

## Translation Quality Assessment of Public Signs: Case of Kerman Province

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### Abstract

The present study has analyzed the translation of public signs in Kerman and some cities (Mahan, Zarand, Rafsanjan, and Sharbabak) around it. To do this, 100 public signs of the mentioned cities were randomly selected by the researchers, and the data of this project were collected and evaluated based on Nord's (2001) model. This research was generally intended to investigate these signs from linguistic and cultural levels. Also, highlighting the frequency of the errors and identifying the shortcomings of the English translations were the other objectives of the study. Data were collected by the researchers and processed through the SPSS software. In other words, the descriptive data included frequencies and percentages represented by the corresponding tables and figures. The results of this study indicated that most of the errors were related to the cultural level. That is to say, "informativeness" and "word-for-word translation" were the most frequent types of all. Moreover, some shortcomings of the Persian translations were analyzed and interpreted by the researchers.

*Keywords:* Translation Strategy; Sign; Public Signs

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### 1. Introduction

The use of language as a means of communication is widespread across the world. We meet people's lives, cultures, and symbolic systems in the era of communication, sometimes through signs. As more people travel,

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the tourism business flourishes in many parts of the world (Ko, 2010). It is crucial to have English translations of signs alongside their original counterparts since English is now an international language and facilitates communication between individuals from various linguistic communities versions (Feng, Lv, & Zhou, 2004). Translation has been viewed as a creative process by certain academics, including Marani et al. (2012). This illustrated the importance, complexities, and problems of translation. Without a thorough investigation, it would be challenging to comprehend the source and target languages. In a nation like Iran, where English is not the native tongue, translating public signs into English is a means for people who are largely passing through and do not speak Persian to communicate.

It should be mentioned that multilingual signage is becoming more commonplace in various public areas of most cities. It appears that many of these signs have not been translated by native English speakers or professional translators. Additionally, you may see improper English use on such signs everywhere, which causes a lot of issues with communication. Additionally, the signage may not always provide English speakers with the information they need, which adds to their confusion and irritation. Because inaccurate or incomplete translation may affect and distort the message, a translator is obliged to convey the exact meaning. Mistranslation also creates a barrier to communication since a foreigner could not understand the sign's exact meaning; for this reason, it's critical to examine public signs and look for any errors based on the Nord's (2001) principle. By examining the translation of signs in public areas, we come across several mistakes and mistranslations whose examination enables us to identify their root causes and, consequently, hunt for answers. The translation of public signage in Kerman and several nearby cities was thus examined and assessed in the current study (Mahan, Zarand, Rafsanjan, and Sharbabak). Based on Nord's (2001) paradigm, the primary goal of the current study is to identify and examine the translation of public signs in Kerman and several nearby cities (Mahan, Zarand, Rafsanjan, and Sharbabak). In other words, the research made an effort to look into how accurate each warning was. It also looked at the flaws in the translation's street signage.

Christiane Nord, a famous German theorist, holds that only a translation error can hamper the aim of translation to have a specific function for the readers in the target language. That is to say, translation errors can be classified into four categories, namely, “linguistic translation errors, cultural translation errors, pragmatic translation errors, and text-

specific translation errors” (Nord, 2001, p. 28). Similarly, the errors of public signs are divided into three major types, namely, linguistic translation errors, cultural translation errors, and pragmatic translation errors. Among them, linguistic errors are often due to deficiencies in the translator's source or target language competence (Nord, 2001). As for the linguistic translation errors, the first kind is the misspelling Problem. These errors or typos are due to the carelessness of translators or printers. The second kind is the grammatical problems. Grammatical rules, being just the organizers of words, which are considered the foundation of a language, are quite important during the process of translating. Therefore, the translated public signs having grammatical errors usually make foreigners feel perplexed about their intended meaning of them. Besides that, some of these linguistic translation problems are restricted to language pairs, as might be the case of cognates or false friends. Nord thinks that contrastive grammar and comparative stylistics can provide valuable help in solving these problems (Nord, 2001). For a successful translator, being familiar with two cultures is even more important than mastering two languages because language is the carrier of culture and translation is also an exchange of two cultures. Thus, words can only be meaningful in their cultural background. To make an accurate and reasonable translation, the translator should put language inappropriate cultural background in translation and shift the cultural perspective from their country to that of the target culture. Only after that the linguistic and cultural barrier can be overcome. Sometimes one may come across the circumstance that during the process of translation practice, namely, the words of the source text don't have their equivalent counterparts in the target text.

## **2. Literature Review**

“Transferring a written text from SL to TL in a particular socio-cultural context” is what Hatim and Munday (2004, p. 7) define as translation. As Luo and Li (2006) noted, sign translation is a practical issue, and researchers must pinpoint the fundamental issues and suggest workable solutions. In order to generate meaningful answers, specialized translation procedures are frequently required to address the issues that arise while translating signs, particularly those that have distinctive qualities. According to Ko (2010), translating signs is a common requirement in the tourism industry. The need for translation grows together with the number of visitors. The preparation of multilingual signage in public areas is crucial so that visitors may locate what they need and make judgments

about their choices in a strange nation with less risk. The majority of multilingual signage employs English, a worldwide language that is used by every tourist destination to interact with other people. Because of this, English translations of signage may be found in various locations. Written or spoken translation is an important part of human communication. The disputes between a literal and free translation that Cicero had, Horace's rejection of literal translation, and St. Jerome's Latin translation of the Bible are where the history of translation practice begins (Munday, 2001). Despite the fact that the study of translation has a very long history, translation is a relatively recent field of study that just began to receive serious attention in the second half of the 20th century. It's important to note that a significant amount of recent research on the subject of translation studies has arisen from a lack of contentment with the way translation has been handled. In his well-known publication, *"The Name and Nature of Translation Studies"* Holmes (1988) introduced the name Translation Studies (TS) for the novel scientific methodology (as cited in Hatim & Munday, 2004).

