

# A Study on Advertising Translation from the Perspective of the Skopos Theory—A Case Study of Apple Inc.

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## Abstract

International trade between nations is expanding as a result of the development of economic globalization. Advertising is a type of appealing text that plays an important role in promoting products, attracting consumers, and establishing brand image. Among a large number of transnational corporations, the English-to-Chinese translation of the advertising text of Apple Inc. has distinctive characteristics, and the "Apple-style Chinese" has played a unique role in boosting its product sales and brand image. From the perspective of German Skopos Theory, this thesis first summarizes the evaluation criteria of advertising translation, then conducts a specific analysis of Apple's advertising translation, and finally proposes some strategies for advertising translation in order to provide a variety of experiences for more multinational corporations.

**Keywords:** Skopos Theory, advertising translation, translation strategies, advertisement

## 1. Introduction

China is attracting companies from around the world to open up its domestic market as the world's second-largest economy. As one of the most important ways of transnational marketing, advertising plays a key role in introducing products and services to consumers in the target market. A well-translated advertisement will have a big impact on product sales, and in today's brutally competitive worldwide economy, outstanding advertising can win customers' hearts. Therefore, a profound research of advertising translation is of great significance.

In the practice of advertisement translation, some traditional translation principles such as "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance", "faithfulness" and "equivalence" no longer meet the needs due to the evolving demands of globalized and digital marketing. Under this circumstance, the Skopos Theory, which originated in the 1970s, believes that translation must follow a number of rules, including the skopos rule, the coherence rule and the fidelity rule, and is a purposeful and fruitful action based on the source text that must be finished through negotiation in order to meet various contexts. It provides a more comprehensive and systematic theoretical framework for advertising

translation and has important guiding significance for it.

The study of advertising translation in China can be generally divided into two stages: during 1990-2000, most of the topics focused on the linguistic features and rhetorical analysis of advertisements, or the discussion of translation methods and the problems in advertising translation. For example, Liu Quanfu and Hu Yuanyuan (1996) published papers that pointed out common errors in domestic advertising translation by various examples, including printing errors, misuse of words, etc. After 2000, China's accession to the WTO deepened the degree of opening-up. The number of advertising translation studies has increased and the perspectives have become diverse. Zheng Qiufang (2004) discussed the skopos rule and advertising translation, pointing out that advertising translation should be based on the realization of the expected function of the target text in the target language culture and putting forward relevant translation strategies such as deletion, re-translation, and so on.

The present paper aims to analyze the advertisement translation of Apple Inc. from the perspective of the Skopos Theory. After introducing the theoretical framework, the author tries to summarize some evaluation criteria for advertising translation according to the three basic rules of Skopos Theory and analyzes some typical translations of Apple's products according to these standards. Finally, based on a wide range of cases, this paper will put forward some strategies for advertising translation to provide multinational corporations with a variety of translation experiences.

## 2. Literature Review

In the 1970s, the Skopos Theory emerged in Germany. Hans Vermeer claims that translation is a purposeful and consequential action based on the source text and that it must adhere to a set of principles, the first of which is the skopos rule. In other words, the translation is dependent on the intended audience. The ultimate goal of any advertisement is to persuade consumers to purchase the goods and services being promoted. If it fails to achieve this goal, there is no doubt that this advertisement is a failure. By the same token, the advertising translation cannot be deemed successful if it is unable to achieve this purpose. As a result,

while translating advertisements, the ultimate goal of advertising — that is, to grab the receivers' attention and ultimately persuade them to make a purchase — must be taken into consideration.

