

# Translating Cosmetic & Hygienic Advertisements: A Study on Some English Advertisements and Their Persian Translations

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## ABSTRACT

Advertising is one of the phenomena which has most contributed to the transmission of ideas and values. The purpose of the advertisement is to persuade people to purchase a product. Based on the Venuti, in translating advertisements, a translator may find it useful to frustrate domestic exceptions of a foreign culture. It isn't enough to find linguistic equivalents of the words and phrases in the target culture. When a translator translated an advertisement, he or she needed certain skills in order to duplicate the impact of an advertisement in the foreign market. The translators use different strategies and approaches in the process of translation. Without effective and productive translation, it is impossible to have an effect on the foreign consumer. So, this study explores the issue of translated advertisements in view of Skopos theory and Eco-translatology theory by examining thirty-five advertisements in English and their Persian translation of cosmetic and hygienic products. Five of them have Persian subtitles. The researcher investigated them with respect to amplification, abridgement, adaptation, imitation, language dimension, culture dimension and communication dimension. The researcher found the most strategies that a translator is used are the abridgement and adaptation. The translators followed their culture. The analysis demonstrates that translating advertisements does not always involve the direct equivalent in the target language, but translators sometimes have to produce readable and acceptable target texts. This kind of advertisement from communication dimension has the same effect. At the end, the researchers found out both theories (Skopos and Eco-translation theory) are useful in translating advertisements.

**Keywords:** Advertisement, Skopos theory, Eco-translatology.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In daily life, advertisements have become an important part. People can find an advertisement

in any way. Advertising not only plays an important role in the development of companies and sales but also affects people's lives. In modern societies, English commercial advertising increased national exchanges and competition, so the English

commercial advertising translation is becoming more and more useful.

Present day advertisements use a variety of media, Internet, radio, mail, newspaper and it appeals to all senses and is included wordplay, cultural reference, allusion, storytelling, music, striking visual images, famous celebrities. Because of its ubiquity and the volume of linguistic and visual data, it makes advertising a fascinating area of study.

Iran advertising was evolving quickly as its translation. When businesses expand their operations overseas they often take their existing advertising material with them. In order to make this advertising appropriate to the target culture, they carry out some form of translation. The definition of translation has to be broad, involving a whole range of strategies from the complete transference of the source text into the target culture to the creation of a new advert for the target culture, based on the interpretation of the advertiser's creative brief. Although there is debate about the suitability of advertising texts for translation, due to their high cultural and social content, the harsh reality is that due to financial and brand image concerns, adverts are frequently created on a European or international scale in English, and subsequently translated into the languages of the markets where the advert is to be supplied.

Nowadays, the demand for advertisements has increased. According to Williamson (1978, p.75), "advertisements do not only sell goods and services but they are commodities themselves". The purpose of advertisement copywriters is not only to promote goods and services but also to entertain the public and to influence attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. For example, advertising promotes campaigns for education, health, environment or social campaigns.

Unfortunately, few studies investigate the issue of translating advertisements promoting foreign products as Munday (2001, p.210) states that not much has been written about the translation of advertisements. As a result of the need for research in the field of translating advertisements in general, the present study is carried out to evaluate the translation strategies and any marks of linguistic inaccuracies in order to facilitate the task for future translators in the field in question.

Culture plays an important role in the advertisement strategies especially in areas like the Iran world where taboos are widespread. That is, the advertising approaches are planned and

shaped in a way that fits the consumer's culture and needs.

The cultural factor in translation is very important because a significant communication can only happen when the message conveyed through texts is well understood by the communicants.

Some words may lose their meaning if we translate them; especially in advertisements where some proverbs or quotation which will lead misunderstanding and sometimes meaningless.

The second problem is that translator generally face with it is ideological and it is because of the differences in the way Persian and English people think. The third problem in translating of the advertisements is religious since some words or quotes may contradict with religions, especially in Islam.

Translation of advertisements basically from English into Persian is, therefore, likely to be very problematic, particularly in the type of advertisements which contain an element of humor, irony, sexual connotation, a reference to political figures and cultural intertextuality. This is due to organizations and government policies and in consequence, the meaning loses and failing to reach satisfactory results.

