

Functionality of Promotional and Advertising Texts: Pragmatic Implications for English-Arabic Translation

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Abstract : In business promotion and advertising, language is used intentionally to create a powerful influence over people and their behavior. In commercial and marketing activities, the choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people is pragmatically important. Design and visual content in promotional and advertising texts also have a great persuasive impact on consumers. It is the functional combination of design, language and visual content that helps people to identify a product or service and remember it. Translating promotional and advertising texts between structurally and culturally different languages, such as English and Arabic, usually involves pragmatic/functional shifts that decide the quality of translation. This study explores some of these shifts in translating promotional and advertising texts between English and Arabic and their implications for translation quality. The study is based on a contrastive analysis of data collected from real samples of English-Arabic translations of promotional and advertising texts. The samples cover different promotional and advertising text types and different business domains. The aim is to identify the most recurrent translation shifts and most used translation approaches/strategies that achieve quality in view of the functional nature of promotional and advertising texts and target language culture conventions. The study shows that linguistic shifts and visual shifts are recurrent in English-Arabic translations of promotional and advertising texts. The study also shows that the most commonly used translation approaches/strategies are functional translation, domestication, communicative translation.

Keywords : advertising, Arabic, English, functional translation, promotion

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