

Aesthetics of Chinese Translation of English Cosmetics Brand

Wenjing QI

Tianjin University of Technology, Tianjin, 300384, CHINA

Abstract: In modern society, more and more females pay attention to their appearance and pursue beauty. They would like to use cosmetics to make them look young and beautiful. It is no exaggeration to say that the skin care products play an important role in the lives of women. According to statistics, in the Chinese market, 80 percent of the skin care products are foreign brands and they have a large share in the Chinese market. Those skin care products of foreign brands are not only be familiar by Chinese consumers, but also in hot pursuit by the Chinese consumers. This success is not only dependent on the quality of the products, but also dependent on high-profile propaganda. How to make Chinese consumers to understand, recognize and accept the foreign brands, the translation of the foreign cosmetics brand occupies a pivotal position. A good cosmetic trademark translation brings an enterprise a great success, whereas a bad one may let it suffer a great loss. This requires that the translator should be on the basis of respect for mass culture and aesthetic psychology, using the appropriate method to translate the cosmetics brand. To spread emotional factors as the leading factor, the naming of the women's cosmetics focuses on concise beauty, beautiful image, the beauty of artistic conception and creative beauty, so the translation is more in line with Chinese aesthetic taste and cultural implication. Therefore, word-for-word translation does not usually work; it often requires the creative use of transliteration, liberal translation, Zero-translation, and even creative translation to rename. This paper discusses the aesthetics of the Chinese translation of English cosmetics brand, studies the aesthetic characteristics of the cosmetics brand translation, analyzes the characteristics of the Chinese and English cosmetics brand translation and provides the methods and strategies of the English cosmetics brand translation so as to improve the ability of the cosmetics brand translation. The aim of this paper is that according to the characteristics of the cosmetics brand, using the appropriate translation method and on the basis of respecting the mass culture and aesthetic psychology, making the translation more attractive and tempting.

Keywords: Cosmetic Culture Aesthetic Features; Translation Methods; Aesthetics

1. Introduction

Since the reforming and opening up in the 1980s, the Chinese market economics is in prosperity, information technology is developed, material enriched, social ideology appeared huge transformation and people's aesthetic ideas are changing, too. People pay attention on the product performance, the price, at the same time pay more attention on personalized, vogue, and other spiritual enjoyment. Facing the huge cosmetics market, national brands would like to occupy a seat in the Chinese market one after another. For in the market competition, all the manufacturers are faced with a problem: how to better introduce their own products to the target market consumers. To expand sales channels, for more benefits, translation of the cosmetics brand advertising naturally became the top priority, the translation quality had a direct impact on the product's market share. Brand translation belongs to the advertising translation which is the translation of a strong purpose, and the goal is to maximize the brand's advertising function to attract the attention of the audiences. Driven by this purpose, the transla-

tor or the manufacturers who are in the choice of translation will no doubt be affected by the economic interests. So to cater to the target language culture, the target language aesthetic habit, to please the target language audiences will become the characteristics of cosmetics brand translation. This paper will make a preliminary study of the Chinese translation of English cosmetics brand that present out of the aesthetic characteristics and translation methods and strategies.

With the development of the society, the public has been liberated from the past aesthetic activities in a passive position and became aesthetic subject who have more independent options. The brand of a product is not only a sign of trademark, but also condensing much commodity information. It is one of the cultural and aesthetic symbols created in the progress of human society process, it is not only a deep cultural connotation, but also has the distinct aesthetic attributed. The aesthetic value embodied in all kinds of the concrete things and the images that it formed. The consumers as aesthetic subject and the commodity as an aesthetic object are dependent on each

other that constitute the aesthetic relations contradictory unity.

