

Automobile Advertising Translation from the Perspective of Newmark's Theory*

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Abstract—This paper mainly discusses the application of Newmark's theories of communicative and semantic translation in automobile advertisement translation. After analyzing the translation examples of automobile advertisement text, title and trademark, the following conclusions are naturally drawn. The combination of communicative and semantic translation can guide translation practice more effectively. Semantic translation theory is preferred for automobile manual translation, while communicative translation theory is more suitable for automobile brand and slogan translation. Therefore, in order to achieve the intended effect of automobile advertisement, it is better to combine semantic translation with communicative translation in automobile advertisement translation.

Index Terms—semantic translation, communicative translation, automobile advertising translation

I. INTRODUCTION

With the development of economic globalization and the increasingly fierce market competition, countless foreign goods and services are flooding into Chinese markets. And the automobile is on its way of becoming the pillar industry. So the automobile advertisement is becoming more and more important. Behind the competitiveness of automobiles is the competition of advertisement.

In Newmark's theory, Semantic translation is faithful to the original text; communicative translation pays more attention to how to make the readers get the same feeling as the original readers (Newmark, 1977). The essential difference between them is that the former pays more attention to the influence of the original form and the latter emphasizes the true meaning of original content.

By using literature research and case analysis as the major methods, this paper takes some typical automobile advertising translation as research objects, then analyses the automobile advertising translation strategies under the guidance of the semantic translation and communicative translation theory. First the development of advertisements translation and problems in current studies are discussed. Next Newmark's theories of semantic and communicative translation and their similarities and differences are introduced. Then the evolution and the linguistics features of automobile advertising are discussed. And then the application of communicative and semantic translation and some effective strategies are proposed for automobile advertising translation on the basis of detailed analysis of the translated examples of automobile advertising headlines, slogans and trademarks. Through the research, it is naturally concluded that the desired effective method can be out of the combination of communicative and semantic translation.

II. NEWMARK'S THEORY OF COMMUNICATIVE TRANSLATION AND SEMANTIC TRANSLATION

A. *Communicative Translation*

Communicative translation is one of the two translation conceptions proposed by Newmark, its purpose is to make the translation have the same effect on the target language readers as the original text has on the source language readers (Newmark, 1982). That is to say, the key of communicative translation is to transmit information based on the culture, language and pragmatic way of target language, rather than a faithful reproduction of the original text. During the translation process, the translator has more freedom to explain the original text, adjust the form and style, eliminate the ambiguity, even to amend the original mistake. Because the translator tries to achieve a certain communicative purpose and has a specific group of readers, so his translation works will break the limitation of the original context. Communicative translation is usually applied to the translation of news reports, textbooks, public notices and many other non-literary works.

B. *Semantic Translation*

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Semantic translation is a translation conception proposed by Newmark, its purpose is to reproduce the literal meaning of source context accurately under the allowance of structure and semantics of target language (Newmark, 2001). Semantic translation puts emphasis on the original form and the author's original intention, rather than the target language context and its way of expression, not to make the translation correspond to the target cultural condition. Due to the strict translation order and rules, sometimes the translation contexts which conform to semantic translation theory are contradictory, ambiguous or even wrong. Semantic translation is usually applied when translate literature, science and technology literature and other contexts which regard language and content are equally important. However, it is necessary to point out that even Newmark thinks that semantic translation is not a perfect translation model, just like communicative translation model, has its own limitation.

C. Comparisons between Communicative Translation and Semantic Translation

Semantic translation, with the source language as the center, takes advantage of literal translation, foreignization and faithful translation; while communicative translation is on the basis of target language and takes advantage of domestication, free translation (He, 1998). Semantic translation attaches great importance to the original form and the original author's intention, not to the context and expressive way of the target language. On the contrary, communicative translation is based on the target language and tries to convey information, rather than copy the original text.

Generally speaking, communicative translation context is smooth, natural, clear; semantic translation context is more complicated, hard to pronounce because of a foreign accent (Newmark, 2001). As communicative translators are endowed with great freedom, they could modify or refine the original context while the semantic rules must be respected everywhere, so the flexibility is relatively low.

