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LINGUOCULTURAL ASPECT OF ADVERTISEMENT TRANSLATION FROM CHINESE TO ENGLISH AND ENGLISH TO CHINESE

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Abstract: As a product of culture, advertising can more directly show the relationship between language and culture, therefore advertising language is an art form with strong cultural background and influenced by the tendency of the times as well. This paper discusses the English and Chinese advertising languages, analyzes the problems existing in the translation of advertising languages, and puts forward several effective methods for the advertising translation from the perspective of culture. Since the purpose of advertising language is to persuade target consumers to buy its products or services, it becomes a crucial task to fully understand the cultural differences between China and the western countries. This paper analyzes from following aspects: collectivism and individualism, social and historical background, and taboo factors in advertisement translation.

In the process of advertisements translation between Chinese and English, there are many unsatisfactory examples, some of them even lead to sales setbacks. This paper proceeds from problems in advertising translation that the translators do not have a good command of the nation-specific culture and is too adhesive to the advertisement's superficial meaning while there are a lot of cultural factors hidden in the present advertising translation. In fact, advertisement translation requires more than just rendering sentences into another language. Translators have to convert the ideas and thoughts behind the sentences into the target language by applying the knowledge of the target culture. This paper suggests some methods to make advertising translation in view of the language and culture differences.

Keywords: advertising language; culture difference; advertising translation

Nowadays the marketing competition plays a significant role in global business. In this circumstance, the quality of the advertisement seems to be very important and necessary if you want to make your products competitive and attractive to the consumers among millions of other competitors. As we know China is a large importer and exporter, and its economy has already integrated into the world economy, thus the translation accuracy between Chinese and English

will have a great impact on world economic trade.

A high-quality translated advertisement will not only transform the information in accuracy and reap a good advertising effect, but also take receptor's cultural and appreciating association into account, which will have much help to the cultural communication, thus it is also an impulse in cultural diffusion. However we also cannot deny the fact that most of the company haven't realized the

importance of the advertisement translation and seek for help from the inexpert translators instead of a professional one, due to this selection the quality of the translated version will not be high, as this article mentioned before, the process of the advertisement translation will not only convert the information in accuracy but also involve the cultural aspect of source and target text.

Language

The study on the relationship between language and culture is not a new topic. According to the works of previous scholars, we can clearly understand that there is a close connection between them, which determines that translation is not a simple process of language conversion. Even for the relationship between language and culture, some people put forward the idea that language is culture and the two are consistent. However, from my point of view, I can't agree with this statement completely.

Human language is highly complex in that it is based on a set of rules relating symbols to their meaning, thereby forming an infinite number of possible innovative utterances from a finite number of elements [1]. Language is a combination of every element, which contains the ideology, cultural background and other factors of the speaking group. Therefore, language is not a simple combination of different limited elements, but a complex combination which supported by the awareness and culture of the speaking group.

Culture and Language

As Amer Enas mentioned in her article "language cannot be separated

completely from culture because it is deeply embedded in. Foreign languages are the key to cultural heritage of another people, and that knowledge of a foreign language enables an individual to increase his personal culture through contact with great minds and the great world of literature" [2]. As a foreign language learner, culture plays an important role in a language. Language is the product of the long-term development of human society, and this product is also the expression of human cultural heritage. At the initial stage of learning a language may be is to simply learn the grammar structure of the language, but with the deepening of learning, we will realize that how the culture contained in the language. For instance, there are many positive idioms include dragon in Chineselike "龙腾虎跃" "龙凤呈祥", whereas in western culture, dragon represents ferocity, so it is difficult for language learners to understand why the meaning of these idioms is positive without understanding the cultural background.

Culture, Language and Translation

As Alejandra Patricia Karamanian states in her article "Translation, involving the transposition of thoughts expressed in one language by one social group into the appropriate expression of another group, entails a process of cultural de-coding, re-coding and encoding. As cultures are increasingly brought into greater contact with one another, multicultural considerations are brought to bear to an ever-increasing degree" [3]. With the development of society and globalization, cultures among languages are no longer independent. Due to the integration of

cultures the “multicultural” has become increasingly important in the translation process. Larson claimed that “Translation is a complicated process” [4]. To have the target language knowledge is the basic requirements of the translators, however in recent years, having language knowledge is no longer the only requirement of translators. In the process of translation, the transformation between languages is the foundation, and the transmission of background culture contained in the original text is particularly important.

