

**Research Article**

Construction of Language Landscape in Newly Built Ancient Cities: A Case of Yizhou Ancient City, China

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Received: 24/10/2023

Revised: 22/11/2023

Accepted: 26/11/2023

Published: 25/12/2023

**Keywords:**Language landscape
Investigation and perspective
Newly built tourist attraction
Yizhou Ancient City**ABSTRACT**

Introduction: As China has increasingly ushered in the era of mass tourism, ancient city or town tourism has gained popularity across the country, and a significant number of new scenic spots in ancient towns have been constructed. However, these lovely spots typically rely on conventional tourist and catering. Many tourists focus more on the issue of how to study old cities' cultural ambiance and internal features on a deeper level, as well as the depth of its connotations. This study examined the language landscape creation of the Yizhou Ancient City in Linyi, China, to delve into the language landscape building of newly built ancient town tourist attractions.

Methodology: The data collection stage was mainly completed through field investigation, using digital cameras to shoot various language signs in the scenic spot. The data statistics stage mainly included three parts: random interview, research objective determination, and data statistical analysis.

Results: The results showed that the language signs in the scenic spot were mainly monolingual, supplemented by bilingual signs. There were two languages, Chinese and English, in which Chinese was the priority code, while English was a marginalized code in the language landscape of the scenic spot. The management department of scenic spots played a decisive role in constructing language landscapes, but the managers of scenic spots and shop operators had not yet realized the economic value of language landscapes. The language landscape of Yizhou ancient City had some problems, including insufficient construction of a diversified language landscape, weak design sense of language landscape, lack of cultural connotation of language landscape, and inadequate innovation in language landscape construction.

Conclusion: It is suggested that the scenic spot management department should pay attention to four aspects in the future: firstly, pay attention to the potential value of language landscape construction; secondly, the unique linguistic landscape brand of the scenic spot should be constructed; thirdly, meet the multi-language needs of tourists.

1. Introduction

The concept of linguistic landscape was first formally introduced in 1997 by Landry and Bourhis. Over the past two decades, researchers all over the world have been continuously exploring the depth and expanding the breadth of linguistic landscape research, which has gradually made linguistic landscape research one of the

hotspots of interdisciplinary research in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics (Li & Feng, 2021; Zhang et al., 2019). Linguistic landscape arises from geographic space, and as a symbolic landscape, it is an integral part of participating in the construction of space (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006; Guo et al., 2022; Nie et al., 2023a). Linguistic landscape has the

► *Cite this paper as:* Guo Y, He T, Nie P, Zhang R. Construction of Language Landscape in Newly Built Ancient Cities: A Case of Yizhou Ancient City, China. Journal of Contemporary Language Research. 2023; 2(4): 199-206. DOI: 10.58803/jclr.v2i4.85



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information function of reflecting spatial characteristics and the function of constructing space, which plays a vital role in constructing geographic space into cultural space (Heller et al., 2014). The linguistic landscape of tourist attractions, as a kind of linguistic sign, has the function of transmitting information to tourists, showing the local cultural connotation of scenic spots, reflecting the local historical lineage, social culture, economic level, and other information (Luo & Li, 2021; Sun et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2019), and it is a significant and exploitable tourism cultural resource (Cheng, 2021).

As China gradually enters the era of mass tourism, people's demand for tourism consumption has changed from low-level, sightseeing-focused tourism to high-quality, diversified leisure and vacation, which puts forward more requirements for the deep, connotative, and high-quality development of the tourism industry (Guo et al., 2022). Ancient city tourism has recently grown in popularity throughout China due to the development of these ancient settlements, satisfying the rising demand for tourism consumption (Chen et al., 2012; Du, 2022; Hu, 2011). Many newly built ancient cities and tourist attractions are capitalizing on the trend due to the success of China's ancient cities and tourist destinations, mostly centered on conventional sightseeing tours and catering. Despite allowing visitors to take in the stunning scenery, this type of tourism in pursuit of commercial interests reduces the appeal and competitiveness of the broader tourism sector. The issue that many tourists focus on more is how to investigate the internal dynamics and cultural environment of old cities at a deeper level, as well as its rich meaning.

