

苏州大学

硕士学位论文

从目的论角度研究广告翻译

姓名：李艳

申请学位级别：硕士

专业：英语语言文学

指导教师：王宏

20080401

中文摘要

广告已成为产品在商场的竞争中能否取胜的一个至关重要的因素，它在促进产品销售、繁荣经济、发展国际贸易和促进国际交流等方面的作用也越来越明显，因此广告翻译的地位也越来越重要，广告翻译研究受到了越来越多的关注。

广告文体是一种具有极高商业价值的实用型文体，是一种极其特殊的文体，其最终目的和主要功能是促使消费者接受并购买它所宣传的产品和服务。如果一则广告达不到说服消费者实施购买行为的目的，这则广告无疑是失败的和毫无价值的。与此同理，如果广告译文无法达到这样的目的和效果，就不能算是成功的翻译。因此，在进行广告翻译和探讨广告翻译的基本策略时，必须把广告的特殊目的与翻译理论结合起来。然而在我国，广告翻译尚未得到充分的发展，对广告翻译的理论研究却远远不够。“信、达、雅”、“忠实”“对等”等一些传统的翻译标准已无法满足广告翻译的要求。作为对传统翻译理论的一个重大突破和翻译理论研究的重要补充，由德莱斯、费米尔、诺德等学者提出的功能翻译理论为广告翻译的理论研究开辟了一个新的视角。作为功能翻译理论的中心，“目的论”强调翻译行为所要达到的目的在翻译过程中的所起的作用，认为翻译目的决定着翻译策略和翻译方法。根据目的论观点，所有翻译遵循的首要法则就是“目的法则”：翻译行为所要达到的目的决定整个翻译行为的过程，即目的决定方法。因为广告文体和广告翻译具有很强的目的性，目的论对广告翻译具有很大的指导意义。

由于在语言和文化上存在着很大的差异，不同国家的广告表达方式是不同的。如果在翻译时忽略译入语的语言和文化差异，忽视广告的预期目的和特殊功能，就不能达到原广告的效果，甚至会达到相反的效果。因此，广告翻译要遵循在目的论的指导下，以译入语的语言和文化为取向的基本策略，这样才能达到广告的目的。

本文探讨了英汉两种语言的文化差异及其对广告翻译的影响，指出

现阶段广告翻译应注意的语言和文化的差异以及目的论对广告翻译的指导意义。通过将目的论，语言文化差异和广告翻译实践结合，提出了一条有效的广告翻译策略——目的语言和文化取向策略，并就这一策略在广告翻译中的具体运用进行了探讨。

关键词：广告，广告翻译，广告的目的，目的论，目的语言和文化取向

Abstract

Advertising, the embodiment of commerce, is becoming an important part of our daily life. The intensification of international exchanges and severe competition involve a growing need for advertising and advertisement translation. However, the traditional translation theories seem increasingly inadequate and the study of advertisement translation is far from satisfactory. Advertisements are of a very practical type of writing with high commercial value, and the ultimate purpose of all advertisements is to promote sales. If the translator rigidly adheres to the original form and content in advertisement translation, the translation may not produce the persuasive effect and may lead to the failure of promoting sales in the target market. Therefore, a more practical theory and translation strategy are called for.

As a break with the traditional translation theories and an important complement to translation studies, the functionalist concept of translation put forward by some German scholars has opened up a new perspective to the study of advertisement translation. According to Vermeer's "skopostheorie", any form of translational action may be conceived as an action, and any action has its purpose. The prime principle determining any translation process is the purpose (skopos) of the overall translational action, and translation strategies and methods are determined by the purpose and the intended functions of the target text. Within the framework of skopostheorie, the skopos rule is the top ranking rule for any translation. In general, a good advertisement is undoubtedly successful in persuading its audiences. When an advertisement is designed, the advertiser is sure that the source audiences can understand it and accept it in the source language and cultural background. However, due to the barriers of language and culture,

when translated, the advertisement may not be successful to the target audiences. That is because when the situation is changed, the persuasive effect in the source culture may not be produced in the target culture. Only when the original advertisement is adapted to the target language and cultural standard, can the target audiences easily understand what is advertised and be more likely to accept the persuasion and buy the advertised product. Therefore, in order to achieve the special purpose of advertisements, and develop the special persuasive function at its best, a particular translation strategy----- the target-language-culture oriented strategy should be taken as the basic strategy in advertisement translation.

Since the target-language-culture oriented strategy requires that the translation of advertisements should be adapted to the target language and culture, this thesis makes further studies into the language and cultural features of English and Chinese advertisements.

The author advocates that the target-language-culture oriented strategy is the basic strategy of advertisement translation and then under the guidance of the strategy does a practical study of advertisement translation by quoting some authentic examples.

Key Words: advertisements, advertisement translation, purpose of advertising, skopostheorie, target-language-culture oriented strategy

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研究生签名： 李艳 日期： 2008.4.20

导师签名： 王芳 日期： 2008.4.20

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Li Yan
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Chapter One Introduction

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Early Traces of Functionalist Approaches to Translation

Translation practice has a long history, but it is mainly focused on literary translation. And up until the second half of the twentieth century, translation theories seemed locked in a debate over ‘literal’, ‘free’ and ‘faithful’ translation.

Since the sixties, with the development of modern linguistics, translation studies has come to a new stage and new theories which are more flexible has sprung out.

Among all the translation theories two main clues can be clearly seen. One is that translation studies breaks with purely linguistic translation theories to be a theory combining linguistics, sociology, and intercultural communication. Translation is now widely viewed as a kind of ‘cross-cultural event’ (Snell-Horby, 1988). Another clue is that the target text readers have been assigned an important role. Nida’s dynamic equivalence theory emphasizes that the effect of the target text on the target text readers should be similar to that of the source text on the source text readers. Relevance theory also places its emphasis on the target audiences. According to the theory, translation is to provide optimal relevance to the target text readers (Gutt, 1991).

The action-oriented and culture-oriented functionalist approaches, with Vermeer’s skopostheorie as a typical model, go one step further. In the framework of his theory, one of the most important factors which determine the purpose of translation is the addressees, the intended receivers or audiences of the target text.

The functionalist view of translation made its appearance in ancient times and experienced a long period of evolution. As a matter of fact, functionalist ideas can be traced back to a very early stage of translation development, if not at the very beginning of translation activities, when the translators were confronted with the dilemma of choosing between 'faithful to the SL text' and 'adjustment to the target situation'. "Throughout history we find translators-----observing that different situations call for different renderings. However, 'translation proper' is frequently associated with literal fidelity to the source text, even though the result may not be considered appropriate for the intended purpose" (Nord 2001:4). It seems that the process of translation cannot get rid of such a dilemma and it inevitably meets two contradictory situations: a faithful reproduction of formal source-text qualities in one situation and an adjustment to the target audiences in another.

With the wheel of history rolling into the twentieth century, the functionalist view began to distinguish itself more clearly as we can find in Eugene A. Nida's dichotomy between formal and dynamic equivalence in translation. 'Formal equivalence' refers to a faithful reproduction of the elements in the form of the source-text and 'dynamic equivalence' denotes the equivalence of extralinguistic communicative effect.

Functionalist ideas have an even more obvious presentation in "A Framework for the Analysis and Evaluation of Theories of Translation" (1976) where Nida places special emphasis on the purpose of translation, on the roles of both the translator and the receivers, and on the cultural implications of the translation process.

1.1.2 A Debate on the Nature of Advertisement translation

Inter-lingual advertising, in its broad sense, includes all forms of

commercial (and sometimes non-commercial) communications and promotion, from a leaflet to television campaigns and it has aroused the interests of many theorists and caused debates on this subject.

The functionalists pay more attention to this subject and among them several functionalist theorists express their opinions. House adopts a functional equivalence approach to translation. According to his opinion, the target text should be an equivalent of the original in terms of function. However, the functional equivalence is difficult to achieve because of the differences of socio-cultural norms. Thus the translator has to consider the different cultural presuppositions in the two language communities.

Honig & Kussmaul (1984) base their method on the action-oriented and culture-oriented communication theory. They view advertisement translation as a functional change and show how functional strategies provide appropriate solutions to the problems confronted with in translation. Honig & Kussmaul propose a translation theory that does not regard the text function as a factor kept constant in translation, but as variables, which depend on the purpose of communication.