Semantic translation attempts to convey the exact meaning of the original context and pursues the fully equivalence between the meaning of the original text and its translation. In addition to the word, sentence and other language semantic equivalence, translators often need to consider different contextual relationship so as to achieve the equivalence at the discourse level. In practice, many translators tend to adopt communicative translation method, but if the specific language used by the author and the expression of the content are equally important, it is better to adopt semantic translation. In particular, like some authoritative sayings, lively and vivid novel metaphor, is only suitable to use semantic translation; on the contrary, when translating some common used language, communicative translation method is a better choice. Communicative translation attempts to produce an effect on the readers, this effect should be as close as possible to the original has on the reader.

But even so, translators still need to put emphasis on source language text and regard it as the only basis for translation. Semantic translation is based on the culture of the original context, only helps readers to understand the connotation of context, and the condition is that the connotation delivers major information which has a universal significance for all mankind, not only for a minority. A fundamental difference between the two methods is that when the conflict happens, communicative translation must emphasize "effect", rather than on the content of the information.

This is to say, semantic translation pays much attention to the faithfulness, processing just like literal translation. However, communicative translation emphasizes that translation should conform to the target language habits, processing like free translation. But the two are not completely separated, the difference between semantic translation and communicative translation is relative, in the process of translation works, semantic translation and communicative translation often complement each other. This two translation approaches are based on the understanding of translation, must reflect the ideological content of the original, must obey the grammatical structure of target language and certain stylistic features.

III. LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF AUTOMOBILE ADVERTISEMENT

A. Lexical Features

(1) Use of numerals. The use of numerals makes automobile advertising much more authoritative and scientific, so that consumers have a sense of security and the desire to purchase products and services. The car belongs to the luxurious products, so the customers are relatively rational and sensible when they purchase these products, so being authoritative and scientific are most important factors for automobile advertisement, for example:

①动力强劲,百公里加速仅需3秒。(阿斯顿马丁)

From this advertisement, we can know that it just take three seconds to reach a very high speed. Customers will think this is a perfect car of great horsepower. "Three seconds" is concrete and reliable, giving customers a sense of security.

②置身其中,清晰感受空间延展,全局一手掌握。更汇聚高效空间规划,呈现自在驾乘感受——2.6米轴距座舱设置16处储物空间,兼顾繁忙公务与私密生活。(别克凯越)

In this example, the advertise uses two numbers, "2.6" and "16", to show the capacious and comfortable space of this car, which attracts customers who like a car with great space to consume.

(2) Use of verbs. The use of verbs makes automobile advertisements full of life and vitality so that it can help to form a dynamic feeling about the product in the minds of consumers. Advertising language is usually simple and vivid, so the simple verbs which are easy to pronounce and memory are often used in auto advertising. For example:

①放眼未来,值得信赖。(大众捷达)

②Life is a journey, enjoy the ride. (Nissan)

In the above examples,“信赖”“enjoy” are used to make the advertisements energetic and dynamic, attracting customers to make a further comprehension of products.

(3) Use of new words and misspellings. The use of new words and misspellings can make car ads look fashionable and attract consumers' attention (Fatihi, 1991).

①敢享敢为。(海马汽车)

②奇瑞 A5, 赏“芯”悦目。(奇瑞汽车)

This two examples use homophones, replacing “想”、“心”with “享”、“芯”.From this rhetoric method, customers will be impressed and have a feeling of freshness, which promotes the sales of products.