So far, many Chinese scholars have focused on the linguistic landscapes of tourist attractions in China (e.g., Du, 2022; Guo et al., 2022; Kong, 2021; Zhang, 2021; Wei & Li, 2018). Numerous studies have been conducted from various angles and dimensions, such as multilingual language landscape, language landscape and language policy, language landscape and English globalization, and language landscape and minority language (e.g., Li & Feng, 2021; Wu & Zhang, 2019). However, the linguistic landscape of tourist attractions is now receiving relatively little attention due to the relatively late start of China's tourism industry. There is a dearth of systematic and cohesive research accumulation, limited study examples, and a very nascent state of research on the linguistic landscape of ancient cities/towns tourism.

Given this background, the researchers in the current study started from the perspective of the construction of language landscape in China's newly built ancient city and took Yizhou Ancient City in Linyi as the field investigation area of language landscape. The purpose was to understand the overall appearance of the language landscape construction of Yizhou Ancient City, sort out the problems existing in the language landscape construction of Yizhou Ancient City, reveal the deep information hidden behind the language landscape, and put forward measures and suggestions for the optimization of the language landscape of the newly built ancient town in the future. The findings

can enrich understanding of the language landscape construction of newly built ancient towns in China and make up for the shortcomings of existing research.

2. Methodology

2.1. Setting

The site of Yizhou Ancient City is the administrative place of ancient Yizhou Prefecture, located in the old Chengguan of Lanshan District, Linyi City, China. The newly built scenic spot of Yizhou Ancient City is located in the Hedong District, about 8 kilometers northeast of the original site, covering an area of more than 280 acres, according to the Ming and Qing Dynasties Yizhou urban pattern construction. The first phase of the scene spot has finished, striving to become a provincial characteristic commercial pedestrian street in Shandong province and creating the most classic tourist attractions with Linyi characteristics. The second phase of the core cultural recreation area is under comprehensive construction.

2.2. Study design

The current study followed a field research principle to observe and interpret the linguistic landscapes in the natural environment of Yizhou Ancient City, China. It was performed from May to June 2023. No major holidays or temporary events were celebrated in the ancient city during this period, so the results of the study are generally representative.

2.3. Corpus

There are many ways to deal with the unit of analysis in linguistic landscape research. Most of them take a single sign as the unit of analysis (Backhaus, 2006), but there are also forms to deal with a store as a unit of analysis (Genoz & Gorter, 2006; Dang, 2022). This study only examined the language landscape of the shop facade, taking a single sign as the unit of analysis, which could be conducive to grasping the language landscape of the scenic spot. The data collection stage was mainly completed through field investigation, using digital cameras to shoot various language signs in the scenic spot.

2.4. Procedure

The data collection stage was mainly completed through field investigation, using digital cameras to shoot various language signs in the scenic spot. In the process of shooting, only fixed signs such as scenic spot information signs, shop signs, and restaurant billboards were photographed, without considering the text signs inside the house, nor the text, price tags, or various texts existing on tourism commodities. Second, data collection was mainly based on information boards, indicators, warning boards, warning boards or shop signs, while temporary language landscapes such as epidemic

prevention and control and traffic control were not the focus of this research. Using the above two principles, 116 qualified language signs were collected in Yizhou Ancient City.

The data statistics stage comprised three key components. Firstly, 14 shop operators in Yizhou Ancient City were randomly interviewed to gain insights into the context, motivation, and background of language signs in scenic spots. This aimed to prevent subjective assumptions in the subsequent statistical analysis. Secondly, the primary objectives of the data statistical analysis were defined, including examining the overall characteristics of the language landscape, identifying issues and underlying reasons in language landscape construction, and proposing ideas and directions for optimizing and enhancing language landscape construction in Yizhou Ancient City in the future. Lastly, the data analysis was conducted using Microsoft Excel 2021.

