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The Use of Newmark's Translation Theory in Advertising

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the application of analyzing Peter Newmark's use of translation theory in the translation of online advertisements, focusing on the application of semantic and communicative approaches. The semantic approach focuses on accuracy and fidelity to the source text, while the communicative approach emphasizes more adjusting the message so that it can be understood and received well by the target audience. The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative, by analyzing examples of online advertisements translated using both approaches. The results show that the communicative approach is more widely applied in online advertisements due to its ability to adapt the message to the local cultural context and audience preferences. The semantic approach, while still used, often faces challenges in terms of fluency and readability. In conclusion, the application of Newmark's translation theory is crucial in online advertising, with the communicative approach being more effective in ensuring the message remains relevant and persuasive in the global market.

Keywords: translation theory; online advertisement; semantic translation; communicative translation; advertisement translation

1. Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology has changed the way companies and brands interact with consumers. As expressed by Castells (2009), digital technology has enabled the creation of a network society that connects individuals, organizations, and economies around the world. One significant change is the shift from traditional advertising to online advertising that can reach a global audience quickly and efficiently. Social media platforms, websites, and mobile applications are becoming the main channels for delivering marketing messages to various audience groups around the world (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). With globalization and stark language differences, companies often need to translate their advertisements to be understood and accepted by audiences in different markets (Nida & Taber, 1969).

Online advertising translation is not just about transferring words from the source language to the target language, but also involves customizing the message to remain effective and persuasive in culturally different markets. Nida and Taber (1969) emphasize that translation must take into account the cultural context so that the message can still be well understood by the target audience. Online advertisements usually contain elements that are highly tied to cultural contexts, values and social norms, which makes the translation process more complex. Therefore, an appropriate translation theory approach is necessary to ensure that the message does not lose its meaning or persuasive effect in translation (Baker, 2011).

Peter Newmark, a renowned translation scholar, developed a translation theory that divides translation methods into two main approaches, namely semantic translation and communicative translation. Newmark (1988) explains that semantic translation focuses more on fidelity to the source text, while communicative translation prioritizes the ability to convey a message that can be well received by the target audience. In the context of online advertising, both approaches have important roles, depending on the purpose of the advertisement and the audience to be reached. As Hatim and Mason (1997) point out, translation in the context of advertising has to adjust the message so that it can still be received and understood by diverse audiences.

However, while many translation theories exist, online advertising translation often faces challenges related to language and cultural adaptations that need to be carefully considered. Baker (2011) states that the main challenge in ad translation is to keep the message engaging and persuasive, while taking cultural differences into account. A deep understanding of translation theory and its application in the context of digital marketing is becoming increasingly relevant, especially to ensure the effectiveness and success of global advertising campaigns.

This research is important because the phenomenon of globalization has led to an urgent need to ensure that marketing messages can cross language and cultural barriers without losing their essence and appeal. Translation errors in online advertising are often a source of problems, such as consumer confusion, cultural misunderstanding, and decreased trust in the brand (Baker, 2011). In the context of modern society, many companies experience challenges in delivering linguistically and culturally appropriate messages to a global audience. This suggests the need for a planned translation strategy, such as the application of Newmark's theory, to address these issues.

Based on this, the problem formulation in this study is how to apply Peter Newmark's translation theory, especially the semantic and communicative approaches, in the translation of online advertisements so that the messages remain effective and relevant in the global market?

This study aims to analyze the application of Peter Newmark's translation theory, particularly the semantic and communicative approaches, in the translation of online advertisements, and identify how they are used to ensure message effectiveness and cultural relevance in translated advertisements, so that they can be well received by a global audience. In addition, this study also aims to provide insights into the challenges faced in translating online advertisements for culturally diverse markets.

This research is expected to provide significant benefits, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this study can enrich the understanding of the application of Newmark's translation theory in the context of online advertising, and contribute to the development of translation science, especially in the field of digital marketing communication. Practically, this research can provide guidance for translators and marketing professionals in choosing the right translation approach to create effective and relevant advertisements in the global marketplace, as well as paying attention to the necessary cultural adaptations

2. Literature Review & Methods

2.1. Previous Research

A number of studies show the importance of ad translation in a global context to ensure message effectiveness and relevance. Al-Dosari (2019) highlighted the need for cultural adaptation in English-Arabic ad translation to avoid misunderstandings and increase ad appeal, while Kováčiková (2016) emphasized the importance of local context adjustment in advertising in the European market, including aspects of humor and social values. Omar (2018) explored the translation of advertisements in the tourism sector, emphasizing the use of local cultural symbols to attract consumers. Vassallo (2015) examined effective digital ad translation methods for the global market by paying attention to consumer behavior and visual elements, while Chen and Xie (2017) found that digital ad translation should include visual elements and symbols that are culturally appropriate to the target audience. These studies confirm that a successful global advertising campaign requires more than linguistic skills, it requires a deep understanding of the culture and psychology of the audience.

