



INVESTIGATING TRANSLATION OF ENGLISH ADVERTISING SLOGANS INTO VIETNAMESE

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Abstract:

Advertising slogans can be seen everywhere in this world, from smaller cities to bigger ones and as more and more businesses have been run, a plethora of brands have been introduced. However, many companies in the world now have found their way out of their host countries and wish to do business in other potential countries. When they do this, they need language assistance to advertise their products. Due to this language importance to promote sales, this study aimed to explore twelve advertising slogans related to skin, hair protection, food, beverages and other common brands that are prevalent in Vietnam to see how the English slogans of the brands were translated into Vietnamese. The authors used the translation perspectives proposed by Nida (1991) to help direct the analysis. The result uncovered that the majority of the translated texts did not apply the philological and linguistic perspectives, but instead they were translated based on the Skopos theory, meaning they translated the slogans to purposefully persuade people to purchase the products. This study ignored the communicative perspective as the authors could not record extra-linguistic features such as sounds to insert the effect on buyers. Some proposed suggestions for further studies were also included.

Keywords: advertising slogans, philological and linguistic perspectives, communicative perspective, Skopos theory

1. Introduction

Since this world has increasingly become smaller, people of different languages have more opportunities to come close in contact in many aspects of life. Then, the role of translation has evidently played its roles in such aspects. The translation is a general term that can be represented in a written channel or in the oral form. Each channel has its strategies to fulfill the tasks. Then, besides such strategies, many translation experts also

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proposed many theories of translation. Nida (1991) looked at translation from three different perspectives. First, it is about the philological perspective, which focused on the issue of the faithfulness of the texts as this theory was used chiefly in translation bibles in the seventh century. Second, it needs to mention the linguistic perspective, which concentrated on the distinctive features of the two languages as translation deals with at least knowledge of two languages. Third, he mentioned the communicative perspective, which drew attention to paralinguistic and extra-linguistic features of oral and written messages such as tone, voice, loudness, word enunciation, gestures, stance, and eye contact. In this article, the authors would like to see which of these translation perspectives are commonly used to translate English advertising slogans. As Cook (2001) put it, advertisers always attempt to inform, persuade, remind, and influence buyers. Moreover, they also strive to change consumers' opinions, emotions, and attitudes. In addition, advertising is to disseminate the brand identity. A brand identity usually comprises a brand name, logo, and slogan (Fohli & Lethesser, 2001). Obviously, a slogan is a way used to convey the message of a product to potential consumers. According to Forsyth (2015), slogans are treated as adages of the company identity, the corporate motto, and commercial competitions. As known, to insert memory input, sentences and utterances must be short and meaningful, which are known as 'cracking sentences', which tend to be shortened, convey the corporate's intended strategy and purposely convince consumers to buy their products. It can be intriguing to investigate these translated texts of English advertising slogans into Vietnamese. As the result can be best considered by consumers to not just to see the translated texts which tend to allure their eyes, but to see how the products work as well. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the authors would like to propose the following research question:

- How were the English advertising slogans translated into Vietnamese?

2. Literature review

2.1. Definitions and theory of translation

As Nida (1964) put it, the work of translation is to assist in transmitting the source text in a language to the target text in another language. According to Newmark (2009), the process of translation is "*rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text*" (p.5). In this sense of slogan translation, it seems to us that Ren (2013) has a more precise way of translation. The author stated translation is the method of rewriting under certain constraints and for a purpose, so to achieve that purpose, rewriting is needed during the process of translation. This definition can be best based on the Skopos theory (Vermeer, 1989), which is a reader-oriented translation approach addressing the priority concern of readership. Likewise, advertisers are keen on creating effects of their company's slogan which are intentionally consumer-oriented. Since this study attempts to see how translation is manipulated, the authors would also orient the text analysis based on the localization strategy which is utilized to make the translated text sound familiar to the target country and make its people understand the slogans at ease.

2.2. Related work

Yu (2015) investigated the use of the functional equivalence theory, comprising the receptor' response and content over form in application of advertising slogan translation. The author found that this theory is more appropriate to translate commercial slogans as it targets at obtaining the receptors of both source texts and target texts. According to the author, Literal translation can be chosen to translate simple Chinese advertising slogans into English. Parody translation is found to be prevalent in translating advertising slogans from Chinese to English. This strategy applies the epigrams, maxims, and proverbs in western culture to render Chinese slogans. The creative translation was also mentioned in this study and this strategy is used when the translator does not expect unambiguous or confused meaning in the target texts. This strategy requires the translator to be sophisticated not only in the knowledge of translation but also the knowledge of the field he or she is dealing with.