Public sign research is often conducted from the perspective of the "linguistic landscape," examining difficulties with language policy and multilingualism (e.g., Backhaus, 2006; Cenoz & Gorter, 2006; Gorter, 2006). The translation theories of text typology, functional equivalence theory, and Skopos theory have been largely used by researchers to do a study on public sign translation from various angles. First, a typology theory adapted from Karl Bühler's concept of language functions was put up by German translator Katharina Reiss. The German scholar classified writings into three categories: those that were focused on reader effect, linguistic form, and substance or information. According to researchers, the approach to translation was determined by the type of text. British academic Newmark (1988), who also relied on Bühler's (1990) model of language functions, differentiated various text kinds and translation methodologies two years after the release of her paper "Translation Criticism: The Potentials and Limitations" (Reiss, 2004). Their ideas are very similar, despite the fact that their nomenclature and classifications differ. They both believed that texts could be categorized according to how the language is used, that the kind of text determines the translation strategy, and that both the function and the type of text are fixed. Some earlier research has used text typology to direct sign translation (Mei-fang, 2009; Qunxing & Xiaowei, 2011).

Second, a pragmatic theory was used for public sign translation by Huai-kui and Huai-hong (2004), Jian-gang and Jian-hua (2005), and

Shuying (2006). These authors emphasized pragmatic equivalence and strongly suggested using a pragmatic translation approach. It stresses the transfer of "pragmatic meaning" and focuses on the "pragmatic equivalence" of content expressions, which highlights the social pragmatic equivalence of cultural and linguistic communication. The translation of street signs has reached a new level as the emphasis has shifted from the content itself to cultural and environmental differences. However, a study on the pragmatic equivalence of public sign translation omitted a significant issue: "Should the translator continue to use the method of equivalence if the original text involves pragmatic failure?" In actuality, this is an essential requirement for pragmatic equivalence research: If the speaker/writer doesn't use the right words at the right time and in the right way, is it the translator's job to fix it? In the actual world, this is a useful query. German academics Reiss, Vermeer, and Nord, proposed and advanced the Skopos Theory. According to the Skopos Theory, which is founded on behavioral theory, translation is a human activity with certain goals and objectives. The goal of the translation affects every step of the translation process, including the choice of translation techniques. The intended function of the source material is the most significant aspect in determining the translation goal. Under the influence of functionalism, Qiu-rong and Min-xia (2008) and Hong (2007) examined public sign translation and recommended translating in accordance with the objective of the sign. Skopos's theory also emphasizes the idea that "purpose chooses means," which may encourage the presence of different translation versions without establishing a superior one and may also serve as proof that poor translations exist. The theoretical review revealed that the fundamental necessity of translating public signs is poor cognition, which is the major source of issues in a theoretical study on public signals. Public sign translation is not the translation of a static text into several languages, and the translator should not employ the Skopos Theory or neglect the interaction between the source text and the translation, nor should they blindly pursue pragmatic equivalence, which is source text-centered. Additionally, several publications about translating public signs have been published, including works by well-known academics and translators like Zong-xian and Hefafa (2005) and Luo and Li (2006). Numerous academics do extensive study on this topic, and the results of their work have been compiled in books and journal articles. However, many articles about public signs only cover a single specific topic, such as how to understand and evaluate the original language or how to provide translation approaches (Jing-sheng, 2001).

The study aimed to seek appropriate answers to the following questions:

*Q1. To what extent is the translation of public signs accurate?*

*Q2. What are the shortcomings of the translations?*

### **3. Method**

The purpose of this study, which is a type of qualitative and descriptive corpus-based research, was to look into and analyze how public signs were translated in relation to Nord's theory. The researchers also made a point of identifying the common tactics and their flaws.

One hundred public signs from Kerman and several nearby cities make up the corpus of this study (Mahan, Zarand, Rafsanjan, and Sharbabak). This sample was compiled in order to demonstrate the severity of the problems with the Persian translation of street signs. The items had therefore been classified according to whether or not they include translation faults. The sample of public signs exclusively featured bilingual Persian-English translations; neither Persian-only nor English-only public signs were included because they were beyond the purview of this study and had no bearing on the translation process. The purpose of this research was to analyze the public signs using Nord's methods that were being used for the project. The following actions were performed to gather and evaluate data with a view to achieving the goals of this study. As previously indicated, 100 public signs from Kerman and several nearby places served as the source of the study's data (Mahan, Zarand, Rafsanjan, Sharbabak). Digital cameras were used to gather the data at various locations.

### **4. Results and Discussions**

In order to analyze data, first, the corpus - the source and target text - are analyzed in two sentences. Then, the signs in the Persian language are compared with their English counterparts. Some cases of the translation problems of public signs are justified below:

#### ***4.1. Problems on Linguistic Level***

Owing to the translator's casualness and unsoiled theoretical knowledge, the ridiculous linguistic mistakes are quite witnessed even in the big cities. Without the elimination of linguistic errors, the intended meaning of the original text of public signs is hard to achieve. As the causes of producing this language error are multifaceted, the linguistic

perspective errors are not easy to shake off, but it does not mean that we will allow this absurd mistake.