Other theorists adopt a different view. Snell & Crampton, for example, belong to those who are doubtful that advertising should be dealt with by translation: "Translation has little to do with this fascinating area of communication" (Snell & Crampton, 1983:112).

Despite the heated debate on the nature of advertisement translation, it is generally agreed that advertisement translation forms a direct communication between the source text producer (sponsor of advertisements) and the target text readers. The target text should be seen as a creation or recreation instead of being marked pragmatically as a TT of a ST. The information must be relevant to the target audiences. Under this principle, it is of great importance to consider the wide variety of

perspectives of the consumers' needs. Therefore, in translating advertisements, it is important to meet the expectation of the target consumers as to what advertising should be like.

Understanding the nature of advertising, we can reconsider the standard of good advertisement translation and what theory we can abide by to meet this standard. The purpose of this thesis is to propose a guiding theory of advertisement translation----skopostheorie.

1.3 The Framework of the Thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters.

Chapter One is a general introduction, in which the research background is presented.

Chapter Two talks about the literature review. This chapter first introduces the theoretical foundation of skopostheorie and then goes further to give a general introduction to skopostheorie and principal rules of skopostheorie, which are the skopos rule, the coherence rule and the fidelity rule.

Chapter Three presents a general introduction to advertising, including its definition, purpose, functions and components.

Chapter Four is a comparative study of the differences of language and culture in Chinese and English advertisements. This chapter first explores the different language features in Chinese and English advertisements and then goes on to expound on the different cultural features in Chinese and English advertisements. In advertisement translation, the differences of language and culture should be paid sufficient attention to and taken into account because they may be barriers to successful advertisement translation. Otherwise, the translator may fail to achieve the purpose of advertisements.

Based on the theories talked about in the former chapters, Chapter Five, in which theory and practice are combined, presents the application of skopostheorie in advertisement translation and gives some insights into advertisement translation within the framework of skopostheorie. As a detailed study of advertisement translation under the guidance of skopostheorie, this chapter probes into the basic strategy of advertisement translation and holds that the selection of translation strategies and methods is determined by the translation skopos. After elaborating on the view that the target-language-culture oriented strategy should be considered as the basic strategy of advertisement translation in light of Vermeer's skopostheorie, the author goes on to probe into the application of the target-language-culture strategy in advertisement translation.

The last chapter is a conclusion. This chapter begins with the summary. Then, in consideration of the limitations of the thesis, the author also proposes some suggestions for future studies in advertisement translation.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 The Theoretical Foundation of Skopostheorie

“The 1970s and 1980s saw a move away from the static linguistic typologies of translation shifts and the emergence and flourishing in Germany of a functionalist and communicative approach to the analysis of translation” (Munday, 2001:73). “Katharina Reiss’s work in the 1970s builds on the concept of equivalence but views the text, rather than the word or sentence, as the level at which communication is achieved and at which equivalence must be sought” (Reiss, 1977/89:113-14). Her functional approach aims initially at systematizing the assessment of translations. It borrows Karl Bühler’s three-way categorization of the functions of language. Reiss links the three functions to their corresponding language ‘dimensions’ and to the text types or communicative situations in which they are used” (Munday, 2001:73).

Skopostheorie has also taken its root in the action theory. As Vermeer defines, human action is an intentional, purposeful behavior that takes place in a given situation (Nord, 2001:11). The translational action model proposed by Holz-Manttari takes up concepts from communication theory and action theory with the aim, amongst others, of providing a model and guidelines applicable to a wide range of professional translation situations (Munday 2001:77). And this is what is called the model of translational action, which views translation as a purpose-driven, outcome-oriented human interaction and focuses on the process of translation as message-transmitter compounds involving intercultural transfer. Translational action focuses a lot on producing a target text which is functionally communicative for the receivers.

The functionalists bring concepts of action, interaction, translational

action and translation together and according to skopostheorie, translation is an intentional, interpersonal, and partly verbal, intercultural interaction based on the source text.

2.2 A General Introduction to Skopostheorie

Skopos is a term loaned from the ancient Greek, meaning ‘shooting target’. Skopostheorie applies the notion of skopos to translation and it is the prime principle determining any translation process in the purpose (skopos) of the overall translational action. Translation can be viewed as a type of human action which must have its own purpose, for any action is intrinsically purposeful.

Although skopostheorie predates Holz-Manttari’s theory of translational action, it can be considered to be part of that same theory, as it deals with a translational action which is ST-based, which has to be negotiated and performed, and which has a purpose and result (Vermeer 1989/2000:221). Skopostheorie focuses above all on the purpose of translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result. It went through three stages in its formation.

The first stage began as clearly as 1971. Katharina Reiss introduces a functional category into her “objective approach to translation criticism” (Reiss, 1977/1989:112). She proposes the prototype of functionalist translation theory in her book titled *Possibilities and Limitations in Translation Criticism*. Though still firmly confined to the framework of equivalence-based theory, this monograph is generally regarded as “the starting point for the scholarly analysis of translation in Germany” (Nord, 2001:9).

The second stage features with Hans Vermeer, a student of Reiss.

Vermeer gave up the equivalence theory and lays the foundation of the functional theory---skopostheorie. According to Vermeer, translation is a type of transfer. During the process of translation, communicative verbal and non-verbal signs are transferred from one language into another. In Vermeer's approach, translation is a form of translational action based on a source text and any action has an aim or purpose. Translation is also a kind of human action, which is an intentional, purposeful behavior taking place in a given situation.

Justa Holz-Manttari, a Finland-based German professional translator, translation scholar and teacher of prospective professional translators, goes one step further than Vermeer. In Holz-Manttari's model, translation is defined as "a complex action designed to achieve a particular purpose"(Holz-Manttari & Vermeer, 1955:4, cf Nord, 2001:13). The purpose of translational action is to transfer messages across language and cultural barriers by means of message transmitters produced by experts.

The functionalist theories paid more attention to advertisement translation and it is generally agreed that they got great accomplishments in practical writing translation, such as advertisement translation. Among the theories, skopostheorie goes the farthest. It transcends the dispute on formal equivalence or dynamic equivalence, literal translation or liberal translation, domestication or foreignization, and sets the intended skopos of advertising as the most important target to achieve. According to this guideline, the translator can decide to choose the most appropriate translation strategy to achieve the intended skopos. This thesis proposes skopostheorie the most appropriate principle for advertisement translation.

2.3 Principal Theories of Skopostheorie

2.3.1 Skopos

Skopos is a Greek word meaning 'aim' or 'purpose' and Hans. J. Vermeer introduces 'skopos' into translation theory as a technical term for the purpose of translation and of the action of translation. According to skopstheorie, any translation process is determined by the purpose (skopos) of the overall translational action. Vermeer defines 'aim' as the final result an agent intends to achieve by means of an action. Vermeer also uses another synonym 'purpose', which can be understood as a provisional stage in the process of achieving an aim. According to Nord (2001:27), three possible kinds of purpose can be distinguished in the field of translation: the general purpose aimed at by the translator in the translation process (perhaps 'to earn a living'), the communicative purpose aimed at by the target text in the target situation (perhaps 'to instruct the readers') and the purpose aimed at by a particular translation strategy or procedure (for example, 'to translate literally to show the structural particularities of the source language') (Vermeer 1989:100, cf. Nord, 2001:28). Nevertheless, the term 'skopos' usually refers to the purpose of the target text.

2.3.2 Basic Rules of Skopostheorie

There are three basic underlying rules, which are the skopos rule, the most dominating rule for any translation, the coherence rule (also called intra-textual coherence) and the fidelity rule (or inter-textual coherence).

2.3.2.1 The Skopos Rule

As above-introduced, skopos is a Greek word meaning 'aim' or 'purpose'. The top-ranking and the most dominating rule for any translation is the skopos rule, which means the translational action is determined by its skopos (aim or purpose), in other words the end justifies the means. Vermeer explains the skopos rule in the following way:

Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The skopos rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want to function. (Vermeer, 1989:20, cf. Nord, 2001:29)

This rule is intended to solve the eternal dilemmas of free translation vs. faithful translation, dynamic equivalence vs. formal equivalence, good interpreters vs. slavish translators, and so on. It means that the skopos of a particular translation task may require a free or faithful translation, or anything between these two extremes, depending on the purpose for which the translation is needed. The receivers or the addressees are the main factor determining the target-text skopos, therefore the translation needs to adapt to the target language and culture to satisfy the receivers.