3. Results

3.1. The construction of language landscapes

The section below presents the data obtained addressing the construction of language landscapes.

3.1.1. Types of language landscapes

There were two types of language signs in Yizhou Ancient Town Scenic spot, namely monolingual and bilingual (Table 1). Among them, 105 were monolingual signs, accounting for 90.52% of the statistical signs, the most significant number of language signs in the scenic spot. The number of bilingual signs ranked second, with a total of 11, accounting for 9.48%. This means that the management department and store operators of Yizhou Ancient City mainly focus on the needs of domestic tourists and do not fully consider the needs of foreign tourists to obtain information through the language landscape. At the same time, the monolingual signs in the scenic spot still accounted for more than 90%, and there were only two language types on the signs in this scenic spot, and the language and text types were significantly less. Although the scenic spot has begun to realize the necessity of presenting multilingual types in the language landscape in the scenic spot, it still does not consider the experience and feeling of foreign tourists when visiting, and the overall service quality of the scenic spot still has room for improvement.

Table 1.
Types of Language Signs in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	Monolingual	105	90.52
2	Bilingual	11	9.48
Total		116	100.00

Yizhou Ancient City used Chinese and English in language signs (Table 2). It is relatively rare to set only two language types in constructing language signs,

compared with the domestic scenic spots where language landscape research has been carried out (Dang, 2022; Du, 2022; Nie et al., 2023b; Zhang & Shi, 2020). Chinese appeared on all signs among the 116 language signs counted. It can be seen that Chinese is in an absolutely dominant position in the language landscape of Yizhou Ancient City, which is consistent with the situation of the vast majority of domestic tourist attractions. There were 11 language signs using English, accounting for 9.48% of the total number of statistical signs. This indicates that English is second only to Chinese in importance in the scenic spot, highlighting the dominance of English as an international language and a global language.

As far as Chinese is concerned, the scenic spot used simplified Chinese characters as the primary language of all kinds of signs, so domestic tourists could feel convenient when watching and visiting. Simplified Chinese characters were used on all signs containing Chinese, accounting for 100% of the total number of signs. The public service industry took standardized Chinese characters as the primary service characters, which also conformed to the relevant provisions of the National Common Language Law. In addition, two of the Chinese signs in the scenic spot were in Chinese + pinyin, accounting for 1.72% of the total number of signs. Pinyin was more like a decorative symbol on the shop sign, creating a beautiful visual experience.

Table 2.
Language frequency of language signs in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	Simplified Chinese	105	90.52
2	English	11	9.48
Total		116	100.00

3.1.2. Priority codes in the language landscape

In the study of language landscape, language landscape could be divided into two types according to the differences in landscape creators. The top-down language landscape is set up by the scenic spot management department, and the down-top language landscape is set up by the merchants in the scenic spot. In Yizhou Ancient City, top-down signs totaled 39, accounting for 33.62% of the total number of signs and there were 77 down-top signs, accounting for 66.38% of the total number of signs. The number of the former was about 1.97 times that of the latter (Table 3). The signs set up by the scenic spot management department constituted the main body of the scenic spot language landscape, indicating that the scenic spot management department of Yizhou Ancient City has a very high degree of participation in constructing the language landscape and is in a decisive position.

Table 3.
Two types of Language Landscape in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	top-down	39	33.62
2	down-top	77	66.38
Total		116	100.00

3.1.3. Functions of language landscape

In Yizhou Ancient City, bilingual language signs constituted 9.48% of the total signs. Typically, the Chinese text on these signs was positioned towards the middle of the latter side, relatively close to the upper end. The font size was generally larger, emphasizing its significance as the priority code within the scenic spot, serving both informational and communicative functions. English text often followed the Chinese, either appearing directly below or to the side. English, however, occupied a marginalized position in the language landscape of scenic spots, diverging from the priority code. Despite conveying information similar to that of Chinese, English served a symbolic role, contributing to an international and diverse ambiance within the scenic spots.