Some scholars are just beginning to reconsider the role of translation not only in advertising but also in business communication. However, as a translator, there is a great need to be familiar with common strategies of translation of advertisements, it is essential to find strategies which have the power to persuade their consumer to prefer one product over similar product with the growing consumerism world and the endless colourful products. In this research, the skopos theory and Eco translatology which introduced by Reiss and Vermeer, and Genghen to find which strategies are mostly used in the translation of advertisement text also whether there is any significant difference among the strategies used in the translation of advertisements or not.

Advertising translations are very helpful in international trade. Companies have to change their strategies, according to the tastes of the local customers. A good advertising strategy may not give positive results if it is not properly translated. Generally, the medium of advertising adopted by many companies are radio, press, television, and the Internet. Translating service companies helps the businesses in customizing and translating advertisements and they communicate the

message to the target customers in international markets.

The significance of this study arises from the scarcity of research on this topic. More specifically, no study has yet explored translating English advertising concerning cosmetic and hygienic products into Persian, so this area will be the main topic of this research. So, the researcher has found no study dealing directly with the translation strategies and problems of translating Cosmetic and hygienic products from English into Persian. The study also identifies the strategies used by translators to render effective Cosmetic and hygienic products advertising. Certain instances of translation inaccuracies are also identified in order to help translators to be more careful in the translating process. This, in turn, leads to better translations, of course.

The objectives of the study are to determine the strategies used in translating the English Cosmetic and hygienic ads into Persian, to ascertain the frequency of the strategies and to determine the strong and weak points of the translations.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The corpus under investigation comprises thirty advertisements from English to Persian of cosmetic and hygienic products and four advertisements that have Persian subtitles. The advertisements were selected randomly from <http://mediaarshiv.com> and <https://www.youtube.com> in 2013 till 2016. The advertisements all deal with cosmetic and hygienic advertisements. Cosmetic and hygienic advertisements were chosen because they have not yet been studied by previous researchers. The researcher uses the Skopos theory (Reiss, J Vermeer, 1978) and theory of Eco-translatology (Hu, 2013).

The purpose of this research is to investigate the methods of equivalence in the translation of propaganda from English to Farsi, so the researcher focuses on the terms and pictures in the advertisements. To found out more about the common ways in translating of advertisement, the researcher tried to find adv. with the same Persian translation by searches on the internet. For this purpose, thirty advertisements from English to Persian of cosmetic and hygienic products and four advertisements that have Persian subtitles were investigated. The researcher investigates them based on their translation and their picture by Eco-translation and Skopos theory. Then their

values show in the column chart, bar chart, pie chart and line chart.

## III. RESULTS

Some English and Persian advertisements are analyzed to illustrate the huge difficulties a translator would encounter in translating advertisements, especially when the two languages belong to completely different cultures and socioeconomic orientations such as is the case in the English and the Persian languages. For this purpose, the researcher uses the Skopos theory (Reiss, J Vermeer, 1978) and theory of Eco-translatology (Hu, 2013).

The results are as follow:

Skopos theory	Eco-translation
Skopos rule:32	Language dimension: 13
the Intertextual coherence: 33	<i>Culture Dimension:</i> Hcc 20 Lcc:14
<i>Intratextual coherence:</i> 33	<i>Communication Dimension:</i> 26
Amplification: 13	
Abridgement:27	
Adaptation:25	
Imitation:9	

## IV. DISCUSSION

The overall finding reflects that although advertisements of both Iran and English have and similarity but it has differences in pictures and cultural values. In the present study, some questions were raised relating to advertisement communication and its impact on the consumer in the degree or level of creativity.

In respect to the differences between Persian and English advertisement the following findings conducted.

The advertisement appeal is mostly factual for English advertisements is and for Persian advertisement is expressive.

Women are also one of distinguishing feature in advertisements. In most advertisement especially for shampoo and cream, the picture of women is omitted and pay attention to the text.

From culture dimensions, LCC culture and HCC culture is different from each other. In LCC culture is very important for the communicator to be explicit in order to be fully understood. But in a higher-context culture, the way words are said is more important than the words themselves, so

many things are left unsaid, relying on the context of the moment and the culture as a whole to impart meaning.

The Iranian advertisement contains very little text and the English advertisement is very focused on the linguistic part of the message.

English advertisements are comparatively long, detailed with trust building and indirect communication styles to convey message, whereas Persian advertisements are shorter in length with less focus on product details, more focused on technology and features and directly addressing the target audience regarding the features of product. The features of the product are reflected by actions of the characters in advertisements.