However, the skopos rule does not strictly exclude philological or literal or even word-for-word translation. There are many cases where relative literalism is precisely what the receivers need.

2.3.2.2. The Coherence Rule

The coherence rule states that the target text “must be interpretable as coherent with the TT receivers’ situation” (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:113). In other words, the target text must be translated in such a way that it is coherent for the target text receivers, given their circumstances and knowledge (Munday, 2001:79).

In terms of skopos-theorie, the translation brief is based on the circumstances of the target culture, rather than the source culture. However, the source culture is usually part of the brief as skopos-theorie accepts the assumption that translation is an action involving the source text. In terms

of action theory, however, the agents, including the senders, the receivers, the initiators and the translators play the most important part and it is problematic to speak of 'the source text' unless we really only mean the source language words or sentence structure. The function of a text is not something inherent in the linguistic signs: it cannot simply be extracted by anyone who knows the code. A text is made meaningful by its receivers and for its receivers.

What the translator can do, and should do, is to produce a text that is at least likely to be meaningful to the target-culture receivers. In Vermeer's terms, the target text should conform to the standard of 'intratextual coherence' (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:109), which means the receivers should be able to understand the target text and the target text should make sense in the receivers' communicative situation and culture in which it is received. A communicative interaction can only be regarded as successful if the receivers interpret it as being sufficiently coherent with their situation. According to the coherence rule, a translation should be acceptable in a sense that it is coherent with the receivers' situation. A translation can be successful unless the target-culture receivers can at least make sense of it.

2.3.2.3 The Fidelity Rule

Deferring from intratextual coherence, there exists intertextual coherence referring to the relationship between the target text and the source text. This is postulated as a further principle, the fidelity rule. The fidelity rule merely states that there must be coherence between the *translatum* and the source text or more specifically, between the source text information received by the translator as well as the interpretation the translator makes of this information and the information that is encoded for the target text receivers.

One goal of translation is to faithfully bring the words and form of the original text into a new language. And the ideal is to make the information as clear to the target readers as it is to the original readers.

As the translator and the receivers live in different cultures, some adjustments in the form showing the relationship between the source text and the target text should be made according to the translator's interpretation of the source text. One possible kind of intertextual coherence can be a maximally faithful imitation of the source text. As Vermeer points out, it may be said that the postulate of 'fidelity' to the source text requires that a new item should be translated "as it was in the original".

In the above, three principal rules of skopostheorie have been presented. One point that should be made clear here is that intertextual coherence is considered subordinate to the coherence rule, and both are subordinate to the skopos rule. If the skopos requires a change of function, the standard will no longer be intertextual coherence with the source text but adequacy or appropriateness with regard to the skopos (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:139). And if the skopos demands intratextual incoherence, the standard of intratextual coherence is no longer valid.

An important advantage of skopostheorie is that it allows the possibility of the same text being translated in different ways according to the purpose of the TT and the commission which is given to the translator (Munday, 2001:80). However, there are some criticisms that have been made of skopostheorie. These include the following: "What purports to be a 'general' theory is in fact only valid for non-literary texts. Literary texts are considered either to have no specific purpose and/or to be far more complex stylistically" (ibid: 81). "Skopostheorie does not pay sufficient attention to the linguistic nature of the St nor to the reproduction of microlevel features in the TT". (ibid) Even if the skopos is adequately fulfilled, it may be

inadequate at the stylistic or semantic levels of individual segments.

Chapter 3 A General Introduction to Advertising

3.1 The Definition, Purpose and Functions of Advertising

The word “advertise” originates from the Latin word “advertere”, which means “to make know to the public”. According to *Webster’s Dictionary*, advertising is a kind of activity which draws the public’s attention to something, especially by means of paid announcements.

According to American Marketing Association (AMA), advertising is “the nonpersonal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media”(Zhao Jing 赵静,1992:1).

The Association of National Advertisers (ANA) defines advertising as a paid form of mass communication, which aims at providing information, changing others’ attitudes to the advertised product, inducing others to get action and eventually making profits for the advertiser.

Referring back to the above definition, we can find that advertising should contain the following characteristics: Firstly, advertising is non-personal and it is a form of mass communication; secondly, it is a presentation or an introduction of information about goods, services or ideas; thirdly, it is by means of many different kinds of media (e.g. newspapers, magazines, radio television, World Wide Web etc); lastly, the purpose of advertising is to promote sales and to make profits.

Advertising is an effective way for traders and businesses to communicate information about their goods, services or ideas to the consumers. Advertising is to present information about a product in such an effective way that it triggers the buying motives of the potential consumers and it is utilized to inform the consumers of what is being advertised and

induce them to buy it. Effective advertising is intended to increase the likelihood that the consumers will buy the product or service. Advertising can build the consumers' awareness of a product and provide some information about its use, quality and performance. Thus advertising is a very purposeful action and the purpose of advertising is to boost the sales of a specific product.

An effective advertisement can increase the likelihood of the consumers' buying action by first attracting their attention and arousing their interest, and then providing reasons for buying a product and for believing the advertiser's claims. Advertisers use a variety of techniques to create effective advertisements, such as attention-getting headlines, slogans, testimonials, product characters, comparison of products, and repetition, etc.

3.2 The Essential Components of an Advertisement

Generally speaking, a written advertisement is composed of five parts, which are headlines, body copies, slogans, brand names and illustrations. These five parts function differently and serve different purposes, therefore they are not equally important.

3.2.1 Headlines

A headline plays an extremely important role in an advertisement. Being in the leading position of an advertisement, it is the sentence that will be seen and read first and therefore should be attached great importance so that the greatest attention can be drawn. Its position determines that it should be able to catch the readers' eyes, draw their attention and arouse their interest and curiosity immediately. Otherwise the readers may ignore the advertisement and shift their attention to other advertisements. Furthermore, from a headline, the readers may know whether the subject in

it is useful and helpful to them and then decides whether to read the rest of the advertisement.

There are numerous successful headlines. For example, “What kind of man reads Playboy?” This headline employs an interrogative to provoke the readers’ interest and inform the readers of the name of the product as well. “My Rolex is more than just a watch, it makes me feel dressed.” In this way, Rolex’s advertisement gives the readers much room for imagination.

3.2.2 Body Copies

A body copy contains the detailed account of the headline. It emphasizes the detailed information about the advertised product or service, and explains in which way the product or service can meet the consumers’ need. Provided that the readers’ attention has been attracted and their curiosity aroused, a body copy should be able to persuade them to buy the product or service.

3.2.3 Slogans

A slogan is a kind of agitating form of language which is generally used in political events, religion, art, and business etc. When used in advertisements, its purpose is to impress the readers deeply, therefore, it should be simple, brief and easy to understand and remember, and meanwhile it’s better if it can cause great popularity among the public. Though short, it plays an extremely important role and deserves the greatest attention. In most cases, a slogan is the highlight of the whole advertisement. Furthermore, it is most likely to be culture-loaded, which should be paid attention to in advertisement translation. Some impressive and successful slogans are presented below:

Nothing is impossible. (Nike)

Always coca-cola. (coca-cola)

不闪的，才是健康的。(创维电视)

味道好极了。(雀巢咖啡)

怕上火喝，喝王老吉。(王老吉)

头屑去无踪，秀发更出众。(海飞丝)

The above slogans are popular among the public and cause favorable responses. They successfully impress the consumers and are deeply rooted in their mind.

3.2.4 Brand Names

A brand name, which is a legally registered trademark, is another important part that deserves much attention as well. In most cases, it is the brand name that decides whether the image of a product or service will be remembered. There are numerous examples of famous and successful brand names, such as Coca-Cola, Kodak, Toshiba, Sharp, “美的” “联想”, and “海尔” etc. The aim of a brand name is to make the product or service rooted in the consumers' mind and these famous brand names tend to exert a powerful influence on the consumers.

3.2.5 Illustrations

An illustration is the non-verbal part of an advertisement and an indispensable part to various kinds of advertisement as well. As an important component, its role cannot be ignored.

It should be noted that an advertisement may not contain all these five parts. Some advertisements may not have headlines, and some may have slogans only. However, no matter what form an advertisement is, its main functions and purpose remain unchanged, that is to inform the consumers of the product or service and induce them to buy it.