2.2. Concepts, Definitions, and Terms

Translation theory is the process of transferring messages between languages involving linguistic, cultural and social aspects in order to be understood by the target audience. Nida and Taber (1969) emphasize the importance of meaning transfer by considering the cultural context, while Catford (1965) highlights semantic and structural alignment in the translation process. Schaffner (1998) relates translation to marketing communication, emphasizing the importance of cultural adaptation. Vinay and Darbelnet (1995) offer techniques such as transposition to handle cultural differences in translation.

Newmark's (1988) theory develops two main approaches: semantic and communicative translation. The semantic approach emphasizes fidelity to the source text, suitable for informative texts such as legal documents, while the communicative approach focuses on audience acceptance, making the message more natural and socio- culturally appropriate. In online advertising, the communicative approach is often favored to create effective persuasive messages in a global audience.

Online advertising allows companies to efficiently reach a global audience through digital platforms. Shimp (2010) highlights the visual and interactive elements in online advertising, while Kotler and Keller (2016) emphasize the ability to personalize messages based on audience data. However, the translation of online advertising must take cultural adaptation into account, as a message that works in one market may not be effective in another without appropriate modifications.

2.3. Theory and Analysis Approach

This study utilizes Peter Newmark's (1988) translation theory, which distinguishes two main approaches: semantic and communicative translation. The semantic approach maintains fidelity to the source text, suitable for technical information, while communicative translation focuses on transferring messages that are easily accepted by the audience by taking into account local culture. In the context of online advertising, these two approaches complement each other; semantic translation is used for information accuracy, while the communicative approach is more effective for persuasively influencing consumer behavior. This research analyzes the application of both approaches to maintain message effectiveness and relevance in the global market.

2.4. Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to describe the phenomenon in depth without hypothesis testing or statistical analysis. Bodgan and Biklen (2007) explain that the qualitative approach aims to understand the context and meaning of the observed phenomenon, in accordance with this study which examines the application of translation theory in online advertising. Silverman (2013) emphasizes the importance of understanding the perspective of the subject under study, while Patton (2015) mentions that this method explores the cultural dynamics that influence translation in more depth. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) highlight that qualitative analysis helps identify patterns in phenomena holistically, relevant for understanding the complexities of ad translation.

The data source comes from online advertisements across various digital platforms, such as social media, websites, and mobile apps, with a focus on advertisements that involve translation for a global audience. Rhamadany, Lanta, and Aswadi (2024) highlighted the importance of persuasive language in business advertisements, while Pratama (2024) emphasized the need for creativity in translation to maintain the effectiveness of advertising messages. The data includes text, image and interaction elements, analyzed based on Newmark's translation theory to assess the application of semantic and communicative approaches.

The data collection technique used a documentation study as described by Creswell (2014), which involved analyzing texts, images and electronic media. This method provides varied information about online advertising translation practices, supporting the research objective of identifying relevant approaches to maintain the effectiveness of advertising messages in the global market. Based on the research of Rhamadany, Lanta, and Aswadi (2024) and Pratama (2024), here are some examples of translated sentences in advertisements:

(5) *Dengan Wardah Colorfit Series, kamu bisa always ready on cam dengan waktu yang super singkat!*

Figure 1. Wardah Colorfit advertisement

| BSu | : *It's Brrr on the Coke side of life.* |
| BSa | : Brrr di hidup ala *Coca Cola* |

Figure 2. Coca Cola advertisement

| BSu | : *With Olay Total Effect, You'll love the skin you're in.* |
| BSa | : Dengan *Olay Total Effect*, cintai kulit indahmu! |

Figure 3. Olay Total Effect advertisement

| BSu | : with UC1000, *Healthy Inside, Fresh Outside* |
| BSa | : dengan UC1000, *Healthy Inside, Fresh Outside* |

Figure 4. Advertisement UC100

The data analysis technique in this study uses content analysis to identify patterns or themes in the data, such as the application of semantic and communicative translation in online advertisements. Krippendorff (2004) explains that content analysis is a systematic method for categorizing and interpreting text in order to understand the meaning contained in the data. For data validity,

this research applies triangulation, which is comparing the results of analysis from various sources or theories. Denzin (1978) refers to triangulation as a method to increase the credibility and accuracy of findings by utilizing various techniques, sources, or theoretical perspectives, so that the research results become more valid and free from bias.

3. Result and Discussion

In this chapter, the results of the analysis of online advertisement translation will be presented based on the data obtained from various advertisements on digital platforms. The results of this analysis will discuss how the application of Newmark's translation theory, particularly semantic and communicative translation, can affect the effectiveness of the messages in the translated online advertisements.

3.1. Analysis Results

From the data obtained, the four online advertisements that have been translated and analyzed are as follows:

1. Wardah Colorfit Series Advertisement
   - Source text: "With Wardah Colorfit Series, you can always be ready on cam in no time!"
   - Subtitles: "With Wardah Colorfit Series, you can be always ready on cam in super short time!"
   - Analysis: This ad shows the application of semantic translation by retaining the phrase "always ready on cam" even though it is not translated. Nonetheless, the words "super short time" are very communicative and in line with Indonesian culture. This shows that the communicative approach is dominant, where the translator focuses on understanding the local audience.