B. Syntactic Features

(1) Use of simple sentences. In order to deeply impress consumers and reduce the cost of advertising, advertising is generally written in short and simple sentence, which conveys the primary products information with the fewest words. Therefore, the car advertisement use simple sentence widely and the complex sentences are rarely used. For example:

①驾驭现代, 成就未来。(现代汽车)

②For the road ahead. (Honda)

(2) Use of affirmative sentences. Affirmative sentences can express positive idea with a complimentary effect, Advertising Copy writing will generally use affirmative sentences in order to leave a good impression on consumers. For example:

①处处为您着想好车有限惊喜无限。(奥拓汽车)

②The relentless pursuit of perfection. (Lexus)

(3) Use of negative sentences. In the automobile adverting language, negative sentences often include two kinds of words: negative words such as not, little, less etc., and derogatory words, like weak, poor and bad. In an automobile advertisement which adopts negative sentences, it usually has the positive answer. So that the advertisement can create a more positive effect through the comparison between positive and negative words. For examples:

①A long drive doesn't have to feel like a journey. (Mercedes-Benz)

②Don't dream it. Drive it. (Jaguar)

IV. APPLICATION OF SEMANTIC TRANSLATION AND COMMUNICATIVE TRANSLATION IN ADVERTISEMENTS TRANSLATION

A complete literal automobile advertisement is usually divided into three parts: brand name, slogan and body copy.

Brand name is a major symbol for customers to identify goods or enterprises. In the advertisement design, it plays an important role in the whole advertisement layout. Because the brand name is the most simple part of an automobile and has an intensive visual effect, which can leave consumers a profound impression.

Slogan is cooperated with brand name and body copy, strengthening the image of automobile. Automobile advertising language must be concise and comprehensive so that customer could remember the product easily and arise their consuming desire.

Body copy is a description of the automobile, introducing the characteristics of product. The purpose of body copy is to help customers to have a general understanding of the product. So the body copy must be accurate and concrete.

A. Translation of Brand Names

Brand name is the symbol of product, which tactfully reflects the content of the product. In form, translation of brand name should be brief and impressive. In content, translation of brand name should reflect characteristics of products. In effect, translation of brand name should be as attractive and interesting as the original advertisement or even better than. And here are some ways to translate brand names under the guidance of Newmark's theory.

First, literal translation. As a major means of translation, literal translation means translate based on literal meaning of source language without modification. The literal translation is to retain the original meaning of source language, and to reproduce the cultural factors behind the language meaning. These brand names are mostly beautiful, elegant and flowery words, their translation versions also express the internal meaning of the original trademark, and have the same promotional effect as the original trademark. For example:

(1) TOYOTA Crown is translated as "皇冠" in Chinese. Both Chinese and English version reflects the car's royal and luxurious style, which promotes consumers to buy it.

(2) GM "Buick Regal" is translated as "别克君威", conveying its original trademark noble feeling. This Chinese version will leave customer an impression that this type of car are made for people with high social status, just like ancient emperor. And this will motivate customer's desire to purchase.

Second, transliteration. Transliteration is to replace English brand name with Chinese characters bearing same or similar pronunciation. Transliteration has been widely used as a way of trademark translation. Either English to Chinese transliteration or vice versa, the translation version of trademark words should achieve a perfect unity of sound, form and meaning. Transliteration is able to retain the original phonetic beauty, with exotic atmosphere, desirable, delivering

cultural meaning of a foreign car brand, and to meet the value orientation of a considerable part of China consumers (Nida, 1993). Because many car brands are named after the inventor's names, many international famous car brands adopt transliteration. For example:

(1) "Lincoln" is a luxury car with a great reputation named after the famous president of the United States Lincoln. As we all know, Lincoln is one of the greatest president in the American history even in the world history, he has a high status in American's mind so that they will be proud if they have a Lincoln car. In some developing countries where national automobile manufacturing technology has not yet reached the international advanced level, local consumers could know Lincoln is imported goods with excellent product quality through its brand name, and this will stimulate their consuming desire.

(2) A Ford crossover SUV "Edge" is translated as "锐界". "Edge" is pronounced similar to the latter part of the sound of "界" and it means cliff and sharp, "锐界" is not only associated with Edge's literal meaning, but also reflects the orientation of the car: the pursuit of freedom, advocating self, not bound by traditional ideas. This translation version guide consumers to make useful associations, deepen the impression of the product.