Chapter 4 The Differences of Chinese and English

Advertisements in language and culture

4.1 A Comparative Study of Different Language Features of Chinese and English Advertisements

The creation of a high-quality advertisement needs inspirations and this is also true with advertisement translation. Some techniques need to be employed in the creation as well as recreation of an advertisement. After reviewing the differences and similarities of some famous advertisements in both Chinese and English languages, the author elaborates on the different language features of Chinese and English advertisements in terms of lexis, syntax, style and rhetorical devices.

4.1.1 The Lexical Features

It is noted that words and phrases used in advertisements are usually simple and easy to understand and advertising language should be original, creative and effective. The famous brands like Nike, Coca-Cola, Adidas, and Nokia all use simple slogans to impress the audiences, help spread their product images and attract more consumers.

To impress more consumers, coinages, slang and intentional misspellings are used to make the advertisement special, impressive and appealing. The following are some of the examples:

We know eggsactly how to sell eggs. (egg advertisement)

默默无“蚊”的奉献。(福建金鹿牌蚊香片)

(Literal meanings: a. dedication in silence b. without mosquitoes)

“骑”乐无穷，乐在“骑”中。(嘉陵摩托车)

(Literal meanings: a. it is of great fun b. it is fun to ride a motorcycle and fun can be found in riding a motorcycle)

Examples similar to the above can be frequently seen in both English and Chinese advertisements. The above 3 advertisements have something in common, that is to attract the audiences by purposefully making mistakes in spelling and imitating well-known idioms or phrases so as to create a pun. The intentional spelling mistakes and imitation will cause the consumers to think that there are mistakes in the advertisements and attract their attention at the first glance. However, after a second glance, they will find out the delicacy and creativity of the advertisements. In this way the advertisements will arouse the consumers' favorable feelings and help to achieve the skopos.

4.1.2 The Syntactic Features

Another feature of Chinese advertising language which can be easily seen is the use of short and simple sentences. Short and simple sentences are favored and employed by Chinese advertisers to attract consumers of various levels and age groups. However, long and compound sentences are used more often in English advertisements than in Chinese advertisements since short and concise sentences are characteristic of Chinese language. e.g.

衣食住行，有龙则灵。(建设银行龙卡)

(Literal meaning: it is better to have LongCard in every aspect of your life, such as clothing, food)

(Suggested translation: Your everyday life's so very busy, but our LongCard can make it easy.)

要买房，到建行。(建行广告)

(Literal meaning: if you want to buy a house but lake money, just go to

the Construction Bank)

(Suggested translation: Want to buy a home but feel financially scant?
Why don't you come to the Construction Bank?)

4.1.3 The Stylistic Features

4.1.3.1 Flowing Chunks vs. SV Structure

On the syntactical level, Chinese sentences extend several minor-clauses in a linear way without any semantic markers with seemingly short and loose structure, but the interrelationship between different units is implied through the flowing chunk, because the focus moves in accordance with the logical order and the changing rhythm instead of fixing on one point rigidly. And meanwhile, the linguistic functions and constituent information are contained in the process as well. Unlike the Chinese structure, English sentences display a spatial arrangement with a verb as the center. Flexible changes of the verb contain most of the functional, structural and even semantic information. Revolving around the verb, English sentences unfold with modifiers in a hierarchical order, thus they are clear in meaning and tight in structure. In translation, we must abandon our own way of thinking, and arrange the sentences to conform to the target norms and conventions. Through the following examples, we will find out how these intrinsic differences work in Chinese and English advertisements and explore some plausible translation methods. e.g.:

Source Text: 上海银舟大厦位于上海浦东陆家嘴金贸区，东临主干线源深路，西濒该地区的集中绿地双子广场，占地 5037 平方米，楼面面积 37700 平方米，高 100 米，28 层，为商贸结合的高级办公楼。（上海银舟大厦写字楼）

Translated Text: Located in the center of Pudong's Lujiazui financial center, the 100-meter-high Shanghai Silver Boat Mansion is a 28-storey

deluxe commercial and office building, standing on a site of 5037 sq. meters with a GFA of 37,700 sq. meters. It faces on the east of the Yuanshen Road, one of the city's main roads, and the Shuangzi Square green zone on the west. (上海写字楼档案)

It is obvious that the original structure is changed greatly in the target text. The structure of the Chinese advertisement is loose with many short clauses, whereas the English version is formed of two sentences, which are centered on a verb, with modifiers of participle phrases, proposition phrases, and compound adjective etc. The clauses in the source text are arranged in a different order in the target text. By doing so, the translation emphasizes the central meaning in the last three clauses and specifies the implied logical relationship in the surface form. This translation is a successful one in both the content and function because it reflects the features of English language.

4.1.3.2 Florid Language vs. Plain Wording

Another difference of Chinese and English language is that Chinese abounds in gorgeous words while English is characterized by brevity. For example, touched and impressed by what they see or hear, Chinese poets tend to exhaust grand vocabulary to describe their thoughts and feelings. Thus Chinese literature reflects the individual preference of wording instead of imitating the reality. With regard to the language form, Chinese language strives for symmetry in structure and rhyme in sound, hence reading neat, implicit and musical. For example, four-character phrases, parallelism, and antithesis can be frequently seen in Chinese. Moreover, Chinese is also characteristic of high-sounding words. For instance, in Chinese advertisements such words as “一流, 完美, 独特” are frequently seen regardless of the quality of the product being advertised. On the contrary, western literature and art have been developing under the theory of

“imitating the reality”. English language reflects this theory and proves to be formal, factual and rational with tight sentence structure, meticulous stream of thoughts and logical relationship between linguistic units, concise wording and straightforward description. All in all, brevity is the soul of wit, or in other words, good English means a proper word in the proper place and the abusing of florid language is forbidden in good English because it is considered illogical and may spoil the original meaning. Thus Chinese and English are quite different: Chinese language which is casual and subjective, is specially designed for describing rather than for classifying, however, unlike Chinese English displays a beauty of form, straightforward, explicit, and objective. Therefore, influenced by their respective language features, Chinese advertisements are usually florid while English advertisements concise and plain.

4.1.3.3 Heavy Modifiers vs. Light Modifiers

Chinese language also manifests an abundant use of modifiers, whereas English gets rid of ostentatious modifiers and remains factual. Chinese language often resorts to tautology in order to achieve rhyming, emphasis or neat structure. However, in English, it is wisely said that adjectives are the enemy of nouns. Due to the differences in the two languages, some modifiers in Chinese are repetitive but not wordy; sometimes they contribute to the whole rhyming structure or performing the function of giving emphasis. However, when translated literally into English, they sound superfluous and awkward and may even fail to achieve the communicative purpose. As a result, in translation we can omit, adapt them or make them implicit between the lines depending on specific translational situation. Look at the following advertisements:

Source Text: 建国 40 多年，特别是改革开放 10 多年以来，该城市

已成为远近闻名的粮仓，酒乡，烟都，纺城。

Translated Text: In the over 40 years since the founding of the people's Republic of China, especially in the past 10 and more years of reform and opening up to the outside world, the city is now known far and wide as a granary, a wine land, a cigarette capital and a textile city. (现代广告杂志)

As can be seen, the source text is special and thus eye-catching for its using such different words as“仓”，“乡”“都”and “城”， which are actually similar in meaning and each of which helps form a two syllable word together with the words before them. However, the English expression “the land of” can summarize all of them. Besides, “远近闻名” can be replaced by “well-known”, and if added “far and wide”, it becomes wordy.

Furthermore, the translation for “改革开放” is not brief enough and should be changed into the conventional wording, “the reform and open-up policies”. Lastly, in the translation for “建国 40 多年”， “in the” is unnecessary. In a word, close equivalence is sought unsuccessfully and the result is that wordy expressions hinder the comprehension of the main idea. Thus, a revised version of translation is suggested: Over 40 years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, specially in the past 10 and more years of the reform and open-up...the city has been well known as “the land of grain, wine, cigarette, and textile”.

