

Adaptability of Chinese Translation of Luxury Advertisements from the Perspective of Cross-Cultural Communication

Xiangyin Yuan

Southwest Petroleum University, China

Abstract: The world today has entered an era of globalization, and has achieved global connectivity in cultural, economic, technological and informative. With the rapid development of global trade, cross-cultural communication has become an irreversible trend in today's world. In such background, the translation of transnational advertising is not only crucial to the future development of enterprises, but also related to the effectiveness of cultural communication. In cross-cultural context, this article explores some luxury advertising translation from cases of success and failure from the perspective of application of "Adaptation Theory" in translation, and points out that the translator should make full use of the "Adaptation Theory" when translating advertisements. Luxury advertisement translation as a kind of cross-cultural communication activities, involves many factors such as regional culture, consumption psychology, aesthetic ideas, value orientation. Therefore, translators should take these factors into full consideration when translating, so as to make the translated text conform to consumers' psychology as far as possible, and achieve dynamic adaptation of cultural information. At the same time, it puts forward strategies for Chinese local products to help them "go out".

Keywords: Cross-cultural communication, Luxury advertisement, Adaptation Theory; translation.

1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, economic globalization has developed rapidly, and China has also made efforts to integrate into the global market in this process. In the transnational circulation of goods, advertising, as a way to spread information and culture, plays a significant role and gradually permeates into the daily life of the public. According to the data in the 2019 Global Luxury Industry Research Report (Autumn Edition), the global luxury market sales are expected to grow by 4% in 2019, of which the Chinese luxury market sales are expected to grow by 26%, with a consumption amount of 98.4 billion euros. At the same time, Chinese consumers' contribution to the sustainable growth of the global personal luxury market has reached 90%, accounting for about 35% of the global total personal luxury consumption, ranking first in the world. It can be seen that luxury advertising is not only an effective means of selling goods, but also an important part of social life.

At the same time, the translation of luxury advertising not only affects consumers' purchase desire, but also affects the production and operation mode of enterprises. In different festivals, luxury advertising slogans emerge one after another and are constantly updated. In order to occupy a favorable position in the international market, enterprises are paying more and more attention to the role of advertising in transnational promotion. In this context, this paper chooses some typical examples of advertising translation of world-famous luxury goods to analyze, and uses linguistic adaptation theory to explore advertising translation and promotion strategies in the context of cross-cultural communication.

2. Linguistic Adaptation Theory

The theory of linguistic adaptation was put forward by the famous Belgian linguist and the secretary-general of the International Pragmatic Society, Jef Verschueren, in

Understanding Pragmatics. In his view, using language is a process in which language functions, or language users constantly choose language means according to the needs of the communicative context to achieve communicative intent. Adaptation is embodied in the mutual adaptation between the use environment of language and the choice of language structure. "In this context, language has variability, negotiability and adaptability. Variability refers to the possibility of a series of choices in the use of language; Negotiability means that the use and choice of language are highly flexible; Adaptation means that language users can make flexible choices in different language items according to the actual situation and communication needs, so as to meet the needs of communication" (Wang Yingpin, Xu Xiao 2020: 175).

"If we apply the theory of adaptation to the field of translation, according to the concept of language variability, the translator can make a variety of translation choices in the process of translating the original language into the target language. According to the concept of language negotiation, the translator does not translate mechanically, but under the guidance of highly flexible principles and strategies. As for why the translator should make flexible choices according to these strategies, this is precisely related to adaptation theory. Translators often use this theory as a guide to achieve their translation purposes, ensure and promote the success of communication between the original author and the target readers" (Liao Hongzhong, Zhou Meixiang 2007:158-161). In the translation of luxury advertising, the theory of adaptation is of great significance. The main purpose of luxury advertising is to promote the products and services of the enterprise or establish a good corporate image. Therefore, the information conveyed in luxury advertising must be attractive, which can trigger the purchasing desire of consumers. At the same time, in the cross-cultural context, advertising translation should fully consider consumer

psychology, aesthetic concepts, value orientation and other factors, especially regional culture. Only in this way can the translation adapt to the consumers' psychology to the greatest extent.

3. Adaptation in Luxury Advertising

In the Encyclopedia of China Sociology, it is said that "culture refers to the sum of all material and spiritual products created by human beings, or specifically refers to the spiritual products including language, literature, art and all ideologies". Different countries have different cultures, and their beliefs, habits, systems and other models are different. There are not only material categories, but also non-material things including ideas, languages and so on. Therefore, cross-cultural translation should not only consider the appeal and attractiveness of the target language, but also consider whether the translated content is acceptable to the people of the target country and conforms to the values of the country. Cross-cultural advertising translation is a language activity established between countries with different cultures. Its cultural differences cannot be ignored naturally. Improper translation will lead to different ways of thinking, psychological characteristics and values, and ultimately affect the understanding and actual effect of advertising, and ultimately also affect consumers' purchasing desire.