B. Translation of Slogans

Automobile advertising slogan is of great value to the enterprise propaganda, which could express the brand price. And the marketing performance of a product has a direct relationship with slogan. A well written automobile advertising slogan could knock on the door of the market to a great extent, bringing consumers into a business environment. It also reflects the enterprise's business philosophy and has a great effect, therefore, advertising slogan role cannot be ignored in the research of automobile advertising translation (Reiss, 2004).

First, literal translation. It is very important for automobile enterprise to identify the breakthrough point or the penetrating point when they translate the advertisement. The literal translation is to retain the original sentence structure and rhetoric in the process of translation and to reproduce the form and style of the original text. For example:

(1) Shift the future. (Nissan)
转变未来。(尼桑)

In this example, the Chinese version is directly translated from "Shift the future", advertising language is simple but unique. Although "Shift the future" seems extremely exaggerate, but it shows great boldness. This translation version conforms to the western and eastern language habits and can also express the meaning of the original advertising slogan to a great extent without modification.

(2) Qualities are at the heart of every Mazda. (Mazda)
质量是马自达的核心。(马自达)

In this example, the translator doesn't use too fancy language and literal translation strategy is directly employed. Because the purpose of advertisement is to achieve economic value instead of making people appreciate it. And from this advertisement, customers could rapidly realize that Mazda puts great emphasis on its product quality and this is the ordinary characteristics of Mazda, arousing the customer's desire to buy.

Second, free translation. Due to the great differences between the languages and cultures, sometimes the translator needs to retain the content and abandon its original form, not limited to the literal meaning of original slogan. In addition to keep the original basic information, through the change of form, making the translation more authentic and acceptable from the perspective of consumer. And free translation mainly focus on the practical significance, not paying too much attention to the details of the content. For example:

The Ultimate Driving Machine. (BMW)
登峰造极。(宝马)

In this example, the translator doesn't translate according to the literal meaning of the original advertisement. He/She chooses a Chinese idiom "登峰造极", which means the best and top achievement of this type of car, giving customers a sense of confidence and achievement. The Chinese version impresses the customers that this car is remarkable and perfect.

Third, omission. Omission strategy is to omit some words not essential during the translation process. If it is confined to the original form and not delete some unnecessary words, it will be counterproductive in the publicity, contrary to the expressions of the target language. Automobile advertising translation often has such words, not only weaken the promotion effect, but also lost the original meaning (Zu & Dong, 2015). So the automobile advertising translation should apply omission strategy when it's necessary. For example:

Your key to a better life and a better world. (Buick)
通往美好生活的秘诀。(别克)

In this example, the translator doesn't translate completely according to the literal meaning of English version, instead, it omits the translation of "a better world". Because in Chinese culture, a better life equals to a better world, if translated word for word, it will be a redundant and the customer will be confused about the advertisement.

Fourth, creative translation. Creative translation means not adhere to semantics and phonetics of the source language, making creative translation to achieve equivalence in function or effect both in the target language and the source language. However, a translation is not pure a creation but a expansion in translation based on the source language. The translator should not be confined to the literal meaning and try to dig into the deep meaning, and boldly add up its

individual creation. For example:

- (1) Leadership--Chi in control.(Cadillac)
修身，齐家，治业，行天下。（凯迪拉克）

In this example, it is not difficult to find the idea of this slogan has connection to an ancient saying we often say "cultivate one's moral character and regulate the family and rule the state". This idea comes from the "Da Xue", it means that in order to make an achievement in life, a man should first realize everything by cognitive research and acquire knowledge, then correct thinking and perfect one's character; secondly, he should make a good management of family; finally, he could promote the morality in the world.

With the advancement and development of the times and society, obviously, in people's eyes, a sign of success of is no longer the original rule, but to have a successful career. Therefore, we can see that under the influence of this idea, the advertising language written for Cadillac is "治业，行天下". On the one hand, it implies that Cadillac can be seen as a sign for successful people, on the other hand, the change from "fair world" to "conquer the world" matches with the use of car, taking into account its features of grand and magnificent.