4.1.3.4 Four-character Phrases in Chinese

Chinese manifests an abundance of parallel four-character phrases, which prevail in historical documents, folk idioms and slangs. The popularity of four-character phrases is rooted in the peculiarity of Chinese characters, which is a writing system of monosyllable hieroglyphic instead of alphabet. Each Chinese character is a unit of sound, form and meaning. And as a language governed by meaning, Chinese displays a flexible and

dynamic nature which means key words can be added or omitted without harming the semantic meaning. On the contrary, as an alphabetic language, English attaches great importance to syllable and stress rather than rhyme. Since English sentences are of strict syntactic structure and fixed lexical form, adding or omitting words will lead to ambiguity in meaning. Therefore, four-character phrases in Chinese can't find their equivalents in English in terms of the aspects of form, meaning and sound. Owing to Chinese aesthetic values, the translator often consciously or unconsciously strives for the equivalence in form, which ends up with a loose and florid target text and therefore is opposite to the feature of English language. Compare the following two advertisements:

Source Text: 本店货色齐全, 花色多样, 任凭挑选。(一个小店的广告)

Translated Text: We have a good assortment of goods to choose from.
(苗秀艳, 2007)

Sentence structure in the Chinese and English advertisements differs greatly in that the Chinese read smooth, neat and of tremendous force, while the English ones concise and fluent. Both of them have their own advantages and in translation it's better to take advantage of the features of the target language and abandon those of the source language. Li Xiangde proposes four ways of translating Chinese four-character phrases. According to him, advertisements are rich in four-character phrases, some of which are proverbs while others randomly connected phrases. In translation, rhetorical devices can be employed to achieve great force.

Some four-character phrases can be rendered literally. (李祥德, 1993: 31)

Source Text: 典雅大方

Translated Text : elegant and graceful

Source Text: 香浓可口

Translated Text: aromatic character and agreeable taste

On some other occasions, four-character phrases should be translated freely. Sometimes set phrases which have similar meanings can be resorted to in the target language:

Source Text: 款式多样, 做工精细。

Translated Text: great variety, fine workmanship

Source Text: 选料考究, 质地优良。

Translated Text: choice material superior quality

Appropriate rhetorical devices can even be worked out to help achieve creative translation. (裴邦清, 2006) See the following examples:

Metaphor:

Source Text: 发乳柔软迷人, 色泽悦目 (某发乳广告)

Translated Text: soft enchanting, smiling color

Personification:

Source Text: 一册在手, 纵览全球 (全球杂志)

Translated Text: The Globe brings you the world in a copy.

Parallelism:

Source Text: 百万买卖, 毫厘利润

Translated Text: a business in millions, a profit in pennies

Repetition:

Source Text: 人带“梅花”, 准时乐道 (梅花手表)

Translated Text: Give the watch to all and to all a good time

Alliteration and end rhyme:

Source Text: “茉莉”香糖, 越嚼越香 (茉莉香糖)

Translated Text: Murrymints-----good-----to-----murrymints

In addition, the “to be +adj. + adverbial phrase” structure can be applied. (ibid)

Source Text: 品质优良

Translated Text: to be excellent in quality

Source Text: 设计华丽

Translated Text: to be luxuriant in design

Lastly, four-character phrases can be changed into preposition phrase.
(ibid)

Source Text: 享负盛名

Translated Text: with a long standing reputation

Source Text: 品种齐全

Translated Text: in complete range of articles

In a word, the translation of four-character phrases should be novel and attractive and fit the whole stylistically. Chinese advertisements are full of clichés such as “规格齐全、品种繁多、款式新颖、经久耐用、品质优良” etc. If we translate them into English only by copying literally from dictionaries and reference books, the English version will be full of redundant words and expressions and the communicative purpose of those advertisements will be undoubtedly impaired.

To sum up, from the above comparison, a conclusion can be drawn that different language features can be found in Chinese and English advertisements. In addition, Chinese and English advertisements are also different on the whole. For one thing, some Chinese advertisements emphasize the physical need by making painstaking efforts to quote large paragraphs of awkward-sounding jargons. On the contrary, many English advertisements pay more attention to the readers' spiritual satisfaction by arousing their interest and appealing to their emotions. Compare the following two advertisements:

Chinese advertisement: 中国人参钵酒是用上等葡萄酒, 经过长期陈酿, 配以我国东北人参, 参用科学方法制成。本品含有多种维生素, 有

机酸，有机铁，多种人参甙，人参宁配糖钵等成分，经常饮用有健脾胃，补气血，生津液，强心身之功能。(人参钵酒)

English advertisement: If you could take the grace of a flight of flamingoes, the sweetness of Beethoven's Fur Elise, the delicacy of a dawn sky, and capture all this in a wine, you would come close to the character of Nederbury Rose. (Nederbury Rose)

Both of the two advertisements are about alcohol, but they are completely different. While the Chinese one is full of medical terminologies, the English one establishes a romantic atmosphere by appealing to the readers' sense of visual (the grace of a flight of flamingoes, the delicacy of a dawn sky), hearing (sweetness of Beethoven's Fur Elise), and taste (capture all in a wine)

4.1.4 The Utilization of Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical devices have been used because of their advantages of enriching the expressiveness and effect of language, enforcing the vividness and artistic beauty of language and in this way arousing people's free imagination and association of ideas.

In advertising language, rhetorical devices are the talisman of the advertiser. They add to the attractiveness and thoughtfulness of advertising language so as to impress the consumers with a lasting image, and finally facilitate the promotion and popularization of a product. In advertising language, the most commonly used rhetorical devices are: figure of speech (simile and metaphor), pun, parallelism, rhetorical question, parody and rhyme.

It is clearly shown through the above comparison that the translator needs to bear in mind both the similar and different features of English and Chinese advertisements. And the most important point is that it is essential

to carry out an adaptive transfer of the source advertisement to meet the target consumers' language habits and cultural backgrounds under the guidance of the skopos rule.

4.2 A Comparative Study of the Cultural Differences in Chinese and English Advertisements

Advertising is an active constituent in the whole market and a powerful tool of promoting sales. However, due to the different cultural features, diverse living habits as well as the varieties of language in different countries, the function of advertising has been weakened on different levels. And cultural differences can be reflected everywhere in the global economic market.

In the era of the "global village", the implication and influence of advertising culture is far-reaching. Advertising culture is an independent branch of culture related to advertising and it is not an isolate social phenomenon. Observed from its superficial structure, advertising culture includes from advertised products or services to various kinds of media, from people's consuming actions to advertising activities, and so on. Observed from its deep structure, advertising culture is mainly manifested in people's life attitudes, marketing concepts and ideas about advertising effects, advertising policies-making and advertising aesthetics. Advertising culture not only spreads the product's information to the consumers but also bestows a cultural enjoyment. At the same time, advertising has to take the political, regional and ethnological cultures into consideration.

So a qualified advertiser should know clearly the basic cultural differences, and only in this way, can he or she create a successful advertisement translation which can be well understood and arouse the sympathetic purchasing action. Therefore, it is essential to understand a

foreign country's culture, ranging from people's tastes to their living habits. Only in this way, can advertisements achieve their desired effects in different countries. The following is a contrast and analysis between Chinese and English advertisements from a cultural angle.

4.2.1 Group Orientation vs. Individual Orientation

Group orientation, or collectivism, is characterized by a rapid social framework that distinguishes between the in-group and out-group. People count on their in-group (relatives, clans, organizations) to look after them, and in exchange, they believe they owe absolute loyalty to the group. Collectivism means greater emphasis on the views, needs and goals of the in-group rather than oneself; (b) social norms and duty defined by the in-group rather than behavior to get pleasure; (c) beliefs shared with the in-group rather than beliefs that distinguish self from in-group; and (d) great readiness to cooperate with in-group members. In collective societies, people are born into extended families or clans that support and protect them in exchange for their loyalty. A "We" consciousness prevails: The identity is based on the social system; the individual is emotionally dependent on organizations and institutions; the culture emphasizes belonging to organizations; organizations invade private life and the clans to which the individual belongs; and individuals trust group decisions. As a matter of fact, collective behavior has deep historical roots. The message of collectivism can be reflected in these words from Confucius: "If one wants to establish himself, he should help others to establish themselves at first."

On the contrary, individual orientation, or individualism, means that the individual is the single most important unit in any social settings, regardless of the size of that unit, and the uniqueness of each individual is of paramount value. The following are some of the characteristics of these

cultures that value individualism: People's personal goals take priority over their allegiance to groups like families or the employers. The loyalty of individuals to a given group is very weak; they feel they belong to many groups and are apt to change their membership so long as it suits them, switching churches, for example, or leaving one employer for another. In cultures that tend toward individualism, an "I" consciousness prevails. Competition rather than cooperation is encouraged; personal goals take precedence over group goals; people tend not to be emotionally dependent on organizations and institutions; and every individual has the right to his or her private property, thoughts, and opinions. These cultures stress individual initiative and achievements they value individual decision making.

