

从关联理论角度研究广告翻译

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硕士学位论文

从关联理论角度研究广告翻译

On the Advertising Translation from the Perspective of
Relevance Theory

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Abstract

After China joined the World Trade Organization, international trades have rapidly developed in China. The fast growth of international communications and acute competitions triggers an increasing need for advertising. International advertising has become a very important part not only for merchants but also for consumers. The success of an international advertisement depends largely on whether its translated version can arouse the interest of the target audience and persuade them to take purchasing action. Therefore, advertising translation has a pivotal position in the international advertising industry.

Every advertisement includes a fundamental meaning in it, which is just what the advertiser wants to convey through the advertisement. And the advertiser wants the audience to get the meaning without much processing efforts when they see the advertisement. So translated advertisements should also take this as an objective to help the target audience know the advertiser's intentions easily. However, due to cultural differences, the source audience and the target audience of an advertisement may have totally distinctive linguistic practice and cognitive environment, which bring advertising translation difficulties. Under this condition, if we use those traditional translation theories which focus on loyalty or equivalence to the source text, the effect of the translated advertisement may sometimes turn out to be deficient. So this thesis works on advertising translation from Relevance Theory, a new and more flexible perspective, which stresses the optimal relevance and contextual effects.

Relevance Theory holds that utterance is a cognitive process containing two aspects, one of which is giving ostensive stimuli and the other is inference. The speaker makes assumptions about the hearer's cognitive ability and environment, and gives the ostensive stimulus which is optimal relevant to his communicative intention. Then, depending on the ostensive stimulus, the hearer obtains the

optimal relevance to the speaker's communicative intention with minimal processing efforts in his contextual environment. According to Relevance Theory, advertising translation is a type of pragmatic translation which is of a communicative process. In the process, the translator should first of all get to know something about the source advertisement text and the source context. Then he infers the intentions of the advertiser from the source advertisement and analyzes whether the source audience and the target audience share the same or similar contextual environment. He should take into full consideration the target audience's cognitive ability and their cultural differences which are often reflected in language. Then the translator chooses different translation strategies to deal with the source advertisement text so that he can convey the intentions of the advertisement producer clearly in the target text, helps the target audience access the optimal relevance to the producer's communicative intention with the minimal processing effort, and achieves the adequate contextual effects of the translated advertisement in the target environment.

This thesis systematically introduces Relevance Theory from the aspects of its definition, source, theoretical basis and main concepts, and reviews the general idea of advertising and the language features of advertising English. Then the author explores the relations between culture and advertising language, stressing that cultural differences influence the achievement of the contextual effects in the target environment. Finally, through authentic advertisements, the author introduces different translation strategies which are usually applied in advertising translation in order to achieve the optimal relevance in the target language.

Key Words: Relevance Theory; advertising translation; optimal relevance; cultural differences; translation strategies

摘要

随着中国加入世界贸易组织，国际贸易在中国快速发展起来。国际交流的快速发展和国际竞争的加剧使得企业对于广告的需求也日益增长。不论对于商人还是消费者来说，国际广告都已经成为生活中重要的一部分。一则广告能否在国际市场上获得成功很大程度上取决于它的译本能否引起目的观众的兴趣并促使他们购买产品。因此，广告翻译在国际广告业有着至关重要的地位。

每个广告都蕴含着一个基本意思，这个基本意思正是广告人想要通过这则广告来表达的东西。广告人希望当观众看到这则广告时不费吹灰之力就能理解广告的基本意思。所以，广告的译本也应该以此为目标，帮助目的观众轻松地了解广告人的意图。但由于文化差异，一则广告的原观众和其译版的目的观众则可能有着完全不同的语言习惯和认知环境。这些不同会给广告翻译带来一些困难。在这种情况下，如果运用那些强调忠实于原文或者与原文形式和内容完全对等的传统翻译理论来进行广告的翻译，广告的翻译版本有时可能会达不到期望的效果。所以，这篇论文从一个新的灵活的角度，即强调最佳关联和语境效果的关联理论，来研究广告翻译。

关联理论认为话语是一种包含示意和推理两方面的认知过程。说话人对听话人的认知能力和认知环境进行假设并做出与其交际目的有着最佳关联的示意行为。听话人根据说话人的示意行为，结合语境，通过最小的努力，求得语境效果而获取说话人的交际意图。根据关联理论，广告翻译是一种实用型的翻译，它是一个交际过程。在这个过程中，译者首先应当对原广告文本和原文的语境进行了解，而后从原广告中推断广告人的交际意图，并分析广告的原观众与广告译本的目的观众是否有同样或者相似的语境环境。同时，译者还需要充分考虑广告译本的目的观众的认知能力和文化差异，这些文化差异常常表现为语言表达习惯上的不同。根据这些，译者再决定选择不同的翻译策略来处理这则广告的翻译以至于在译本中将广告人的意图清楚完整地表达出来，并且帮助译本的目的观众费最少的力在译文语境中找到与广告人交际意图之间的最佳关联，使得广告的译本在目的环境中获得足够的语境效果。

本文从定义、来源、理论基础和主要观点等方面系统介绍了关联理论，并对广告及广告英语的语言特征进行了大体的回顾。通过分析文化与广告语言的关系，作者强调了文化差异对语境效果在目的环境中的实现的影响。并通过分析广告实例，来介绍广告翻译中常被用来达到最佳关联的翻译策略。

关键词：关联理论 广告翻译 最佳关联 文化差异 翻译策略

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Introduction

In our daily life, advertisements can be seen everywhere. Advertising influences our lives in different ways. First, advertising is an effective way to promote products and services. A good advertisement can help the advertised product go into the target market and get good sales, speeding up the capital flow of the producer. Second, advertising informs consumers of the advertised product's basic information, such as origin, quality, performance and price. It helps consumers get to know products, be aware of differences existing in similar products of different brands, and judge which product is the one they need. Advertising is such an important factor in the business world with its language. When a producer goes overseas to promote his products with an advertisement, he may fail if the target language version of the advertisement is invalid. So the research on advertising translation seems to be necessary and becomes an urgent task. This thesis is to explore advertising translation against such an economically globalized background.

Admittedly, there have been a lot of researches done on advertising translation. Those traditional or well-known translation theories are applied, such as Yanfu's translation theory, the Skopos Theory, the Functional Equivalence Theory, and so on. However, some problems still exist in the field of the research on advertising translation. Firstly, those traditional translation theories and equivalence-based linguistic approaches only seek for faithfulness or equivalence to the source advertisement text, which sometimes makes the translated advertisement fail to achieve its pragmatic effects. In addition, the functionalist approach pays greatest importance to the functions of the target text. The Skopos Theory takes the objective of advertisements as the principle of the whole translation process. None of them stresses and explains what kind of role the translator plays and how his inferential, creative processing task goes in advertising translation. Secondly, there is no sufficient consideration of both of the source audience and the target audience. Before

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