### 2.1 Definition and Development of the Skopos Theory

"Skopos is the Greek word for 'aim' or 'purpose' and was introduced into translation theory in 1970s by Hans J. Vermeer as a technical term for the purpose of a translation and of the action of translation" (Munday, 2001: 27). Translation is considered as a special type of human behavior rather than a transcoding procedure inside the Skopos theory framework. Like any human action, translation has a purpose. The Skopos Theory emphasizes that translation should choose a best method based on the analysis of the source text and for the purpose of the expected function of the translation. The development of the Skopos Theory can be divided into four stages:

1) Katharina Reiss and the functional category of translation criticism: In 1971, she published *Possibility and Limitation of Translation Criticism*. Reiss first listed the function of the text as a criterion for translation criticism, that is, to evaluate the translation in terms of the relationship between the functions of the source text and the target text. This relationship actually relates to the functional equivalent between the source text and the target text, as Reiss' theory was founded on the principle of equivalence.

2) Hans J. Vermeer and his Skopos Theory and beyond: Vermeer, a student of Reiss, overcame the limitations of equivalent theory, took purpose (skopos) as the first criterion in the translation process, and developed the main theory of functionalism: The Skopos Theory. It prioritizes the purpose of a translation, which Hans J. Vermeer defines as "a theory of purposeful action". Vermeer contended that linguistic analysis alone could not solve all translation issues. He integrated translation theory with the theory of human action or activity. Vermeer considered translation to be a form of human action, "which is an intentional, purposeful, behaviour that takes place in a given situation; it is part of the situation at the same time as it modifies the situation" (Nord, 1997: 11).

3) Justa Holz-Manttari came up with a new theory in 1981 called translational action. According to functionalists, translation action and translation are two distinct ideas, and action

has a special meaning: it has a specific purpose. According to Manttari, translation can be seen as “a complex action intended to achieve a particular purpose” (Nord, 2001: 13). She focused on the action-related aspects of participants’ roles and the contextual conditions of advertisements.

4) The fourth stage is Christiane Nord’s Functional plus Loyalty Principle. The Skopos Theory has been improved by Nord. She initially provided an English summary of all functionalist academic thinking. In her book *Text Analysis in Translation*, published in 1998, Nord promoted the idea of function plus loyalty. A fundamental value for a translator to uphold in the practice of translating is loyalty.

### 2.2 Three Basic Rules of the Skopos Theory

The first rule that all translation activities should follow, according to the Skopos Theory, is the skopos rule. “A translation action is determined by its Skopos; that is, the end justifies the means” (Nord, 2001: 29). But the act of translating serves a variety of purposes. There are three explanations for this purpose: the translator’s purpose (such as earning money), the translation’s purpose (such as enlightening readers), and the purpose to be attained by using a particular translation technique (such as using literal translation to highlight unique grammatical features in a language). Generally speaking, purpose refers to the translation’s communicative intent. As a result, the translator must state his intended purpose for the translation clearly when provided with context, which allows the translator to select the appropriate translation methods.

The coherence rule and the fidelity rule: The coherence rule states that the translation must adhere to the inter-textual coherence criterion. The so-called inter-textual coherence refers to the fact that the translation must be understood by the recipients and be meaningful in the target language’s culture, as well as in the communicative environment in which it is used. According to the fidelity rule, there should be inter-textual coherence between the source and target texts. Similar to what is typically meant by “faithfulness to the source text”, inter-textual coherence is influenced by the translator’s understanding of the source text as well as the purpose of the translation. The extent and form of faithfulness to the source text are determined by the purpose of the translation and the translator’s comprehension of the original text.

The fidelity rule is one of the three rules in the Skopos Theory, which also includes the coherence rule and the skopos rule (Nord, 2001: 32).

## 3. A General Introduction to Advertisement

### 3.1 Definition of Advertisement

The word *advertisement* comes from the Latin word *advertere*, which means to pay attention, to induce, and to spread. The word *advertise* developed in Middle English (c. 1300–1475) to imply “draw someone’s attention to something” or “inform someone of something in order to attract the attention of others”. Until the end of the 17th century, Britain began to engage in large-scale commercial activity, and the word advertisement became widely known and utilized. At this point, “advertising” refers to a variety of advertising activities as well as a specific advertisement of a product. The noun *Advertise*, from the concept of static things, is endowed with modern meaning and transformed into *Advertising*.

