

# The Changes in the Name of Variety Shows that Introduced into China from South Korea: From a Linguistics Perspective

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**Abstract**—By comparing the names of South Korean programs introduced in mainland China from 2015 to 2020 on the four mainstream platforms with the original programs, the linguistic characteristics are summarized in the article: the phonetics tend to be four-syllables and five-syllables; The range of vocabulary is relatively small; the proportion of Chinese programs using sentences as names is higher, but the two countries' programs still tend to use words as program names.

**Index Terms**—Chinese and South Korean variety show, variety shows' name.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The rise of online variety shows in China has made variety shows become one of the Consumption landscapes that have attracted much attention, as well as an important way for people to entertain. As a cultural industry, variety shows ushered in a period of rapid development after the rapid development of the Internet in 2015. The name of the variety show serves as the first window for the audience to understand and recognize the program and an important part of memorizing the program. The title of the program shows the main content of the program to a certain extent and is also an important factor affecting the audience's attention. It is said that the name of a variety show is the soul of the show. From another perspective, the name of the variety shows is also a popular cultural language. The introduced programs can reflect the tolerance of foreign culture in popular culture and the characteristics of popular culture in mainland China from the perspective of linguistics. Some language skills can make the program closer to the culture of Mainland China.

The article focuses on the “remake” of the South Korean Variety Shows by mainland producers. It includes the remake of the original Korean programs with copyright and programs have been accused of copying South Korean shows in the program structure and other aspects.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The research on the names of variety shows has increased since 2005. The linguistic interpretation mainly focuses on the semantics and language structure of the name of the variety show, and the non-linguistic interpretation mainly focuses on the propagation effect of the name of the show and copyright issues. [1] For the introduction of foreign programs,

the language translation is mainly studied, such as Xu Qunping's “The Application of Skopos Theory in the Translation of TV Variety Show Titles”. [2]

There are still some imperfections in the current research on the names of variety shows: the first is the neglect of online variety shows. After 2010 fast development of the Internet, mainland China's variety shows no longer dominated by TV stations Online variety shows produced by Internet broadcasting platforms such as Tencent accounted for nearly 40% of the variety show share in 2019.

The second is the neglect of the research on the names of introduced programs. After 2010, Many foreign programs were introduced into mainland China and many different programs were formed based on the same foreign program. The language and culture, language and society changes reflected in the similarities and differences of the programs are also lacking in research. The research scope of variety shows mainly focus on reality shows that have gradually received attention and pattern of traditional TV stations [3], while online variety shows on the network platform attract relatively less attention. The research on foreign programs is mainly about program translation, and there is less research on domestic variety shows with imported models, which also leaves room for research on the language characteristics and causes of variety shows.

## III. CURRENT SITUATION OF THE INTRODUCTION OF SOUTH KOREAN VARIETY SHOWS

After 2015, the Internet began to become an important medium for watching programs, and a large number of programs provided by TV stations were moved to online platforms. In order to better analyze the current status of Chinese TV variety shows, this article mainly collected data from four mainstream online platforms according to the market share in the late five years. They are Youku, iQiyi, Tencent, and Mango TV. Based on the variety shows of the past five years collected on four online platforms, a list of variety shows that have South Korean program copyrights or suspected of copyright issues from 2015 to 2020 was compiled. Any variety show that was broadcast after 2015, are included; derivative programs of individual programs are not included; all programs are subject to the official website name. According to the above statistics, a total of 105 Chinese programs and 72 South Korean programs are involved. According to the content of the original South Korean program, it can be roughly divided into four categories: competitive games; music; healing variety shows; and observation variety shows.

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From the aspect of translation, the variety shows can be divided into four parts: literal translation; amplification; semantic translation; free translation. According to Table I, almost half of them chose to use free translation, while fewer programs used literal translation.

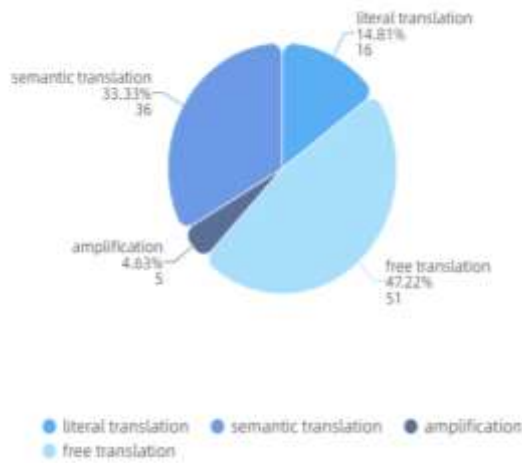


Fig. 1. Different types of translation of variety shows' name.

