



A Comparative Study on the Translation of Automotive Marketing Texts Based on an Automotive English Corpus

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Abstract

This study aims to construct an automotive English corpus to comprehensively compare the differences between English automotive marketing texts and their Chinese translations. The objective is to reveal challenges and opportunities in cultural and contextual translation. The research holds significant importance for understanding the impact of cross-cultural communication in the automotive market and providing more effective translation strategies for multinational automotive manufacturers. Through corpus analysis, focusing on common marketing phrases and text features, employing both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods, and examining the accuracy, naturalness, and cultural adaptability of translated texts, we delve into the similarities and differences in conveying automotive information between the two languages. The study finds that expressive and emotional expressions commonly used in English automotive contexts may encounter challenges in Chinese translations due to language and cultural differences. This necessitates the adoption of more flexible translation strategies. Additionally, Chinese translations tend to emphasize the practicality and safety of products more than their English counterparts, placing a greater emphasis on technical and functional descriptions. The primary conclusion of this research is that the translation of automotive marketing texts requires heightened cross-cultural sensitivity and an understanding of the target audience. When translating automotive advertisements and promotions, translators should consider consumer expectations and cultural values in different contexts to ensure the effectiveness and adaptability of the translation. Furthermore, the formulation of more flexible translation strategies, integrating local culture and market demands, will contribute to enhancing the image and influence of automotive brands in the international market. Through this study, we provide deeper insights for automotive manufacturers, assisting them in leveraging the power of language for successful global market penetration.

Keywords: English corpus, marketing texts, translation of automotive advertisements

1 Introduction

Driven by the wave of globalization, the automotive market is no longer a playing field confined to a single country or region; it has become a global stage where numerous multinational companies compete for market share. Automotive marketing texts, as the “vanguard” in this intense competition, bear multiple responsibilities, including shaping brand image, conveying product information, and communicating with consumers. A precise marketing slogan or an engaging product description can often give a company a competitive edge in a rapidly changing market environment.

However, the creation and dissemination of automotive marketing texts are not easy tasks. In particular, within the context of international markets, the cultural differences, linguistic habits, and consumer psychology of different countries and regions pose significant challenges to the effectiveness and appeal of marketing texts. This is especially true for the translation between English and Chinese. English, as the lingua franca of international communication, often features highly specialized and creative automotive marketing texts. In contrast, Chinese, the most widely spoken language in the world, has markedly different expressive habits and aesthetic preferences from English. Therefore, achieving smooth translation between English and Chinese automotive marketing texts while retaining the essence of the original text has become a subject worthy of in-depth study.

The purpose of this study is to reveal the challenges and opportunities in the translation process by comparing automotive marketing texts in English and Chinese linguistic environments. By deeply analyzing the cultural differences, linguistic habits, and consumer psychology behind the texts, we aim to provide targeted market strategies and cultural adaptation suggestions for multinational automotive manufacturers. Simultaneously, we hope this study will offer effective methods and guiding principles for practitioners translating automotive marketing texts between English and Chinese.

From a broader perspective, the significance of this study extends beyond the automotive industry or the field of translation studies. In the context of globalization, any multinational enterprise might face similar market challenges and cultural conflicts. Therefore, the methodology and conclusions of this study are of important reference value for companies in other industries regarding marketing strategies and cultural adaptation in international markets. Furthermore, with the continuous development of technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, this study could provide beneficial data support and improvement directions for the application of machine translation in specific fields like automotive marketing texts.

This study aims to explore the challenges and opportunities in the translation process by comparing English and Chinese automotive marketing texts, providing useful insights for the market strategies and cultural adaptation of multinational automotive manufacturers. We believe that through continuous efforts and exploration, we can achieve more precise and effective dissemination of automotive marketing texts in the context of globalization, making a due contribution to the sustained development of the automotive industry and international communication.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Current State of Research on Automotive Marketing Text Translation

Internationally, with the continuous development of the automotive industry, the translation of automotive marketing texts has gradually become a hotspot in the field of translation studies. Researchers have delved into this topic from various perspectives, such as functional equivalence theory, cross-cultural communication theory, and corpus linguistics. These studies aim to explore how to effectively convey automotive marketing texts in target language markets while retaining the original meaning. Scholars abroad have achieved substantial results in this field, providing valuable experiences and insights.