Lim and Ying (2015) investigated Chinese slogans in commerce translated into English and they selected the data from promotional leaflets, posters, advertisements of bus service, and on the website of the Macao Government Tourist Office. They obtained 130 responses in the tourist destinations and the respondents were asked to rate their opinions on a six-point scale (1-6). They were provided with a rubric including Fluency, Conciseness, Persuasiveness, and Mnemonic effect so that the respondents could give each criterion a number from 1 to 6. For the Chinese-speaking, each individual criterion received points from 3.7 to 4.5 ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.29$). The English-speaking respondents, rated each criterion quite lower than those of their Chinese-speaking counterparts, from 2.7 to 4.0 ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.43$). The most remarkable point to be made in this study is that word-for-word translation was not favoured by the readers and received the lowest ratings. This result implicates that translators need to have better interaction between them and their potential readers to create a greater effect on the target readers.

As Rumšienė (2014) put it, the length of the source text decides the choice of the method to be used for translating this text into the target text. The shorter the original texts tend to be, the more prominent is the stress on the lexical detachment of the target text from its source. This method of translation prioritizes the objective of translation and as the Skopos theory stated as long as the translation passages can achieve their goals, they are accepted. In this case, the linguistic perspective is deemphasized. The author found that transcoding is no longer in use and the purpose of translation is to communicate with the target readers. In short, the purpose of the target determines translation methods and strategies.

Smith and Eynullaeva (2009) investigated online three versions of each of five adverts corresponding to different brands and types of products advertised in English, Spanish and Russian and they aimed to make a cross-cultural comparison of the similarities and differences, drawing sole attention to the quantity and type of information offered to the target audience. The analysis was based on the amount of information, type and scope of information, variable presentation order, emphasis on certain aspects (relevance for a particular group of addressees), connotations of a specific vocabulary, pronoun use and register (familiar, polite, neutral, distant or direct),

euphemisms, and slogans with subtle cultural differences. They found five brands adapting the content and format of their adverts for the same product in three distinctive cultural settings. Each translator in each country seemed to use the Localization method to satisfy the people in their country's needs. They took Olay product as an example. This cream was advertised completely the same way in Mexico, Argentina and Chile with a minor difference in the version for the web pages in Spain. One more interesting point is they classified females into three groups depending on their tradition and cultural values. They see females as girls, brides, and mothers, not including single or professional women. From this finding, the Skopos theory is seen as the dominant vehicle orienting the translation way.

Munday (2014) agreed that concepts such as audience, equivalent effect, Skopos theory orientation, and cross-cultural study are considered to be important in the field of commercial translation. Nonetheless, the author expected the way of translation to be changed, not sticking to the conventional look. The author asked for the multi-aspects that can assist the effect of translation on the readers, such as multi-models and multi-media for a better understanding of the messages. Moreover, the research of the interdisciplinary field of study can trigger translation enhancement.

Kuúçua and Ünlüa (2015) explored the different translation genres using authentic materials for instructing translation of advertising. They used the PPP Approach to Language Teaching for the intervention. PPP means Presentation, Practice, and Production of a lesson plan stage. The participants were 3rd year English students who were instructed by two instructors during a semester of 15 weeks. The lesson plans included authentic materials such as brand logos, slogans and TV commercials, which are commonly seen in daily life. After a period of instruction, the lesson plans of instruction were appraisal and it is that the students found they gained considerable knowledge of translation after receiving these authentic teaching materials. They also valued that the lessons were fun, informative and creative.

Manaf and Alallan (2017) explored the influence of animated cartoons as brand awareness on television advertisement by surveying viewers' cognitive and affective responses which were recorded for analysis. They found that after watching these commercial cartoon episodes, the viewers were inclined to purchase the products advertised via the cartoons. They, in addition, discovered that the viewers intended to purchase the animated brands when they were influenced by cognitive advertisement rather than the affective counterpart.

Above are many of the related studies that are used to support this current study and its limitations are unavoidable as there could be more intriguing findings related to translation advertising slogans.