The writing form of the language landscape in Yizhou Ancient City also indicated strong regularity. It is evident that the influence of ancient writing methods and materials contributes to a unique arrangement of language elements. The prevalence of a top-to-bottom and right-to-left orientation, as highlighted by Du (2022), sets Yizhou Ancient City apart from other domestic ancient town scenic spots. Compared with some domestic ancient town scenic spots, Xinzhou Ancient City, Hangzhou Hefang Street, and Juguo Ancient City where signs featured right-to-left writing ordered at proportions of 16.19%, 21.29%, and 43.75%, respectively (Table 4). This proportion is significantly lower than the ordinary tourist scenic spots.

Table 4.
Writing Order of Language Signs in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	From left to right	90	77.59
2	From right to left	16	13.79
3	From top to bottom	10	8.62
Total		116	100.00

In addition, the language landscape of Yizhou Ancient City presented five functions, namely, information introduction, safety tips, policy slogans, advertising display, and direction instructions, accounting for 78.45%, 6.90%, 6.03%, 5.17%, and 3.45% of the 116 language signs in this survey, respectively (Table 5). Among these signs, 75% of the security warning signs in Yizhou Ancient City were bilingual, totaling six signs. Additionally, 50% of the directional signs, amounting to two signs, were bilingual. This indicates that these specific sign types are crucial in offering security and direction information to both domestic and foreign tourists. However, the occurrence of foreign languages in information introductions, policy slogans, and advertising signs was minimal, with some cases registering zero. This suggests a challenge for the scenic spots in providing greater travel convenience for non-Chinese tourists regarding information accessibility and communication.

Table 5.
Writing Order of Language Signs in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	From left to right	90	77.59
2	From right to left	16	13.79
3	From top to bottom	10	8.62
Total		116	100.00

3.2. Problems reflected in the construction of language landscapes

The results of the problems reflected in the construction of language landscapes can be presented in the following sections.

3.2.1. Insufficient construction of diversified language landscape

The frequency of English in the language landscape of Yizhou Ancient City was only 9.48% (Table 2), much lower than that of domestic ancient town scenic spots. It is evident that Yizhou Ancient City has not carried out statistical work on information such as the country of origin of overseas tourists since it was opened to the outside world in 2020. According to the official statistical data from 2015 to 2019 (due to the impact of the global epidemic from 2020 to 2022, the relevant data are not statistically significant), the top three countries of origin of overseas tourists in Linyi are Japan, South Korea and the United States (Table 6). The language signs of Yizhou Ancient City contain English, which can only meet the language needs of some overseas tourists, and ignore tourists from Japan and Korea, which is not conducive to the international communication and export of Yizhou Ancient City's history and culture. Currently, the two languages in the language landscape of scenic spots, Chinese and English, cannot meet the diversified language needs of overseas tourists. The Yizhou Ancient City's high percentage of monolingual signs and low number of sign language varieties may severely restrict the picturesque location's ability to share its historical and cultural riches with the outside world.

Table 6.
Main Countries of Origin and Person-times of Overseas Tourists in Linyi from 2015 to 2019

Year	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5
2019	Japan	Korea	America	Canada	Britain
	19319	19248	5231	4277	4035
2018	Japan	Korea	America	Australia	Canada
	16408	14418	4910	3635	3508
2017	Japan	Korea	America	Canada	Australia
	16932	15610	5577	3697	3472
2016	Korea	Japan	America	Canada	France
	20912	15354	5483	3252	3074
2015	Korea	Japan	Australia	Canada	Britain
	18799	10249	4369	2680	2656

Unit: person-times

3.2.2. The design of the language landscape is not obvious

Yizhou Ancient City language signs employed seven distinct manufacturing materials. The differences in color, substance, and texture were visibly indicative of the management division and store owners. They intentionally created a hierarchical visual ambiance in the scenic region. A total of 34 signs made of metal, electronic screens and concrete were present in the scenic spot, which was close to 30% of the statistical signs. Since these signs and the local ecological environment do not coordinate well, the scenic spot

appears more abrupt and unnatural. Additionally, 46 signs—nearly 40% of the statistical signs—could be seen in the picturesque area and were constructed of paper, resin, and other materials. The inability of these materials to withstand weathering has resulted in a few signs being decolorized, blurry, and some even exhibiting damage, decay, yellowing, and aging, which to some extent alters the overall exterior appearance of the beautiful location (Table 7).