Economist O. J. Fireston once wrote: “The main function of advertising is to persuade consumers to buy products”. Therefore, in the practice of commercial advertisement translation, the translator needs to effectively convey the advertising information and communicative intention to the advertisement receivers based on the various functions of commercial advertising. Under the best relevance of different contexts, after cognitive understanding, receivers are persuaded to buy the goods advertised by the commercial advertisement so as to achieve the translation purpose of the commercial advertisement. Therefore, the functions of advertising are summarized as follows: First and foremost, the primary function of advertising is to provide consumers with product-related information; second, advertising is an essential part of the culture. In other words, despite how brief it may be, an advertisement must have many cultural features of its own. Thirdly, effective advertising should draw the receivers’ attention to the advertised product or service and attract their interest in trying the goods or service. Finally, advertising is an effective tool for business people to enlighten clients about their goods and services.

### 3.2 Introduction to Advertisement Translation

Advertisement translation, also known as marketing or advertising localization, is the process of adapting and translating advertising

content from one language or culture into another while ensuring it remains effective, culturally relevant, and persuasive to the target audience.

Translating advertisements effectively requires a strategic approach that goes beyond literal translation and other regular methods. Here are some important strategies for advertisement translation: First is recreation, which involves recreating the message, style, and emotional impact of the original advertisement in the target language and allows for adaptation to the cultural nuances and preferences of the target audience. Next is cultural adaptation. Understanding the cultural context is crucial. Ensure that cultural references, humor, and imagery are appropriate and resonate with the target audience.

When it comes to advertisement translation, the Skopos Theory provides a highly adaptable and powerful framework. Firstly, one of the core principles of the Skopos Theory is that ‘the purpose determines the means,’ meaning the primary task of translation is to achieve specific communication goals. In advertisement translation, this implies that the main objectives and effects of the advertisement must be realized in the target culture. This can include conveying the emotions, impact, and appeal of the advertisement rather than just a literal translation of the text. Secondly, the Skopos Theory underscores the importance of cultural adaptation. Advertisements typically contain elements related to the local culture, values, and customs. Translators need to understand the culture of the target audience to adjust the advertisement content as needed to make it appealing in the new culture. Thirdly, the Skopos Theory encourages translators to flexibly apply translation strategies when achieving advertisement objectives. This can involve creative word choices, rephrasing slogans to suit the target culture, or even rewriting the advertisement to meet the expectations of different cultures. In summary, the Skopos Theory provides a framework that is conducive to successfully conveying advertisement messages in different cultures. By emphasizing the purpose of translation and cultural adaptation, it helps ensure that advertisements achieve the expected results in diverse markets and realize the intended purposes and impact.

### 3.3 Linguistic Features of Advertisement Language

Language is the most important expression of commercial advertising. A successful advertisement is based on an effective (and persuasive) language style. Due to the importance of language in commercial advertising, this section focuses on analyzing and comparing certain basic features of Chinese and English commercial advertising languages in order to propose some translation strategies for commercial advertising.

#### 3.3.1 Lexical Features of English and Chinese Advertisement

1) *The abundant use of Monosyllabic Words*: The expression of commercial advertising language pays attention to the presentation of emotion, values and mass appeal and strives to be concise, accurate and innovative on the basis of effectively conveying information. Vocabulary, as the main framework of commercial advertising language, has attracted more and more attention. Chinese is good at using monosyllabic words. One single Chinese character can be flexible and full of freedom. Its combination with other words can show diverse language expression. Therefore, the use of monosyllabic words in Chinese commercial advertising presents a high-frequency trend. For instance, “重构想象 就此刻” (HUAWEI Mate 30) and “科技以人为本” (Nokia). Monosyllabic words are often read with sprightly rhythm and loudly; they can also show the brand’s values subjectively, which makes it easy to impress the advertising audience and then produce a sense of identity. Monosyllabic words have also been widely used in English commercial advertising to make the language accurate and persuasive: “Just do it” (Nike), “The taste is great” (Nestlé), and so on.