Such a cultural difference usually leads to the differences of Chinese and English advertisements. For example, Chinese people often have a tendency of following suit, which can be well reflected by the phenomenon that most of the Chinese consumers believe that the more people buy a product, the better quality it has. Therefore, when faced with a great variety of brands, they usually buy what is favored by most people. Such kind of psychology is thus taken advantage of by the Chinese advertiser. That is exactly why Chinese advertisements tend to focus on group behavior. To be exact, they try to persuade the consumers into purchasing the advertised with the masses. Many examples which stress group behavior can be found in our daily life, and “我们都喝”、“深受大众喜爱”、“老少皆宜” are just some of them. However, it is just opposite to western advertisements. Because of the individual orientation in western culture, what prevails in their advertisements is such words as independence, uniqueness, and privacy.

4.2.2 Indirect Communication vs. Direct Communication

Due to the diversity of different cultural backgrounds, people who speak different languages have different ways of thinking. Generally speaking, English-speaking people have a linear way of thinking. To be exact, their articles usually begin with a topic sentence which points out the main idea of the passage straightforwardly rather than in a round-about way. Then, the main idea is developed only in the later part of this passage. To make a sharp contrast, the structure of a Chinese article is usually a spiral one. The theme is elaborated not directly but in a circuitous way. A Chinese article often starts with something that seems to have no direct relevance to its subject. And step by step, its theme becomes clear and understandable through a gradual disclosure. Such a cultural contrast is also reflected in their respective advertisements. Compare the following two advertisements:

嘉士利为你珍藏童真的滋味…

那一年，我和妹妹去乡下姥姥家，我们在田野上奔跑，在小河里钓鱼，在收割过的麦地里拾麦穗，空气里尽是迷人的清香！现在，很难找到那种感觉了。田野变成了厂房，小河也不见了…咦？这是什么？味道真特别，让我想起乡下麦地里那迷人的清香！

嘉士利饼干为你珍藏童真的滋味！（嘉士利饼干）

A QUAKER CHEWY GRANOLA BAR

Has 1/3 less sugar,

Which makes that candy seem

A little less dandy

Compared to the five leading chocolate candies, an average Quaker Chewy Granola Bar has, ounce for ounce, 1/3 less sugar and less fat. And it comes in eight delicious, wholesome varieties your kids will love, like Raisin & Cinnamon, Peanut Butter and Strawberry .So maybe all that sweet stuff isn't quite such neat stuff.

Know the facts about snacks.

Choose Quaker Chewy. (Quaker Chewy Granola)

The Chinese advertisement is for a kind of biscuits. However, its first few sentences are a recollection of one's childhood, which seems to have no direct connection with its subject—the biscuits. Yet, this recollection of the past, in fact, functions as an initiator and a bridge. It leads the readers back into their own childhood and thus resonance is obtained through emotional appeal. Then, the recall of the past gradually turns to the advertising subject. And in fact, this recall just indicates the unique feature of the biscuits. To make a sharp contrast, the English advertisement is totally linear. From the very beginning, the chocolate's name is stated in capitalized boldfaced words, closely followed by its merit, namely, it contains 1/3 less sugar. And in the body copy, this advantage is highlighted with more detailed information. Besides that, it also adds that it is still delicious with various kinds of flavors. From an overall respect, the whole copy is well-knit and contains no redundant or useless words. We cannot judge which style is better without considering cultural factors. As their target consumers differ in their cultural backgrounds, both of them are suitable for their respective clients.

4.2.3 Authorities vs. Facts

Promises and guarantees in advertisements usually need reliable proofs. Chinese and English advertisements have a big difference in choosing proofs. The traditional Chinese culture stresses unification. It usually advocates the absolute authority from the superior to the inferior. Furthermore, the Chinese show great respect to their authorities. They believe whatever the authorities say. In other words, the authorities should never be doubted. This tradition, of course, has its profound historical roots. As China has long been a feudal society, it is deemed a virtue to be obedient

to the rulers. And in ancient times, people were taught to believe that what the authorities said was a forever truth. Up till now, it is still a feature of the Chinese psychology. However, the western culture is just opposite. It is held that inequality in society should be minimized. People in these cultures believe they are close to the authorities and should have access to them. To them, a hierarchy is an inequality of roles established for convenience. Subordinates consider superiors to be the same kind of people as they are, and superiors perceive their subordinates the same way. People in power, be they supervisors or government officials, often interact with their constituents and try to look less authoritative than they really are. The powerful and the powerless try to live in concert. Therefore, in most western countries, it is the facts, not the authorities, that are considered as important. The westerners tend to be more objective. When dealing with a subject, they usually will not take personal factors into account. In other words, they are more business-minded, and distinguish personal feelings from impartiality in a clear manner. Such a contrast in cultural background is again mirrored in advertising. As Chinese people usually show respect to authorities, their advertisements frequently quote from all levels of authorities to prove their product's quality. Therefore, what fills in our ears is often such words as “获得…金奖”, “国有企业”, “中国消费者协会推荐”, “昔日宫廷秘方”, “国宴饮料” and etc. The obvious implication behind these words is that the quality of their products is proved by authorities, which leaves no room for you to doubt. On the other hand, the western advertisers regard facts more important. Therefore, they often strive to obtain the experimental data through numerous tests and surveys. And then, they use these data as proofs to persuade their consumers.

4.2.4 Interpersonal Harmony and Interpersonal Disharmony

In Chinese culture, people seek to avoid confrontations and conflicts and strive for a communication style that values interpersonal harmony. It is undoubted that harmony is one of the primordial values of Confucianism and of the Chinese culture. According to Confucianism, the ultimate goal of human behavior is to achieve harmony which leads Chinese people to pursue a conflict-free and group-oriented system of human relationship. However, many western cultures are known for their assertive and aggressive communication style. In cultures that have a long history of valuing nonconformity, individualism, competition, and freedom of expression, interpersonal disharmony is something that can be found frequently. In such cultures, assertiveness-training courses are offered so that people can learn that communication is a contest and that aggressive verbal and nonverbal techniques usually “win” the game. In cultures where individualism is highly valued as it is in the US, people are expected to take the initiative in advancing their personal interests and well-being and to be direct and assertive in interacting with others. High social and geographic mobility and the comparatively superficial nature of many personal attachments create a climate where interpersonal competition and disharmony and a moderate level of aggressiveness are tolerated and even expected.

This feature is also reflected in advertising culture. Applied linguists find out through their constant research that English-speaking people are apt to use comparison and contrast in their writing. Those western copy writers just take advantage of their consumers’ habits. They highlight their product’s merits by comparing it with their rivals. Generally speaking, this kind of advertisement can be divided into two types: The first type is implicit, which does not point out the rival’s name directly; the second, explicit, in other words, it mentions the rival’s name in a straightforward

way so as to stress the comparative advantages of the advertised product and belittle other products or services by comparing with the advertised. However, comparison and contrast almost never appear in Chinese advertisements.

Chapter 5 The Application of Skopostheorie in Advertisement Translation

5.1 The Basic Strategy of Advertisement Translation under the Guidance of Skopostheorie

The special purpose and functions of advertising determine that advertisement translation differs from the translation of other types of writing. Vermeer stresses repeatedly that the selection of translation strategies and methods is determined by translation skopos. In the light of Vermeer's skopostheorie, the target-language-culture oriented strategy should be considered as the basic strategy of advertisement translation and advertisement translation should be under the guidance of skopostheorie.