3.2.3. Language landscapes lack cultural connotation

Obviously, most language signs in the scenic area are just stacks and combinations of words, and the font design was unattractive. Additionally, colors like black, dark, yellow, and white were frequently utilized to accentuate the text content and darker or brighter colors were used for the backdrop. As a result, the scenic area lacked a language landscape style and a feeling of design, impacting how the scenic area was constructed. This means that the Yizhou Ancient City administration division has not given the design and production of language landscape its full attention, nor has it built an ideal system for the renewal and replacement of language landscape signs. In addition, these signs do not incorporate elements that reflect the local nature, history, and culture, and cannot highlight the rich historical and cultural characteristics of Linyi City, where Yizhou Ancient City is located.

Table 7.
Writing Order of Language Signs in Yizhou Ancient City

No.	Types	Quantity	Percentage (%)
1	Metallic materials	23	19.83
2	Wood materials	30	25.86
3	Concrete materials	2	1.72
4	Resinous materials	36	31.03
5	Paper materials	10	8.62
6	Carving of stone	6	5.17
7	Electronic screen	9	7.76
Total		116	100.00

3.2.4. Lack of innovation in language landscape construction

Yizhou Ancient City faces criticism for allegedly replicating language landscapes from other scenic spots, resulting in a lack of originality and cultural indigeneity. The accusation suggests that the focus has been predominantly on surface aesthetics, neglecting the deeper historical and cultural connotations. It only pursues appearance effect but ignores the heritage and publicity of historical stories, making the language landscape of the scenic spot appear empty and powerless. It ignores the awareness of cultural protection; the modern elements are too much integrated into the traditional language landscape, which makes the scenic spot lose its real simple charm and historical sense. Some tourists may desire a richer understanding of the historical background and cultural traditions of ancient towns through the language landscape. Yizhou Ancient City's alleged overemphasis on contemporary elements and

neglect of the deeper cultural context could potentially limit tourists' ability to engage with and appreciate the genuine historical and cultural treasures the site has to offer.

4. Discussion

Linyi has a long history of more than 3,000 years and was known as Qiyang City in the Spring and Autumn Period, Langya County in the Qin Dynasty, Linyi County in the Han Dynasty, and Yizhou Prefecture in the Qing Dynasty. Linyi is undoubtedly rich in historical and cultural heritage. However, with the advancement of urbanization, the historical relics of Linyi Ancient City gradually disappeared. For many years, the deep cultural heritage has had no carrier to support, and there is a need to create some artificial ancient towns to make the culture can be inherited. Accompanied by the hot resources of ancient towns, many ancient towns of tourist attractions have gradually emerged in the tourism industry. The ancient City of Yizhou, this artificial imitation of ancient towns of tourist attractions, also came into being. For the modernization of artificial new scenic spots, whether in construction or development, they have to go through a bumpy road, cultural integration, historical reproduction, and characteristics of the building all need to be carefully shaped. Because newly built tourist attractions are in the absence of a humanistic landscape and are costly to create, it is often labeled as "fake", "no substance", "meaningless", and many other labels. In fact, the ancient city or town is not ancient and is not very important; the critical thing is whether it can win the eyes of tourists if it is meaningful.

Yizhou Ancient City, as a newly built tourist attraction, how to break through the limitations of its development, how to explore the scenic spot more deeply value of resources, the inner characteristics, and the rich connotation, should be a scenic spot management department needs to pay attention to and think about the problem. The management department of Yizhou Ancient City may have realized the importance of language landscape in the previous scenic spot rating process, but this attention is still minimal. As a language practice driven by the economy and embodying the ideology of the creators, the language landscape formed in the tourism scene can reflect the multi-faceted social language reality (Shang, 2018). For language landscape in newly built ancient cities, the tourism language landscape can at least be examined from the dimensions of language commercialization, language authenticity, and language internationalization. Given this background, the researchers started from the perspective of the construction of a language landscape in China's newly built ancient city and did some analysis on the construction of language landscape in Yizhou Ancient City.