#### IV. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE FEATURES OF CHINESE AND SOUTH KOREAN PROGRAM NAME

The characteristics of language ontology can be observed in three aspects: phonetics, vocabulary, and grammar.

##### A. Investigation of Phonetic Features

Variety show name, as an audio-visual language often used in the show and publicity, is important to be catchy. First, the article focus on the characteristics of Chinese and South

Korean program names from the number of syllables and rhythmic matching of program names [4].

It can be seen that the original South Korean programs of South Korean programs introduced by China tend to have four syllables and five syllables, which account for 61.1% and 75%. The syllable tendency of Chinese programs introducing South Korean variety shows is consistent with the trend of the entire Chinese variety show market. Compared with South Korean original programs, Chinese programs tend to use five-syllable names, and this is an upward trend in China. Except for the English transliteration of South Korean program names, South Korean programs still have more four-syllable and five-syllable program names. In the use of English as the program name, the proportion of two English words as the program name is nearly 100%.

The name of variety shows pursues conciseness, which caters to the high-efficiency society in the fast-paced life. Secondly, the four-character or four-character pattern has a stable and solemn color in Chinese because of the neat tone and rhythm. Four syllables in Chinese mostly appear in the format of nouns and nouns which are both two-syllable words, having obvious symmetry. Some four-syllable names in South Korean are English, while other four-syllable words are often a combination of Chinese words, which also has the geometric shape and sequence. The five-character format are mostly in the structure of "2+1+2", "2+3" or "3+2". The vowel at the end of the prosodic sentence is short, but the silent pause is longer or the rhyming phrase is long since the final vowel is stretched with a long silent pause after that. Both have obvious pauses, making the five-syllable names resemble four-syllable words in terms of pauses [5].

TABLE I: CHARACTER STATISTICS OF SOUTH KOREAN PROGRAM NAMES

South Korea/character	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Non-South Korean
number	1	3	16	28	6	4	7	3	3	1	2
proportion	1.3%	4.2%	22.2%	38.9%	8.3%	5.6%	9.7%	4.2%	4.2%	1.3%	2.8%

TABLE II: CHARACTER STATISTICS OF CHINESE PROGRAM NAMES (THE TOTAL NUMBER OF CHINESE PROGRAM IS 108 FOR THE CHANGING OF THE NAME)

China/character	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
number	1	5	20	61	9	8	0	1
proportion	0.93%	4.7%	18.5%	56.5%	8.3%	7.4%	0%	0.93%

TABLE III: TYPES OF WORDS USED IN RELEVANT PROGRAM TITLES IN SOUTH KOREA AND CHINA

The genre of the word	South Korea	example	China	example
Other language	32	BREAKERS 브레이커스	5	Hi 室友
Peoples name	3	윤식당	0	
Occupation	4	나는 가수다	12	明星大侦探
number	7	1박 2일	10	青春有你2
New created word	4	Let's G古 시간탐험대	8	奇妙的食光

##### B. Investigation of the Use of the Word

Words are another important element of language and the most important grammatical unit. The use of vocabulary can

reflect the changes in popular culture.

From the perspective of the choice of words, loan words are often used in the names of South Korean programs, which is consistent with the current situation of frequent use of loan words in South Korea. In addition, foreign words are mainly English. Among the 72 South Korean programs, 25 programs are using foreign words, close to 35%, but only 4 Chinese programs, accounting for 3.7% of all programs. This proportion reflects the difference between China and South Korea in accepting foreign words.

Another feature is the contrast between acronyms in South Korean and newly created words in Chinese: Chinese newly created words mainly replace existing vocabulary because of the need for word meaning [6]. For example, "一唱到底" replace "贯(being consistent)" in the original phrase "一贯到底", with "唱(singing)". In some singer competitions, to

distinguish winners from other singers, the core element “歌 (song/singing)” is remained and added with “将 (the General)” or “王(king)”.