2) *The overuse of Verbs and Adjectives*: Using modifiers to highlight the benefits of the marketed product is an effective way of advertising. For instance:

*Things go better with Coca-Cola. (Coca-Cola)*

饮可口可乐，万事如意。

Here, the use of the adjective *better* implies the high quality of Coca-Cola vividly. At the same time, the word *Things* is translated into 万事 in Chinese, 万事如意 can be given different special meanings by different consumers. Meanwhile, the meaning of Coca-Cola has been raised to a higher level, which makes the whole product more attractive. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of commercial advertising is to convey

the features and advantages of the products to the audience, and the use of comparative and superlative language is also highly common in English commercial advertising. For example, *Let us make things better.* — Philips; *The fastest, most powerful iPhone yet.* — iPhone 3GS. In order to achieve the effect of advertising and satisfy its economic purposes, comparative and superlative word usage in commercial advertising will help the audience fully comprehend the text and have a clear understanding of the advantages and quality of the products. In a nutshell, the lexical choice of Chinese and English ads has the same, comparable, or distinct qualities; nonetheless, the overall goal of lexical choice is to capture people's attention, and so become one of the most successful techniques of promoting the sale of goods.

### 3.3.2 Syntax Features of English and Chinese Advertisement

1) *The use of Simple Sentences*: Simple sentences are the first notable syntactic characteristic, as in real-world situations, advertising must be brief and to the point in order to grab the target audience's attention. For instance:

*Obey your thirst.* — 服从你的渴望。(Sprite)

*Connecting People.* — 科技以人为本。(Nokia)

*A Kodak Moment.* — 就在柯达一刻。(Kodak)

Due to their brevity and potency, the ad examples above are well known to the general public. The use of many simple, straightforward sentences in advertising text can appeal to, induce, and arouse consumers' desire to purchase, which has a significant persuasive effect.

2) *The use of Elliptical Sentences*: In both Chinese and English commercial advertising language, elliptical sentences are frequently used. Language components that are omitted allow for a greater presentation of ideas while maintaining the economy and conciseness of commercial advertising language. For instance:

*Start ahead.* — 成功之路，从头开始。(Rejoice)

This example skips the subject and has a noticeable, eye-catching imperative sentence structure that makes it brief and to the point. This can aid customers in swiftly understanding the key points of the advertisement. There is another example:

*No business too small, no problem too big.*

没有不做的小生意，没有解决不了的大问题。  
(IBM)

The predicate verb *is* and the conjunction *and* connecting two clauses are omitted in this advertisement. From the above examples of commercial advertising, it can be concluded that elliptical phrases can emphasize important details about the products and services in order to attract consumers' attention, induce them, and finally persuade them to make a purchase.

## 4. Analysis on Advertisement Translation of Apple Inc. from the Perspective of the Skopos Theory

With the development of economic globalization, Apple's smart devices have become the mainstream products in the personal mobile devices market, and the consumption capacity of the Chinese market has played a crucial role in supporting the company's sales. Public relations publicity is the first and key step to making consumers understand and accept products. Therefore, in a nation where Chinese is the primary language, the effectiveness of publicity is largely determined by the quality of the Chinese translation of the product introduction on the official website. The Skopos Theory has given a good direction for the translation action of Apple products.

Through the previous introduction, we learned that the skopos rule, the coherence rule, and the fidelity rule are the three core rules of the Skopos Theory. In this chapter, the author will analyze how the E-C translation of Apple's products is completed under the guidance of these rules through some specific text.

### 4.1 The E-C Translation of Apple Inc. Under the Guide of the Skopos Rule

To "advertise" is to inform the public about a product or service in order to persuade them to buy it. As we mentioned above, the skopos rule is the most important of the three principles, which holds that a translation action is decided by its purpose. In some ways, the accomplishment of the advertising purpose is more significant than the translation process itself when considering both the nature of translation and the nature of advertising. Because it is concerned with inducing the receivers to purchase the products recommended, all commercial advertising is founded on the appellative function of language. Driven by the purpose of the purchase, a basic evaluation criterion of successful advertising is

whether it can make the products sell well; in other words, it refers to the sales force.

