

Analysis of English translation skills of Chinese mobile phone advertisement from the perspective of the skopos theory

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Abstract: As a special style, advertisement has an essential role in the promotion and sales of goods. In recent years, some Chinese electronic enterprises such as Huawei, OPPO, Xiaomi, Honor and other successful companies have made brilliant achievements in their internationalization. As a result, studying the above brands of mobile phone advertisement translation will bring timeliness and representativeness. Under the guidance of the skopos theory, this paper selects some typical advertisement of Chinese mobile phone companies such as Huawei, VIVO, OPPO, Xiaomi and other mobile phone companies for analysis. Similarly, it also summarizes the basic characteristics of mobile phone advertising writing. Besides, it generalizes the English translation skills of mobile phone advertisement. It can provide reference for those who study this field.

Keywords: advertising translation; the skopos theory; advertising style; advertising English

1. Introduction

As a big import and export country, under the encouragement of the policy, China's enterprises and commodity economy have been well developed since the Reform and Opening up. At the same time, in recent years, the deep development in China's science and technology and manufacturing industry has also leveled up the share of products made in China, especially in communication tools, Huawei mobile phones, Xiaomi, OPPO, VIVO and other domestic brands have gone abroad. The achievements of these brands in foreign countries are not only with their own solid technology and excellent product performance, but also inseparable from advertising publicity. However, due to the differences between China and English-speaking countries in terms of language and culture, the words in English translation of advertisement are worth pursuing. Besides, the mobile phone professional vocabulary also brings challenges to Chinese translators. As a result, translators should flexibly use translation skills to deal with different goods, so the skopos theory can be a guiding role in the study of English translation of mobile phone advertisement.

2. Concepts of advertisement

Advertisement is widely used to inform the public about the emergence and development of something. It in Cambridge dictionary is stand for a picture, short film, song, etc. that tries to persuade people to buy a product or service, or a piece of text that tells people about a job, etc. As a result, advertisement can be divided in the broad sense and narrow sense. Firstly, the advertisement in narrow sense is a kind of propaganda language tailored for goods in order to sell their goods, which is also called commercial advertisement. While the advertisement in broad sense refers to some statements and initiatives of the government, religious associations, and social organizations, and these advertisements are not for the money and profits. Its function is to introduce, agitate or lobby.

There are many types of advertisement, according to the content, there are mainly commercial advertisements, industrial technology advertisements, job recruitment advertisements, public service advertisements. No matter what type of advertisement, it determines the special style of the advertisement that is different from other application languages.

3. Introduction of the Skopos theory

The skopos theory is the core of functionalist translation theories. Skopos is the Greek word for "purpose, aim, goal". It was Proposed by Reiss and subsequently refined by H.J. Vermeer in the 70s of the 20th centuries. In skopos theory, the "skopos rule" is regarded as the top-ranking rule. Skopos theory focuses above all on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result.

Apart from the "skopos rule", there are two important subordinate rules: the "coherence rule" and the "fidelity rule". The "coherence

rule” states that the TT must be interpretable as coherent with the TT audience’s situation.” In other words, the TT must be translated in such a way that it is coherent for the TT audience, given their circumstances and knowledge. The “fidelity rule” merely states that there must be coherence between the TT and the ST (source text) .

Skopos theory highlights that the translation strategy is decided by the purpose of the TT which is mainly fulfilled by the target addressee—the intend target audience’s demand with their cultural-specific knowledge and their expectations.

4. Characteristics of advertisement in Chinese mobile phone

4.1 Plenty Chinese four-character phrases

With profound language and culture of Chinese, Various Chinese four-character phrases are employed in the advertisement. They are simple and easy-understanding for domestic people. The publicity effect is pretty good. For example, In Huawei Mate50Pro, the translation introduces the by using four Chinese characters “领势”. They generalizes overall features of the Mate50’s ---- 领势设计、领势性能、领势影像、领势体验 “观感出众，屏屏出彩”describes the clear and transparent view of the screen and outstanding picture quality. “虚实结合，一拍即合” highlights the updated and powerful photo function. With more portrait and natural picture protagonist three-dimensional sense of prominence, it meets some female customers to take pictures for beauty.