The special purpose and functions of advertising require that the translation of advertisements be adapted to the target culture as well as the target language. In other words advertisement translation must be target-language-culture oriented in order to achieve the purpose of advertisements. If the translator doesn't take the target language and cultural features into account and thus translates the original advertisement literally, the target text may become incomprehensible and unacceptable to the target audiences. A translation can be considered good in quality and successful if the images of the original language and culture can be retained. However, some translated advertisements fail to achieve that and thus can hardly attract the potential consumers' attention and induce them to buy the product. Furthermore, it is possible that the target text may lead to hostility among the target audiences. Thus, in translation, stress should be laid on "the function or set of functions the target text is to achieve in the target culture" (Nord, 1991:28). In England, a shop notice almost certainly

involves a dramatic simplification into a “special offer/reduced prices” notice displayed over the product, with, in this case, perhaps an indication of “freshness” and “abundance”. In order to induce the potential consumers to buy the product, the French advertisement should be adapted to “Special Offer---Fresh and Abundant” in English. Although some cultural information in the original advertisement is inevitably lost, the special purpose and persuasive function can be achieved in the target culture. It is still a successful advertisement, because the purpose and persuasive function of advertising can be achieved. In advertisement translation, a translation must be adapted to the target language and target culture. For example:

Cigarettes by John Player, England

In English advertisements, word groups in which two nouns are linked by “by” are usually used to describe the artistic and creative activities, such as “Watercolor by Jill Blackmore”, “Oil on Canvas by Ian Hamilton”, “Floral Arrangement by Sylvia Ditchburn” (Pan Hong 潘红, 1998). Advertisers often use this structure to tell the consumer that the product is of unique and peculiar quality and indicate that the person who chooses it has high artistic taste. It is obvious the above cigarette advertisement tries to persuade the potential consumers that this kind of cigarettes is noble and graceful. The British consumers are willing to accept this kind of persuasion and buy the cigarettes, so the advertisement can achieve its purpose and therefore, it is indeed successful.

However, if the translator rigidly adheres to the original form and renders it into “英国普莱尔的香烟”, the translation will seem to be so mediocre that it will be difficult to stimulate the Chinese consumers’ desire to buy the cigarette and this advertisement will be a failure. Under such circumstances, the target-language-culture oriented strategy should be

called for to induce the potential consumers to purchase the product. Thus, the popular linguistic compounds in Chinese----- four-character compounds, such as “口味独特”(peculiar taste) “做工讲究 (exquisite in workmanship) “非同一般”(out of ordinary) can be employed in translating this advertisement. If the cigarette advertisement is adapted to “普莱尔香烟, 精工细作, 口味独特, 与众不同”, the Chinese customer may be ready to accept it, and thus the special purpose of advertising can be achieved.

Similarly, in Chinese advertising, most Chinese advertisers tend to make prominent points such as “省优部优” (honored as superior quality product by the provincial government and the Ministry concerned), and “信誉第一, 顾客至上” (reputation first and consumers the utmost). If these phrases are translated into English literally, they will confuse the western consumers. Let's see the following translation of the advertisement for Zhejiang Textile Import and Export Co:

Source Text:

三十年纺织品和服装出口经验。质量第一, 信誉第一, 友情第一。
重合同, 守信用, 始终一贯。

Translated Text:

30 years' experience of textiles and garment export. Quality the Best.
Reputation and Friendship the Foremost. Always abide by Contract and
Credibility. (廖七一, 2000:259)

To the English audiences, such kind of writing is not an advertisement, because it is quite different from the form and structure of advertisements they are familiar with and therefore it quite odd to them.

As we know, the ultimate purpose of advertisements is to introduce the product and persuade the potential consumers to buy the advertised product or service. Advertising language is only a means to achieve this purpose. Both the form and content are subordinate to the persuasive effect that the

advertisement is designed to reach. So in advertisement translation, it is not necessary to conform to the original form and structure. On the contrary, it is a necessity to adapt the translation to the target language and target culture. For the sake of the special purpose of advertising, the target-language-culture oriented strategy can be considered as the basic strategy of advertisement translation.

5.2 The Application of the Target-language-culture Strategy to Advertisement Translation

According to skopostheorie, the target-language-culture oriented strategy is the basic strategy of advertisement translation. Therefore, the translator should not ignore the target language and culture.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, a complete written advertisement is usually made up of five component parts. However, not every advertisement includes all the five parts. Among them, brand names and slogans play a special role in advertisements. In this chapter, the application of the target-language-culture oriented strategy in translating brand names and slogans will be discussed.

5.2.1 The Translation of Brand Names

A brand is any name, term, sign, symbol, or design—or the combination of these—intended to differentiate goods or services. An excellent brand name sets up an excellent company image, which in turn helps to promote sales. An excellent internationalized brand name is a good means of marketing for multi-national companies to explore the global market. It is widely accepted that the consumers' decision of purchase is determined by whether the brand name of the product is appealing to them

or not. What's more, brand names help the consumers to identify the origin of the product and provide a guarantee of consistent quality. In many cases, the consumers refuse to buy the product just because its brand name doesn't appeal to them, so the translation of brand names is of great significance. Whether the translation is adapted to the target language and target culture is a key point in determining whether the translation can satisfy the target consumers' taste and further whether the product will be well accepted in a new market in another country. However, due to poor knowledge of the target language and culture, quite a lot of Chinese enterprises fail to promote sales in the international market. For example, Chinese people like to use the images of some animals as brand names, but the associations related to the animals are quite different in different cultures. The unawareness and ignorance of these differences will lead to the failure of achieving the advertising purpose. See the following examples:

“喜鹊” is a Chinese brand name for bed sheets. If the brand is literally rendered into “Magpie”, it will fail to promote sales in international market, because in Chinese, “Magpie” has an associative meaning “lucky bird that heralds good news”, but in English it is associated with gossipy persons. As a result, the brand name “喜鹊” is adapted as “Luckybird” in English.

Guangzhou “五羊” bicycle is popular in Chinese market. The brand name is heavily culture-loaded, because it is derived from a folk story. “羊城” is the city of Guangzhou in Guangdong Province. According to the story, five fairies visited Guangzhou on five sheep, bringing five sorts of grains together with blessing. Therefore, “五羊” is a symbol of good fortune in Chinese culture. However, if the brand name is literally translated into “Five Rams”, the product will be confronted with sales problems in Western countries, since “Five Rams” is associated with recklessness and unsafety in western culture and will arouse the target consumers' unpleasant feelings.

This brand name can be transferred into “Five Lambs”, which not only preserves the original meaning, but gives the associated meaning of a gentle and dear person.

“小白象” children’s shoes are quite popular in Chinese market as “小白象” is a lovely animal that can bring good fortune to people. But when sold in the English countries, they were confronted with some unexpected problems. That is because “white elephant” is related to “useless and expensive thing” in English culture. That’s the reason why the brand name was finally assimilated into “Pet Elephant.”

“轻身减肥片” (originally translated as “Obesity-reducing Tablets”) was expected to sell well in American market since keeping-fit is in fashion there. However, it failed because at sight of the brand name, American consumers considered that this tablet was for the obese people, and they were unwilling to classify themselves into the group of the obese. Later the brand name was adapted as “Slimming Pills” to cater to consumers’ pleasure.

“回力” (shoes), which means tremendous power in Chinese, is adapted to “Warrior”, meaning a soldier or experienced fighting man in English. Making use of the similar pronunciation, the translation reaches the original effect of persuasiveness, that is, you may get the great power when you wear “Warrior” shoes.

“昂立一号” (medicine) is rendered into “Only One”, instead of “Ang Li One” or “Standing” to show the peculiar quality and effect of this medicine.

Nowadays, more and more Chinese enterprisers and translators notice the importance of adapting to the target language and culture and employ the target-language-culture oriented strategy in advertising their products. More examples are listed below:

“联想” (computer) is rendered into an English brand name “Legend”. “联想” computer presents an imagination to the Chinese consumers but a legend to the Western consumers.

“黑人” is a famous Chinese brand name for toothpaste. The brand name is viewed as a creative one for its positive associated meaning. It is derived from the fact that the teeth of the black always seem whiter than those of other races. The brand name suggests that the toothpaste can help to make the teeth whiter and cleaner. However, this brand name can't be literally rendered into Black Man or Dark Man in English, because the version will be regarded as a demonstration of racial discrimination. Therefore, it is rendered into Darlie which means darling. The translated version suggests the product is just like someone who cares for you and whom you like to be with every day. Although the translation is far from its original meaning, it is a creative rewriting and successful in opening the foreign market and promoting sales, because the word “darling” in English is very colloquial and shows the close and intimate relationship between people.

Similarly, for the sake of developing Chinese market and building up a good image in Chinese market, some well-known multinational corporations tend to adopt the target-language-culture oriented strategy to cater for Chinese consumers' taste. Let us take some examples:

Heineken (beer) 喜力	Good Companion(cigarette) 良友
Marlboro (cigarette) 万宝路	Mild Seven (cigarette) 万事发
Pepsicola (drink) 百事可乐	Salem(cigarette) 雪乐门
Lactov(drink) 乐口福	7-up(drink) 七喜
Holsten(beer) 好顺	Goldlion(tie) 金利来
Paloma (water heater) 百乐满	Pepsicola(drink) 百事吉
Mastercard (credit card) 万事达	Ford (automobile) 福特

Polaroid (camera) 宝丽莱

Transit (automobile) 全顺

In the above examples, we can easily find such characters which are favored by the Chinese consumers as “乐” pleasure “福” happiness “发” fortune “达” eminence “顺” smoothness “宝” treasure “利” (profit). These characters and phrases can easily strike the Chinese consumers' heart and stimulate their desire to buy the advertised products.

