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Correlation between the Original and Translation of Advertising Slogans: Translational Autonomy and Equivalence

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This paper sheds some light upon the new category of autonomy in translation theory. The author makes an attempt to apply this category to a famous theoretical descriptive model by Vilen N. Komissarov.

Keywords: translation, original, autonomy, additions in translation, advertising slogans, equivalence.

Preliminary Notes

Currently translation studies pay insufficient attention to the problem of studying of the relationship of the original and the translation of advertising texts, particularly with regard to oriental translation, where scholars feel an acute shortage of such works. In addition to that, quite few works try to apply a new translation category to denote discrepancies in translation – the category of autonomy. This article outlines main results of the research, which was accomplished by me and my assistant Anastassia S. Opeykina, who is a graduate of Siberian Federal University now. Here we made an attempt to describe the relationship between the original and its translation from the standpoint of the theory of equivalence and the translation category of autonomy as sections of the linguistic theory of translation. The original text was in English and the translation that we analyzed was in Chinese.

Before we proceed to the practical part of the work, we need to define some theoretical guidelines. First of all, identity is an epistemic goal of translation (Sokolovsky, 2011). Translation is supposed to search for identity between different languages and cultures (Sokolovsky, 2010). The lack of identity between the original and a translation, obviously, can have two cases: 1) certain elements of the original are absent in a translation 2) the translation has some additions, which have no correspondence in the original. The latter case is the main focus of attention in our work.

Lev L. Nelyubin in his work describes the term “additions” which refers to “the expansion of the term of the original language in translation by adding explanatory words” (Nelyubin, 2003), he further says that the additions are “necessary, when some semantic content in the text of the original is expressed by a certain type of

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language means which is impossible to resort to in the language of translation". A similar opinion may be found in the classical work of Eugene A. Nida "Toward a Science of Translating". Eugene A. Nida states that there are certain additions to the translation, which can "legitimately" be incorporated into a translation (Nida, 2004: 227), the most common and important among them are: (a) filling out elliptical expressions; (b) obligatory specification; (c) additions required because of grammatical restructuring; (d) amplification from implicit to explicit status; (e) answers to rhetorical questions; (f) classifiers; (g) connectives; (h) categories of the receptor language which do not exist in the source language; and (i) doublets..

Analyzing the similar standpoints of Eugene A. Nida and Lev L. Nelyubin (they are similar since they both underline the idea of sensibility and legitimacy of additions into a translation), we need to point out that our interest in this paper also touches upon the so-called "non-legitimate" additions to the translation, i.e. we intend to examine all the additions (all amendments of the content in a translation, which have no correspondence with the original). Moreover, in this article we only want to define and "detect" these additions (absence of the correspondence with the original) and the issue of "legitimacy" is actually beyond the scope of our research now.

Here we make an attempt to introduce a new category into translation studies – the category of translational autonomy. This term was used by Alexander M. Kaplunenko (Kaplunenko, 2007). We admit that there is still much work to be done to clearly differentiate the notions of "additions" and "autonomy" in translation. We have chosen the category of autonomy since this term is a fully-fledged notion in modern epistemology and is defined as "its own law, e.g. the autonomy of organic life in relation to the inorganic, thinking in relation to being, the ethics of autonomy, the ethical self-determination on the basis of its own

mind and its strength in accordance with its own nature" (Encyclopedic Dictionary of Philosophy 2007: 10). We suggest that translational autonomy can be defined as "structural elements of the translation that are missing in the original text at the corresponding language level" (Sokolovsky 2011: 83). Apparently, the language grounds (benchmark) for this "level" can be diverse (it is a separate issue in the field of translation theory), however in our paper the notion of "language level" is equal to one of the five levels described in the theory of level equivalence by Vilen N. Komissarov (Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies 2001: 545-546): 1) the level of linguistic signs (words), 2) the level of the utterance, 3) the level of the structure of a message, 4) the level of description of the situation, and 5) the level of the purpose of communication.

In fact, the model proposed by Vilen N. Komissarov is just a way of describing the possible relationship between the original and its translation, the model shows us to what extent and how much of the content of the original text it is free or not free to be left out. Thus, this model makes it clear that under no circumstances we can sacrifice the purpose of communication. There cannot be any equivalent correspondences at other levels, if there is no equivalence at the level of the purpose of communication. However, this does not mean that equivalence at the level of the purpose of communication is better than equivalence, say, at the level of language of signs, since the latter also necessarily implies the preservation of the purpose of communication.

