locations during the COVID-19 pandemic. These banners conveyed important information to citizens, urging vigilance and providing guidelines on preventing the spread of the virus. Such language landscape features not only serve informational purposes but also contribute to public policy communication, underscoring the role of language landscapes in supporting governmental health initiatives.

### *5.4 Cultural Image*

This field study focuses on the cultural phenomena conveyed through the language landscape of the Binzhou Hebanshan National Forest Park. The language used in the park's signs adopts a practical style, which aligns with the nature of tourism-related texts. As such, the internal and external factors influencing the language landscape in this context are similar to those found in tourism-related texts. In her framework for purpose-oriented text analysis, Nord (1997) categorizes the factors influencing the translation of a text into two groups: extratextual and intratextual. Extratextual factors include the sender and intention of the text, the intended recipients, the medium, and the motivation for communication. Intratextual factors, on the other hand, include the text's theme, content, structure, vocabulary, and syntactic features. A translator must analyze both sets of factors to determine the translation's function and choose the appropriate translation strategy.

During the on-site investigation, it was observed that the language landscape signs in the park primarily fall into the following categories: landscape names, landscape descriptions, street signs, guide signs, and warning signs. Due to the specific nature

of the environment, most of the Chinese text on the signs is concise and specialized, serving primarily to transmit information and promote public awareness. A unique feature of this type of translation is that both the source and target languages are used within the same context. A challenge for translators arises when too much "foreignization" is used, as this may hinder the target language audience, particularly tourists, from achieving their communicative goals within the limited space available on the signs.

### 5.5 Summary

This section provides a summary of the language landscape in Binzhou City, as discussed above. Public spaces in Binzhou, such as subway stations and airports, generally feature bilingual signs that are accurate and well-established. This is largely due to the oversight of the government and the regulatory efforts of relevant institutions. However, it should be noted that the bilingual signage of some individual vendors on Binzhou's streets does not adhere to standard language norms. Many shops use translations of their names that are vague or do not effectively convey the intended message. Additionally, at tourist sites like Hebanshan, there is an issue with incomplete English signage. On a positive note, the signage at Binzhou Wanda Plaza serves as an excellent example of standardized language practices.

In conclusion, while language services in Binzhou have made significant progress, there is still substantial room for improvement and future development. The language landscape serves as a direct reflection of a region's political, economic, and cultural dynamics. Through the language landscape, one can observe Binzhou's vibrant growth as well as the challenges it faces in the process of globalization. As a key tool in the city's internationalization efforts, the language landscape should be uniformly regulated. To this end, appropriate laws and regulations based on language domain theory and language management theory should be enacted to maintain and promote Binzhou's city image.

## 6. Pedagogical Implications for English Language Teaching

The study of language landscapes—public signage, official directives, and commercial displays—provides a unique lens through which the interaction between language policy, cultural values, and commercial interests can be examined. In Binzhou City, the language landscape reflects a blend of cultural identity, regulatory standards, and market-driven forces, offering a rich area for empirical research. This section explores the implications of these findings for university-level English language teaching, particularly in preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of culturally and linguistically diverse environments.

### 6.1 Cultural Imagery in the Language Landscape

Cultural imagery within language landscapes conveys the collective identity of a place. In Binzhou, public signage often incorporates elements of traditional Chinese aesthetics alongside bilingual translations, aiming to balance local heritage with international accessibility. Street signs, government buildings, and public spaces prominently feature Chinese characters, frequently accompanied by English translations. This bilingualism is not purely functional but also acts as a bridge for cultural exchange, symbolizing respect for cultural heritage while fostering global accessibility.

For college students, exposure to such culturally rich visual cues offers valuable language-learning opportunities. Understanding the nuances of translation between Chinese and English can deepen students' appreciation of the cultural values embedded in language. By analyzing how translations preserve or modify cultural references, students are encouraged to explore language as both a tool of communication and a vessel for cultural meaning. This approach fosters a deeper connection between language and cultural context, which is essential in developing students' intercultural competence.