In Persian advertisement the facts are deleted and use hyperbole like in advertisement of Oral-B Pro-Expert. The actress said it makes your tooth three times stronger but in Persian advertisement, it became tenth times stronger.

The similarities of advertisements are in pictures and the way that advertisement conducted.

For translating the source texts, most of the translator use abridgement (16%) and then adaptation (14%). They ignore language dimension. It is not easy to make a good conversion in translation while keeping the original meaning unchanged. To make a good translation, one should make the conversion in all-dimensions, such as language, culture, communication and aesthetics. And then make the best adaptation and selection. Such translation will win the attention of the audience. Eco-translatology offers a chance to make up the defects on language, culture and other aspects in advertisement translation.

Under the whole eco-environment, the translator should think more about whether the language in the translation is adaptively selected when facing different languages. Many mistakes happen in the translation because translators think too little about the language or expressions they choose (Fang, 2011).

To make a good translation, the translator is better to avoid the using of ambiguous words, and use some soft words, paralleled sentences, or some homophonic words.

The translators should not neglect the cultural dimension. They should pay attention to the differences between two different cultures.

The superficial purpose of the advertisement is making the target products known by the public. However, how consumers think to decide whether the information can be well expressed. Therefore, the translation of advertisement should think more

about the target consumers, or who the investors are making service for. So, translators should care more about the intercourse when doing the translation of advertisement, so that the translation can achieve the same effect as the original text.

In the actual advertising translation, we can see good translations use many soft words. For example, "prohibit" is rarely seen in advertisements, because it often leaves consumers an impression of aggression. So we often use "no" to replace it. A more soft and easy-going word will get a perfect result.

A good translation of advertisement often takes all of the three elements into consideration, that is, culture, language, and communication.

Advertisement translation which has many characteristics in common with advertisement creation is influenced by many ecological environment factors such as cultural difference, language habits, beliefs, market rules. Therefore, a translator is supposed to have the above knowledge in the process of translation so as to achieve the purpose of advertising. The most important issue the translator should take into consideration is whether the translated advertisement is legal or not in target countries. In other words, a translator needs to know the bilingual culture, advertisement law, as well as the target language.

The overriding function of any advertisement is to persuade and to accomplish this goal advertisers must be aware of those devices that have a persuasive impact on potential customers and use them accordingly. Different target markets will respond to different marketing techniques, as will different cultures when manufacturer stake their products overseas. Translation theorists suggest that the translation of advertising texts should result in an advert which can function as an original in the target culture. Contemporary studies of the translation of advertising texts have responded to this understanding by advocating translation strategies that focus on the target culture and the role of both linguistic and visual messages. Such studies have been based on semiotics, where the sign with its denotational and connotational content is translated to have the same impact on the target audience; descriptive translation studies, where the focus is on the translated text and its position within the target culture; and Skopos theory, where texts are translated to fulfil a defined function within the target culture. Such flexible approaches, which

allow for a number of different translation strategies, are necessary when translating advertising texts which are a constantly changing genre (Cook 2001: 221). Flexible as these approaches are, they cannot account for cases where strategies are employed which seem to go against the recommendations of translation theorists nor deal with the often unequal power relations between those involved in the translation process.

Eco-translatology puts the translation into a more spacious space. It will make up all the defects existing in advertisement translation in many aspects, such as language, culture, communication, aesthetics and so on (De Mooij, 2010). Therefore, to study advertisement translation in the view of eco-translatology will receive an unexpected good effect. On the other hand, the translation of advertisement has the closest relation with Skopos theory. As translation is the transformation involving language and non-language symbols. So, the translation process controlled by the dominant function or by the text Skopos. As a result, Skopos theory has profound influence and significance on advertising translation.

As mentioned the two strategies identified here, namely; Skopos and Eco-translation are suitable to use in translating cosmetic & hygienic advertisements. This study reveals that abridgement, adaptation and cultural substitution seem to be more suitable for Persian translation. Other translation strategies used in the translation of advertisements require further investigation. The following issues need for a further investigation; by increasing the size of the corpus, more specific conclusions could perhaps be made. A larger range of media (e.g. television, newspaper, internet advertising), would properly show a clearer picture of strategies used in translated advertisements in general. Such research has major terminological and lexicographic applications that will contribute to terminology creation and dictionary-making in Persian.

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