3. Methodology

The authors would like to investigate twelve advertising slogans with different products that have been translated from English to Vietnamese. The purpose is to see which perspective: philological, linguistic, or communicative perspective the translators often

use to translate these slogans. This can be seen as essential information for both company owners and consumers to understand more about the meaning of each product and to consider if the meaning is suitable for the products to be named or translated according to their ways. As known, since monolingual people tend to rely strongly on translation, their knowledge of translation should be updated. In order to find advertising slogans, the authors first looked for popular products that have been translated into the Vietnamese market. Some of the slogans in different types of products used for different purposes have been selected. Then, the authors analyzed the translated texts based on their original meanings. In this case, the authors, as said earlier, analyzed the translated texts based on three perspectives proposed by Nida (1991). The findings of these translated texts are illustrated in the following section.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Findings

This section presents the translated texts of the twelve English slogans into Vietnamese and the analysis was based on three perspectives: philological (referring to "faithfulness of the texts), linguistic (referring to the linguistic parameters/systems of at least the two languages), and communicative (taking advantage of paralinguistic and extra-linguistic features of oral and written messages).

Table 1: Category 1: About hair and skin protection

No.	Slogans	Translated texts
1	<i>Romano</i> . Define your class.	<i>Romano</i> . Khẳng định đẳng cấp phái mạnh.
2	<i>Vaseline</i> . Keeping skin amazing since 1870.	<i>Vaseline</i> . Chuyên gia chăm sóc da từ 1870.
3	<i>Sunsilk</i> . Life can't wait.	<i>Sunsilk</i> . Tóc đẹp ngay bây giờ. Sống là không chờ đợi!
4	<i>Maybelline New York</i> . Maybe she's born with it. Maybe it's Maybelline.	<i>Maybelline New York</i> . Có thể cô ấy đẹp tự nhiên. Có thể là nhờ Maybelline.

Table 2: Category 2: About food and beverages

No.	Slogans	Translated texts
1	<i>Dutch Lady</i> . Get ready for life.	<i>Dutch Lady</i> . Sẵn sàng một sức sống!
2	<i>Kitkat</i> . Have a break, have a Kit Kat.	<i>Kitkat</i> . Nghỉ xả hơi, xoi Kit Kat.
3	<i>Heineken</i> . It could only be Heineken.	<i>Heineken</i> . Chỉ có thể là Heineken
4	<i>Tiger Beer</i> . Uncage.	<i>Tiger</i> . Đánh thức bản lĩnh.

Table 3: Category 3: Others

No.	Slogans	Translated texts
1	<i>Prudential</i> . Always listening. Always understanding.	<i>Prudential</i> . Luôn luôn lắng nghe. Luôn luôn thấu hiểu.
2	Vietnam tourist slogans 2005 – 2011. Vietnam – The hidden charm.	Vietnam tourist slogans 2005 – 2011. Việt Nam – Vẻ đẹp tiềm ẩn.
3	Vietnam tourist slogans. Vietnam – A different Orient.	Vietnam tourist slogans. Việt Nam – Sự khác biệt Á Đông.

4	Vietnam tourist slogans 2012 – 2015. Vietnam Timeless Charm.	Vietnam tourist slogans 2012 – 2015. Việt Nam – Vẻ đẹp bất tận.
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4.2. Discussions

All the slogans have the features of image effects, so the translators used the communicative perspective to draw buyers' attention to the products. However, since these slogans were not animated data, the authors were unable to record other features during advertising these products (please see the appendix). Therefore, the texts were analyzed mainly based on philological and linguistic perspectives.

When looking at the first table, all slogans in this category do not abide by the philological and linguistic perspective completely. Item 1: "*Romano* - Define your class" was rendered as "Khẳng định đẳng cấp phái mạnh". As known, in the source text, no gender was mentioned, but in the target source, the stronger gender group (men) was mentioned. The degree of loyalty was diminished. The verb "define" and the noun "class" do not literally mean as "khẳng định" and "phái mạnh". Thus, if the target text is rendered back to English, it is difficult to use the same words "define" and "class". In the same vain, Item 2: "*Vaseline* - Keeping skin amazing since 1870" was translated as "Chuyên gia chăm sóc da từ 1870". The level of loyalty was not significant when the target text has the word "chuyên gia", meaning "specializing in". When the Vietnamese users of this product see and hear the word "chuyên gia", they feel more trusted in this product. For the linguistic feature, not all words in the source language were exactly translated. For example, the word "amazing" disappeared in the translated text. Similarly, Item 3: "*Sunsilk* - Life can't wait" was interpreted as "Tóc đẹp ngay bây giờ. Sống là không chờ đợi". Again, this method of translation has added the sentence "tóc đẹp ngay bây giờ". Furthermore, the word "life" is an unanimated noun in the source language, but when it is used in the target source, it was transferred to a verb "to live", so a human's action is emphasized. In this circumstance, the translator intended to influence buyers to buy the products, so he or she sacrificed the linguistic and philological aspects. Finally, Item 4: "*Maybelline New York* - Maybe she's born with it. Maybe it's Maybelline" was translated as "Maybelline New York - Có thể cô ấy đẹp tự nhiên; Có thể là nhờ Maybelline". The source language sounds ambiguous to the readers, but when it was rendered to Vietnamese, it was improved. The referential "it" in "Maybe she's born with it" makes the readers feel uncertain. Nonetheless, when "it" was rendered to Vietnamese, it is "đẹp tự nhiên", which was not found in the source text, which means "a girl was born with her natural beauty". Next, the word "nhờ" in the translated text is also a questioning. In the source text, there is not any words to mean "due to or with the support of", but in the target language, a lady is getting beautiful thanks to her use of Maybelline. To sum up, the translated of Items 3 and 4 tend to go too far from the meanings of their original sources.