The most crucial part of the skopos rule is how to catch people's attention and create a desire to acquire the product. Let's start with the case of iPhone 4:

**Example 1:** *This changes everything. Again.*

再一次，改变一切。

The iPhone 4, officially launched in June 2010, is one of Apple's most significant phones. This mobile phone has popularized the concept of "retina display screen" to the world, which has increased the pixel density by a large part, making it difficult to see the pixels on the screen. In addition, it is the first time that Apple has added a front camera to push the quality of mobile phone photos to a new level. All of these are important nodes in the history of the iPhone, even in the history of mobile phones. First, it grabs the attention of consumers; the semantics become more coherent, and the tone is concise and powerful compared with the original text, which shows Apple's confidence in the iPhone 4. People will be curious about what 一切 is and try to know the phone so as to achieve the core meaning of the advertisement: to attract customers and sell products.

**Example 2:** *Say hello to the future.*

你好，未来。

The iPhone X was launched by Apple in September 2017. As a blockbuster product for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the iPhone, it is Apple's first full-screen phone and the most advanced and prominent design of the iPhone. The advertisement's originality and ingenuity are both evident: *Say hello to the future* is a somewhat long sentence in English, yet it can be translated in Chinese with only two words: 你好，未来。 This mobile phone ushered in a new era of unlocking your phone with your face, and the translator definitely showed the arrival to the public. 你好 means *hello* in English, which shows the company's audacious ambitious for science and technology as well as their enthusiasm for the future. Limitless creativity is another benefit. If someone wants to know more about the future, he can use the iPhone X to find out. The subtleties of language are presented vividly and perfectly in this translated version.

#### 4.2 The E-C Translation of Apple Inc. Under the Guide of the Coherence Rule

In the previous introduction of the coherence

rule, we knew that its essence was that the translation must be understood by the receivers and be meaningful in the culture of the target language and in the communicative environment in which it is used. In the transformation of two languages, because of cultural diversity, it may be difficult for most receivers to understand the meaning of the original text directly. People from different cultures have diverse perspectives on the same issues. Because of this, the translation must be consistent with the situation of the intended audience. Translation alterations must be made in an effort to adapt to the language and culture of the target reader in order for the advertisement to fulfill its purpose, which is known as cultural suitability. However, it falls short of being acceptable in terms of comprehensiveness. A good advertisement should also ensure readability when reaching inter-textual coherence. An obscure and stiff translation first could not meet the translation standards and also could not have a good effect on the advertisement. So, we come up with another evaluation criterion, which is aesthetic. To sum up, under the guidance of the coherence rule, if a company wants to bring a comfortable reading experience to potential customers through the translation and, at the same time, make them better understand the products or services, they must try to meet the two evaluation criteria of cultural adaptability and aesthetic. Apple has an advantage in this respect. First is the cultural suitability:

**Example 3:** *Pro cameras. Pro display. Pro performance.*

摄像头、显示屏、性能，样样Pro 如其名。

This is the ad for iPhone 11 Pro released in 2019. *Pro* is short for professional, which is an extended model of mobile phones that has more functions than the original version. Therefore, this iPhone will be more professional and outstanding in some aspects. Comparing the three short sentences that begin with *Pro* in the source text, the translator chooses to list the three best aspects of the product first and puts the fullest meaning of the whole sentence at the end by rewriting the idiom 人如其名, which is the best part. 人如其名 is a neutral word, which means that "a person's character is consistent with the connotation of his name". Here, replace 人 with *Pro* to express that the product is professional in every aspect, just as described. The combination of idioms makes the

translation closer to our language habits. Other examples: 一身才华, 一触, 即发。— MacBook Pro (*A touch of genius*); 动笔画, 随你出神入化。— iPad 2019 (*Draw something draw some*). Idioms like 一触即发 and 出神入化 are used in these two ads respectively.