With the rapid development of the world economy, the impact of the advertisement translation is increasing. The translated version with high quality must be able to impress people and create a lasting and strong memory in people’s mind. Writers and translators of advertisements should pay attention to the features of advertising language, cultural differences and translation principles.

This article mainly focusses on the influence of advertisement translation due to the cultural differences between China and western countries and how to dealing with these cultural problems in the process of translation.

Cultural Differences in Advertisement Translation

The target of advertisement writer is the native reader who has same values, thinking ways and living habits, so the advertisement translator needs to face the people whose cultural background, tradition and social values are utterly different. Therefore, as an intercultural activity, advertisement translation requires the translator to put acceptance degree of target reader in the first place and to consider adequately

the specific details of a culture in advertisement.

Advertisement can influence people’s values, traditions and customs. We don’t need to worry about the cultural difference in our own country while we are making an advertisement. We Chinese people underestimate the communication situation when we prepare for readers, listeners, or viewers from western countries somehow.

A qualified advertisement translator should know clearly about the cultural differences, thus, he or she could be able to make a good advertisement and arouse the customers’ purchasing desire. Now, this part list several aspects related to culture-specific in advertisement translation and discuss its problems and solutions.

Differences in cultural values

The value orientation of Chinese culture emphasizes self-conscious ability, generally showing an introverted character, while that of westerners shows an extroverted character. For instance, when the famous American slogan "just do it" was broadcast on Hong Kong television, it was translated into "想做就去做". The theme of the advertisement would not be surprising in the United States, which highlighted the individual freedom in western culture. However, Hong Kong as a Chinese society has the traditional self-control psychology, thus many consumers think that the advertisement has the suspicion of inducing young people to do bad things, this cultural difference causes a number of complaints for this slogan, therefore the company later changed the slogan of the advertisement into “应做就去做”—

to do what you should do. Chinese people put more emphasis on collectivism while western countries value individualism more. From this advertisement we can see the typical spirit of Chinese people.

Western countries value the spirit of innovation while Chinese people follow the spirit of mediocracy. This spirit of the mediocracy involved in Chinese famous idioms: 木秀于林风必摧之, the word or word translation of this idiom is “wind damages the flourishing trees in the forest”, the connotation of this idiom is “outstanding people always be jealous or a person in a high position is always be attacked”, thus the spirit of the mediocracy plays an significant role in Chinese value, however people in western countries don't feel like running only in one groove. Take the slogan of Apple as an example: Apple thinks different (苹果电脑, 不同“凡”想). They emphasize the “difference” between individuals, and try to create their own style attract people's attention. Therefore, as a translator in the process of translation need to consider the form of the source language and the background information as well.

2.The different social history background can influence advertisement translation

Different social and historical backgrounds are reflected in advertising translation. For instance—“金龙食用油, 绿色的食用油”, this is an advertisement for the edible oil, the person who knows about Chinese culture will familiar with the symbol “dragon”, it is definitely a sign of lucky and fortune in China, but in western

countries it is just an evil creature, so this is so inappropriate if you translate the brand name “金龙” to “golden dragon”. This article also chooses two typical examples to analyze the social historical differences which involve in the advertisement translation.

Example 1: Southern Comfort—the spirit of New Orleans since 1860.

Actually, this advertisement is total a success in America because it relies on native people's understanding of American traditional culture. “Southern Comfort” wine just like the American Jazz all comes from New Orleans. Due to the cultural identity, we can easily figure out its pun meaning which means a lot in a good advertisement translation. “Southern Comfort” wine has become widely familiar in America from middle period of 19th century when people began to create Jazz music. It presents the spirit of New Orleans somehow—innovation and optimism. However, due to the lack of related cultural background, it is hard for Chinese reader to perceive cultural connotation in the original text. So, the translation should be based on Chinese audience's point of view and mainly focus on cultural apprehension.