4.2 A number of homophonic Chinese characters

As a fashionable and practical product, updates are commonplace for mobile phone in modern times. If the sellers want to capture the love of consumers, they need to use some innovative words in the advertisement. For example, In Huawei Nova10pro, “你的光芒，随10闪耀”。“时”is changed to the Arabic numeral 10. It directly insists that Huawei nova10 will always makes you happy. ““开启芯算摄影时代”in OPPOFindX5’s mainly introduces its self-developed featured NPU chip, which opens a new mode of photography. OPPOFindX5 “opens the era of photography” mainly introduces the special NPU chip developed by itself, which opens a new mode of photography, and the“心算”and“芯算” just correspond to each other. innovative vocabulary draws the psychological distance between sellers and customers closer. And a sense of familiarity will slowly ferment, in addition to a sense of fashion and freshness.

4.3 Colorful technical words

In addition to fashionable and practical, mobile phone is essentially a high-tech product. As a result, the advertisement will involve some professional terms, such as “P3 wide color gamut, 2000+ color tuning” the layman may not know what these numbers and vocabulary refers to, but the insiders can see at a glance that they are the terms of phone photographic.

5. Translation skills of mobile phone advertisement

5.1 Restructuring

Advertisement in mobile phone is mainly characterized by the use of Chinese four-character phrases. Definite literal translation probably brings risk of misinterpretation. Besides, it doesn’t align very well with the simplicity in English. So, the translator basically restructuring original language structure. For example, in Huawei Mate50, the phrase“巍巍昆仑，巅峰之作”is translated into “An instant classic, “巍巍昆仑，巅峰之作”is used for describing Mate50’s appearance, which brings Huawei’s latest Parisian stud design concepts to phones. Based on the dawn and sunset of the Kunlun Mountains, the workers design three colors: frost silver, obsidian black, and flowing purple. “An instant classic” reflects a kind of mystery. Because the Kunlun Mountain is a mysterious mountain with many creatures and secrets.

5.2 Omission

The numeral translation involved in advertisement are not translation. Translator mainly uses omission to make the language more fluent. For example: “这一面，精彩每一面”. It was translated into “Immersive and Impressive”, which here mainly describes the phone’s folding screen. Similarly, “Immersive and Impressive” not only readable, but also express its meaning completely. “精彩的沉浸式体验；流

光四曲，视网膜级屏幕” is translated into “Glow with the 1.5K AMOLED Screen”.

6. Conversion

Generally, there are many verbs in a sentence. Some verb phrases, conjugated phrases, etc. can act as various components of a sentence without changing the form. However, the verbs in English are often weakened, and they are usually transformed into noun forms or adopt the form of non-predicate verbs to express the meaning of the verb. As a result, English is a static language and Chinese is an active language. In the translation of advertisements, some sentences reflect this feature. For example: OPPO Find X2 系列设计简约纯粹，触感优雅柔和。若有似无的曲线抚平机身的每一处棱角，双曲面机身演绎立体圆润的顺畅手感。拿起它，感受从眼前到指尖的舒适。The translator translated it as Beauty Beyond the Visual. Find X2 series features a simple, tangible elegance that takes off the edge. with smoothed curves that fit perfectly in with smoothed curves that fit perfectly in your hand, this is a beauty you can feel from your eyes to your fingertips. This sentence mainly describes the smooth and comfortable external feel of the OPPO Find X2.

7. Amplification

According to the custom of the Chinese, the possessive pronouns “you” and “your” do not appear frequently. In most advertisements, second person pronouns are used to reduce the distance between the customer and the seller. English often expresses the deeper meaning clearly through the form of language. For example: Reno Glow 晶钻工艺 银河就在手中。映入眼中的是银河般的闪耀，手指抚过却顺滑无比。The translator translates it as “Reno Glow Hold a galaxy in your hand This phone’s unique finish is silky to the touch and it looks like you have all the stars of the universe in the palm of your hand. universe in the palm of your hand”. The personal pronoun “you” and the possessive pronoun “your” are added for making the consumer feel that the seller is providing one-on-one service. The intimacy between the seller and the consumer unfolds at the same time. And this expression also caters to the characteristics of western consumers in the pursuit of individual feelings.

8. Conclusion

C-E translation of Chinese advertisement plays an important role in the process of promoting Chinese-made phone products. Translators should take introducing and publicizing the products, talking to consumers and promoting the sales of commodities as the fundamental purpose. Besides, the methods and strategies according to the differences between English and Chinese are also determined. Then respect the linguistic habits and rules of English-speaking countries, on the basis of which they can innovate the translation to prompt consumers to accept these texts and make purchases.

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