Mr. Fu Zhongxuan in the book *The Practical Translation Aesthetics* [1] points out that the original aesthetic composition, that is the aesthetic factors of the characteristics of the works, can be divided into two categories: the beauty of form and the beauty of content, according to their nature. The original form refers to the original language form. The original content includes the theme, the ideas, and to describe the phenomenon in the original life with aesthetic appeal of the evaluation. There is no exception of the translation of the English cosmetics brand. Its formal beauty mainly displays in language form, strong rhythm of the pronunciation, fast-paced, and has the beauty of harmonious rhythm. Its content beauty mainly displays in meaning beauty. A good translation tends to cater to people's aesthetic appeal: Brief marked, fast-paced, easy to remember, easy to read, and also the chosen words connotation is rich, beautiful artistic conception, meeting the aesthetic demands of the translation is often able to arouse people's desire to buy.

The cosmetics brand translation has two aesthetic features. First is the gentle and beautiful meaning of the words, and the concentrated words. Just as its name implies, a good name represent good commodities, "Shopping for the brand" the cognitive habit performs particularly fully today. Those good-naming commodities have often become the consumers' best-sellers. The audiences of the cosmetics brand are mainly the naturally love beauty females, so the translator will use some words which are easy to produce a better association to embody the charm of women, to attract their attention and to seize their aesthetic expectation.

The high frequency words in the investigation of the brand in Chinese are: Ya, such as Ya Zi,-ARTISTRY, Ya ShiLanDai-Estee Lauder, Ou LaiYa-L'Oreal, YaYang-Avene and so on; Lan, such as Lan Kou-Lancôme, Lan Zhi-Laneige, Jiao Lan-Guerlain, Si FuLan-Sephora and so on; Na, such as Lian NaLiZi-Nina Ricci, Mei YiNa-Duo-Menard, He LianNa-Helena, An SuNa-Anna Sui and so on; Li, such as Fu LiFangSi-FREEPLUS, Bao GeLi-BVLGARI, Bei Li-La Prairie, Ai LiBiSi-Elagbae and so on; Mei, such as Yi NaiMei-Illume, Mei BaoLian-Maybelline, Mei DiGaoSi-BEAUTE de KOSE, Mei Qi-Si-Matrix and so on; Shi, such as Jiao YunShi-Clarins, Man ShiDanBei-Marjorie Bertagne, Yue ShiFengYin-Innisfree and so on; Zi, such as Bo Zi-Payot, Wei Zi-Vichy, Zi Rui-ZA and so on. Vocabularies that rich of women's characteristics, such as words with the radical of "nv" can show the beauty of the women's appearance and body, such as Ting, Na, Jiao, E, Ji, Fei, Ni and so on; words with the radical of "cao", reminiscent of women's soft charming and beauty, such as Fang, Kou, Bei, Li, Sha, Yin, Ai, Fei, Hui and so on; words with the radical of Yu/Wang to describe the purity and modesty of the

female, such as Bi, Bao, Mei, Lin, Qi, Rui and so on. Some other words are often be used, too. Such as Lu, Quan, Bo, Nong, Ao, Yang, Qing, Si, Rou, Fu, etc [2]. These words are either used to indicate the characteristics of the products, or to make the people associated to the women's temperament that they are like water and like an orchid.

Second is the catchy melody and it should be pleasing to the ear. The name must be loud and clear, easy to be read fluently. If the pronunciation is incoherent or the rhyme is not harmonic, it will not easy to spread and even more cannot cause the consumers' attention and their buying mood. Although the Chinese characters are single syllable ideograms, but the rich changing tone, melodious rhythm and the level and oblique tones harmonious combination can make infinite charm. Chinese words have not only flexibility in the number, but also have high and low and flexibility in tones.

In the syllables, cosmetics brand translation has a certain three-syllable tendency which is different from the other two-syllable to give priority to the brand. In the translation of the collected 130 brand names, there are 65 three-syllable translation, accounting for 50%, such as Zi ShengTang-Shiseido, Ai FanDa-Aveda, Bi OuQuan-Biotherm, Ou ShuDan-L'Occitane, Bei JiaSi-Borghese, Ai MoLi-Amore, Ai WenLi-Avenir, Ge BaoTing-Calotone, etc. All are well known brands. Three-word-structure has become the catchiest expression, which maintains the "status" of these brands, shows the position of the imported goods and satisfies the women's psychology in the pursuit of beauty. Followed by the commonly used two-syllable words, there are 42 brands, in the proportion of up to 32% [3].