South Korean new coinage is made through two methods: abbreviating original phrases or sentences or combining South Korean and English. The most typical one is Running Man (런닝맨). First, the verb, run, is changed to a gerund and combined with a noun. Then the word is transliterated into South Korean

In addition, the person's name and occupation are also used in the title, such as 가수, “明星” and “偶像”. However, it can be seen that there are very few words in the names of variety shows for both countries, such as place, time and etc. Compared with the program names in the overall variety show market, the vocabulary is not abundant and various.

### C. Investigation of Grammar

Grammar can be divided into four levels: morphemes, words, phrases, and sentences. Although written language needs punctuation to distinguish it from everyday language, it is also included in the sentence part for part of the program name already has a clear tone.

TABLE IV: THE COMPARISON OF GRAMMAR

	South Korea	example	China	example
word	7 9.7%	퀵	5 4.6%	中餐厅
phrase	57 79%	꽃보다 청춘	76 70%	花样青春
sentence	8 11.1%	나 혼자 산다	26 24.2%	咱们穿越吧

It can be seen from Table IV that when China introduced South Korean programs, the rate of using sentences as names was twice that of South Korean programs themselves, and most of them were imperative sentences ending with the word “吧”, while South Korea mainly used declarative sentences. Compared with other Chinese variety shows, other original variety shows, and derivative shows often use imperative sentences ending with “吧” as their title.

Another feature is the special grammatical structure. Most South Korean variety shows with titles as a word is either noun phrase or verb phrase; Chinese programs also conform to the existing structure: subject-predicate structure, verb-object structure, supplementary structure, partial positive structure, or joint structure. However, a large number of “noun + noun” structures appear in the names of programs in China and South Korea, such as “무한도전”, “明星大侦探” and so on. Part of the adjectives that come from Chinese in the South Korean directly retain the actual meaning of the words in the Chinese part, and “하다” is omitted. This greatly removes redundant information, which is in line with the pursuit of simplicity in variety show titles. The name of South Korean programs as sentence all conform to the normal sentence structure. Part of the Chinese programs have an inversion of subject and verb, such as “奔跑吧兄弟”.

development, and it is not uncommon for Chinese variety shows to learn from South Korean programs after they were introduced in 2013. Most of the time, programs that purchase copyrights will literally translate the original South Korean program names into Chinese, such as “꽃보다 누나” and “花样姐姐”, “진짜 사나이” and “真正男子汉”. For programs that have not purchased copyright or reproduced versions of programs that have purchased copyright, the main elements of the program will be directly placed in the name of the program, such as “梦想的声音”, “我就要这样生活” and so on.

One of the important factors is to highlight the content of the program is celebrity. The setting of the program not only did not narrow the distance between the program and the audience but increased the distance between the star and the general audience. The program was constructed from the perspective of observation. [7] It can also be seen from the content settings of the programs that in the early stage of the investigation period, more competitive game programs were introduced now. However, in the introduction of programs in the last two years, compared to the variety show that aims to enjoy life, observation programs like “我家那小子” has attracted more attention, especially when it comes to topics related to love and living alone.

Another important feature is that the name of the program reflects that the target audience of the program introduced in China is younger than before. Observation programs emphasize personal will, love, and living alone, which are more in line with the loneliness of urban young people under the current atomization trend in society. In the content of the introduced program, the core aspect is not to highlight unity and friendship but to enjoy life alone. However, the main theme of the program still has to highlight celebrities, the content is more inclined to enjoy life rather than ordinary life troubles. One example is the ever-changing “花样姐姐” series, from “花样姐姐” to “旅游的花样”. They all have the same processing from “꽃보다누나”, but the content has changed over time. Another possible reason is that the National Radio and Television Administration has control over the content of variety shows. Because of the emphasis on the combination of celebrities and ordinary people in the program, programs have to shift the perspective from the interaction between celebrities to ordinary people, emphasizing that celebrity guests and ordinary humans are the young generation, and fully emphasizing their social practice. For example, For South Korean programs, the only program involving the word “청춘” is “꽃보다 청춘”, which is a backpack travel program, but there are 5 programs in China, including talent show and hotel management programs. After the introduction of many programs including “Good People”, “김병만의 정글의 법칙” to China, their original competitive and task-based performances have been transformed into a portrait of youth, “young people's life choices and ideal practice”.

