

CHALLENGES OF TRANSLATING ADVERTISING TEXTS

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada reklama matnlarini tarjima qilish jarayonida yuzaga keladigan lingvistik, madaniy va pragmatik muammolar tahlil etiladi. Reklama diskursining persuaziv (ta'sir ko'rsatishga yo'naltirilgan) xususiyati tufayli tarjimon til jihatidan aniqlikni saqlagan holda, madaniy jihatdan mos va maqsadli auditoriya uchun qabul qilinarli mazmun yaratishi zarur bo'ladi. Maqolada ekvivalentlik, madaniy moslashtirish, uslubiy vositalar, tarjima qilinishi qiyin bo'lgan birliklar hamda tarjima jarayonidagi ijodkorlik kabi asosiy masalalar ko'rib chiqiladi. Shuningdek, mazkur qiyinchiliklarni bartaraf etishda qo'llaniladigan bir qator tarjima strategiyalari ham muhokama qilinadi.

Kalit so'zlar: reklama tarjimasi, ekvivalentlik, lingvistik qiyinchiliklar, madaniy moslashtirish, tarjima qilib bo'lmaslik, tarjima strategiyalari, persuaziv diskurs.

Abstract

This article explores the linguistic, cultural, and pragmatic challenges involved in translating advertisement texts. Due to the persuasive nature of advertising discourse, translators must balance linguistic accuracy with cultural appropriateness to deliver messages that resonate with target audiences. The paper examines key issues such as equivalence, cultural adaptation, stylistic devices, untranslatability, and the role of creativity in translation. Several translation strategies used to overcome these challenges are also discussed.

Keywords: advertising translation, equivalence, linguistic challenges, cultural adaptation, untranslatability, translation strategies, persuasive discourse.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются лингвистические, культурные и прагматические трудности, возникающие при переводе рекламных текстов.

Учитывая persuazivную (воздействующую) природу рекламного дискурса, переводчику необходимо соблюдать баланс между языковой точностью и культурной уместностью, чтобы сообщение эффективно воспринималось целевой аудиторией. В работе анализируются такие ключевые вопросы, как эквивалентность, культурная адаптация, стилистические средства, непереводаемость и роль креативности в переводческом процессе. Также обсуждаются несколько стратегий перевода, применяемых для преодоления указанных трудностей.

Ключевые слова: перевод рекламы, эквивалентность, лингвистические трудности, культурная адаптация, непереводаемость, переводческие стратегии, воздействующий дискурс.

Language plays an essential role in human life because it serves as our primary tool for communication. Today, it is used across different types of media for a wide range of purposes. In the modern world, advertising has become an inseparable part of everyday life. The main aim of advertisements is to capture people's attention and encourage them to purchase the promoted product. To achieve this, advertisers now apply various techniques to make their messages more appealing.

Advertisement is the promotion of a product, service, event, or idea in order to attract attention and influence the target audience. Advertisement constantly motivates consumers to buy and use the advertised product and it tries to convince the users that this product is better than the brands they use. [7].

Today, commercial advertising has turned into a highly influential tool of mass communication. Its impact on us is greater than we often realize. Advertisements provide people with information about new products, their prices, available services, and current trends. Many household items we use today — from steam irons and automatic washing machines to dishwashers, vacuum cleaners, and compact discs — have become part of our daily lives thanks to advertising.. It is not secret that advertisement all over the world has its vital role. In commercials, the language of the advertisement should be brief and laconic because it is viewed as a special structure of the language. Advertisement texts have some essential features and when texts need to be translated; these features should be taken into consideration.

Translating commercial advertisements is a demanding task, regardless of whether the text is brief or extensive. Although advertising language is typically concise, this does not make it easier to render into another language. In fact, the opposite is true. Advertisement translation cannot rely solely on automated translation tools, as machine translation often fails to convey the intended meaning. This happens because each language reflects its own cultural background. For this reason, the target version of the advertisement must be treated with the same level of importance as the source. In international advertising, if the target audience cannot grasp the original message, the entire purpose of the advertisement is lost. Consequently, translation becomes a crucial component of advertising, placing significant responsibility on translators. Throughout this process, they encounter various difficulties and must find ways to address them.

Linguistic Challenges in Advertising Translation

There is no doubt that a product cannot succeed in the target market if its translation is ineffective. Throughout the history of advertising, many cases have shown that incorrect or inaccurate translations lead to miscommunication. Such problems typically arise from insufficient linguistic competence. One of the most difficult aspects of translation is finding appropriate equivalents between the source and target languages. The idea of equivalence holds a central place in translation practice. It has long been a key topic of discussion and research within translation studies. Bassnett [2, p.25] describes this concept as a "much used term in translation studies". Equivalence means finding the term or expression in the target language that has the semantically similar meaning as to what it expressed in the source language with a different signifier. According to Pym [6, p.37], "equivalence is supposed to define translation, and translation, in turn defines equivalence".

