

The Intercultural Competence in Advertising Translation

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Abstract

In this article, we would like to examine one of the most difficult types of translation, namely the translation of advertising texts. Why is it one of the most difficult? Because it is not enough to master the source language to translate advertising. Even if you can easily translate knotty technical instructions, this does not guarantee that you will accurately render an advertising text into another language. The translator must be able to think creatively, and this is not so easy to learn. In addition, the purpose of advertising translation is not just to transfer the meaning of words, but also to attract potential customers. No other text attempts such a task.

Keywords: advertising, translation, cultural, slogan, competence, language, reader

Introduction

Learning a foreign language means learning a new culture, a new way of life, behavior, and thinking—another logic, a different, new one; it means entering into a mysterious world at first, understanding individual behavior, and assimilating all the new information and knowledge.

Given the above-mentioned definition, all the problems that can concern us regarding a foreign language, its implications, and difficulties in translation take shape immediately.

In this work, let us focus on the field of cross-cultural influences and the difficulties encountered in translating in the advertising sector, examining what advertising is and where it is intended.

Although advertising is a kaleidoscopic, simplified, and distorting reflection of the society to which it is addressed, it remains nevertheless the discourse closest to and

most representative of social perception, compared with journalistic or political discourse. Free of ethical or political priorities, an expression of the dominant discourse, it aims to be close to the target, which makes its discourse particularly sensitive to social caricature. It finds inspiration in an environment of social clichés, templates, and commonplaces.

The translation of advertising is a topical media subject, located at the intersection of applied linguistics, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics, and the translator not only needs to translate, but must adapt the message in relation to language and, above all, to the culture of the country. For this reason, it is essential that the interpreter have a background in communication, in order to find his place in the process of creating advertising.

In the case of advertising the same product, careful attention should be paid to ensuring that the examples are not far-fetched or even misplaced. These can be failed examples, many of them mechanical adjustments from one version to another, and may reflect a lack of sensitivity towards the public to which the advertising is addressed. All these defects can damage the persuasive force of the advertising message, so that it cannot clearly reflect the cultural context of the language into which the advertising is being translated.

In an advertisement, the slogan is the most important unit, and it is also the most difficult to translate. It swings between three positions: seduction, technical information, and adaptation to the cultural context.

A large number of advertisements revolve around ideological stereotypes, which respond to public expectations. An advertisement for the Peugeot 806 in Greek states: (Το ταξίδι με ένα νεό "Peugeot 806" είναι πάντα μια απόλαυση) - "The journey with the new Peugeot 806 is always a pleasure. " The same ad in the Albanian language reads: «*Me Pëzhonë 806 më shumë kënaqësi dhe siguri*». "With the new Peugeot 806 more pleasure and safety. " In contrast to the Greek version, the Albanian version is based on a mentality that highlights safety for the Albanian community, while for the same advertisement in Greece the French Peugeot gives more importance to comfort. - In the field of the translation of advertising, what is most important is the systematic adaptation toward the targeted communities, rather than the linguistic conformity of the advertising message.

The interpreter should consider the problem of loyalty to the concept of advertising, which is very interesting. - In advertising, language is not simply a tool; if you see it as such, you are in danger of losing cultural identity. Literal translations should be avoided, in order not to make mistakes that can be considered "cultural", as noted in the advertisement for Amstel beer, where we have a literal translation:

The original slogan in Greek is "Άμστελ, γιατί έτσι σας αρέσει"; an advertisement that appears in Albanian as: "*Amstel, sepse kështu ju pëlqen*"; "Amstel, because this is how you like it," or the advertisement for "Snickers", which in Greece appeared with

the slogan "Αρπάξτε ένας Snikers", an ad that is translated literally into Albanian as: "*Rrëmbeni një snikers*"; "Grab a snickers".

"Πάντα Coca-Cola"; "*Gjithmonë Coca-cola*"; "Always Coca-Cola", this is another well-known ad throughout the world, and here we can see how the words are intentionally selected by the promoters of this product such that the slogan in question is translatable into all languages of the world, avoiding possible deviations from the original intention of the company to advertisers.

Another example within the same nature is the latest case of beer Amstel where among others the actors mention the phrase "Καλό καλοκαίρι" phrase which in Albanian language would go more like "*Pushime të mbara*"; "Nice vacation" and not: "*Verë të mbarë*"; "Nice summer" as the interpreter favors.

In the context of internationalization, there are many communication agencies that deal with advertising campaigns, a process that turns out to be very difficult because it involves translations loaded with cultural references. For example, Emporiki Bank has as its slogan: "Για να ξέρεται πάντα που επενδύεται τα χρήματά σας." (Literally means: "*që të dini gjithnjë se ku të investoni paratë tuaja*"; always aware where to invest your money), an advertisement that comes into Albanian as: "*Tek ne paratë tuaja janë të sigurta*"; "With us your money is safe." It is here that the impact of time materializes, since during the period when this advertisement appeared, the country needed reliably higher trust in banking, after the negative effects of the Ponzi schemes of 1997, while in Greece the concept of banking remains focused on investment, hiding under the idea of depositing money in the bank.

Another case that we traced is the translation of the slogan of the cell company AMC: "Περιομεικόνες", an advertisement that has been translated into Albanian as: "*Thuaje me ikona*"; "Say it with icons", while it could very well be expressed as: "*Thuaje me figura*"; "Say it with figures", maintaining the standard of the Albanian language. (The advertisement case of Dr. Zlango)

Advertising is today unanimously recognized as a process of creating cultural forms in itself and as one of the most powerful means of transmitting social and identity images to our societies (Soulages, 1994, pg. 55).