- (2) Keeping ahead through technology. (Audi)
突破科技，启迪未来。（奥迪）

The original advertisements is very specific, concentrating on science and technology, but if directly translated as "突破科技", it will be dull and the customer feel bored about the slogan. "突破科技，启迪未来" corresponds with the Chinese way of expression. Although it is not matching with the original advertisement, it not only emphasizes the importance of "breakthrough of science and technology", but also looks forward to the future development. It means that Audi has a great potentiality. So, it draws customer's attention, arousing their interest.

- (3) For the Road Ahead. (Honda)
康庄大道。（本田）

Honda's advertising slogan is "For the Road Ahead" and the translated version is a Chinese idiom "康庄大道". It means that the road is broad, flat and convenient, people will have a bright future if they go on this way. The translator uses creative translation strategies. Because in this advertisement if the translator uses literal translation strategies and directly translates into "为了未来之路", neither reflect any connotation of culture nor the suitability of culture. On the contrary, "康庄大道" is in accordance with the Chinese culture, so as to achieve the pursuit of its connotation and the purpose of advertisement, and the advertisement language can be easily accepted by the customers.

C. Translation of Body Copy

Body copy usually introduces the characteristics of the car, including a large amount of numbers and professional terms, consumers could have a general understanding of the automobile, so the translation of body copy must be accurate and scientific. It is better to translate body copy under the guidance of semantic translation. For example:

Replacing the simple single hood dashboard layout, the iDrive display screen sits centrally on the dashboard in a second binnacle to deliver navigation information alongside on-board computer information, entertainment, climate control adjustments and Check Control messages. Powering the fifth generation of new BMW 3 Series is a range of engines all married to a standard six-speed manual gearbox (six-speed automatic optional). Topping the range is the BMW 330i featuring a powerful 258bhp Valvetronic six cylinder - the same engine that powers the recently launched 630i Coupe. It may have got bigger but, for many buyers, the new 3 Series still represents the quintessential sports sedan in its class. (BMW)

取代了简单的单罩仪表板布局，iDrive显示屏位于仪表板正中央第二个仪表盘的位置，为驾驶员传递导航信息以及车载电脑、娱乐、空调和检查控制信息。标准六速手动变速箱系列引擎（六速自动选装）为第五代BMW三系提供动力。该系列的顶级车型是搭载 258 马力 V6 发动机的 BMW 330i，最近发布的 630i Coupe 也采用同样的发动机。三系可能与原来相比更为庞大，不过对很多购买者来讲，三系依然代表该级别车型中的经典运动轿车。（宝马）

V. CONCLUSION

The automobile advertising translation is challenging the translation skills are also very diverse, automobile advertising translation faces great challenges and has a large display space either from the aspect of culture or language itself. In the process of advertising translation, the translator should have a deep understanding of the cultural connotation and characteristics of the commercial advertisement, be familiar with the similarities and differences between English and Chinese advertising language, realize the targeting country's traditional culture, consumer psychology and aesthetic taste, pay attention to innovation (Venuti, 2000). The specific requirements of advertising market and the complexity of customers require translator to conform to the linguistic habits and aesthetic values of the target culture. A Good translation ought to cater to consumer psychology, taking into account of the cultural differences between different countries and regions, to meet the psychological needs of consumers to achieve the same promotional value as the original advertisement.

For the translator, the most important thing is whether the translation corresponds to the thinking pattern and mental activity of the target audience (Hatim & Ian, 2001). According to Newmark's translation theory, communicative translation is used to translate non-authoritative texts while semantic translation is often used in translating authoritative

texts. Advertisements are usually regarded as non-authoritative texts. However, communicative and semantic translations are often combined to achieve the goal of advertising. Through the research, we can conclude that the combination of communicative and semantic translation contributes a lot to the automobile advertising translation. It is better to translate bodycopy under the guidance of semantic translation and communicative translation is more suitable for the translation of automobile brand names and slogans.

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