2. The Cosmetics Brand Naming in Both Chinese and English

2.1. Naming After People

Many foreign cosmetics brand names are from the founders of the cosmetics brand. By choosing this way it will usually be able to attract the consumers to learn more about the culture of the company's brand. As a result, the public will remember the cosmetic name and the brand founder's name. In fact, many trademarks that are in the name of their founders were passed down from generation to generation. For example:

American cosmetics: Johns', Kiels(Qi ErShi), Bobbi Brown(BoBi BuLang), Mary Kay(Mei LinKai), Elizabeth Arden(YiLiShaBai YaDun), Estee Lauder(YaShiLanDai), Anna Su(An NaSu), Helena Rubinstein(He LianNa), Calvin Klein(KaErWen KeLaiEn);

French cosmetics: Christian Dior(KeLiSiTing DiAo), Guerlain(JiaoLan), Borghese(BeiJiaSi), L'Oréal(OuLaiYa);

Other countries' cosmetics: Dr. Richia (Japan), Ponds (Germany)(PangShi), Sisley (Germany)(XiSiLi).

In China, there are also many cosmetics that are named after people, for example, Doctor Lee(Li YiSheng), Doctor Bai(Bai DaiFu), Da Bao, Mininurse(Xiao HuShi), YUE-SAI(Yu Xi), CMM(Zheng MingMing) and so on. Different with the foreign cosmetics brands, the domestic brands are usually formed of the surname in addition to the occupation or nickname, such as "Doctor Lee" and "Mininurse".

2.2. Naming After the Local Area

In English, naming after the local area is called "Toponym". It can be named after the name of the village, town, or simply the address where the goods are produced. About the cosmetic brand, to name after the local area can more suggest that the cosmetic is made by the natural materials.

Vichy (WeiZi), for example, the well-known French cosmetic brand is a good example. Vichy, a city in the middle of France, is located in the southeast of Paris. The mineral springs in Vichy make it become the most famous spa city in Europe. In addition to the bottled Vichy mineral water, medicine, cloth and cosmetics are all produced here. From its brand name, it is easy for the people to imagine that the mineral water is the main material of Vichy. And Vichy, with its famous hot springs producing area, has promoted its product sales.

There are many other French cosmetics that are named by using this method, such as "Biotherm"(Bi OuQuan), "Uriage"(Yi Yun), "Avene"(Ya Yang), etc. These cosmetics are all named after the small towns or small cities where are famous for the mineral water and the hot springs. "Lancôme"(Lan Kou), another famous French cosmetic brand, its brand name is also originated from a castle called "Lancôme" in central France, where growing with a variety of roses there. All the people who had been there, including Lancôme's founder, are deeply in love with the castle. So its founder, who learned from the natural inspiration, gave its brand a romantic name "Lancôme".

The American brand "Avon"(Ya Fang) is in this way take Shakespeare's hometown Stratford-on-Avon, a river, as its brand name. And the reason is that the founder of Avon is in the worship of and respect for the great English playwright Shakespeare.

2.3. Naming After Image on Animals and Plants

Many domestic cosmetics trademarks translation have borrowed the beautiful images of the animals to attract the attention of the consumers, and they give the product a good reputation or a symbolic significance. "Pehchaolin" (Bai QueLing), "Phoenix" (Feng Huang) are the examples of this [4]. The brands that named after the plants are "BEE&FLOWER" (Feng

Hua), "Violet" (Zi LuoLan), and the translators named the brands with these plants are in order to tell the consumers that the product uses pure natural materials which has no side effects. The cosmetics that named after "grass" are usually based on the mysterious ancient prescriptions, which leaving the consumers a deep impression, and it is this kind of cosmetics that is the carefully selected precious herbal extracts. The cosmetic "HERBORIST"(Bai CaoJi) intended to show that its cosmetic products are made by all kinds of traditional Chinese herbs extraction.