Furthermore, in order to expand Chinese market or keep the market already got, quite a lot of corporations change the original translation of their brand names and adapt them to Chinese language and culture. For instance:

The original translation of the German automobile brand name “Mercedes-Benz” was “默赛得斯·本茨” Or “本茨”. Now it is replaced by “奔驰”, which can reflect the speedy quality of the car and easily attract Chinese consumers' attention.

American Coca-Cola Co. Ltd. has changed its first translation of the brand name “肯蜡蝌蚪” to “可口可乐”, since the latter can appeal to the Chinese consumers with the meaning of good taste and happiness.

American Hewlett-Packard Co. decided to use “惠普” as the brand name of its products in china, instead of the original translation “休利特—帕卡德”, as “惠” in Chinese means “favor” and “benefit”.

In summary, the aim of advertisement translation is to promote sales in a new market, and because promoting sales usually means promoting the brand, the translation of brand names becomes unusually crucial and plays an important role in advertisement translation. Whether a brand name can be successfully translated exerts a great influence on target consumers' decision of purchase. In order to achieve the purpose of persuading the target consumers to buy the product, the translator should adapt the original advertisement to make it acceptable in the target language and culture,

exploit the persuasive function at the best, and at last influence and induce the target consumers to take action.

5.2.2 The Translation of Slogans

The original meaning of a slogan is “battle cry”. In advertising, a slogan is mainly aimed at maintaining the continuity of an advertising campaign and stimulating the consumers’ interest and promoting sales. The slogan of an advertisement is viewed as the eye of the advertisement and should be eye-catching and impressive. Normally a slogan consists of just a few words, which are smooth to read and easy to remember. In a word, an ideal slogan should be simple, clear, attractive, memorable and persuasive.

In the translation of slogans, to enable the target consumers to understand and remember, a wise translator usually takes the target language and culture into account and makes full use of the target linguistic features in the context of the target culture. The following examples may provide a good object for analysis.

(1) Nescafe, good to the last drop. (Nescafe)

雀巢咖啡，滴滴香浓

(2) Taste that beats the other Cold. (Pepsi-Cola)

百事可乐，冷饮之王

(3) REMY MARTIN XO Exclusively Fine Champagne Cognac.

(Remy Martin XO)

人头马一开，好事自然来

(4) A diamond is forever. (De Beers)

钻石恒久远，一颗永流传

(5) Where there is a way for car there is a Toyota. (Toyota)

车到山前必有路，有路必有丰田车

(6) 穿上“金鞋”，足下生辉 (某皮鞋广告)

“Golden Shine” shines your way.

(7) 爽口顺喉，和醇耐味，名贵高尚

Sensuously Smooth

Mysteriously Mellow

Gloriously Golden (廖七一, 2000)

(8) 利莱时装，真我个性，淑女形象 (利莱时装)

Lilai gives you a sense of our time,

A true yourself and a pretty girl.

(9) 接天下客，送万里情 (天津某出租车公司)

Your satisfaction is our destination.

(10) 红玫相机新奉献 (红玫相机)

My love is like a Red Rose. (Yang Quanhong 杨全红, 2000)

Four-character compounds and verbal parallelism are two typical linguistic features in Chinese language. Four-character compounds usually convey profound meanings in very concise structure with strong rhythm and rhyme, such as translations 1 and 2, and examples 6, 7, 8, while parallelism is used for emphasis and heightening the effectiveness of expressions, such as translations 1 to 5, and examples 6 and 9. These two linguistic devices are widely employed in Chinese advertisements especially in slogans, since they are very expressive and effective, and also easy to remember. In the same way, they are also applied in translation from English to Chinese. In the above translations 1 to 5, these two linguistic devices are easily found. With the help of the two devices, those five translations of slogans seem to be smooth to read, easy to remember and leave a deep impression on the Chinese consumers.

In addition, rhetorical devices in the target language can be used to achieve the intended persuasive effect. For example, translation 5 also copies a Chinese proverb “车到山前必有路，船到桥头自然直” which

means that everything will eventually sort itself out in Chinese to make an unexpected sense of humor and to emphasize that Toyota is in great demand. The Application of rhetorical devices is also an effective way in translating slogans.

On the contrary, frequent use of simple, distinctive and elliptical sentences is characteristic of English advertisements. Concise as they are, they convey sufficient message, such as examples 1, 2, 3, and translations 6 to 9. This linguistic feature is frequently employed in translation from Chinese to English. If example 9 is translated as

We meet guests from all over the world.

We give you comfort all the way.

it may be baffling and not in conformity with the purpose of slogans.

Moreover, rhetorical devices are effectively applied in examples 6, 7 and 10. In example 6 the slogan draws the Western consumers' interest and is memorable by the repetition of "shine", while in example 7 alliteration is employed for imitating the process of sampling liquor-----"s(ip)...m...g(ood)", which can stir the Western consumer's heart and prompt sales. In example 10, Burns' well-known verse "My love is like a red, red rose" is imitated. As a result, the slogan helps to catch the consumers' attention quickly and impresses the customer deeply.

Now let's take a close look at a slogan to see how the target-language-culture oriented strategy is employed at its best.

Target Text: Make yourself heard. (Ericsson ad)

Translated Text: 理解就是沟通

The translation is almost a rewriting of the source text. As mentioned in the previous chapter, individualism is widely accepted and highly respected as a social value in western countries. Importance attached to individualism absolutely makes itself clear in the slogan: Make yourself

heard. On the contrary, individualism is a negative word and is related to self-centeredness and selfishness in Chinese culture in which cooperation and collectivism are valued, therefore the one-way communication (you are heard) in the source text is transferred into the two-way communication (understanding each other). Thus it is reasonable to say the adaptation or rewriting adopted in the translation is target-culture oriented and it does help to overcome the cultural obstacles in the international market.

To sum up, as advertising is intended to build up a good image of the advertised product and to promote sales at last, advertising slogans are specially designed to be attractive, persuasive, and unforgettable to provide continuity for an advertising campaign. In order to render the original slogans as attractive, distinctive and effective as possible, the translator should take advantage of the target linguistic characteristics in the target cultural context, since advertising language in each nation has formed its own linguistic features with the development of advertising, which exerts a firmly established influence on its consumers. Hence, the target-language-culture oriented strategy in translation is necessary and inevitable.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 Conclusion

In this thesis, a tentative study of advertisement translation is made to provide a basic strategy for advertisement translation. Focusing on the functionalist theory of the German school, the author firstly makes an analysis of the ultimate purpose and main functions of advertisements, secondly makes a comparison between English and Chinese advertisements in terms of the differences of language and culture, and lastly, by giving a large number of authentic examples, makes a practical study of advertisement translation. In a word, the thesis just tries to find a way to guide the practical advertisement translation. In the light of Vermeer's skopostheorie, the author holds the view that the target-language-culture oriented strategy should be taken as the basic strategy of advertisement translation and due to the language and cultural barriers, advertisement translation should be adapted to the target language and culture so as to achieve the purpose of advertisements.

6.2 Limitations of the Thesis and Suggestions for Future Research

The thesis is fulfilled under such a situation that there are numerous essays and quite a lot of papers on advertisement translation, thus many scholars find it redundant to study advertisement translation again. And it's also extremely difficult to make a breakthrough.

There are limitations of this thesis. In consideration of these limitations, the author proposes the following suggestions for future study:

- (1) The thesis does not pay sufficient attention to the microlevel

features of the TT. There are different levels of skopos, and not all the levels can be fulfilled. Even if the the skopos of advertisements is adequately fulfilled, it may be inadequate at the aesthetic, stylistic or semantic levels of advertisements.

(2) A clear categorizations should be made in view of brand names and slogans when selecting examples.

(3) Comparisons of English and Chinese advertisements in the same field should be carried out, for example, advertisements for commodities, home appliances, expensive goods, health care products and nutrients, or children's products.

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