The advertisement translation of luxury goods should also be elegant, tasteful and individuality, reflecting the pursuit of high-quality life, so as to achieve the function of stimulating consumers' desire to buy. However, advertising translation is a cross-cultural communication activity, which needs to realize the transformation from the source language culture to the target language culture. Therefore, advertising translation is by no means a simple language conversion activity. The translator needs to break away from the bondage of the source language, should obey the cultural form of the target language, and how to reproduce the purpose and function of the source language advertising in the translation as the ultimate goal, which is definitely not an easy thing. Wang Zuoliang (1989:18) once pointed out: "The biggest difficulty in translation is the difference between the two cultures. The translator must be a real cultural person." Therefore, in order to achieve dynamic cultural adaptation, translators should put the target language and its culture in the first place, avoid cultural misunderstanding caused by translation errors, and skillfully integrate into China's local culture. Different countries, with different cultural backgrounds, have different cultural values. Therefore, we should create a sense of belonging and intimacy in advertising translation. It would be better to integrate their familiar traditional culture and customs into advertising translation. This advertising translation is successful. Taking China as an example, the calm and indifference advocated by Chinese philosophy has already left a deep impression on the Chinese people, which is the cultural psychology formed under the influence of traditional culture. So the Japanese automobile brand Toyota's advertisement when it entered the Chinese market was "车到山前必有路, 有路必有丰田车", which is based on a famous Chinese proverb "车到山前必有路, 船到桥头自然直". "车到山前必有路" means that no matter how difficult things are, there is always a solution, and you don't need to worry too much. This is quite different from the advertising slogan that it entered the American market. In the American market, its advertising slogan is "Where there is a way for car, there is a

Toyota", which borrows the English proverb "Where there is a will, there is a way", which conforms to the spirit of the American Dream that you can live a better life as long as you make unremitting efforts. This advertising slogan is the same as that in the Chinese market, They all take into account the cultural psychology of the people, so they are accepted and loved by consumers.

In the traditional concept of the Chinese people, they attach great importance to inheritance, which is passed down from generation to generation. When a son marries a daughter-in-law, most parents will give their daughter-in-law the family heirloom, implying that the incense sticks will be handed down from generation to generation. Patek Philippe's slogan "You never really own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation." is translated into "没人能拥有百达翡丽, 只不过为下一代保管而已". This not only achieves the transmission of the cultural connotation of its own brand, but also conforms to the expectations of every Chinese family for getting married and having children. Similarly, in China, among the praises of mature women, "风韵犹存" is a good choice. And the CHANEL's slogan, "Fashion passes, style remains." that is translated into "时尚会过去, 但风格永存". This translation not only describes the style of Chanel's own products will last forever, but also implies that women who use Chanel's products are still charming, which is punning. It attracts not only young women, but also mature women, even middle-aged women.

In addition, luxury goods can bring consumers additional fame and personal characteristics. The essence of luxury goods is the symbol of identity and social status. At present, the consumption mentality of Chinese luxury consumers is to show their status, so some luxury translation is born in accordance with their consumption mentality. There are some samples: GUCCI's slogan "if you let others jealous, you should have jealousy." that is translated into "要想让人嫉妒, 就要拥有'嫉妒'"; Another slogan of CHANEL, "No one can have our dream, no one.", is translated as "无人能享受我们的美梦"; The slogan of Vacheron Constantin "You can easily have time, but can not easily have Vacheron Constantin." is translated into "你可以轻易的拥有光阴, 但无法轻易拥有江诗丹顿." And Prada's advertising slogan "Real fantasy" translated into "真正的妄想", etc.

From the perspective of language and culture, Chinese likes to use four character patterns because they are full of rhythm and catchy. The translation of luxury advertising uses four character format, which can increase the aesthetic feeling of the translation. For example, Burberry's slogan, "good thing in never change;", is translated in to "生命美好恒久不变"; Patek Philippe's slogan "Begin in your tradition, is translated as "代代相传, 由你开始". The original English text above is all declarative sentences. After being translated into Chinese, it has changed into four character idioms, which is more in line with the Chinese language habits. Similarly, some translations will omit redundant words in advertisements and retain the essence to make the translation more concise. For example, Dior's slogan, "feel what's real" is translated into "感受真我".

On the contrary, In November 2018, an international fashion brand did not fully examine the meaning of Chinese New Year to the Chinese people when designing an advertisement in China, and arbitrarily used the Chinese favorite "red", but created a bizarre and gray advertisement,

which was strongly criticized and boycotted by Chinese people. It can be seen that if the national self-esteem of the target audience is unintentionally violated in cross-cultural advertising, resulting in cultural misunderstanding, the final result is harmful. The language of advertisement translation itself carries a lot of cultural information. Therefore, in addition to respecting the traditional national culture and the cultural psychology of the target audience, the translator should also pay attention to "the equal appreciation of the target language readers and the source text readers for the original and the translated text" (Chen Xinyan and Shao Hua, 2019), and consider whether certain specific languages and images in the context of the original culture can be understood when translated into China.