Levels of Autonomy vs. Levels of Equivalence

In the course of our research we tried to analyze equivalence / lack of equivalence at the corresponding levels between the original text of 78 advertising slogans in English and its translations in Chinese. These advertising

slogans belong to globally famous trademarks and are copied from official websites of the companies. It is worth of note that we do not give a detailed description of the process of “how”

each example was analyzed, since we believe the whole description will not fit into one article. The results of our analysis are written in the summary table, which is published below.

№	Name of the company	English (the original text)	Chinese translation	Levels of autonomy	Levels of equivalence
1	Coca-Cola	Always Coca-Cola	永远是可口可乐	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Burger King	Have it your way	带着它上路	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
3	MTV	I want my MTV	我唱我自在	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
4	Camel	I'd walk a mile for a Camel	为了买这包骆驼香烟, 我走了一英里	5	1, 2, 3, 4
5	Energizer	It keeps going and going and going	勇往直前	2, 3, 4, 5	1
6	Toyota	Drive Your Dreams	前进让梦想更近	3, 4, 5	1, 2
7	Carlsberg	Probably the best lager in the world	可能系世界上最好嘅啤酒	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
8	Esso	Put a tiger in your tank	桶中猛虎威力油	4, 5	1, 2, 3
9	Renault	Drive the Change	让汽车成为一个小家	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
10	Bounty	A Taste of Paradise	来去好劲道	2, 3, 4, 5	1
11	KFC	Finger lickin' good	吮鸡好美味	2, 3, 4, 5	1
12	Pepsodent	You'll wonder where the yellow went when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent	你想知道白速得牙膏将黄齿垢藏到哪儿去了吗?	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
13	Guinness	My goodness, my Guinness	天哪, 我的Guinness!	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
14	Heineken	Only Heineken can do this	只有喜力啤酒可以做到	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
15	Heinz	Beanz Meanz Heinz	买豆子就找亨氏	4, 5	1, 2, 3
16	Lay's	Betcha can't eat just one	停不了的乐事	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
17	Olympus	Focus on life	瞄准生活	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
18	Forbes	Capitalist tool	资本家的利器	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
19	Dove	My moment, My Dove.	牛奶香浓, 丝般感觉	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
20	Skoda	Skoda. Simply Clever	飞的太快, 让风鼓了	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
21	Cadbury	A Glass And A Half Full Of Joy	一杯半牛奶	4, 5	1, 2, 3
22	De Beers	A diamond is forever	钻石恒久远	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
23	Mars	A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play	一日一块Mars, 给您工作、休息、娱乐添精力	5	1, 2, 3, 4
24	Microsoft	Your potential. Our passion	你的潜力 我们的动力	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
25	Stella Artois	Reassuringly expensive	确实昂贵的啤酒	4, 5	1, 2, 3

26	Ford	Ford. Designed for living. Engineered to last.	你的世界, 从此无界	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
27	Alka-Seltzer	Don't leave home without it	没它就不要离开家	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
28	Budweiser	The King of beers.	啤酒之王	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
29	Winston cigarettes	Winston tastes good, like a cigarette should	云斯顿, 好烟的好品味	4, 5	1, 2, 3
30	Dannon/Activia	Actively good.	由内而外的活力	2, 3, 4, 5	1
31	Volvo	Volvo. For life	关受生命, 享受生活	3, 4, 5	1, 2
32	Nissan	Shift expectations	古有千里马, 今有日产车	3, 4, 5	1, 2
33	eBay	The World's Online Marketplace	世界的网上购物市场	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
34	7 up	The Uncola	非可乐	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
35	Pepsi	The choice of a new generation	新一代的选择	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
36	Honda	For the Road Ahead	康庄大道	2, 3, 4, 5	1
37	Audi A8	In the Company of Masters	尊贵人生 大师随行	5	1, 2, 3, 4
38	Duracell	Lasts longer, much longer	世界第一, 耐力电池	2, 3, 4, 5	1
39	Apple	Think Different	不同凡想	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
40	Microsoft	World in hand, Soul in Cyber	掌中乾坤, 梦之灵魂	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
41	BMW	The Ultimate Driving Machine	铸造终极动力	2, 3, 4, 5	1
42	Kodak	You push the button, we do the rest	就是这一刻	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
43	Twix	Two for me, none for you	创造一刻停顿, 打开Twix巧克力	4, 5	1, 2, 3
44	Swatch	Time is what you make of it	天长地久	2, 3, 4, 5	1
45	Volkswagen	For the love of the car	小即是好	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
46	Avis	We try harder	我们正在努力	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
47	Air France	New. Fast. Efficient.	最新、最快、最高效	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
48	Crest	Look Ma, no cavities!	看, 妈妈, 没有蛀牙	5	1, 2, 3, 4
49	M&Ms	The milk chocolate melts in your mouth, not in your hand	只溶在口不溶在手	5	1, 2, 3, 4
50	Pringles	Once you pop, the fun don't stop	劲爆无极限	2, 3, 4, 5	1
51	Chevrolet	Eye it. Try it. Buy it.	先看、后试、再买	5	1, 2, 3, 4
52	Colgate	Good teeth, Good health	牙齿好, 身体就好	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
53	Marlboro	Come to where the flavour is. Marlboro Country	光临风韵之境——万宝路世界	5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
54	Kinder Surprise	Play with the Adventures of your Surprises	次过满足你三个愿望	2, 3, 4, 5	1