Next it's the aesthetic value:

**Example 4:** *The best for the brightest.*

高能, 召唤高手。

This is the ad for 2019's MacBook Pro. In this example, the translator uses 高 twice; the first refers to the best, and the second refers to the brightest. The repetition of 高 has two aims: one aim to create a sense of neat rhythm, and the other is to create puns: use the simplest words to convey two or more meanings. Repetition is not uncommon in the translation of Apple products: 唯一的不同, 是处处不同。— iPhone 6s. (*The only thing that is changed is everything*). Apple has always pursued minimalism, so its ads also need to be consistent with its brand value. What the pun conveys is a simple but powerful impression, a kind of wisdom, a sense of neat rhythm and beauty — these are exactly what Apple pursues.

**Example 5:** *Here's to a healthier you.*

祝你健康, 助你更健康。

This example is the advertisement for the Apple Watch Series 8 launched by Apple Inc. in September 2022. The main functionality of Apple Watch as a wearable is its health monitoring. The new S8 series has added Temperature Sensing, which enables women to better track their periods and other factors. In this ad, the original sentence can be translated as 献给更健康的你. It should go without saying that this version lacks the distinctive features of Apple advertising. The translator has done a very clever job of translating the original sentence to make the form and pronunciation coincide with each other. There is only one *healthier* in the original sentence that expresses the meaning of 健康 in Chinese, but the translator translated it into two short sentences with 健康 in it, which makes the whole sentence neat and aesthetically pleasing and at the same time conveys the most distinctive feature of this watch. Following that, 祝你 and 助你 have the same pronunciation but different meanings in Chinese, with 祝你 emphasizing to *wish* while 助你 means to *help*. The homophones also achieve the effect of a pun in

the Chinese context, reflecting the humanistic care of this product while perfectly demonstrating the product's functions. Sentence with similar effects include *Dream machine*. — 戴好表, 做好梦. This is an advertisement promoting the Sleep App on the Apple Watch. Similarly, the translator translated the original phrase into two short sentences, which conveyed the original sentence's meaning in an ingenious way. Most significantly, the watch's function of tracking sleep stages is portrayed, and the beauty of the Chinese language is also reflected in this translation.

#### 4.3 The E-C Translation of Apple Inc. Under the Guide of the Fidelity Rule

The study of translation theory in China began with Yan Fu's translated works *Evolution and Ethics and Other Essays*, where the famous standard "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" (信达雅) was put forward. This standard has a profound influence in Chinese translation circles, and it has many similarities with the three rules of the Skopos Theory that we mainly discuss today. Among these, the principle of faithfulness was located in the first sequence, similar to the fidelity rule. However, different from the Skopos Theory, "faithfulness" is in the first place, while the fidelity rule is subordinate to the first two rules, and the standard "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" is mainly used in the translation of literary works, so it cannot be used as a single standard in practical text translation. The comparison between "faithfulness, expressiveness and elegance" and the fidelity rule here is intended to emphasize that in the development of translation, a theory is constantly progressing with the changes of language. Here the fidelity rule is used to emphasize that the form and degree of faithfulness should be determined according to the purpose of the translation (skopos rule) and the translator's understanding of the original text, not blindly be the same as the original text.

A new definition of the translator is one of Vermeer's Skopos Theory's most significant contributions to translation studies. The translator is no longer a kind of copier who mechanically translates one language into another. On the other hand, the translator is put in a vital position in the process of translation by being given them more flexible space. This is why the fidelity rule ranks last among the three rules. Secondly, from the perspective of

advertising translation itself, as a kind of appealing text, advertising should not only convey various effective information but also let receivers pay attention to its existence. Therefore, the translator should be given maximum freedom of creativity as much as possible so that they have enough space to think about how to achieve the purpose of advertising instead of being confined to the original text and expression. In this way, under the guidance of the fidelity rule, combined with the development of theory and its position, we could come up with the fourth evaluation standard: creativity. However, it should be noticed that such creativity does not mean groundless creation. It requires the translator to have a comprehensive view of the original text and then express it in a more attractive or popular way. For example:

**Example 6:** *Shoot it. Flip it. Zoom it. Crop it. Cut it. Light it. Tweak it. Love it.*

可横可竖，可近可远，可裁可剪，可明可暗，很可以。

This is an advertisement for the iPhone 11 Pro's 4K video. In order to maximize the translator's freedom based on the original meaning, the translator converts a number of verbs with similar meanings into adjectives with opposing meanings before arranging them in Chinese using the ABAC style. Readers can easily understand the 4K video's performance when compared to the source text, and the use of antonyms increases this function's flexibility in semantics, which not only grabs the public's attention but also effectively promotes the phone. There are many examples of using antonyms in such a way: 强大的小芯片。—AirPods Pro (*A chip with serious chops*); 身量小，能量大。— iPad mini (*Small in size. Big on capability*).

### 5. Strategies for Ad Translation in Light of the Skopos Theory

According to the Skopos Theory, the translation strategy is determined by the purpose of translation. Any translation approach or method can be used to achieve the desired function. In traditional translation theories, equivalence and loyalty are given significant weight. Equivalence and faithfulness are more important in literal translation, but these methods cannot meet the needs of advertising translation to achieve the final purpose. According to the Skopos Theory, the purpose of translation determines the

translation strategy; therefore, as long as the original text's purpose is met, any translation strategy can be used, regardless of loyalty or equivalence to the source text. As long as it serves the intended purpose for the target text receivers, a translation does not necessarily need to be loyal to or equivalent to the source text.

Given that China and English-speaking nations greatly differ from one another in terms of language, culture, and way of thinking, translators should generally use a variety of flexible strategies in their translation work. Translation methods like addition, abridgement, and rewriting can be used to produce a more satisfying outcome when translating advertisements for electronic products.

#### 5.1 Literal Translation

Literal translation refers to maintaining most of the original elements of the source text. It also uses the word-for-word translation method. Literal translation can clearly explain the surface and deep meaning of advertisements in the most direct syntax and grammar. According to the Skopos Theory, the purpose of the texts is the most important factor in translation. The dominating goal of any advertising is to promote sales and stimulate consumption. Therefore, literal translation also needs to abide by this theory. When it comes to some slogans or titles, translators usually choose a literal translation. For example:

1) *Challenge the Limits.* (Samsung)

挑战极限。

2) *Life in your hands.* (Sony)

生活握在你手中。

#### 5.2 Creative Translation

The goal of creative translation is to recreate the target text based on the source text, the target-text addressee, the intended text function, and the intended audience. The Skopos Theory states that the translator might translate into a text that conforms to the target language based on the source text and its potential meaning in order to achieve the ultimate aim of advertising translation. Sometimes, on the basis of fully understanding the inherent meaning of the ad, the innovation of rewriting it can be more attractive than the source text and finally achieve better results. For instance:

**Example 7:** *This is the phone that will change Photography.* (Samsung S20)

耀眼时尚设计，崭新拍摄体验。

If the literal method is used in this case, the translated version might be 这将是改变摄像的一台手机。Such translation is traditional and monotonous. By using the couplet 耀眼时尚设计，崭新拍摄体验, it has a significantly greater advertising effect than the literal translation version. The translator takes the initiative to expand the meaning of the source text, not only referring to shooting but also the look, which makes the ad achieve remarkable success. There are also many classic examples, for example: *A diamond is forever.* — De Bieres. 钻石恒久远，一颗永流传。

With the acceleration of economic globalization, more and more domestic brands have developed abroad. How to translate Chinese advertising texts into English is also a subject worthy of study in international trade. In C-E translation, creative translation also applies:

**Example 8:** *Explore the World, Create Your Stories.* (HUAWEI P50's camera)

三摄一体，全方位高清记录。

In this example, the translator has expanded the topic to the level of “exploring the world and recording stories”, giving it more depth, whereas the original language just highlights the camera’s function. The sentence pattern of reconciliation has both aesthetic value and deep meaning. It can be concluded from the aforementioned examples that creative translation could make the advertisement more readable and appealing than the literal translation, so as to achieve the ultimate goal of advertising.