4. Inspiration to the "Going Out" of Chinese Local Products

In fact, the ultimate goal of advertising is to convey commodity information and stimulate consumption desire with concise and effective words. "In the current context, more and more Chinese products are going abroad to seek broader overseas markets, and translation is the only way to go if the Chinese culture contained in the products is to go abroad" (Zhu Yishu, 2017:50-53). Therefore, cultural dynamic adaptation, which plays an important role in the translation of luxury advertising, is also applicable to the translation of Chinese local industry advertising. Chinese culture has a long history, including many unique cultural background knowledge; After thousands of years of evolution, Chinese characters are highly concise and far-reaching. When Chinese goods are exported, improper translation of advertisements often endangers the economic benefits of domestic enterprises and the spread of Chinese traditional culture.

The macro strategy of "Going Out" for Chinese enterprises is a major strategic initiative put forward by the CPC Central Committee in the new era. Chinese export companies have made important contributions to developing overseas markets and participating in international market competition. English translation of export advertisements is a key link for Chinese brands to "Going Out", which helps overseas consumers to understand and identify with Chinese brand culture.

Therefore, when conducting export trade, Chinese enterprises should strive to achieve dynamic adaptation in culture. The translator should use concise and effective language to convey the core characteristics of the product from the target language and the cultural background of the translation, so that readers can understand and feel. Adaptation is an important principle for translators to follow in their translation activities. For example, the advertisements of ginseng, Chinese local "luxury", often contain slogans similar to "invigorate the five internal organs, calm the spirit, calm the soul, stop panic, eliminate evil spirits, brighten the eyes, improve the intelligence, and take long time to stay light". If it is simply translated as "good for your health, make you happy, and prolong your life", then foreigners who do not know the background of traditional Chinese medicine will be confused. Therefore, the translator "should not be limited to the faithfulness of the text, but consider the reception effect of the target language consumers" (Wan Liling, 2013:180).

Advertising is a paid publicity means, generally speaking, to save advertising costs, but also to enhance the advertising persuasive and infectious, English advertising writing to

follow the KISS principle, that is, "Keep it Sweet and Simple", advertising language to strive for concise and clear, easy to understand, vivid image. Therefore, English advertisements are simple and colloquial, often using monosyllabic verbs, adjectives, abbreviations, compound words, and even slang and colloquialisms; the sentences are short and concise, and the syntax is flexible and variable. However, due to the difference between English and Chinese languages, Chinese and English advertisements present big differences in the expressions of lines and languages. Therefore, when translating Chinese advertisements, the translator has to follow the line characteristics of English advertisements in order to achieve the best readability and advertising effect.

5. Conclusion

The adaptation translation model shows that successful translation is a process in which the translator clarifies the target of translation, makes choices according to the context, and thus completes the task of cross-cultural communication. "Adaptation can also be used as a criterion to judge the quality of translation; studying translation from the perspective of adaptation theory will provide new ideas and methods for translation studies" (Wang Yingpin, Xu Xiao, 2013: 177). Advertising translation is a dynamic adaptation process between context and language structure (Chen Dongcheng, 2012:148). The translation of luxury advertising language is ever-changing both in terms of language and translation strategies, which is not easy. In order to translate luxury advertising slogans from a cross-cultural perspective, the cultural psychology, values and aesthetic interests of the audience should also be taken into consideration, and the theory of conformity provides useful guidance for this complex translation practice. Only from the perspective of choosing conformity can translators consciously and flexibly choose translation strategies and translation methods to conform to the consumer psychology, needs, culture and value orientation of readers of advertising translations from different perspectives so as to obtain the best advertising effect.

References

- [1] Verschueren Jef. Understanding Pragmatics [M].Bei jing : Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 2000: 69.
- [2] Chen Dongcheng. On the Contextual Conformity in Advertising Translation[J]. Journal of Shenzhen University (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition),2012,29(02):144-148.
- [3] Chen Xinyan, Shao Hua. Academic English Translation Guided by Functional Equivalence Theory [J]. English Teacher, 2019(19):50-53.
- [4] Liao Hongzhong, Zhou Meixiang. On Conformity in Business Advertisement Translation[J]. Journal of Nanchang University (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition),2007(06):158-161.
- [5] Wan, Liling. The Principle of Creativity in Commercial Advertisement Translation from the Perspective of Intercultural Communication[J]. Thought Line, 2013, 39(S2): 180-181.
- [6] Wang Ying-fan, Xu Xiao. Dynamic Conformity and Translation: The Translation of Cultural Factors as an Example[J]. Journal of Soochow University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition),2011,32(01):173-177.
- [7] Wang Zuoliang. Translation, thinking and pencil testing [M]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press, 1989.

[8] Encyclopedia of China, General Editorial Committee, ed. Encyclopedia of China - Sociology [M]. Beijing: Encyclopedia of China Publishing House, 2002.

[9] Zhu Yishu. Experimental discussion on the foresight of Xu Yuanchong's translation thought [J]. Foreign Language Teaching, 2017 (1): 92-96.