2.4. Naming After the Product Component and Composition

"Skullcap"(Huang Cen) is not only a kind of domestic cosmetic brand, but it is also a kind of natural herb ointment which can treat eczema, psoriasis and all the other kinds of skin disease[5]. Since ancient times it is widely used, and up to now in many Asian countries it is still the common pharmacy to treat many kinds of skin disease. In southern China, people use Pien Tze Huang, pearl powder and other herbs to make the "Pien Tze Huang Pearl Cream"(PianZaiHuangZhenZhuShuang). From the name of this product we can see its components, and we can know that these components can effectively reduce the skin fine wrinkles, dilute the freckle and especially the acne.

From the above examples we can see the common features of the naming of the Chinese and western cosmetics brand. Even the names, the common words or compounds are used in the Chinese and western cosmetics brand names. Generally speaking, a trend of English cosmetics brand is that people pay more attention to the pronunciation of the brand name, not the meaning of the brand. If the brand sounds sweet and easy to remember, the brand is considered to be successful. And domestic cosmetics brands pay more attention to its brand name rather than its word meaning, therefore, the name that can inspire people's aesthetic association is always favored by people.

In the view of the differences between the Chinese and western cosmetics names, when so much foreign brands are translated into Chinese brand names, they should give more consideration to meet consciously the requirements of the people in this regard. Only in this way can they better attract the Chinese female consumers, so as to achieve business objectives.

3. Translation Strategy of Cosmetics Brand

Aesthetics is the study of beauty and taste, whether in the form of comic, the tragic, or the sublime. In short, Aesthetics is the Philosophy of Art, Beauty and Perception. Cosmetics names of products could be better accepted and memorized when they meet consumer's aesthetic standard. Therefore, when we translate the English cosmetics brand we should take aesthetics as translation

strategy. The beauty of cosmetics name mainly shows in three aspects: associative meaning, sound and form.

3.1. Association Produces the Beauty of Artistic Conception

The beauty of artistic conception refers mainly to the name of the product can make the person produces abundant association, trademark name to people's psychological influence is very complicated. If the brand name is proper and can adapt to the demands of the consumers' psychology, it will cause the people's interest, and arouse their purchasing desire. This requires the translator to make its translation produce beneficial association and create the aesthetic taste in the course of translation as far as possible. The famous brand of Shanghai "Mei JiaJing" benefited from the characteristics of ideographic Chinese words, take the idea of "beauty and add more clean", if it is translated as "BEAUTIFUL-CLEAN" it will seem excessively procrastination and lengthy, and do not conform to the trademark's concise aesthetic characteristics. But the translation MAXAM, its pronunciation is close to MAXIMUM (maximization), which can make a person produce the endless fancy to the product, "maximize" perhaps means that the cleanser washed the most clean, and the lotion is the moist. The beneficial association of such a brand name won the product a lot of the consumers' favor.

And as one of the three big European skin care brand, BIODERM the translation of "Bi OuQuan", is the perfect combination of sound, shape, and meaning. The connotation of the brand name in source language is rich, "Bio-" means the skin's life, "-therm" is refers to the mineral springs, because in the southern French mountains there is a kind of mineral springs, which to the human body, especially to the skin has the special effect, and the organic active factor of the products P.E.T.P TM is just extracted from the mineral springs. And in the Chinese translation, "Bi" reminiscent of blue sky and blue water, "Ou", "Quan" refer to the birthplace of the products. The design of the trademark gives priority to the color of blue, which gives a person the feeling of fresh and natural, elegant and pure. Another example is that, "Be True" is a cleansing cosmetic, which is translated as "Bing Chun", the two syllables of English translated into the two syllables of Chinese characters, and its meaning is more appropriate, which gives people a refreshing sense of pure and noble, immaculate.