### 5.3 Addition

Addition, another word for supplementation, refers to adding certain important words to the target text. Due to the significant differences between English and Chinese, it is not always advisable to translate source text word-for-word because this might result in advertisements that are of poor quality, ambiguous, and difficult for target audiences to understand. Thus, addition is a good choice to solve this problem. For instance:

**Example 9:** *108MP lets you pinch in. Again. And again. And again.*

1.08 亿像素超高分辨率让您拍照感知于远距，可见于微末。(Samsung S20)

In this example, the source text emphasizes its

powerful zoom function by repeating the adverb again, but it seems monotonous and unconvincing. Therefore, the translator adds again to 感知于远距，可见于微末, which means “you could feel the distance and sense the tiny things when the camera zoomed in or out”. By doing this, the target text enriches its meaning and improves its readability.

**Example 10:** *Feel the magic.* (iPad Air's keyboard)  
妙不可言，上手就知道。

In this ad, we can only get 感受魔法 from the literal translation of the source text, while the translator first translates it into 妙不可言 on the basis of understanding the product, which is more appropriate to describe an electronic product and more in line with the expression habit of Chinese. On the other hand, the translator adds 上手就知道, which means *you'll know when you get it*, which turns the tone of the sentence from the beginning into an ingeniously induced expression, which not only shortens the distance between the advertisement and target receivers but also achieves the ultimate purpose of advertising: attracting consumers and completing the purchase.

However, it's important to consider if the addition is necessary and to avoid unauthorized misinterpretations of the original text's content, which would have the opposite effect. Additionally, the added translation typically consists of words, sentences, etc. that have no real meaning; therefore, the added translation should be done in accordance with the specific situation.

## 6. Conclusion

Advertising, one of the most prominent forms of transnational marketing in today's globalized economy, is crucial to international trade because good translations of advertising can attract potential consumer groups and have a significant impact on product sales. Apple, as a multinational corporation with significant international reach, has many prominent aspects in its advertising, although in the last 30 years, some Chinese companies have ranked in the world's top 500 enterprises, but translations of Chinese advertising have not generated satisfactory results. “Faithful” and “Equivalence” are no longer sufficient to meet the needs of advertising translation practice in China. The Skopos Theory, which originated in the 1970s, has provided a better explanation for the conflict between domestication and alienation in the

history of Chinese and Western translation, as well as the formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence that have been widely discussed in translation circles in the past two or three decades. This paper analyzes the advertisement of Apple Inc. from the evaluation criterion of advertisement translation under the Skopos Theory and proves the feasibility of applying the Skopos Theory to advertising translation, at last extending to the strategies and methods of advertising translation, so as to provide more enterprises with a variety of experience in advertising translation.

Under the guidance of the Skopos Theory, the paper discusses several translation strategies that can be applied in advertisement translation: literal translation, creative translation, and addition. In addition to these methods, for Apple's products and other electronic products, translators need to maintain brand consistency: While adaptation to the target culture is necessary, advertisement translation should still maintain brand consistency. The Skopos Theory offers methods for translators to fulfill advertisement objectives while preserving the brand's image and reputation. Moreover, market research before advertisement translation becomes crucial within the framework of the Skopos Theory. Understanding the culture, market trends, and competitors' advertisement strategies in the target market can help translators better comprehend the advertisement's objectives. In the end, with the development of global economic integration, more and more Chinese enterprises are going global. Under this trend, how to translate Chinese into English is also a topic worthy of discussion. The core of the Skopos Theory is that translation is a cultural transfer, a communicative interaction, a conscious action of communication across cultural barriers, and that it serves a purpose. As a result, translators must constantly improve their abilities and skills, including their bilingual ability, familiarity with the two cultures, writing ability for advertisements, and awareness of cross-cultural communication.

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## Notes

All advertisements and their Chinese translations are taken from the official website.