The advertising slogans in Table 2- Category 2 tend to stick to the philological and linguistic perspectives. Item 2: "*Kitkat*- Have a break, have a Kit Kat" was translated as "Kitkat. Nghỉ xả hơi, xoi Kit Kat". To "have a break" means to "nghỉ xả hơi" and to "have a Kit Kat" means "xoi Kit Kat". The only subtlety is the way the translator used the words

in Vietnamese. For example, he/she used the phrase “nghỉ xả hơi” and “xoi”, which are inclined to dialects and in this case these words are found in the north of Vietnam. Another item which sticks to these perspectives is Item 3: “Heineken. It could only be Heineken”, which was rendered as “Heineken. Chỉ có thể là Heineken”. This is a good example of the philological and linguistic perspectives of translation. The meaning of the target language and source language is the same. All the literal meanings of individual words of both sources are aligned.

However, Item 1: “Dutch Lady. Get ready for life” was rendered as “Dutch Lady. Sẵn sàng một sức sống” is not very much exact. The word “life” is an unanimated noun in the source language, but when it is used in the target language it becomes “sức sống” meaning “someone leads an energetic life”. Likewise, Item 4: “Tiger Beer-Uncage” was interpreted as “Tiger. Đánh thức bản lĩnh”. While the verb “uncage” with the image of a tiger means something like “A tiger uncages”, it refers to humans in the target language and the meaning is not loyal to its original one. It was rendered as “đánh thức bản lĩnh” to mean a person with courage and brave triggered. Thus, again these two slogans do not comply with the philological and linguistic rules.

The slogans in Table 3 seem to stick to the philological and linguistic rules. Item 1: “Prudential - Always listening. Always understanding” was translated as “Prudential. Luôn luôn lắng nghe. Luôn luôn thấu hiểu”. The translator kept the original meaning in the target language. Item 2: “Vietnam tourist slogans 2005 – 2011. Vietnam – The hidden charm” was rendered as “Vietnam tourist slogans 2005 – 2011. Việt Nam – Vẻ đẹp tiềm ẩn”. The original meaning is kept in the translated text. Item 3: “Vietnam tourist slogans. Vietnam – A different Orient” was interpreted as “Vietnam tourist slogans. Việt Nam – Sự khác biệt Á Đông”. The meanings of individual words are kept in the target text. However, Item 4 in this category tends to differentiate slightly. “Vietnam tourist slogans 2012 – 2015. Vietnam Timeless Charm” was rendered as “Vietnam tourist slogans 2012 – 2015. Việt Nam – Vẻ đẹp bất tận”. Basically, the original meaning is kept in the target language. Nevertheless, the word “timeless” is something about unlimited time, but then it is used as something like “a place with no end”. This method of translation can be also applied to exaggerate the beauty of this country over time.

After analysis, the authors remark that most of the translators applied the Skopos theory by Vermeer (1989) and tend to align this finding with Smith & Eynullaeva (2009), Yu (2015), Lim and Ying (2015), and Rumšienė (2014). When talking about translation of the commercial slogans, these researchers posited that the purpose of translation, culture-bond and classes of the target country decide the translation method and strategies. This is true that when the translator knows the shampoo “*Romano*” is produced for men, he or she automatically decided to put “phái mạnh” in the translated text. Another case can be seen is about the shampoo “Sunsilk”. Although the source text does not mention “hair”, “hair” is mentioned in the target text. This kind of translation is based on the translator’s knowledge of the product and it is to make the readers know that this brand is made to protect humans’ hair.