## V. THE LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS OF CHINESE AND SOUTH KOREAN PROGRAMS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Chinese online variety shows witnessed rapid

## VI. CONCLUSION

This article sorts out the programs on the four major online platforms from 2015 to 2020 and compares the names of Chinese variety shows introduced from and original

programs. The program names in the two languages have the same tendency on syllables and rhythms; the choice of vocabulary is not relatively abundant for Chinese variety shows; the proportion of Chinese programs using sentences as names is higher, but the two countries still tend to use words as program names. The name of the program can be said to be a language art, reflecting the inclination of the country's popular culture and today's social outlook. From a linguistics perspective, a better understanding of the difference between languages explores the localization of introduced programs.

## APPENDIX

	name of Korean variety show	Korean pronunciation in romanization	English name	name of Chinese variety show
1	Running Man 런닝맨	ronningmaen	running man	给力星期天
2				奔跑吧兄弟→奔跑吧
3	무한도전	muhandojon	Infinite Challenge	极限挑战
4				我们的挑战
5				真心英雄
6				挑战者联盟
7	꽃보다 누나	kkotppoda nuna	Sisters Over Flowers	了不起的挑战
8				花样男团
9				花样姐姐
10				花儿与少年
11	복면가왕	bongmyongawang	King of Mask Singer	蒙面唱将猜猜猜
12				蒙面歌王
13				向往的生活
14	삼시세끼	samsisekki	Three Meals a Day	向往的生活
15	윤식당	yunsiktang	Youn's Kitchen/You n's Stay	中餐厅중찬팅
16				完美的餐厅
17				奇妙的食光
18	하트시그널	hateusigeunol	heart signal	心动的信号
19				喜欢你我也是
20	효리네민박	hyorineminbak	hyori's lodge	亲爱的客栈
21	미운 우리 새끼	miun uri saekki	My Little Old Boy	我家那小子
22				我家那闺女
23	내 딸의 남자들	nae ttare namjadeul	My Daughter's Men	女儿们的恋爱
24				女儿们的男朋友
25	크라임씬	keuraim ssin	crime scene	明星大侦探
26				我是大侦探
27	비정상회담	bijongsanghwedam	Non-Summit	非正式会谈
28				世界青年说
29	꽃보다 할배	kkotppoda halppae	Grandpas Over Flowers	花样爷爷
30	진짜 사나이	jinjja sanai	Real Man	真正男子汉
31	불후의 명곡	bulhue myonggok	Immortal Songs: Singing the Legend	歌声传奇
32				不朽之名曲
33	나는 가수다	naneun gasuda	I Am a Singer	我是歌手→歌王
34				跨界歌王
35	hidden singer 히든싱어	hideunsingo	hidden singer	谁是大歌神
36				隐藏的歌手
37	1박 2일	il bak i il	2 Days & 1	两天一夜