#### 4.1.1. Spelling Errors

Spelling mistake is one of the commonest errors in the collected public signs translation, which results from the carelessness and irresponsibility of the translators or painters. All these mistakes not merely make the readers puzzled about the related information they indicate but also impress the foreigners terribly. What we need to do is to pay more attention to the translation and spend more time checking after translating each time.

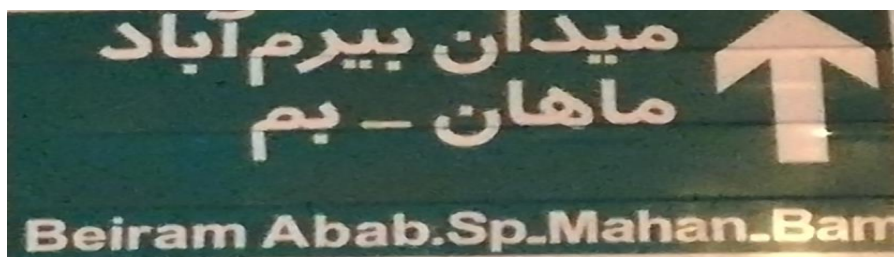


Figure 1. Spelling error

In the above sign, the translator has to use Sq. as the abbreviation of Square.

#### 4.1.2. Diction Errors

Diction, concerning the choice and use of the words, is determined by the context and the literary style. Generally, the words of public signs are very brief but informative. As for English and Persian, both languages are quite rich in vocabulary, properties, and specific cultural backgrounds but express the same ideas, thoughts, denotative and connotation meaning. However, two or more words in both languages share the same denotation but convey different connotations. That is to say, they are different in meaning because of their cultural background.



Figure 2. Diction Errors

From a linguistic level, a Sport Society is not acceptable; an amusement complex or amusement park is the better equivalence for it.

#### 4.1.3. Grammatical errors

Mistakes in grammar are usually caused by the language incompetence of the translators, and grammatical mistakes are usually eye-catching, so avoiding such errors is the fundamental prerequisite for translators. Commonly seen grammatical errors are the misuse of the part of speech of words.

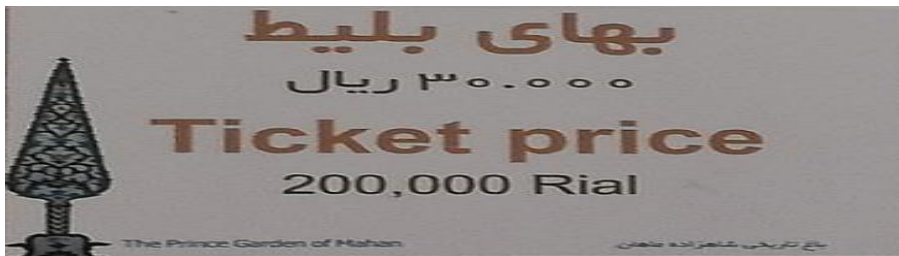


Figure 3. Grammatical errors

At the linguistic level, the above sign has a grammatical error. Rial has to be plural because English is different from Persian, and the counting nouns such as (Rial, Dollar, etc.) have to be plural after the number more than one.

#### 4.1.4. Lexical errors



Figure 4. Lexical errors

In the selected sign, the translator used some equivalences which are not usually used in the English language.

### 4.2. Problems on the cultural Level

There are some techniques for the public signs' translation in terms of the cultural vacuity, such as borrowing, employment of explanation, and use of Pinyin plus Free Translation. If he does not have the beliefs and practices of other cultures, a translator's perspective of the world must be tragically restricted. Nida thinks that if it were not for the many



misunderstandings about the language and culture, cross-cultural understanding could be reached without obstacles. Because words are only meaningful in the cultures, the successful translation method should be biculturalism instead of bilingualism. (Nida, 2000)

#### 4.2.1. Poor Acceptability



Figure 5. Poor Acceptability

Sh is used for Shahid, which is unclear for a reader from other countries.

#### 4.2.2. Harsh Tone (Command Rather Than Request)



Figure 6. Harsh Tone

In this sign, the translation tried to command the content of the service rather than request it.

#### 4.2.3. Informativeness

##### 4.2.3.1. Eyeball-effect



Figure 7. Informativeness

منحصر به فرد should be used for Unique or exclusive

#### 4.2.3.2. Evaluating all Signs

As mentioned before, the researchers selected 100 public signs in some cities, and translations of the signs were investigated and evaluated carefully by them. The results are provided in this part.

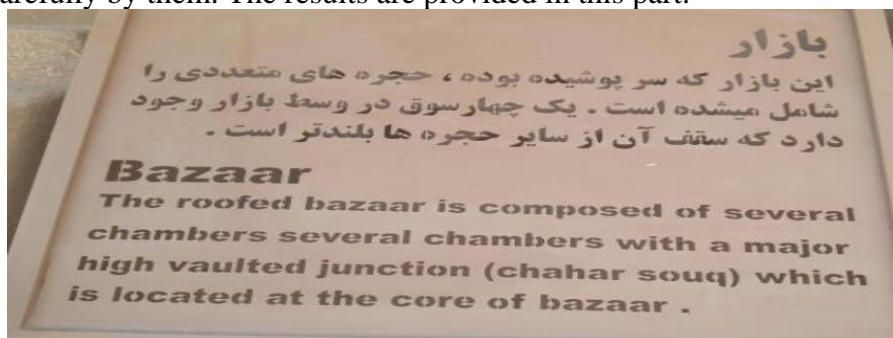


Figure 8. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

1- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 9. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

2- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels



Figure 10. Translation of street sign

3- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels



Figure 11. Translation of Road sign

4- (poor acceptability) Sh is used for "Shahid," which is unclear.