Language commodification is transforming language into a commodity: language is regarded as a basic skill that can be exchanged for material benefits, or as an economic resource that can be invested and consumed (Heller, 2010). When Leeman and Modan (2009) investigated the language landscape of Chinatown in Washington, D.C., they found that Chinese signs were mainly used as a symbol of

commercialization rather than a language of communication. Planners and tourism operators mainly focus on Chinese symbolic value and decorative beauty, while the ideographic function is relatively secondary. Many of the owners here are not Chinese, and their customers are usually not Chinese tourists and residents, but the shops still use Chinese signs to meet the design needs of language commercialization. In addition, the coexistence of multiple languages on signage may also be a means of marketing in the tourism language landscape.

For Yizhou Ancient City, the language landscape is an important carrier and communication medium of history and culture, and the study of the language landscape of heritage can help to promote the protection and adaptive use of heritage; the language landscape has commodity economic value, and micro-renewal of the language landscape can realize the protection and adaptive use of historical and cultural heritage at a relatively low cost. The management of the scenic area needs to continue to change its mindset, recognizing that the linguistic landscape is an important part of the entire scenic area, with the role of transmitting information to tourists, showing the local cultural connotation of the scenic area, and reflecting information about the local historical lineage, social culture, and economic level. Moreover, the administrative department of the linguistic landscape plays a decisive role in establishing the linguistic landscape, and it also has an unshirkable responsibility to improve the tourism and cultural image of scenic spots. The task of language landscape construction should not be handed over to the shop owners or the supervision department of the government.

Regarding the authenticity of the language landscape, tourists' demand for such can be reflected in many aspects. The language on the signs conveys information truthfully, the multi-language on the signs reflects the diversity of tourist sources in the tourist area, and the foreign language or minority language on the signs brings tourists a sense of authenticity far away from home. In a same vein, Xu and Ren (2015) investigated the tourism language landscape in Lijiang, China. They found that the use of Dongba script was a reflection of authenticity, and Dongba script and other symbols highlighting Dongba culture created a sense of authenticity for tourists. Symbolic resources, such as Padang language are often used in the commercial field, which indicates that local tourism operators recognize the importance of these resources and meet the needs of tourists to experience Dongba through the presentation of language and characters. However, the authenticity and commodification of language are sometimes in conflict, and commodification of language may lead to the distortion of its essential properties. For example, Xu and Ren (2015) also found that the Dongba script used on some tourist landscape signs in Lijiang was not standardized, and many Dongba scripts were made into colorful forms, so they were basically decorative symbols. Such practices in the tourism economy that undermine the authenticity of languages are often questioned and criticized.

When constructing the distinctive language landscape of

the scenic spot, it is recommended that Yizhou Ancient City should not solely focus on the language landscape's superficial form and visual impact. Instead, it should delve into the profound connotation of history and culture, preserving and promoting historical and cultural heritage. In the language landscape in the scenic area, a thorough understanding of existing language landscapes should be obtained to avoid consciously duplicating those used in other scenic areas. Efforts should be made to establish differentiation from other ancient town-type scenic areas. Cultural preservation awareness must always be heightened, aiming to enhance traditional language landscapes while maintaining a simplistic and antiquated atmosphere that reflects a sense of history within the scenic area. Furthermore, additional elements related to Yizhou Ancient City's historical background and cultural traditions must be incorporated into its language landscape design to effectively convey its rich and real history to tourists, enabling them to gain comprehensive insights into this remarkable destination.

In the linguistic landscape of the international tourism scene, the ubiquity of the use of English signs reflects the dominant position of English in the linguistic landscape of tourism (Shang, 2018). For example, Jaffe and Oliva (2013) found that on the island of Corsica, a tourist destination in France, many commercial shop names used Corsican, but it was only a symbolic language symbol to show the identity of the owner, while English, French, and other international languages indicated specific product information.