In comparison, domestic research on automotive marketing text translation started relatively late but has been developing rapidly. Chinese scholars, drawing on international research findings and considering the actual conditions of the Chinese market, have explored localized translation strategies and methods for automotive marketing texts. These studies not only consider linguistic conversion but also fully account for cultural and market factors, making the translations more aligned with Chinese consumers' aesthetic and psychological expectations. As the domestic automotive market continues to expand and consumer demands diversify, Chinese researchers have also made continuous breakthroughs in the practicality, applicability, and innovativeness of automotive marketing text translation.

2.2 Application of Corpus Linguistics in Translation Studies

Corpus linguistics, a discipline based on real-life linguistic data, has been increasingly applied in translation studies. By establishing large bilingual or multilingual corpora, researchers can conduct in-depth comparative analyses of the original texts and their translations, thereby uncovering patterns and trends in the translation process. In the translation of automotive marketing texts, corpus linguistics provides researchers with objective, quantitative tools and methods for analysis. For instance, researchers can understand the linguistic features and expressive habits of automotive marketing texts in different languages by retrieving and analyzing high-frequency words, collocation patterns, and sentence structures in the corpus. This data supports the formulation of more precise translation strategies. Additionally, corpora can help researchers identify issues such as mistranslations and omissions, thereby improving translation quality.

2.3 The Guiding Significance of Cross-Cultural Communication Theory in Marketing Text Translation

Cross-cultural communication theory emphasizes the importance of considering the cultural background, values, and cognitive styles of the target audience in cross-cultural interactions. This theory is particularly significant in the translation of automotive marketing texts. Firstly, translators need to possess cross-cultural sensitivity and communication skills to accurately identify and handle cultural information and differences in the original text. Secondly, the translation process should fully consider the target audience's reception capacity and aesthetic preferences, choosing appropriate translation strategies and methods to achieve

cultural and market adaptation between the original and translated texts. Specifically, translators can address cultural differences through domestication or foreignization strategies and achieve alignment with the target audience's aesthetic preferences by adjusting language style and rhetorical techniques. Furthermore, post-translation localization adjustments and optimizations are necessary to ensure that the translation fits the cultural environment and consumer psychology of the target market. This not only enhances the dissemination effect and market competitiveness of the translation but also promotes international cultural exchange and the development of the automotive industry.

In summary, the translation of automotive marketing texts, as a complex interdisciplinary research field, has yielded fruitful results through the joint efforts of scholars at home and abroad. By drawing on international research findings and experiences, applying advanced research tools and methods such as corpus linguistics, and fully considering cultural and market factors under the guidance of cross-cultural communication theory, we are confident in advancing the field of automotive marketing text translation in the context of globalization, achieving new and greater breakthroughs.

3 Theoretical Framework and Research Methods

3.1 Theoretical Foundation

This study mainly constructs its theoretical framework based on cross-cultural communication theory and translation equivalence theory. Cross-cultural communication theory emphasizes considering cultural differences between the source and target languages in the translation process and how these differences affect information transmission and reception. This theory provides guiding principles for handling cultural differences and ensuring effective dissemination of translated texts in the target language culture.

Translation equivalence theory focuses on the equivalence between source and target texts, including lexical, syntactic, textual, and stylistic equivalence. Achieving these equivalences is crucial for preserving the original information, style, and intent in the translated text. However, due to significant differences in vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric between English and Chinese, complete equivalence is often challenging. Therefore, under the guidance of translation equivalence theory, this study will explore how to achieve optimal equivalence between English and Chinese automotive marketing texts while retaining the essence of the original text.