Figure 12. Translation of public sign, poor acceptability

5- (poor acceptability) EXP is unclear for readers.



Figure 13. Translation of public sign, poor acceptability

- 6- From a cultural level, "Garden Shohada" is Word-for-word Translation which is unacceptable. The correct translation is "Shohada Garden." From a linguistic level, it is grammatically wrong.



Figure 14. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

- 7- From a cultural level, it is a Word-for-word Translation that is unacceptable and unclear for visitors.



Figure 15. Translation of public sign, Word-for-word Translation

- 8- From a cultural level, it is a Word-for-word Translation that is unacceptable and unclear for visitors.



Figure 16. Translation of public sign, Word-for-word Translation

- 9- "Police way" is Word-for-word Translation, and the correct translation is highway police which has been used in many public Signs in Iran.



Figure 17. Translation of public sign, Word-for-word Translation

- 10- From a linguistic aspect, ST. is incorrect, and the correct abbreviation for Street is Str. Or St. (Spelling error)



Figure 18. Translation of public sign, Spelling error

- 11- From a cultural level, the sign is poorly acceptable, and the translator has to use "Holy shrine" instead of "Emamzadeh."



Figure 19. Translation of public sign, poorly acceptable

- 12- "آستان مقدس" is omitted and is not translated, so it is not acceptable for a reader.



Figure 20. Translation of public sign

- 13- As the sign shows, "نگهبانی" is omitted and is not translated, so it is not acceptable for a reader.



Figure 21. Translation of public sign

- 14- From a linguistic level, the word "Dome" is an incorrect equivalence for "مخزن".



Figure 22. Translation of public sign(15), incorrect equivalence

15- 18 From linguistic level, "Danger" is incorrect equivalence for "احتیاط".



Figure 23. Translation of public sign, incorrect equivalence

16- "In a specific period has used as a mint" is grammatically incorrect because the selected sentence has not a subject, and the correct one is "In a specific period, it has been used as a mint."



Figure 24. Translation of public sign, grammatically incorrect

17- From linguistic aspects, "Art decorated" is incorrect, and it has to be corrected as "Decorative Arts" (Dictation error).



Figure 25. Translation of public sign, linguistic aspect

18- From grammatical aspects, "22th Bahman" is the correct equivalence for it.



Figure 26. Translation of public sign, equivalence

19- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 27. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

20- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels



Figure 28. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels



- 21- From a cultural level, word-for-word translation is used. The word "بنا" is not translated in part. Also, "استاد" is translated as "Ostad," which is not acceptable.



Figure 29. Translation of public sign, word-for-word translation

- 22- As mentioned before, from a cultural level, word-for-word translation is used.



Figure 30. Translation of public sign, word-for-word translation

- 23- "Cutting Turquoise" is the correct equivalence for "فیروزه تراشی" and "Natural" is meaningless (Informative).



Figure 31. Translation of public sign, correct equivalence

- 24- Unique or exclusive should be used for "منحصر به فرد" (poor acceptability or eyeball effect).



Figure 32. Translation of public sign, poor acceptability

- 25- This building is incorrect. Recurring light is incorrect, and "Light supply" is the better translation for this part (poor acceptability) "حجاری" is omitted (Informativeness).



Figure 33. Translation of public sign, Informativeness

- 26- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 34. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels.

27- Word-for-word translation is used, and it is better to replace "Hendooha" with "Indian" in the text.



Figure 35. Translation of public sign, Word-for-word translation

28- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.

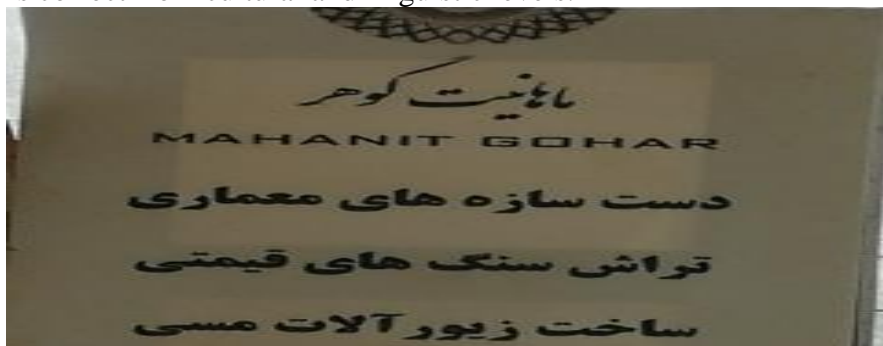


Figure 36. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels.

29- Word-for-word translation is used in the above sign. Moreover, the other phrases are not translated.

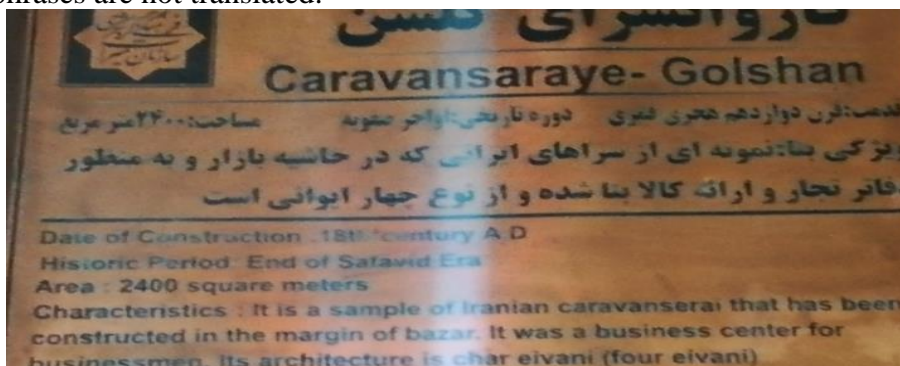


Figure 37. Translation of public sign, Word-for-word translation

30- From a linguistic level, "eivan" is incorrect. "Porch" should be used (Dictation errors).