55	Lexus	The relentless pursuit of perfection	不懈追求完美	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
56	Nike	Just do it	只管去做	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
57	Adidas	Impossible is nothing	没有不可能	5	1, 2, 3, 4
58	McDonalds	I'm lovin' it	我就喜欢	5	1, 2, 3, 4
59	Maybelline	Maybe She's Born With It. Maybe It's Maybelline	把握属于你的美	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
60	Maxwell House	Make every day good to the last drop	滴滴香浓, 意犹未尽	4, 5	1, 2, 3
61	Philips	Let's make things better	让我们做得更好	4, 5	1, 2, 3
62	Lipton	Direct from tea garden to the tea pot	从茶园直接进入茶壶的好茶	5	1, 2, 3, 4
63	L'Oréal	Because you're worth it	你值得拥有	4, 5	1, 2, 3
64	Tide	Tide is in, Dirt is out	有汰渍没污渍	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
65	Nokia	Connecting people	科技以人为本	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	0
66	American Express	Do more	作得更多	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
67	Nescafé	The taste is great	味道好极了	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
68	Snickers	Hungry? Grab a Snickers	饿了就吃士力架	4, 5	1, 2, 3
69	Motorola	Intelligence everywhere	智慧演绎, 无处不在	4, 5	1, 2, 3
70	Samsung	Feel the new space	感受新境界	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
71	LG	LG. Life's Good	拥有LG, 生活更美好	4, 5	1, 2, 3
72	Skittles	Taste the rainbow	品尝彩虹	0	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
73	Red Bull	It Gives You Wings	红牛让你如虎添翼	4, 5	1, 2, 3
74	Kit Kat	Have a break... have a Kit Kat	轻松一下, 吃块奇巧	5	1, 2, 3, 4
75	Sprite	Obeys your thirst	服从你的渴望	0	1, 2, 3, 4
76	Sony	Like no other	SONY, 与众不同	4, 5	1, 2, 3
77	Gillette	Gillette The Best a Man Can Get	男人最好的选择	4, 5	1, 2, 3
78	Dannon/Actimel	A little every day goes a long, long way.	免疫健康	2, 3, 4, 5	1

Summary of the results shows that there are 51 cases of translation autonomy (65%) and 27 cases (35%) of translation equivalence at the level of language signs (words); there are 40 cases of translation autonomy (51%) and 38 cases (49%) of translation equivalence at the level of the structure of a message; there are 25 cases (32%) of translation autonomy and 53 cases (68%) of translation equivalence at the level of the utterance; there are 22 cases (28%) of translation autonomy and 56 (72%) cases of translation equivalence at

the level of description of the situation; there are 11 cases (14%) of translation autonomy and 67 cases (86%) cases of translation equivalence at the level of the purpose of communication.

Conclusion

One of the main objectives of the paper is to show that new categories of translation theory may form a new theoretical model within an existing theory: the category of autonomy within the theory of levels of equivalence by Vilen N.

Комиссаров. We believe that the material used as illustrations is remarkable in at least two respects: first is that commercial text is considered to be one of important attractors of attention on the part of linguistic scholars all over the globe, the second is that the amount of scientific works in

Russia devoted to the problems of translation from \ to oriental languages (e.g. Chinese) is still insufficient. Apart from that, it is evident that the issue of correlation between the notions of “additions in translation” and “translation autonomy” needs further investigation.

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Соотношение оригинала и перевода текстов рекламных слоганов: переводческая автономия и эквивалентность

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В настоящей статье предпринимается попытка применить переводческую категорию автономии к хорошо известной теоретической дескриптивной модели уровневой эквивалентности В. Н. Комиссарова.

Ключевые слова: перевод, оригинал, автономия, добавления в переводе, рекламные слоганы, эквивалентность.