Difficulties can arise when trying to determine the most appropriate linguistic equivalents and selecting the option that best suits the context. Cultural and linguistic differences often complicate the search for accurate correspondence. Therefore, translators must possess thorough knowledge of both languages and cultures to identify suitable equivalents.

Equivalence goes far beyond literal, word-for-word translation. It is particularly important in advertising translation, especially when dealing with cultural elements, idiomatic expressions, and figurative language. In some cases, certain words lack a direct counterpart in the target language, which may lead to partial or complete

untranslatability. When this happens, translators may apply specific strategies such as borrowing or omission. As noted earlier, omission is acceptable only when the absence of the word does not alter the intended meaning of the advertisement. As Baker [1] notes, equivalence is influenced by context, connotation, and function.

Linguistic difficulties arise most often when a text includes humor, figurative expressions, idioms, proverbs, sayings, or wordplay. Their forms, meanings, and associations vary from one language to another, and they are deeply tied to cultural context. As a result, an expression that works effectively in one language may lose its impact if translated literally into another. Because of this, linguistic issues appear more frequently in the translation of advertisements.

Advertisements frequently use metaphors, puns, repetition, neologisms, or rhyme. These devices create memorability and emotional resonance but pose serious difficulties for translators [3]. A pun that works in one language may be meaningless in another. Translators must therefore recreate a similar effect, often requiring creativity rather than literal transfer.

Cultural Challenges in Advertising translation

Culture plays a fundamental role in advertising. Many advertisements include references to local customs, humor, values, or stereotypes. As Newmark [4] argues, cultural elements are the most difficult to translate because they may have no direct equivalent in the target culture. A slogan referencing a national holiday, religious belief, or humor rooted in local context may be completely incomprehensible to foreign audiences.

One of the most important points of translation between different cultures is considering the sensitivity of the situation. For example, there are some language groups with different beliefs and values. Translators have duties and responsibilities such as properly comprehending all the cultural elements of the source and target texts and finding the most appropriate methods to convey these elements. Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, who perceive linguistic and cultural differences as a problem, approach the translation of culture by underlining the fact that the elements to be transferred must adapt to the realities of the target culture recipient [5, p.199].

Untranslatability

Some lexical items and cultural references lack counterparts in other languages. When faced with such cases, translators must resort to strategies such as adaptation, borrowing, paraphrasing, or omission. For example, idiomatic expressions like “Black Friday deals” may not carry the same cultural meaning in countries where the tradition does not exist.

Consumer expectations and social norms

Values and preferences differ across cultures. A message that is effective in one country may be offensive or ineffective in another. The translator must therefore understand cultural norms regarding politeness, gender roles, humor, and emotional expression. Misjudgment may result in advertising failure.

The techniques and strategies of translating advertisements

When translating any text, translators rely on a range of strategies and techniques. Before beginning the translation, they need to determine which approach they will use. A translator working with an advertisement must first read the original text carefully and then analyze it in detail. At this stage, several questions should be considered: “Is the advertisement spoken or written?”, “Is it a single advertisement or part of a campaign?”, “Will it appear on social media?”, “What visuals accompany it?”, and “What are the expectations of the target customers?”

After finding answers to the questions, the translator can use appropriate strategies and techniques during the translation process. The main strategies that are used during the translation of advertisements are followings:

Strategies for Translating Advertisement Texts

Adaptation (Transcreation)

In many cases, adaptation—also known as transcreation—is the most effective method. This involves recreating the message in the target language while maintaining its communicative purpose, emotional tone, and cultural relevance.

Borrowing and loan translation

When a concept has no equivalent, translators may borrow the original term, especially for product names or cultural items.

Paraphrasing

Paraphrase is useful when stylistic devices are untranslatable. It helps transfer meaning even if the form must be altered.

Omission

If a culturally specific element does not affect the core message, omission can be used (as long as the persuasive function is preserved).

Compensation

When meaning or stylistic effect is lost in one part of the text, translators may compensate by adding a similar effect elsewhere.

Conclusion

Translating advertisement texts is a complex process that demands a deep understanding of language, culture, marketing strategies, and consumer psychology. Unlike literal translation, advertising translation focuses on recreating the emotional and persuasive impact of the source text. Linguistic differences, cultural specificity, stylistic devices, and untranslatability are among the major challenges translators face.

Overcoming these difficulties requires creativity, cultural sensitivity, and the use of various translation strategies such as adaptation, borrowing, and paraphrasing. Ultimately, the success of an advertisement in the target market depends largely on the effectiveness of the translated message. Therefore, translators play a crucial role in bridging linguistic and cultural gaps and ensuring successful international communication.

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