Figure 38. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

31- From a linguistic level, "Serai" is incorrect (Dictation errors).



Figure 39. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

32- From a linguistic level, it has a grammar error. The correct one is "Sepah Bank."



Figure 40. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

33- In the above sign "مرکزی" is omitted from the source text (Informativeness).



Figure 41. Translation of public sign, Informativeness

34- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 42. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

35- "Dept" is added to the above text (Informativeness).



Figure 43. Translation of public sign, Informativeness

36- From a linguistic level, it has a grammatical error, and "City" as an adjective should not be plural.



Figure 44. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

37- In this sign, "بافت قدیم شهر" is omitted. It is informativeness from cultural aspects.



Figure 45. Translation of public sign, cultural aspects.

38- In the above sign, "مقبره مشتاق علیشاه" is omitted from the above text, so it is informativeness from cultural aspects.



Figure 46. Translation of public sign, cultural aspects.

39- From a linguistic level, it is a grammatical error, and " 's" is wrong.



Figure 47. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

40- "Sports society" is a wrong equivalence for "مجتمع فرهنگی" (Diction error).

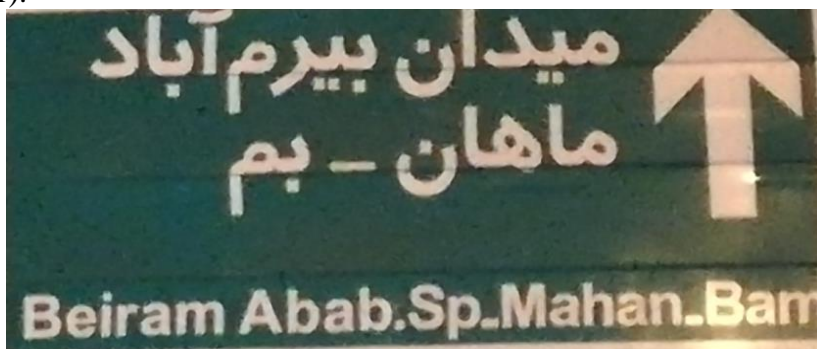


Figure 48. Translation of public sign, Diction error

41- From a linguistic level, it has a spelling error. "Sq" is correct.



Figure 49. Translation of public sign, spelling error

42- From a linguistic level, it has a dictation error. Catering is incorrect, and the restaurant is the better equivalence.



Figure 50. Translation of public sign, dictation error

43- From a linguistic level, it has a grammatical error.

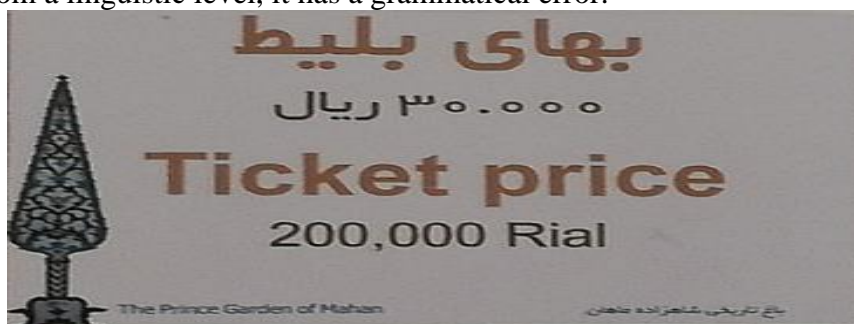


Figure 51. Translation of public sign, linguistic level

44- From a linguistic level, it has a grammatical error. "Rials" is correct.



Figure 52. Translation of public sign, linguistic level



- 45- There is a dictation error. "Reception" means پذیرش in Persian. So "Hotel Reservation" is the correct equivalence.



Figure 53. Translation of public sign, dictation error

- 46- There is a dictation error. The information base is incorrect. Information Center has to be used.



Figure 54. Translation of public sign, dictation error

- 47- The word "مقبره" has been omitted. So, it is informativeness from a cultural level.



Figure 55. Translation of public sign, informativeness

48- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 56. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

49- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 57. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

50- There is a grammatical error with this sign. "Cultural heritage" is correct.



Figure 58. Translation of public sign, grammatical error

51- Harsh tone. It is acceptable in Persian culture, but it cannot be understood by tourists from other countries with different cultures.



Figure 59. Translation of public sign, cultural level

52- The equivalences are not very common in the target language; it has some problems from the lexical level.



Figure 60. Translation of public sign, lexical level

53- From a linguistic level, it has a dictation error.



Figure 61. Translation of public sign, dictation error

54- From a cultural level, it is poorly acceptable, and the restaurant is better.



Figure 62. Translation of public sign, cultural level

55- It is a word-for-word translation.



Figure 63. Translation of public sign, word-for-word translation

56- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 64. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

57- There is a grammatical error, "Keshavarzi Bank" is the correct one.



Figure 65. Translation of public sign, grammatical error

58- In the above sign, "موسسه اعتباری" is omitted from the text, so the reader cannot receive the meaning of the sign.