It is known that translation is often associated with problems of transposition or modulation, in grammar, but even more in the lexical field. Beyond the linguistic aspects, in the field of advertising, translation reflects the close relations of human beings with their physical and metaphysical environment, and therefore cannot be separated from the sociocultural context. Without questioning the usefulness of translation, can we say that it means transferring a similar meaning through changes in languages and cultures?

Fedorov (1953, p. 22) states that to translate, we should know languages, but the difficulty lies in the fact that translating literature is a literary operation, translating

verse is a poetic operation, but translating a film, as in other cases, is a sui generis operation.

If it is accepted that translation is a reinterpretation of the original text, then a rewriting and as a result a creative activity, it cannot be reduced to a linguistic exercise.

In the case of literary translation, for example, it is not just a matter of switching from one language to another, but of building a bridge between cultures that are very different from each other. Difficulties of translation in this case are, on the one hand, linguistic and stylistic, but primarily sociolinguistic. Each advertising translation requires a message that is given in a particular language to be transformed in order to be understood by a reader who does not know this language.

In this case, the reader does not recognize the culture in question. And what happens to the realities outside language described by an author that do not exist in the language of the interpreter? Must a transposition be made from one reference system to another, to the detriment of the authentic sociocultural content? Should we preferably translate the slogan into the target language literally to the maximum, based on the source slogan, so that the translation complies as much as possible with the tradition and culture of the source language, but with the risk that this text is not very easily accessible?

Barriers to translators are first and foremost of the semantic type. These problems become even more acute when there is a large cultural gap between the source text and the potential reader of the target language. Mounie writes: "to translate a written text into a foreign language, two conditions are necessary, to know the language and to know the civilization of the source language (life, culture, ethnography)"(1976, p. 44)

Communicative exchanges may constitute an interpretation problem because of notions that contain connotations. At the level of translation, connotation (as levels of language) has to do not only with stylistics, but also with broader aspects such as sociolinguistic ones.

The author Lederer has formulated several procedures that must be used to succeed in translating cultural elements:

Adaptation is seen as the first element.

Differences in legal systems constitute a major obstacle to transcoding; the text translator overcomes this difficulty by considering the context and purpose of his translation.

Example: She works for a law firm from 9 to 5.

We found among the translations the variant “*cabinets juridiques*” (legal room), but most translators seem to prefer to translate the term “law firm” as a lawyer's office or room. Certainly, a jurist is not a lawyer; but for anyone who knows the United States, the interventions of a law firm in US reality are so frequent that the translation has considered these cultural realities by choosing “*cabinet d’avocats*”.

The Transformation (Conversion)

A dish has its composition, is prepared in a certain way, and has a social function: a famous dish or one served at a feast. The translator recognizes these attributes and tries to clarify them as much as possible.

Example: Frankly, we’re all getting a little tired of fried beans.

Fried beans is a well-known dish in South America, like the hamburger in North America or steak in France. It consists of bean purée stirred in butter or oil that serves as a side to all dishes. “So fried” is not about deep-frying, just as “beans” does not necessarily correspond to the beans Albanians are used to: white beans. They are small black or red beans. Given the large number of restaurants that offer this dish in the USA, the American reader distinguishes in the words “fried beans” a dish that the Albanian reader does not recognize, and the translation “fried beans” would not be proper. Thus, we translate “haricots rouges”- “fasule të kuqe”- “red beans” or “haricots noirs”- “fasule të zeza”- “black beans”, to preserve part of the exoticism of this dish.

Clear Formulation

Names have the function of identifying individuals and categories. Those that identify individuals keep their form in a very natural way in translation. Those identifying categories are accompanied by their identification.

Example: I couldn’t work if it weren’t for her, and the fact the **Safeway** stays open until nine.

Many interpreters have given the variant “supermarket Safeway” to transfer the same information to Albanian readers. The principle of clear formulation is essential in translation. In the implicit-explicit rapport that exists in each text, the author assumes and presents to his reader an amount of information that the interpreter also has but that the foreign reader does not fully know or does not know at all. A good interpreter skillfully modifies the implicit-explicit rapport from the source to achieve a new implicit-explicit balance in the target language.

The element of ethnocentrism is also very important.

It often happens that the translator replaces the cultural facts mentioned in the text with those of their own culture; this makes it more natural.

One example in Greece is the supermarket Μαρινόπουλος

In Greece, this is a well-known and widespread supermarket, and in order to translate it into Albanian we have to adapt it to a similar one, e.g., Euromax.

Using this procedure, minimizing the differences between the source culture and that of the reader, the interpreter undoubtedly requires the reader to accept the text, as foreign features could make it even incomprehensible. By doing this, the interpreter deletes the original cultural uniqueness and transmits false information. This procedure is also called “naturalization”.

A good translator tries not to naturalize the culture of the source language, and not to neglect what should be explained or has to be understood.

The above-mentioned examples have shown that “the cultural transfer” consists in the fact that it brings to the foreign reader knowledge of a world that is not his own. This knowledge does not fully cover the distance between the two worlds, but leaves half-open a window into the source culture. To do this, the translator preserves the source reference in order to transmit it in understandable forms.

Bringing cultures closer through translation is certainly not done by a single word or by a single slogan. One needs to have a variety of slogans translated in order to progressively establish an image where one can avoid prejudices and bring civilizations together, a main goal in the field of advertising and its translation.

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