2. Coca-Cola commercial
   - Source text: "It's Brrr on the Coke side of life"
   - Translation: "Brrr at living Coca Cola-style"
   - Analysis: This ad shows a more communicative translation. The phrase "live ala" is used to describe the lifestyle that Coca-Cola brings. This is an example of a translation that focuses not only on text fidelity but also on language and cultural adaptation to be more resonant with the Indonesian audience.

3. Olay Total Effect Ad
   - Source text: "With Olay Total Effect, you'll love the skin you're in"
   - Subtitles: "With Olay Total Effect, love your beautiful skin!"
   - Analysis: This ad reflects a more communicative and effective translation. The phrase "your beautiful skin" is more persuasive compared to literal translations that may be more confusing, such as "the skin you're in." The choice of the word "beautiful" is very appropriate for the Indonesian audience, who are often confronted with beauty values in advertising products.

4. UC1000 Advertising
   - Source text: "With UC1000, Healthy Inside, Fresh Outside"
   - Translation text: "With UC1000, Healthy Inside, Fresh Outside"
   - Analysis: This ad retains the English text without any changes. The translation is more semantic, as there is no attempt to adapt or customize the wording to the Indonesian audience. However, this use of English is more acceptable to a younger and more global audience that consumes information in English.

3.2. Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis, the translations of online advertisements show variations in the application of Newmark's translation theory, both semantic and communicative. Some ads emphasize semantic translation by maintaining fidelity to the source text, while others favor a communicative approach that is more adapted to local audiences.

1. Semantic Approach

   The semantic approach is mostly applied to ads that retain the structure and wording of the source text, such as the UC1000 ad. While the translation does not change any elements of the text, it does succeed in maintaining the impression and message of the ad, especially for audiences who are more familiar with English or younger audiences. The use of English here serves as a more global marketing tool, given that UC1000 is a product that can be sold in international markets.

2. Communicative Approach

The communicative approach is more prominent in advertisements such as Coca-Cola and Olay Total Effect. These adaptive translations focus on message effectiveness, where local cultural elements are integrated into the translation to ensure that the ad is not only comprehensible, but also more appealing and relevant to the target audience. For example, the use of "live ala" in the Coca-Cola ad gives a warmer and more relatable impression to the Indonesian audience, who are more familiar with the particular lifestyle promoted by the brand.

Meanwhile, Wardah's advertisement shows a combination of semantic and communicative approaches, where part of the text is retained in English (such as "always ready on cam"), but still inserts local cultural elements in other parts of the translation ("super short time"). This shows that the translation of advertisements takes into account not only linguistic aspects but also cultural dimensions and relevant social values.

3.3. Implications for Online Ad Translation Practice

This research shows that online advertising translation requires a deep understanding of the cultural context of the target audience. The right approach, between semantic and communicative, is crucial to ensure that the advertising message remains effective and culturally appropriate. The semantic approach can be used to represent the message faithfully and clearly, while the communicative approach provides the flexibility to customize the message to be more resonant with audiences who have different cultural backgrounds.

The importance of creativity in ad translation, as expressed by Pratama (2024), suggests that translators should be able to make adjustments that not only preserve meaning, but also embrace local elements that make the ad message more relatable. For example, the phrase "live a la Coca-Cola" in Coca-Cola advertisements is a cultural adaptation that gives a stronger impression and is more easily understood by Indonesian audiences than a literal translation

4. Conclussion

This study analyzes the application of Peter Newmark's translation theory, particularly the semantic and communicative approaches, in the translation of online advertisements. Based on the analysis of four online advertisements from various well-known brands, it can be concluded that these two approaches play an important role in ensuring message effectiveness and cultural relevance in the translated advertisements. The semantic approach is used to maintain fidelity to the source text, as seen in the UC1000 advertisement, which is effective for international audiences or those more familiar with English. This approach prioritizes direct understanding of the message. Meanwhile, the communicative approach is more dominant in Coca-Cola and Olay Total Effect ads, where translation is done by adjusting the message to make it more relevant and understandable to local audiences, taking into account cultural elements and social values prevailing in society. This shows that ad translation does not only focus on fidelity to the text, but also on cultural adaptation to ensure that the advertising message can be well received by audiences with different cultural backgrounds. Overall, the combination of semantic and communicative approaches is very effective in ensuring that online advertisements can still capture the attention of global audiences while maintaining the meaning and message. This research also emphasizes the importance of creativity in ad translation, where translators need to consider the cultural context of the audience to produce translations that are not only accurate, but also effective in marketing communication. With these findings, this study provides important insights for translators and marketing professionals to choose the right translation approach and customize advertising messages to suit global audiences with diverse cultural backgrounds.

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