Figure 66. Translation of public sign

59- In the above sign "سنتی" is omitted, so it is informativeness, and the better equivalence is "Traditional Hotel."



Figure 67. Translation of public sign, informativeness

60- It is correct from cultural and linguistic levels.



Figure 68. Translation of public sign, cultural and linguistic levels

61- It is a word-for-word translation.



Figure 69. Translation of public sign, word-for-word translation

62- From a cultural level, it is informativeness because two synonym words are used in this part. From a linguistic level, it has a grammatical error.



Figure 70. Translation of public sign, grammatical error

63- "Entrance" is the correct equivalence, so it has a Dictation error.



Figure 71. Translation of public sign, dictation error

64- From the linguistic level, there is a dictation error. "تفریحی و پذیرایی" is omitted.

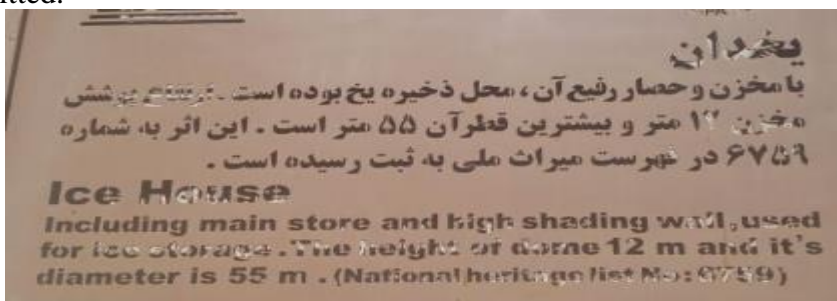


Figure 72. Translation of public sign, dictation error

### 4.3. Descriptive Results of the study

All the signs were investigated and examined carefully by the researchers, and the related tables and diagrams are presented here. Also, this part provided a comparison table and diagram for comparing the two categories in terms of translation errors.

Table 1. Frequency of Accuracy of Public Signs from Cultural Level

Cultural level	Frequency of Strategies	Percentage
Word-for-word Translation	11	11%
Poor Acceptability	1	1%
Harsh Tone	2	2%
Informativeness	16	16%
Eyeball-effect	1	1%

According to Table 1, 11 out of 100 (11%) cases of the translation belonged to the application of the word-for-word strategy. The most frequent strategy in this translation is informativeness with 16 cases. Poor Acceptability, Harsh Tone and Eyeball-effect were used in 1, 2, and 1 case, respectively. Moreover, Figure 73 shows the percentage of each strategy.

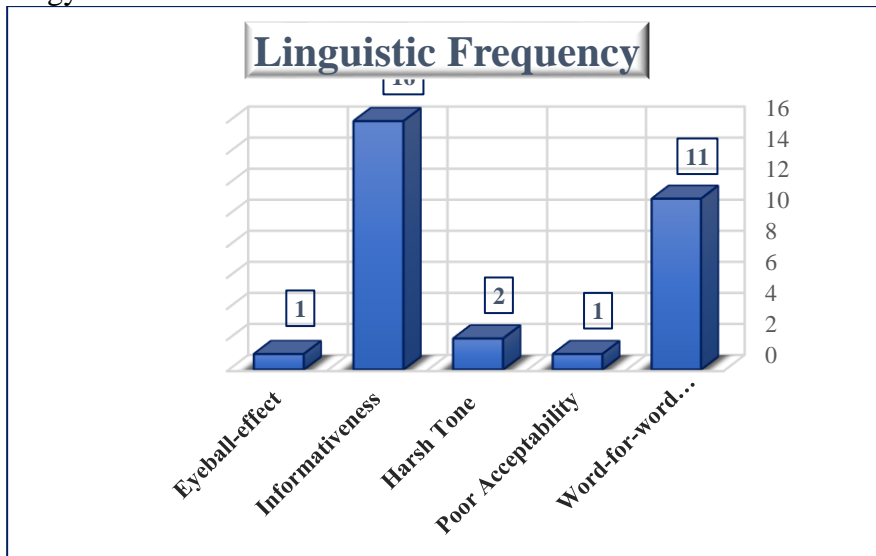


Figure 73. Percentage of Accuracy of Public Signs from Cultural Level

Table 2. *Frequency of the Accuracy of Public Signs from Linguistic Level*

Linguistic level	Frequency of Strategies	Percentage
Spelling errors	2	2%
Diction Errors	14	14%
Grammatical errors	15	15%
Lexical errors	2	2%

In the above Table, 14 out of 100 (14%) cases of inaccuracy belonged to the diction error. The most frequent strategy in this translation is grammatical errors. Also, Spelling errors and Lexical errors were used in 2 and 2, respectively. Figure 74 shows the percentage of each strategy.