### 6.2 Language Policy and Public Signage: The Influence of Regulatory Language

The regulatory framework governing Binzhou's language landscape is in line with national language policies, such as the Hanyu Pinyin system. Implemented in 1958 and later adopted as an international standard, Hanyu Pinyin ensures the consistent transcription of Chinese place names and personal names. These policies not only promote uniformity but also contribute to the creation of a national linguistic identity, emphasizing the importance of a shared language.

For university-level English education, examining the impact of language policy within the context of language landscapes can enrich students' understanding of the relationship between language and governance. Policy-driven language usage on public signage exemplifies how governments use language to organize society and shape cultural perceptions. By studying the evolution of language policies and their influence on public signage, students can gain valuable insights into how linguistic regulations affect public communication and shape the linguistic landscape they encounter. This knowledge enhances students' awareness of the broader socio-political contexts in which language operates.

### 6.3 Commercial Values and the Language Landscape

In the commercial sector, the language landscape often reflects the dynamic interaction between market demands and linguistic inclusivity. In Binzhou, bilingual signage in department stores, shopping districts, and transport hubs serves both practical and commercial purposes. For example, English is frequently used on promotional signage and storefront displays to attract foreign tourists or English-speaking residents. This highlights how commercial motivations drive the use of multilingual signage.

Understanding this commercial dimension of the language landscape is particularly valuable for college students, especially those studying business English or marketing. By observing how businesses utilize language to broaden their appeal, students can see real-world examples of English's role in global commerce. Furthermore, analyzing the effectiveness of bilingual and sometimes multilingual signage provides insights into how language choices can influence consumer behavior, a key aspect of commercial strategy.

#### 6.4 Pedagogical Implications: Applying Empirical Findings to English Teaching

The empirical study of Binzhou's language landscape offers valuable insights into English language teaching. Integrating findings from linguistic landscape research into the curriculum provides students with opportunities to analyze real-world linguistic phenomena. By examining public signage and commercial language usage in Binzhou, students can develop a deeper understanding of translation practices, cultural sensitivity, and compliance with language policies.

One practical application involves case studies focused on translation accuracy and cultural adaptation. For instance, students could analyze the language used on signage for public facilities or transportation, assessing how effectively it communicates essential information. Exercises involving the translation of similar signage for hypothetical international audiences could further enhance students' language skills, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness.

Moreover, understanding the influence of language policies on public communication helps students appreciate the complexities of linguistic regulation. This awareness is crucial in a globalized world, where language policies and multilingualism are integral to international communication.

### 7. Conclusion

This research conducts a field investigation of Binzhou's language landscape through the lens of linguistic landscape studies and Newmark's translation theory. By analyzing the development of domestic and international language landscapes in the context of globalization, and using survey sampling as data support, the study explores the language service strategies reflected in the quasi-language landscape.

Overall, Binzhou's language landscape reveals five primary language service strategies: information transmission, cultural communication, policy publicity, tourism impression building, and commercial value acquisition. However, in the context of internationalization, there are areas for improvement—specifically, the limited presence of bilingual signage and inconsistencies in translation, which highlight the need for further development. These issues suggest a new direction for the evolution of the language landscape in Binzhou.

Binzhou's language landscape offers a valuable empirical case for examining the intersection of language, culture, policy, and commerce. The cultural imagery found on street signs, the policy-driven consistency of Hanyu Pinyin, and the commercial role of English all provide insights that can be directly applied to English teaching at the college level. By incorporating elements of Binzhou's language landscape into classroom discussions and activities, educators can enhance students' linguistic and cultural literacy. This approach prepares students to navigate and appreciate multilingual landscapes, both domestically and internationally, and fosters a generation of informed, culturally sensitive individuals capable of engaging with the complexities of a globalized world.

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