

## Accuracy and Readability in The Translation of Online International Advertisement

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**Abstrak:** Artikel ini mengeksplorasi proses rumit dalam menerjemahkan iklan dengan menekankan pentingnya akurasi linguistik dan relevansi budaya untuk secara efektif menyampaikan pesan antar bahasa. Artikel ini menyoroti pengaruh besar bahasa iklan terhadap perilaku konsumen dan pentingnya menjaga keseimbangan antara ketepatan dan koherensi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi tinjauan pustaka untuk meneliti berbagai teori dan prinsip terkait dengan akurasi dan keterbacaan terjemahan dalam iklan. Temuan utama mengungkapkan bahwa terjemahan iklan yang efektif harus mempertahankan integritas pesan asli sambil tetap sensitif secara budaya dan menarik. Penelitian ini menyoroti lima strategi utama dalam penerjemahan: transliterasi, kondensasi, penambahan, rekreasi, dan pengulangan sebagai alat penting bagi penerjemah. Strategi-strategi ini memastikan bahwa terjemahan iklan tidak hanya akurat tetapi juga sesuai dengan audiens target, meningkatkan daya ingat dan dampaknya. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa memahami dan menerapkan teknik-teknik terjemahan ini sangat penting untuk keberhasilan periklanan di pasar global.

**Kata kunci:** Akurasi, Keterbacaan, Iklan

**Abstract:** This article explores the intricate process of translating advertisements, emphasizing the importance of linguistic accuracy and cultural relevance in order to effectively convey message between languages. This article highlights the profound influence of advertising language on consumer behavior and the importance of maintaining a balance between precision and coherence. This study uses a literature review methodology to examine various theories and principles related to translation accuracy and readability in advertisements. Key findings reveal that effective advertisement translations must maintain the integrity of the original message while remaining culturally sensitive and engaging. The study highlights five key strategies in translation: transliteration, condensation, addition, recreation, and repetition, as important tools for translators. These strategies ensure that the translation of the advertisement is not only accurate but also resonates well with the target audience, improving its recall and impact. This article concludes that understanding and applying these translation techniques is essential for successful advertising in the global market.

**Keywords:** Accuracy, Readability, Advertisement

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## INTRODUCTION

The word “translation” has its etymological roots in the Latin “trans/latio,” which means “across” or “carrying,” i.e., transferring meaning from one language to another. Information is transferred across linguistic boundaries during the communicative process of translation. It is a process that transfers textual content from the source language to the destination language. The target language (TL) is the language that needs to be translated into, and the source language (SL) is the language that needs to be

translated. To accurately and faithfully convey the writer's intention, original thoughts, and opinions in the target language (TL), a translator must possess not only a high degree of linguistic sensitivity but also solid understanding of both the target language and the source language. Translation is the process of rendering text or speech from one language into another while preserving its meaning, style, tone, and context as much as possible. It involves converting written or spoken content from the source language into the target language, taking into account linguistic, cultural, and idiomatic differences between the two languages.

Translation requires a deep understanding of both the source and target languages, as well as cultural nuances and context. It aims to convey the original message accurately and effectively to the target audience. Translation can be done manually by human translators or automatically by computer programs, although human translation often produces more accurate and nuanced results, especially for complex or culturally specific content.

The meaning of accuracy and readability in translation of advertisement is based from the concept of precision and coherence in interpretation of notices is crucial to guarantee that the message passed on isn't as it was etymologically rectified but too socially and relevantly significant to the target gathering of people. This requires a profound understanding of the social subtleties, etymological nuances, and showcase flow of the target dialect and culture. The importance of advertisements is needless to mention, as it is an indispensable component of modern society. As potential consumers, people all over the world are endlessly bombarded with all kinds of product or service information from various media including newspapers, magazines, television, radio, posters, the Internet, etc. Advertising provides a valuable service to society and its members, because it defines for consumers the meaning and the role of products, services, and institutions. Naturally, language of advertising has a powerful influence on people and their behavior. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important. In the theory circle, language of advertising is traditionally viewed as a special one related with the functional factors such as attention value, listenability/readability, memorability, and selling power (Leech, 1969). This concept has been unquestionably applied for a long time to the analysis of advertising language. Most of the specialists in this field agree on it unanimously and probe into it mainly in the light of several levels: lexicon features, syntax features, and figures of rhetoric (Leech, 1969; Geis, 1982; Vestergaard & Schrodder, 1985).