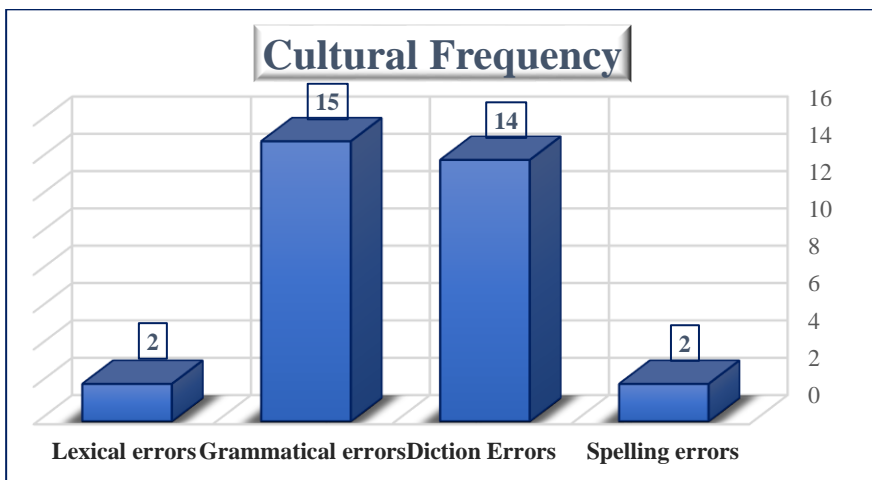


Figure 74. Percentage of the Accuracy of Public Signs from Linguistic Level

Table 3. *Difference between Linguistic and Cultural Levels*

Inaccuracy in signs	Frequency	Percentage
Linguistic level	31	31%
Cultural level	33	33%
Correct signs	36	36%

As you can see in the Table, most of the signs (36 cases) are correct. Thirty-three signs have some errors from the cultural level; however, 31 cases have linguistics errors. The following figure indicates the difference between linguistic and cultural Levels.

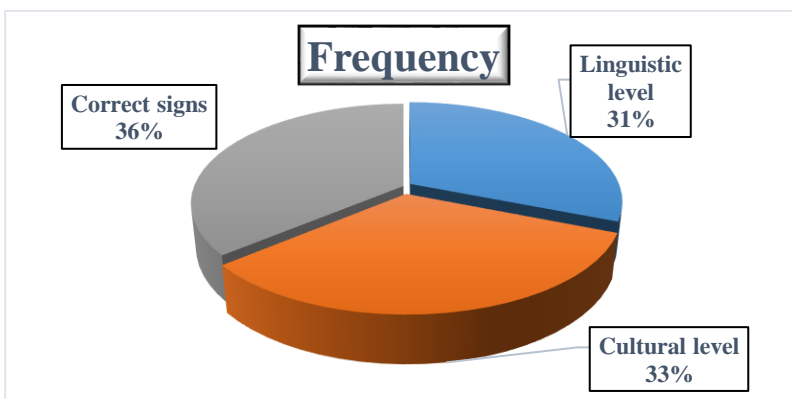


Figure 75. *Difference between Linguistic and Cultural Levels*

As noted above, the purpose of the present study was to identify and analyze the translations of public signs based on the proposed model

(Nord, 2001). Based on the objectives of the study, two research questions were put.

### **Q1. To what extent is the translation of public signs accurate?**

Descriptive statistics displayed the strategies that were used in translations of different public signs. That is to say, all the signs were evaluated based on the two main categories; cultural level and linguistic level. Based on the related tables (.1 & .2), all the problems of the two categories with different frequencies were found in rendering English translations. Table .1 examined the problems related to a cultural level that "informativeness" placed at the first rank with 16 frequencies and was widely used by translators for translating public signs in Kerman and some cities around it. After that, the procedure that was used more widely as "word for word translation" was placed at the second rank with 11 frequencies. Then, "harsh tone," with two frequencies found in the translation of the mentioned signs, received the third rank. Finally, "poor acceptability" and "eyeball effect" were set in the last rank with the same frequencies of 1. This study also surveyed other errors from the linguistic level as spelling, dictation, grammatical, and lexical errors. As table .2 displays, "grammatical errors" and "dictation errors" were identified more than the others. In other words, "grammatical errors" are set in the first rank, and "dictation errors" are placed in the second rank with frequencies of 15 and 14, respectively. Afterward, the other two mentioned errors, "spelling" and "lexical" errors, were recognized in the translation of public signs. The analysis showed that both types of errors received the same frequency of 2. Accordingly, it can be said that the errors of cultural level (33%) were found more than the linguistic ones (31%). However, 36% of all signs rendered the correct translation (Table 3).

### **Q2. What are the shortcomings of the translations?**

Bilingual public signs will function as a window of a city to display its local and distinctive culture and a bridge between the city and the outside world if they are completed in a way that can be acceptable to the audience abroad and at home (Meng, Lu, Li, & Liu, 2016). After a brief introduction of the functions and some common and frequent errors of the bilingual public signs, the current situation of public signs translation in Kerman and the cities around it illustrated deficiency. Totally, the quality of translation, which just paid attention to the source language and maintained the exact source message in the target text, is lower than the target language-oriented translations. In some of the selected public

signs, some abbreviations were used, which are unclear and unacceptable for a reader from foreign countries; for example, "Sh" is used for "Shahid" in some signs or EXP, which is unclear for readers. Moreover, some of the terms were deleted in English translation, for example, "موسسه"، "اعتباری"، "نگهبانی"، "آستان مقدس"، "مشتاقیه" were omitted in the related signs. Also, in some of the sign, the title of persons was not translated, which make them ambiguous for a tourist. For instance, the title of استاد is not translated into a sign.

More importantly, a "Word-for-word Translation" is found frequently in the selected signs, which is unacceptable and unclear for visitors. Some words as "آستانه"، "هندوها"، "آبگرم"، "پلیس راه"، "امام زاده"، "بوستان"، "گهر"، "بوستان" rendered word for word translation. Besides, dictation errors were identified in the translation of some signs as "تفریحی و پذیرایی"، "ورود"، "پایگاه" etc. Furthermore, grammatical errors were found in many of the signs, which is not acceptable. The roles of grammar are just the organizers of words during the process of translation. In the light of the angle of coherence rule, a satisfactory version of public signs translation should at least abide by the grammatical roles of the target language.