Example 2: “Fresh Up with Seven-Up” (七喜广告语)

Numbers in an advertisement is an important factor that we should pay much attention to. The word seven is a positive word in these areas: America and Europe. Seven is equal to the number eight in China which stands for a good luck.

3.The influence of taboo factors in advertisement translation

Taboo is a cultural phenomenon shared by all nations in the world, and

different languages and cultures inevitably form different taboos. In Western Literature

The seemingly positive words in culture are taboos in Eastern culture. In trademark translation, special attention should be paid to avoid unhappiness or even disputes. Coca-Cola has launched a new kind of "Zerosugar" Coke. When the product entered the Chinese market, the Chinese translated it into "零糖", which was originally a very vivid translation. However, because the pronunciation of "零糖" is the same with "灵堂" which means mourning hall, although the name of this commodity highlights the characteristics of the product, but it does not bring expectations to consumers, cause it is easy for consumers to associate with "death", and superstitious people think that such commodities are "unlucky". Therefore, this appropriate translation should be "无糖可乐", It can not only accurately express the meaning of "sugar-free" in the original text, but also avoid the misleading effect of "灵堂" in the translation.

In China, in order to express auspicious meaning, we use homonym to express it. Chinese people generally like to talk about "鸡" (chicken) related topics or words. Because in Chinese language "chicken" and "lucky" are homonyms, so "chicken" is used as a lucky animal for all kinds of happy events, such as "大鸡" ("big lucky") brand cigarettes produced in Jinan, which have become a special cigarette for wedding banquets. But in English, "chicken" has many bad meanings, such as "chicken" means timidity; and "Count one's chickens before they are

hatched."It means overconfident and contains derogatory meanings.

4. Some basic methods and principles in advertisement translation

All above, cultural differences are big barriers for advertisement translators. So, it would be great if the translators can be fully aware of these differences. A good translator should know the traditions, values, language, beliefs and customs well. If we just transfer the literal meaning of the advertisement, the product is impossibly accepted in international market. So, in this part, some basic methods and principles advertisement translation will be discussed.

Use both transliteration and literal translation

Literal translation refers to the method retaining the structure and rhetoric of the original sentence and striving to reproduce the form, content and style of the original language. That is, the grammatical structure of the original language must have the corresponding structure in the target language and the vocabularies are translated correspondingly. Let's see the following examples:

Example: 英雄金笔厂是公司主体, 创建于1931年, 经过60多年的开拓发展, 建树了“英雄”, “博士”两大品牌, 产品享誉海内外, 成为我国重大国事活动的专用笔。

Translation version: The Hero Pen Factory the main subsidiary of Shanghai Hero Co. Ltd, was founded in 1931. After more than 60 years of growth, the company has become famous in China and abroad for its Hero and Doctor Brand Pens and for its Hero golden Pens which are used for important national affairs.

In this example, the fact is put into an important place and no cultural background information is supplied in the original version. Literal translation is applied for the purpose of conveying the function of the original version.

2) Target-language-culture-oriented principle

The special purpose and function of advertising requires that the translation of an advertisement should adapt both to the target language and the target culture. It means due to the purpose and function of advertisements; advertisement translation must be target-language-culture-oriented. Here are some examples

Example: 喝孔家酒，做天下文章。

Version 1: Kongfu down, case done.

Version 2: Confucian spirit provokes your mind.

Look at those 2 versions, we both know that the second version is better than the first one. The second one is closer to the west culture and the psychology of the audience. The word “provoke” is frequently used in advertisements, such as “thought-provoking exhibition” in New York Museum of Fine Arts. So, it is more easily to be adopted by the western people. The “Confucian spirit” is associated with the “British Spirit” which is more familiar to them. So, the second version is better than the first version.

This paper tries to make people know how important a transnational advertisement can be in today’s business world at first. And then it explains the definition of an advertisement and shows us an

advertisement in general. It has also shown us that cultural differences can influence on advertisement translation in so many ways. At last this paper offers us some useful methods and skills in advertisement translation.