## **METHOD**

### **Type of Research**

This research method uses literature research, which falls under the category of library research. Library research involves collecting data from various documents. The literature to be studied is not limited to books but can also include written materials, periodicals, newspapers, and others.

The focus of library research is the search for various theories, laws, principles, ideas, opinions, and other elements that can be used to analyze and solve the problems

being researched (Sarjono, 2008). Library research or literature research means a series of activities related to the method of collecting library data, reading and noting, as well as processing library collection materials only, without the need for field research (Mestika Zed, 2004). According to Sugiyono (2021), library research is theoretical research, references, and other scientific literature related to the culture, values, and norms that develop in the social situation being studied.

### **Nature of Research**

Due to its nature, this research is classified as descriptive research. Descriptive research focuses on systematically describing the facts obtained from conducting research. Descriptive research provides an explanation of the advertised product being studied by describing the accuracy and clarity of the message content based on the type of product.

### **Data Sources**

The data sources used in this research are books, magazines, and websites related to the selected topic. The sources taken are aligned with the topic of accuracy and readability of advertisements from various products that provide aesthetic value and consumer interest in those products.

The data for this research was meticulously collected from various sources including books, magazines, and websites. The collection process involved several key steps to ensure a comprehensive and relevant dataset.

### **Selection of Sources**

The primary sources included academic books on translation studies, peer-reviewed journals, industry magazines focusing on advertising, and reputable websites dedicated to marketing and linguistics. Some of the key references consulted include Newmark's "A Textbook of Translation" (2001) and Leech's "English in Advertising" (1969).

### **Search Techniques**

To gather relevant data, specific search techniques were employed. Databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and academic library catalogs were utilized. Keywords and phrases used in the searches included "advertisement translation accuracy," "readability in advertising," "cross-cultural advertising," and "translation strategies in marketing."

### **Inclusion Criteria**

Sources were selected based on their relevance to the topic, credibility, and publication date. Only sources published within the last 20 years were considered to ensure the data reflects current practices and theories. Additionally, sources had to provide detailed discussions or case studies on translation accuracy and readability in advertisements.

### **Data Extraction**

Relevant data was extracted using a systematic approach. Each source was reviewed, and pertinent information was highlighted and documented. This included definitions, theoretical frameworks, examples of translation strategies, and discussions on cultural nuances.

### **Cross-Referencing**

To ensure the reliability of the data, cross-referencing was performed. Information from multiple sources was compared and contrasted to identify common themes and discrepancies. This helped in validating the findings and ensuring a balanced perspective.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The importance of advertisements is needless to mention, as it is an indispensable component of modern society. As potential consumers, people all over the world are endlessly bombarded with all kinds of product or service information from various media including newspapers, magazines, television, radio, posters, the internet, etc. Advertising provides a valuable service to society and its members, because it defines for consumers the meaning and the role of products, services, and institutions. Naturally, language of advertising has a powerful influence on people and their behavior. The choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is vitally important.

In the theory circle, language of advertising is traditionally viewed as a special one related with the functional factors such as attention value, listenability/readability, memorability, and selling power (Leech, 1969). This concept, not surprisingly, has been unquestionably applied for a long time to the analysis of advertising language. Most of the specialists in this field agree on it unanimously and probe into it mainly in the light of several levels: lexicon features, syntax features, and figures of rhetoric (Leech, 1969; Geis, 1982; Vestergaard & Schrodder, 1985).

It is not an easy task for an advertisement to persuade readers and to be called an “effective” advertisement, as it is impossible to ask the readers to have the same patience when reading an advertisement as when reading a sonnet. Thus, an advertisement must attract the readers’ attention and impress them in quite limited time and space. This requires that the language of advertising should be attractive and memorable apart from its readability. In order to achieve this purpose, Advertising English has formed its own unique style with some special characteristics.