3.2. Voice Produces the Formal Beauty

The beauty of form mainly refers to phonological beauty and glyph beauty of the name of commodity. For example, the famous American cosmetic Maybelline, its Chinese translation is called "MeiBaoLian". "Mei" implies its function, "Lian" implies its effect, the two words take both its sounds and its meaning, and the

pronunciation is aloud, the implied meaning is beautiful, all that can be regarded as a first-rate. Another example is the Japanese skin care product, Clean & Clear, the original name of the product intend to mean "clean and fresh", and its Chinese translation is called "KeLingKe-Li". It not only used the homophones of the original name, but also used the alliteration in Chinese properly. In reading, the sound is clear and melodious; the rhythm is much lively, the translation is the most appropriate as the girls' skin care product. The translation of skin care products that followed the glyph beauty principle: French skin care products, Clarin, the Chinese called "JiaoYunShi", "Jiao", "Yun" the two words embodies the beauty of femininity, plus the word "Shi 诗" appeals to the imagination, and leaves a good impression to women. Similarly, LANCOME(LanKou), Ardor (YaDai), VICHY (WeiZi), AVON(YaFang), ARCHE(YaQian), Olay(YuLanYou), Menard(MeiYiNaDuo), etc adopt "fang", "dai", "shi", "lan", "yu", "zi" these Chinese characters, catering to the women's consumption concept, which will no doubt bring the merchants a great benefits.

3.3. Attention on the Cross-cultural Transformation

As a symbol the brand names have certain common characteristic in the product propaganda, but the national cultural have brought a lot of differences, too. For example, once a translator translated a cosmetic into FANG-FANG BABY TALCUM POWDER [6], "FANG" in this is as "FANG" the Chinese alphabet, its itself is a word in English, it is the snake's "fangs", but not the wonderful "fragrant". In this way, "FANGFANG" talcum powder becomes "the fangs powder". I propose that the translation should be "FRAGRANCE". Considering the different culture emotional color on the same thing may be different, the translator should be in the process of translating more about the language of the cultural factors, and then to consciously flexible, reap-pear its emotional color.

3.4. Cater to the Consumption Psychology

Consumers may have different psychological tendency in their shopping, even if they are in the same age and sex. Because of their culture and the education they accepted, because of the different environments they growled, they also have different psychological tendencies when they are shopping. Most ladies prefer the style of trademarks which can show their femininity, romantic temperament, elegance and kind, such as Safeguard (ShuFuJia), the cleaning product, seems to find all the women who care for their skin their bodyguard, cater to the women's psychological needs that they like to be protected and have a sense of security. Therefore, the trademark designers will have a thorough psychological investigation and analysis on the products sale market, the target customer, and the

audiences' psychology, and then have the process of creating and positioning.

4. Methods of Cosmetics Brand Translation

The translation of the brand name is a process of conversion and recycling, the pursuit of the same value of information is the key factor of a successful translation [7].

4.1. Transliteration

Transliteration is the practice of converting a text from one writing system into another in a systematic way. And here it means that according to the pronunciation of the target language just translate the cosmetics brands names into the Chinese characters with the similar pronunciation. "Maybelline", for example, it will be translated into "Mei BaoLian" in Chinese. Every word has a special meaning; "Mei" means it will make the women who use its products to become beautiful; "Lian" refers to the lotus, which shows that its cosmetic effect will make the consumers look like a beautiful lotus, which is natural and refreshing. All these indicate that its function is to allow the consumers to be more beautiful than before.

"Clean&Clear" is a good example, too. If the brand is translated into "Gan Jing Qing Shuang", it will lose the beauty of translation. This brand is translated into "Ke Ling Ke Li", same as its original name, it uses the rhetorical device of alliteration, also have a similar original pronunciation. And people will always be aware of the brand of its target consumers are cute young girls.

"Dove", the original meaning is the pigeons, in foreign this is a gentle and lovely symbol. But in China, the pigeon is just a kind of birds. As the skin beauty products, if it is translated into "pigeon", it is difficult to be accepted for the public. Therefore, in China it is translated into "Duo fen", which means more fragrance.

There are many more examples: "EsteeLauder" was translated into "Ya ShiLanDai", "SISTEIN" was "Xi SiTing", "Elizabeth Arden" was "Yi LiShaBai.YaDun", etc.

4.2. Liberal Translation

It refers to translate the brand name according to its original brand connotation, in favor of the consumers to remember the brand. Compared with transliteration, liberal translation pays a greater respect for the cultural and aesthetic values of the different countries. For example, cosmetic "BIOCEAN" was translated into "BiOuQuan". "BIO" means "biology", "OCEAN" means "the sea", which extends the beauty of the Marine life to the beauty of the nature, but if it uses transliteration, it will be translated into "Bi Ao Xi Ang", which appears cumbersome and not elegant, but "BiOuQuan" avoids these defects.

