In the Name of God

University of Isfahan

Faculty of Foreign Languages

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M.A. Thesis

A Study of Rhetorical Figures in the Translation of Print Advertising Headlines from English into Persian from the Purview of Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Advertising has a great impact on people's lives because it can inform and guide many of the important decisions made. Headline plays a vital role both in organizing the message and in engaging the audience, thus becoming an important persuasive part of advertising discourse. The present study is an attempt to investigate the rhetorical operations used in English print advertising headlines and to discover what will happen to them while translating into Persian. Attempts are also made in particular to see whether there is any ideological consideration in using each category of figures operations (Tropes/ Schemes). The sample consists of 65 advertising headlines in English and their corresponding versions in Persian collected from a wider corpus. In order to analyze the rhetorical features in advertising headlines of the two languages, the category of advertising rhetorical figures presented by Huhmann (cited in McQuarrie & Philips 2008) was used. Then, they were checked against the advertising translation strategies proposed by Smith (2006). Finally based on the integration of Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Grammar (SFL) and Fairclough's (1992, 2003) Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) the ideology behind choosing each category of literary devices, tropes and schemes, were extracted. The finding of the study expanded the translation models proposed by Smith (2006) in translating English headlines to Persian. The most frequent strategy was transference along with the source oriented translation strategy. Persian used repetition schemes greatly, but substitution tropes are dominant operations used in English. Ideological representations of each operation are important for both languages.

Keywords: Print advertisements, advertising headline, rhetorical figures, advertising translation, systemic functional grammar, critical discourse analysis, ideology

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List of Abbreviations

AD: Advertisement

CDA: Critical Discourse Analysis

FL: Functional Linguistics

RF: Rhetorical Figure

SFL: Systemic Functional Grammar

SH: Source Headline

SL: Source Language

TH: Target Headline

TL: Target Language

TS: Translation Studies

Chapter One
Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Print advertisements exhibit cultural and ideological significance when they combine wordplay with other linguistic features to persuade or provoke their readers to particular response. This claim is supported by Hashim (2010, p.378) stating that "print media represents a significant economic and cultural development in Asia, where developed and developing consumer markets have experienced rapid and sustained growth." It is believed that the central idea is reiterated in advertisements linguistic texts. This study seeks to investigate the translation procedures adopted by Persian translators to render rhetorical figures in English print advertisements headlines and reveal the ideological considerations in using each category of figures. In this chapter, important concepts for analyzing rhetorical figures in advertising headline will be discussed.

1.1.1. Advertising

According to Goddard (1998, p.11), "the terms '*advertisement*' and '*advertising*' have, at their root, a Latin word, '*advertere*', meaning *'turn towards'*." Advertising has long been a subject of several studies in different disciplines such as mass communication, marketing, sociology, cultural anthropology, social psychology, semiotics and cultural studies. Ahmed (2000, p.11) believes that "whether from a quantitative, qualitative or interpretive perspective, whether a researcher follows the modern social scientific approach, critical theory perspective or postmodernist approach, analysis of advertising and other media content is of growing importance."

Advertising for Cook (1992, p.5) is a prominent discourse type in all contemporary societies. For him, the important distinguishing feature of advertising (henceforth ad) discourse is its function, which is usually to persuade people to buy a particular product. But, this is not the only function.

Reader plays an important role in the process of meaning making from an advertising discourse. McCracken (1988, p.79) states that "advertising relies on the reader to complete the meaning transfer as active participant". Although several studies have examined advertisements in the West, very little has been done in Asia. Cook (1992), for example, examined contemporary British advertisements using an approach derived from linguistics and discourse analysis. He analyzed advertisements as discourse and his focus was not only on language but also the context of communication. His concern was on "who is communicating with whom and why; in what kind of society and situation; through what medium; how different types and acts of communication evolved, and their relationship to one another" (Cook 1992, p.1).

According to Durant & Lambrou (2009, p.93), "advertising conveys information, so that consumers know what is available, who makes it, and where and how they can get it." Cook (1992, XV) states that, "writing on advertising is difficult. The reasons are partly formal, arising from its ever-changing uses and combinations of language, pictures and music." Reiss (1971) regards ad as an operative text type by attempting to persuade people or to elicit desired response. She assigned to them an 'adaptive' mode of translation (1981, p.129). According to Bloor & Bloor (2004, p.141), "one aim of advertising is to inform, and a lot of advertising is informative without being overtly persuasive." But the main aim of most advertising perhaps is to promote the sale of goods or services, which means that it must persuade. Advertising theory and practice propose that to resonate with the audience, advertising should present models similar to the reception language (Belch & Belch, 2003).

Williamson (1978, p.19) believes that an advertisement does not create meaning initially but invites us to make a transaction where it is passed from one thing to another. This claim is supported by Saren et al. (2007, p.128), who states that adverts utilize "a pre-existing referent system of meaning, because the product, prior to signification in the advert, has no meaning." Goldman (1992, p.2) reads ads socially by identifying advertising as a key institution in "producing and reproducing the material and ideological supremacy of commodity relations". He calls this system '*commodity hegemony'*; because, "they reproduce a sense of commodity relations as a natural and inevitable part of the lives of different individuals" (Saren, et al. 2007, p.129).