For Yizhou Ancient City, the multilingual needs of tourists should be fully considered. The management of scenic spots should enhance the number of signs in languages other than Chinese and present Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and English texts on vital tourist information signs. In addition, the actual language needs of overseas tourists should be closely integrated into the scenic tourism language landscape, and English should not be symbolically included in the language landscape for the sake of scenic rating. Considering the limited space on the signage, scenic spots can also print guidebooks and promotional materials in Japanese, Korean, and English to make up for the lack of language services. The purpose of this move is not only to introduce scenic tour information to foreign tourists efficiently but also to maximize the symbolic role of the linguistic landscape so that tourists feel welcomed and valued, resulting in an excellent visiting experience. Such linguistic landscape planning is not only to meet the needs of maintaining the image of the city, but also to attract foreign tourists and even attract investment and other economic considerations.

5. Conclusion

Starting from the perspective of tourism linguistic landscape of newly built town-type scenic spots in China, this study conducted a field survey on the construction of linguistic landscape carried out in Yizhou Ancient City Scenic Spot in Linyi City and collected data on the linguistic landscape to carry out statistical analysis work. The results of the study

show that the linguistic landscape in Yizhou Ancient City Scenic Spot presents three main features. First, linguistic signs were mainly monolingual and supplemented by bilingual signs, and there were two kinds of linguistic characters in the scenic spot, namely Chinese and English. Second, Chinese was the preferred linguistic code in the linguistic landscape of the scenic spot, and English belonged to the marginalized linguistic code. Third, scenic spot management played a decisive role in the construction of the linguistic landscape, but scenic spot managers and merchants also played important roles. Third, the management of scenic spots plays a decisive role in constructing linguistic landscapes, but neither scenic spot managers nor store operators recognize the economic value of linguistic landscapes.

Comprehensively analyzing the collected data, the linguistic landscape of Yizhou Ancient City had some problems, including inadequate construction of diversified linguistic landscapes, poor sense of design of linguistic landscapes, insufficient cultural connotation of linguistic landscapes, and insufficient innovativeness of linguistic landscape construction. Based on the above findings, the authors suggest that the scenic areas should be managed by considering four aspects in the future: first, considering the potential value of the construction of linguistic landscape; second, building a unique linguistic landscape label for the scenic area; and third, satisfying the multilingual needs of the scenic tourists.

In the future, as the status of tourism as a strategic pillar industry of the national economy becomes more consolidated, tourist attractions that can scientifically and reasonably create their linguistic landscapes to cater to the rigid demand of tourists for a better tourism experience will undoubtedly contribute to the high-quality development of China's tourism industry, and will have a far-reaching impact on China's tourism and its related industries (Yang & Wall, 2022). Through this work, we also expect to awaken the sense of responsibility of the management of Yizhou Ancient City Scenic Spot so that it recognizes the important value of linguistic landscape and creates a linguistic landscape rich in regional characteristics and cultural image while enhancing the service capacity of the scenic spot, to contribute to the connotative development of China's ancient town-type tourist scenic spots.

Declarations

Competing interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning the research, authorship, and publication of this article.

Funding

This work was supported by the Key Project of Art Science of Shandong Province, China (L2022Z06170452), the Project from Rizhao Society of Folk Culture Research, China (HX220052), and the College Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program of Linyi University

(X202310452176).

Authors' contribution

Ying Guo and Ping Nie designed the study, collected and analyzed the data, and wrote the initial draft of the manuscript. Tian He and Ru Zhang contributed to the data analysis and provided critical revisions to the manuscript. Both authors read and approved the final version.

Availability of data and materials

The datasets analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues (including plagiarism, consent to publish, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, and redundancy) have been checked and compiled by the authors.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to acknowledge the generous support and contributions of Dr. Xiaowen Zhuo for his valuable input and guidance throughout this research project.

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