Some gross errors were seen in public signs, which is really unacceptable such as the first sign, in which a part of the sentence was repeated without any reason. Although in most of the public signs, the translators have tried to do their best, they have to use different methods in their translations to have some more explicit and acceptable translations because it is very important for a tourist to understand the city sign and find the address.

## 5. Conclusion

It is important to note that translating street signs involves adapting them to new lexical, semantic, and syntactic structures as well as new social and cultural settings. The quality of the translation of street signs will be improved by the dynamic adaptation to language and situation, leading to successful cross-cultural communication (Cheng, Wong, & Liu, 2013). Based on a well-known idea, the current study looked at the translation of street signs in several of the places indicated. The data analysis revealed that Iranian translators made more cultural-level errors than other translators, with this level accounting for the majority of the errors. Additionally, it should be noted that Iranian translators placed more emphasis on "word for word translation" and "informativeness," probably because some translators find it difficult to understand the original and turn to a word-for-word translation out of ignorance. A text

may also include more or less information than is necessary, which can result in information redundancy or text inaccessibility. These situations are referred to as faults in informativeness. The translator should do their best to maintain the cultural messages and, if required, to provide the cultural context in order to increase the informativeness of the communications translated from the source language to the target language.

The Iranian translators had more issues with grammar and dictation, according to an analysis of the language level. The fact that the grammar rules of the source and target languages differ may be the cause of their frequent usage of grammatical mistakes. The grammatical errors are typically the result of the translators' poor language skills, who simply translate the statement word for word without considering its grammatical and syntactical structure. More significantly, grammatical mistakes or poor word choices frequently lead to misinterpretation of street signs. The causes include a failure to comprehend the original material, a lack of knowledge of the background of the target culture, or even simple linguistic errors. A systematic checking process should be implemented to prevent diction errors. When translating public signs, the translators must ensure that the translation accurately reflects the circumstances (Nord, 2001). Additionally, this analysis uncovered several translation issues with street signage. Some of the examined indicators suggested that the translation of Persian cultural and linguistic concepts into English was insufficient and inappropriate. The phrase "using insufficient or inappropriate translation techniques" refers to amateur translators. Since these translators are not native speakers of the target language, they lack a thorough understanding of it. They employed various translation techniques that are inappropriate for interpreting street signs.

The findings of the present study confirm those of earlier research conducted by other researchers. Guo (2012) looked into the mistakes made in the English translation of Chinese street signs. He stated that grammatical faults tended to make up the majority of translation mistakes on street signs. Additionally, Jing (2012) asserted that the majority of issues with the translation of street signs are closely tied to cultural issues. He made notice of the two types of errors that are frequently seen in the translation of street signs, particularly those that have cultural roots. Additionally, a 2013 research by Cheng et al. evaluated the translation of street signs in Qingdao. He came to the conclusion that translators needed to become more fluent in English, particularly with regard to diction on a linguistic level, and pay greater attention to the issues with literal

translation and low cultural acceptability. It is impossible to dispute the importance of public signs in daily life, and the English translations of these signs are quite helpful and convenient for visitors. They are now a valuable tool for building a global reputation. The findings show that the English translation of these signs is currently not sufficient, and there are several examples of badly translated English signs that give foreign readers a confusing impression. Even if there are issues with the translation of bilingual street signs, it is encouraging to note that the academic community, the government, and even the general public have brought the matter to light and that it will soon become a public concern. The significance of public signs in international communication is rising. In order to better grasp the outside world throughout the process of cultural exchange, a comprehensive study of public signs and their translation will undoubtedly be very helpful. On the other side, standardizing the multilingual signage will also be a method for our culture to spread internationally and be internationalized (Cheng et al., 2013). By publishing this study, the researchers want to increase interest in the translation of street signs and encourage further worthwhile studies in this area.

The researchers attempted to conduct a comprehensive study on the translation of signs by Iranian translators in the few studies that have been conducted on the issue. Without question, there will be a lot of work to be done in the near future. Based on Nord's tactics, the current study looked at public signs that were translated from Persian to English. First and foremost, every translator has to be well-versed in both the source and target languages' cultures and languages. Information that has been incorrectly translated may disturb foreign readers and change their opinions about Iranian translators. More precisely, the translation offered by Iranian interpreters may alter and distort the perspectives of outsiders. In other words, improperly translated public signs convey unexpected and bizarre signals to readers who are not native speakers, which causes annoyance and bewilderment. The socio-cultural contrasts between the English and Persian languages, interference from the mother tongue, and linguistic inexperience of the translator are some of the causes of these sorts of problems.

Additionally, it takes time and effort to improve the quality of public sign translation, and it requires expertise. There is a need for their correction and treatment since the study's bilingual public signage has several faults in its translation. It is not recommended to just rely on bilingual dictionaries for sign translations because doing so would

typically result in an incorrect translation. In light of this, using a dictionary effectively can be one translation method. Dictionary equivalents might need to be further modified in order to effectively convey the SL meaning in a particular socio-cultural context. More significantly, it is best to avoid using translation tools like Google Translation. Public signs should be carefully translated since they may enlighten the reader or outsider to the richness of Persian culture. Finally, translators need to have a strong sense of duty and take their profession seriously. It should be noted that translating street signs is just as challenging as translating other types of texts. In this case, it is up to the translators to become more fluent in both the source and destination languages in order to convey the signals' intended meanings. It is envisaged that the translator would look for the best and most acceptable equivalences given the expanding availability of online information bases.

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