Baren & Davis (2011, p.48) state that, "as adverts frame issues for us, they cultivate our perceptions of the social world so that we are more likely to make sense of things in some ways rather than others." Whatever

strategy a translator applies in his act of translation, the final product in target language should transfer the intended meaning of the original text to render the same response (Larson, 2003). However, not only linguistic features but also many other factors may cause difference in languages, such as social and cultural differences (Mundey, 2001).

1.1.2. Different Classifications of Rhetorical Figures

Much scholarly effort, from classical times through the Renaissance and into modern times, has been devoted to classifying the figures of rhetoric in appropriate categories. Rhetoric originates from the theory or the study of how, by means of what linguistic devices, speakers or writers might best achieve their aims. From the time of Aristotle the concept of rhetoric has always been connected with aspects of discourse that are intended to persuade (Connor, 1996). Corbett defines rhetoric as "an artful deviation relative to audience expectation and it is assumed to create pleasure in processing" (cited in van Mulken 2003, p.116).

Aristotle in his book entitled *'the Art of Rhetoric'* said that 'good style*'* was based on clear and appropriate language, but also on 'unfamiliar' or 'foreign' words, which because they differed from normal usage were more striking (trans. Lawson 1991). The concept of rhetorical figures as representing an artistic transcendence of the ordinary on non- artistic resources of language was basic to rhetoric. Vickers (1989, p.86) divided figures into 'figures of thought', which involve more general tactical processes in oratory (rhetorical question, apostrophe), and then, more important, 'figures of speech'. Todorov (1967) classified figures as 'rule-violating' and 'rule-reinforcing' operations. Both types of deviation are subdivided according to linguistic patterns and relations.

Leech (1966) conceived a linguistic basis for possible classifications of rhetorical figures. He outlined the formal structures of 'rule-violating' and 'rule-reinforcing' deviation. Defining the former as "a violation of the predictable pattern" and the latter as "a pattern superimposed on the background of ordinary linguistic patterning" (ibid., p.146).

McQuarrie & Mick (1999) classified tropes and schemes separately into two categories based on their complexities and deviation from one's experiences of language. Schemes are divided into two groups of 'repetition and reversal' operations and tropes contain 'substitution and destabilization' operations. The due definition of each category will be discussed in chapter two in detail.

1.1.3. Critical Discourse Analysis

In recent years, there have been several debates to establish the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to propose research goals for this approach. According to Bloor & Bloor (2007, p.4), CDA is a truly international project with contributions from many countries and cultures. They claim that "central to CDA is the understanding that discourse is an integral aspect of power and control. Power is held by both institutions and individuals in contemporary society and any challenge to the status quo challenges those who hold power" (ibid.). Most critical discourse analysts tolerate varied approaches.

Wodak (1995) and her colleagues in Vienna (The Vienna School of Discourse Analysis) called their directions in CDA, *'Discourse Sociolinguistics'*. Wodak's model was based on "sociolinguistics in the Bernesteinian tradition and on the ideas of the Frankfurt school, especially those of Habermas" (Wodak 1995, p.209). Her focus was on the historical contexts of discourse in the process of explanation and interpretation. The

social, historical, and cultural factors that influence the meaning-making process are important (Weiss & Wodak, 2003).

Van Dijk (1998a) defines CDA as a field that is concerned with studying and analyzing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and bias. Fairclough (1993, p.135) defines CDA as follows:

> Discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony.

CDA has offered educational researchers ways of investigating language use within social contexts. By questioning the important features of language and enabling explorations of how texts represent the world in given ways according to particular interests, CDA provides opportunities to the relationships between discourse and society, text and context, and language and power into consideration (Fairclough, 2001b, Luke, 1995/1996, 2002). Nevertheless, according to Luke (2002, p.99), CDA is still considered "a fringe dweller in mainstream analysis." Unlike traditional forms of discourse analysis that are concerned with the forms and features of texts, the aim of critical analysis is to uncover the

ideological assumptions of language use. That all linguistic forms are essentially ideological is a fundamental tenet for critical discourse theorists.

Fairclough (1989, p.10) identified his approach, not as just another method of language study, but as "an alternative orientation". What he called "a social theory of discourse" (Fairclough, 1992a, p.92) was an attempt to "bring together linguistically-oriented discourse analysis and social and political thought relevant to discourse and language." According to Weiss & Wodak (2003, p.7), it is good and justice to think of CDA as "a theoretical synthesis of conceptual tools."

1.1.4. Ideology and Translation

Extracting the hidden meaning or ideology behind the texts during the process of translation has been the central concern of many researchers for a long times. According to Kress & Hodge (1979) "ideologies usually act unconsciously at a level beneath critical awareness as they establish their hegemony." It is therefore necessary to analyze not only texts, but also how texts are interpreted and the effects they have. Van Dijk (1997, p.7) believes that ideology is a kind of framework which is "assumed to specifically organize and monitor one form of socially shared mental representation, in other words, the organized evaluative beliefs-traditionally called 'attitudes'-shared by social groups." Williamson (1978) points out that ad help us to see ourselves and the world in ideological ways.

Lefever (1985, p.217) points out that ideology is "a certain concept of what the world should be like", but it is also "the world view of a certain society at a certain moment" (ibid. p.226). According to Eagleton (1991, p.9) ideology is less a matter of inherent linguistic properties of who is saying what to whom for what purposes. This means that the historical