38			Night	明星家族的两天一夜
39	개그콘서트	gaegeukonsoteu	gag concert	一起来笑吧
40	대단한 시집	daedanhan sijip	grest in-laws	明星到我家
41	학교 다녀오겠습니다	hakkyo danyoogetsseumnid a	Welcome Back to School	我去上学啦
42	너의 목소리가 보여	noe mokssoriga boyo	I Can See Your Voice	偶滴歌神啊
43	영웅호걸	yongunghogol	Heroes	偶像来了
44	우리 결혼했어요	uri gyolhonhaessoyo	We Got Married	如果爱
45				我们相爱吧
46	대탈출	daetalchul	Great Escape	密室A计划
47				密室逃脱
48				密室大逃脱
49	슈퍼맨이 돌아왔다	syupomaeni dorawattta	The Return of Superman	爸爸回来了
50				我们长大了
51	헬로 베이비	helro beibi	hello baby	放开我北鼻
52	슈퍼스타 K	syuposeuta kei	superstarK	我的中国星
53	서바이벌 오디션 K팝스타	sobaibol odison kei papsseuta	kpop star	中国星力量
54	신서유기	sinsoyugi	New Journey to the West	青春环游记
55	보컬전쟁 - 신의 목소리	bokoljonjaeng sine mokssori	Vocal Warfare - Voice of God	天籁之声
56				更好的声音
57				一唱到底
58				梦想的声音
59	룸메이트	rummeiteu	roommate	青春旅社
60				hi 室友
61	정글의 법칙	jonggeure bopchik	Law of the Jungle	我们的法则
62	인생술집	insaengsuljip	Life Bar	杯酒人生
63	김병만의 정글의 법칙	gimbyongmane jonggeure bopchik	Law of the Jungle	花样好友记
64	안녕하세요	annyonghaseyo	Hello Counselor	四大名助
65	판타스틱 듀오:내 손에 가수	pantaseutik dyuonae sone gasu	fantastic duo	我想和你唱
66	영재 발굴단	yongjae balguldan	Finding Genius	神奇的孩子
67	한끼줍쇼	hankkijupssyo	Let's Eat Dinner Together	亲爱的，来吃饭
68				未知的餐桌
69	냉장고를 부탁해	naengjanggoreul butakae	Please Take Care of My Refrigerator	厨房的秘密
70				拜托了冰箱
71	내 귀에 캔디	nae gwie kaendi	Candy in My Ears	耳边遇见你
72	심폐소생술	simpyesosangsung	Cardiopulmonary resuscitation	原来是金曲
73	Let's G古 시간탐험대	ret esseu jwi go sigantamhomdae	Let's Gfi Time Expedition	咱们穿越吧→穿越吧
74	꽃보다 청춘	kkotppoda chongchun	Youth Over Flowers	花样青春
75	신입사원 탄생기 - 굿피플	sinipssawon tansaengi gutpipeul	good people	令人心动的 offer
76	전지적 참견시점	jonjjik chamgyonsijom	Omniscient Interfering	我和我的经纪人

			View	
77	아빠! 어디가?	appa odiga	Dad! Where Are We Going?	爸爸去哪儿
78	살림하는 남자들	salrimhaneun namjadeul	Mr. House Husband	做家务的男人
79	나 혼자 산다	na honja sanda	I Live Alone	我要这样生活
80				让生活好看
81	비긴어게인	biginogein	begin again	美好的时光
82	싱글라이프	singgeurwaipeu	Single Wife	妻子的浪漫旅行
83	BREAKERS/브레이크 이커스	beureikoseu	BREAKERS	我是唱作人
84	리틀 포레스트	riteul poreseuteu	little forest	奇妙小森林
85	출발드림 팀	chulbaldeurimtim	Let's Go! Dream Team	中韩梦之队
86	동상이몽	dongsangimong	Same Bed, Different Dreams	幸福三重奏
87	립스틱프 린스	ripsseutikpeurinseu	Lipstick Price	口红王子
88	아이돌 스타 선수권 대회	aidol seuta sonsugwon daehwe	Idol Star Championshi p	超新星全运会
89	주문을 잊은 음식점	jumuneul ijeun eumsikjjom	a restaurant that has forgotten its order	忘不了餐厅
90	더 지니어스 : 게임의 법칙	do jinioseu geime bopchik	The genius	高能玩家
91	퀸덤	kwindom	queendom	炙热的我们
92	집사부일 체	jipssabuilche	Master in the House	我们的师父
93	쇼미더머 니	syomidomoni	show me the money	中国新说唱
94				中国有嘻哈
95				偶像练习生
96				创造101
97				青春有你第一季
98	프로듀스 101 1/2/3/X	peurodyuseu baegil il/ i/ sam/ eksseu	Produce 101 season 1/2/3/X	青春有你第二季
99				创造营2019
100				创造营2020
101				加油美少女
102				明星诞生记
103	뮤직뱅크 , 인기가	myujikpaengkeu/in gigayo/ eumakjjungsim/	《music bank》SBS	音乐至上
104				music on 宇宙打歌中心

105	요, 음악중심 , 쇼챔피 언, THE SHOW, 엠카운트 다운	syochaempion/ do ssyo/ emkaunteudaun	《Inkigayo》 MBC 《Show Music Center》 《Show Champion》, SBS MTV 《THE SHOW》, Mnet 《M! Countdown 》 he show	《中国音乐公 告牌》
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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Hu Xinyue contributed to all parts of the paper.

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