Advertisement is a tool for business communication. We cannot ignore the cultural differences between China and Western countries. In order to attract more potential customers, it is an urgent task for all advertisers to make clear of each other’s culture. Thus, we can provoke those potential consumers to buy our own products.

Advertisement translation is a transfer of language and also a transfer of culture.

It is necessary for us to know something about advertisements’ features if we want to do a good job on advertisement translation. We should pay more attention to the relationship between language and culture. To be an adequate advertiser we also need to fully handle the culture differences and get to know the basic standards of a good translation of advertisement.

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ПЕРЕВОДЧЕСКАЯ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЯ ВЫБОРА АДЕКВАТНЫХ ЭКВИВАЛЕНТОВ

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Аннотация. Как продукт культуры, реклама может более непосредственно показать связь между языком и культурой, поэтому язык рекламы — это вид искусства с сильным культурным прошлым, на который также влияет тенденция времени. В данной статье рассматриваются язык английского и китайского текстов рекламы, анализируются проблемы, существующие в переводе рекламных языков, предлагаются несколько эффективных методов перевода рекламы с точки зрения культуры. Поскольку целью рекламного языка является убедить целевых потребителей покупать его товары или услуги, становится важной задачей полное понимание культурных различий между Китаем и западными странами. В данной статье анализируются следующие аспекты: коллективизм и индивидуализм, социальный и исторический фактор, табу и факторы в переводе рекламы.

В процессе перевода рекламных объявлений между китайским и английским языками существует множество неудовлетворительных примеров, некоторые из которых даже приводят к спаду продаж. Эта статья проистекает из проблем, связанных с переводом рекламы, которые заключаются в том, что переводчики плохо владеют национальной культурой и слишком привязаны к поверхностному значению рекламы, хотя в переводе рекламы скрыто множество культурных факторов. На самом деле перевод рекламы требует больше, чем просто перевод предложений на другой язык. Переводчики должны преобразовать идеи и мысли, стоящие за предложениями, в целевой язык, применяя знания целевой культуры. В данной статье предлагаются некоторые способы перевода рекламных текстов с учетом языковых и культурных различий.

Ключевые слова: язык рекламы; культурная разница; рекламный перевод

АУДАРМА ҚҰЗЫРЕТІ БАРАБАР ЭКВИВАЛЕНТІМЕН ТАҢДАУ

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Андатпа: Мәдениет жемісі ретінде жарнама тіл мен мәдениет арақатынасын көрсетеді, жарнама тілі мәдени таңбаланған және уақыт ағымына қарай түрлі ықпалға түседі. Аталмыш мақала ағылшын және қытай тіліндегі жарнама тілін суреттейді,

жарнаманы бір тілден екінші тілге аудару мәселелеріне талдау жасайды, мәдени тұсын ескере отырып жарнаманы аударудың бірнеше өзекті тәсілдерін ұсынады. Жарнама тілінің мақсаты тұтынушыларды тауарлар мен қызметтерді сатып алуға көндіру болғандықтан Қытай мен батыс елдері мәдениетін тұтастай түсіну қиын мәселе болмақ. Мақалада жарнаманы аудару мәселесі бірнеше факторларды ескеріп жүзеге асады: коллективтік және жеке-дара мәдениет, әлеуметтік және тарихи, табу сөздер ерекшелігі.

Қытай тілінен ағылшын тіліне жарнамаларды аудару барысында көптеген сәтсіз аудармалар кездеседі, бұл тіпті тұтынушылардың сатып алу қабілетін төмендетеді. Оның себебі аудармашылардың мәдениет тұрғысында білімінің саяздығы, жарнамаға тән тілді меңгермегендігінен. Шындығында, жарнаманы аудару тілі тек берілген сөйлемдерді екінші бір тілге аудару салудан тұрмайды, аудармашылардың мәдениеттен хабары болып, сөйлемде жасырынған түпкі мағынаны шынайы жеткізуі міндетті. Сондықтан осы мақала жарнаманы бір тілден екінші тілге аудару барысында ескерілуі тиіс бірнеше аударма тәсілдерін қарастырады.

Түйін сөздер: жарнама тілі, мәдениет айырмашылығы, жарнаманы аудару

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