### **Authenticity**

Advertisements must not contain inaccurate or deceptive claims, statements, illustrations, either direct or implied, with regard to a product or service. In assessing the truthfulness and accuracy of a message, the concern is not with the intent to the sender or precise legality of the presentation. Rather, the focus is on the message as received or perceived.

### **Effectiveness**

An advertisement should be applicable and effective to reach the purpose of the advertising activity. Hence, a good advertisement is supposed to do two things:

(1) To seize the correct USP (Unique Selling Proposition) to convince consumers with adequate reasons

(see Example 1).

Example (1)

ESTEE LAUDER

Treat your lips.

With Estee Lauder's new

PERFECT LIPSTICK

The first ever

Skincare-formula lipstick

Of its kind

The secret is in our inclusive new Hydramoist Complex. It puts a true skincare-formula within a weightless "web" of lasting color. Laboratory tests show that the longer you wear it, the longer your lips stay moist, soft, and comfortable. There is only one Perfect Lipstick. But with 16 colors to choose from, who could do with just one?

ESTEE LAUDER

From the script, the USP is: The longer you wear it, the longer your lips stay moist, soft, and comfortable.

(2) To bridge the gap between consumers and products to strengthen intimacy. More touching words can arouse satisfaction in consumers. An advertisement for *Soyjoy* in English: "Soylution" is geared towards the needs of diet persons-to-be.

### **Originality**

Originality in advertising is not necessarily the creation of new and tricky words and pictures, but one of putting familiar words and pictures into new relationships. This is a special challenge when dealing with cross-cultural advertisements as the context that these buzzwords and pictures derive from is decidedly different.

### **Harmony**

An advertisement is not composed of literal expressions alone, but related to cultural background firmly. A good advertisement should harmonize with the environment, and co-ordinate with other elements, identical to the features of advertising media. In harmony with cultural context, different countries and nations possess various cultures, value, and customs, specifying the divergent forms of expression catering to corresponding consumers. The cultural differences between the

two languages have resulted in those linguistic differences. English has long been influenced by Judeo-Christian ethics. Therefore, native speakers of English tend to use expressions that have religious color, such as “God”, “God bless/damn you”, “My god”, etc. But, for the majority of Asians, especially people from southeastern countries, their cultures have mainly been influenced by Islam and Christians.

### **Transliteration**

A completely written advertisement is composed of five parts: headline, body text, slogan, trademark, and illustration, and the first three of them are verbal while the other two are non-verbal parts. Among them, when it comes to transliteration, it is mostly applied on trademark translation (see Example 2).

Example (2)

Pantene—Pantene (In Indonesia)

Lux—Lux (In Indonesia)

Those are trademarks of P&G (Procter & Gamble) products, belonging to an international company with more than 166 years. Pantene, a trademark for shampoo is transliterated into Pantene, simple and clear. Pantene sounds like a beautiful girl’s name. When seeing the advertising, Indonesian consumers have in their imagination a pretty girl with beautiful hair hanging about the shoulder, saying proudly: “Health makes it shiny”. While, Lifebuoy is for soap. The Indonesian version Pantene indicates that this kind of shampoo boasts of being comfortable and high quality and the word Lifebuoy can be regarded as soap for interpretation with the meaning: Using Lifebuoy can bring the whole family healthy. We can recognize the function of transliteration in Example 3.

Example (3)

Benz—Benz (Automobile)

Audi—(Automobile)

Sunlight—(Washing Liquid)

Canon—(Home Appliance)

From the above, transliteration is involved in phonetic equivalence, adopted by translators deliberately to mimic an English trademark’s pronunciation and transfer a few Indonesian morphemes connected to make sense.

The whole transference process involves all-around considerations of English and Indonesian cultural factors.

While translating, translators should generally choose words with the meaning of good omen from many equivalent words in phonology. Indonesian people always bear in mind happiness, safety, and coziness, which requires the translated version to have cultural incentive besides literal equivalence. Sound, meaning, and feeling are in good harmony in this translation.