"Uriage" is a cosmetic name, also a name of a hot spring in the Alps Mountains, where the hot spring is

specially used in the treatment of skin problems. As a cosmetic brand, "Yi Quan" is a very good translation. At the same time, the translation of the brand also shows the composition of the cosmetic and the function of the product.

4.3. Creative Translation Method

Creative translation accounts that transliteration and liberal translation all have part of the defects, in order to achieve the perfect combination of sound and meaning, the translators create another word or phrase to fully display the function of the products. Let's take "Plantesystem" for example. This brand is produced by the largest medical cosmetic factory in France. Its meaning in Chinese is "plant system". But the translator translated it into "Ou BiCui". This transformation not only makes the consumers feel good, but also stresses that this is the one that from the European plants as raw materials.

4.4. No Translation

No translation can also be called Zero-translation, it means that not to translate, just use its original name. According to the Trademark

Law of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese characters, the minority language, and the foreign words and letters can be registered as the trademarks [8]. With the rapid expansion of the Chinese market, more and more foreign cosmetics manufacturers registered the trademarks and brand names directly in China. This can not only save the translation costs, but also ensure the brand's exotic. The "VOV", "HR", "DHC", "SK-II", "ZA" are the typical examples.

All these four methods of cosmetics brand translation existed objectively, but their function and effect are not very the same. Transliteration is very easy, but it can neither show the brands' characteristics, nor express the meaning of the brand name. Liberal translation expressed the positive associative meaning, but it has no relationship between its sound and meaning. So I think, to integrate the translation methods is the best way to translate a good, beautiful cosmetic brand name.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, a successful translation of a cosmetic trademark can not only convey the connotation of the original trademark, but more can on the basis of strengthen and sublimation so as to reach the realm of beauty. Therefore, the translation of cosmetics brand is no longer a simple translation of the word. In the translation of the cosmetics trademarks, the translators must consider the object of the consumption, must consider their cultural psychology and aesthetic habits of the object of consumption, and must pay special attention to that the translation cannot generate dislocation with aesthetic consciousness of the

target market readers. At the same time, the translation of the cosmetics brand must do to highlight the theme, have distinctive personality, full of poetic words; the diction and the choice of words should be tidy and have the harmonious rhyme. This requires the translators a deep understanding of the culture of the two countries and explore certain regularity, adopt various and flexible translation method, to make the translation of the cosmetics brand names appropriate and charming. And on the basis of respecting the mass culture and aesthetic psychology, making the translation more attractive and tempting, so as to achieve the effect of stimulating the consumption.

References

- [1] Belch, George & Michael Belch. Advertising and Promotion-An Integrated Marketing Communication Perspective. [M]. 1998, 615-636.
- [2] Blackett, Tom. Trademarks. [M]. 1998, 7-39.
- [3] Franzosi, Mario. European Community Trade Mark-Commentary to the European Community Regulation. [M]. 1997, 209-222.
- [4] Myers, Greg. Ad Worlds-Brands, Media, Audience. [M]. 1998, 55-71.
- [5] He Chuansheng. American language new industry report: brand naming. [J]. Contemporary Linguistics. 2003, (1):41-53.
- [6] Huang Yueyuan, Chan Allan KK, Wei Zhiqiang. The Linguistic Characteristics in Chinese Brand Naming. [J]. Applied Linguistics. 2003, (3):81-89.
- [7] Long Senxiang. On the Brand Name's Translation from Chinese to English in Perspective of its Function. [J]. Journal of Yulin Teachers College. 2005, 26(4).
- [8] TENG Yan jiang. The Phenomenon of Cultural Aphasia in C-E Trademark Translation. [J]. Shandong Foreign Languages Journal. 2004, (1):95-96.
- [9] Fu Zhongxuan. The Practical Translation Aesthetics. [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai foreign language education press. 1993.6.