5. Conclusion

This study aims to help improve consumers of products and company owners have more understanding of the translation of the product brands. The authors explored twelve advertising slogans related to skin, hair protection, food, beverages and others. This exploration is to see how the translators translate these slogans in terms of the philological perspective, linguistic perspective and communicative perspective. Due to the data collected from the written form, the authors, besides the products' images, could not advocate the communicative perspective much, so they gave priority to the philological perspective and linguistic perspectives. The majority of the slogan translations do not abide by the rules of these perspectives. The translators tended to sacrifice the meanings or the unclear meanings in the source texts when they transferred the slogan passages into Vietnamese. Although some of the slogans stuck to the loyalty and linguistic features of the source language, many slogans are used to have an impact on the commercial purpose. Next, the finding also revealed that the translators tended to translate the product slogans according to the audience, in this circumstance, Vietnamese people, so they chose alluring words and phrases to appeal to this group of audience. Finally, the translators are sophisticated with these products meaning they know the purpose of use of these products, so they preferred to add more words when necessary to make the meaning clearer in the Vietnamese context. For example, the shampoo brand "*Romano*" was produced for men, so the translator added the word "phái mạnh" to make it appealing to this class. Then the word "Khẳng định đẳng cấp" is very sophisticated, which encourages men to use this product to be a man. Future research in this field can be more interesting if researchers can record the animated data (sounds and actions, etc.) to see if these extra or paralinguistic matches the written forms (slogans) printed on the products. Furthermore, the survey of different groups using a foreign product that is translated into Vietnamese should be conducted to see how they think about the product and the translation of its slogan. This idea has been mentioned in the studies conducted by Kuúçua & Ünliua (2015) and Manaf & Alallan (2017). They agreed that translation of big brands will be very much improved if it is supported with sounds and other visual aids.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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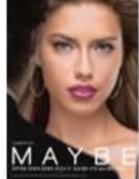
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Appendix

 <p>ROMANO helps you "Define Your Class"</p> <p>Source: wipro-unza.com</p> <p>Không định sẵn, bạn định nghĩa nó.</p> <p>Source: YouTube</p>	 <p>Keeping skin amazing since 1870</p> <p>Source: pinoyeshop.com</p> <p>Vaseline – Chuyên gia chăm sóc da từ năm 1870</p> <p>Source: iprice.vn</p>
 <p>their hair tells their story</p> <p>make your hair happen</p> <p>life can't wait</p> <p>Source: Adeevee</p> <p>tóc đẹp ngay bây giờ</p> <p>Source: YouTube</p>	 <p>Có thể cô ấy đẹp tự nhiên. Có thể là nhờ Maybelline.</p> <p>Source: saga.vn</p>
 <p>Get ready for life!</p> <p>Source: VTV.VN</p> <p>Sẵn sàng một sức sống!</p> <p>Source: nguoimua.vn</p>	 <p>Have a  , have a </p> <p>Source: Pinterest</p> <p>Nghỉ xả hơi, xơi </p> <p>Source: kenh14.vn</p>
 <p>It could only be Heineken</p> <p>Source: Rubee</p> <p>Slogan của Heineken – Chỉ có thể là Heineken!</p> <p>Source: saokim.com.vn</p>	 <p>ĐÀNH THỨC BÀN LĨNH</p> <p>UNCAGE</p> <p>Source: VietNamNet</p> <p>Source: Mothership.SG</p>
 <p>PRUDENTIAL</p> <p>Always Listening. Always Understanding.</p> <p>Source: ebaohiem.com</p> <p>PRUDENTIAL</p> <p>Luôn luôn lắng nghe. Luôn luôn thấu hiểu.</p> <p>Source: iColor Branding</p>	 <p>Vietnam</p> <p>The hidden charm</p> <p>Source: sggp.org.vn</p> <p>Vietnam</p> <p>Vẻ đẹp tiềm ẩn</p> <p>Source: Pinterest</p>
 <p>Vietnam</p> <p>Timeless Charm</p> <p>Source: VTV.VN</p> <p>Vietnam</p> <p>Vẻ đẹp bất tận</p>	 <p>Vietnam</p> <p>Sự Khác Biệt Á Đông</p> <p>Vietnam</p> <p>A Different Orient</p> <p>Source: dangcongsan.vn</p>

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