Take a restaurant name as example (see Example 4):

Example (4)

Diamond—Diamond

This restaurant name appears in Surakarta. Diamond to American: precious, luxurious and expensive stone, and dining there is precious and feel luxurious and expensive not just merely dining and as the counterpart, not only has a similar pronunciation, but also arouses nostalgia among the *Solonese*—Indonesian: Dining here is like dining at beautiful and luxurious place.

Hence, the restaurant receives scores of people every day.

This is a good example of translation, a combination of pronunciation and emotional meaning (see Example 5):

Example (5)

Oil of Ulan—(Cosmetics)

It is a kind of flower full of fragrance and purity to Indonesian people. The morphemes used convey the message: After using this, your skin will be as beautiful as a flower.

Vanish—(Washing Powder)

Here, the Indonesian means all the stain will disappear when the product is used.

From the above, we can easily come to a conclusion that transliteration approach is not only exploited to help us translate some “untranslatable” trademarks in the process of advertising translation such as “Adidas—shoes, preserving efficiently the rhythmic beauty of the original name, but to convince us of the possibility of harmony in sound, meaning, and emotion. However, judging from Indonesian aesthetic concept, total transliteration of trademarks sometimes sounds a bit queer and inappropriate. So it is quite often that we combine transliteration approach with other translation devices.

### **Condensation**

Four-character Indonesia phrases are considered as part of our culture. We value this special habit of expression, and it follows that we will feel more competent in advertising translation if we use such four-character phraseologies. There are two reasons accounting for this. For one thing, four-character Indonesia phrases boast of their distinctive advantages over others: succinct in language, impact in form, rich in meaning, and melodious in reading. For another, proper four-character Indonesia phrases in proper places are as much for the faithful representation of meaning of the SL (second language) as for the lure of readers’ interest. Now that the condensation of advertising ideas into four-character Indonesia character adds luster to the TL (target language), making it more expressive without inflicting any harm on the meaning. In advertising translation, it is often workable in slogans (see Example 6):

How bold can you go?

This advertising slogan for A-Mild cigarette, was remarked by *Sampoerna* cigarette to challenge the customers. No one can deny that the translated versions

convey the specialties of the products with the condensed words. By giving an optimum display of the advantage of the TL, the translation is quite natural, easy to read and remember, thus achieving the equivalent effect. "... The main aim of the translator is to produce as nearly as possible the same effect on his readers as was produced on the readers of the original" (Newmark, 2001, p. 10).

Advertising language is expressive, informative, and evocative, needing a wealth of descriptive adjectives which should be best translated with five-character words. Although this way makes some deletions in form, it is very applicable to Indonesian consumers, for content should always precede form. Many regular expressions are often employed, just to mention only a few (see Example 7):

I love you Blue of Indonesia (cigarette)

The others can only follow (cigarette)

### **Addition**

Arising from the natural barriers between the English and Indonesian language rules of lexical and syntactic structures are abundantly different. In consequences of this discrepancy, the facility in the use of language is that a translator must often make additions. In Peter Newmark's mind, expansion is a rather imprecise translation procedure, yet he admits that it is a procedure "... which you practice intuitively in some cases" (Newmark, 2001, p. 90). As is often the case, the lack of some words in the TL blocks comprehension or affects readability. Addition of relevant words where necessary is one way out of trouble. Meanwhile, it can enable the readers to follow with ease the train of thought of the original news writer. The necessity of addition is determined by the context. A translator is given a license to exercise addition over his version, when necessary, per the given context. In English advertising translation, there are two possible situations where addition become necessary:

The Boss drive with benefit (BMW)

Express your personal style with the iconic Proton Saga (Proton)

Every element is our element (Audi)

*"Penemuan terbesar sepanjang masa adalah bahwa seseorang bisa mengubah masa depannya hanya dengan mengubah sikapnya saat ini."* – Oprah Winfrey (All-New Nissan Kicks e-Power)

Drive to inspire! *Butuh inspirasi dan informasi terkini seputar Mitsubishi Motors di Indonesia?* (Mitsubishi)

(1) In a bid to expose the implied meaning to the public, a translator has to tap the potential meaning of some keywords.

(2) Addition can be applied especially in the consideration of Indonesian conventional expressions. A five-character phrase contains rich connotations which are easily used to the advantage of advertising writing as a rhetorical device such as, for example, antithesis and rhyme

### **Re-Creation**

Re-creative translation— “contextual recreation” as Delise (1981) calls it—which means translating the thoughts behind the words. Translating the sub-text, is a procedure which some authorities and translation teachers regard as the heart or the central issue of translation (“get as far away as possible from the words”). The truth is the opposite: “interpret the sense, not the words” is the translator’s last resource; an essential resource, certainly, and a touchstone of his linguistic. In advertising translation, re-creation has almost been far away from translation, because the advertising involved has already had its well-known English version and its corresponding Indonesian n. And the Indoensian version has no similar meaning superficially with English one, but it is widely acknowledged as its translated version. Therefore, re-creation here is a kind of creative translation. In translating, a translator should spare no efforts with creativity and imagination to combine the producer’s purpose, the consumer’s demand with progressing age to create an up-to-date version for the TL user from source language

Example:

Don’t worry be happy (Garda Otto)

A to Z (Hyundai)

More fire, less fuel (Mercedez)

Why wait now? (BMW)

From the above, it is only a chance that reveals traces of the original language in the Indonesian. Of course, this is not a paraphrase— “It is an amplification or explanation of the meaning of a segment of the text. It is used in an ‘anonymous’ text when it is poorly written, or has important implications and omissions” (Newmark, 2001, p. 90). Take the famous Indonesian version of the Nokia slogan for example. If 100 translators were to change it into English, “Connecting People” could not come out. Therefore, the Indoensian versions above have reached a higher level rhetorically, and the elegance and readability go better than the original.

### **Repetition**

Literal translation is believed to be the basic translation procedure, both in communicative and semantic translation, in that translation starts from there. “It ranges from one word to one word through group to group, collocation to collocation, clause to clause, sentence to sentence” (Newmark, 2001, p. 69). This theory is often used in the translation of English advertisements, for consumers need direct information. Repetition as a language device is often applied by advertisers to reiterate words, phrases, or ideas for the purpose of emphasis or clarification. Therefore, the immediate repetition can be easily translated by Indonesia repetitive equivalent which has the effect to the Indonesia consumers (see Example 11):

Tory Tory Tory Tory Tory Cheese Cracker

Fruit Fruit Fruit Fruitela Fruitela Fruitela Fruitela

There are numerous English advertisements with repetition like above serving as a very effective way to draw attention and you can name it. The examples above are in conformity with functional equivalence.

However, there is another aspect in using Indonesian repetition as a translation device of English advertising (even though there is no repetition in the original text). That is, in the vast body of English advertisements, per the rules of English grammar, either an indicative pronoun is used to replace the word that has appeared in first sentence (in a bid not to repeat), or the repetitive part itself is omitted. Advertisements in Indonesia also often turn to repetition but more for the sake of tone and emphatical harmony—this forming an outstanding feature in the tradition of advertising translation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The correct translation of advertisements forms the centre piece of any marketing strategy and thus, despite the lack of scholarship on the issue, the “how” of translating the advertising correctly has become an issue of great practical significance. As to the actual process of translation, there is no pure criterion relevant to English advertising. This may be seen a reflection of the little scholarship undertaken on this matter of significant importance but also may be taken as a comment on the nature of advertisements generally—the language of Advertising English will change rapidly with the vogue of the society of the day—pop culture—and thus any set of comprehensive a-z rules will quickly become obsolete. Nevertheless, the five principles of “transliteration, condensation, addition, re-creation, and repetition” stand out as devices available to the translator to better negotiate this difficult occasion. With a clear idea of what constitutes a correct translation about the actual process of translation becomes more manageable. The difficulty though as always is keeping a keen awareness of the requirements peculiar to advertising translation that the translation itself must highlight the qualities of being informative, readable, evocative, and easy to memorize.

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