3.2 Research Methods

This study adopts corpus analysis as the primary research method, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to explore the characteristics of English automotive marketing texts and their Chinese translations.

Regarding the corpus, although the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) is a widely used English corpus, this study will construct a specialized automotive English corpus as the research foundation, considering its generality and broad scope. This corpus will collect automotive marketing texts covering various brands and models, ensuring the data's professionalism, representativeness, and specificity. Additionally, the corresponding Chinese

translations of these texts will be collected to form a parallel corpus for in-depth comparative analysis.

In the quantitative analysis, this study will use corpus analysis tools to conduct multi-level comparative analyses of the vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric of English automotive marketing texts and their Chinese translations. Techniques such as word frequency statistics and keyword extraction will reveal differences in vocabulary usage between English and Chinese automotive marketing texts. Methods such as syntactic structure comparison and dependency analysis will explore the distinctive features of sentence construction in both languages. Rhetorical device identification and sentiment analysis will uncover similarities and differences in expressive effects. These quantitative data will provide robust support for subsequent qualitative analyses.

In the qualitative analysis, this study will interpret and discuss the results of the quantitative analysis in depth through examples. By comparing specific automotive marketing texts and their translations, it will explore the challenges and opportunities in the translation process, summarizing effective translation strategies and methods. Furthermore, surveys and interviews will be conducted to collect target audience feedback on the acceptability and reception of translated automotive marketing texts, validating and refining the study's conclusions.

In conclusion, under the guidance of cross-cultural communication theory and translation equivalence theory, this study will deeply investigate the characteristics and patterns of English automotive marketing texts and their Chinese translations through the combined methods of corpus analysis, quantitative, and qualitative analyses.

4 Construction and Analysis of the Automotive English Corpus

4.1 Corpus Construction Process

Data Sources: The primary task in constructing the automotive English corpus is to determine the data sources. Considering the professionalism and representativeness of the corpus, this study collected automotive marketing texts from multiple channels, including but not limited to official websites of car manufacturers, car advertisements, magazine articles, social media marketing posts, and press releases. These texts cover various brands, models, and market segments, ensuring the diversity and breadth of the corpus.

Selection Criteria: After collecting a large amount of raw text, this study set strict selection criteria. First, texts unrelated to automotive marketing or with low relevance were filtered out to ensure the thematic focus of the corpus. Second, the quality and completeness of the texts were assessed, with incomplete, error-prone, or unclear texts being excluded. Finally, considering the timeliness of the corpus, texts from recent years were prioritized to reflect the latest trends in automotive marketing and language expression.

Preprocessing: Preprocessing is a crucial step in corpus construction. This study conducted multiple rounds of cleaning and standardization of the filtered texts. This included removing irrelevant information (e.g., slogans, copyright information), standardizing text formats (e.g., font, case, punctuation), and performing linguistic processing such as tokenization and part-of-speech tagging. Additionally, to ensure the comparability and

consistency of the corpus, this study aligned the English and Chinese texts to form a parallel corpus.

4.2 Characteristics and Representativeness Analysis of the Corpus

The carefully constructed automotive English corpus has the following notable characteristics:

1. High Professionalism: The corpus consists entirely of texts from the automotive marketing field, encompassing a rich variety of professional vocabulary and expressions.
2. Good Timeliness: The corpus mainly includes texts from recent years, reflecting the latest market trends and language changes.
3. Prominent Diversity and Representativeness: The corpus covers texts from different brands, models, and market segments, providing a comprehensive display of the linguistic features and styles of automotive marketing texts.

Regarding representativeness, this study validated the corpus through a combination of statistical analysis and expert evaluation. Statistical analysis showed that the lexical distribution, sentence structures, and other features of the corpus highly matched the overall characteristics of automotive marketing texts. Expert evaluation further confirmed the representativeness and typicality of the corpus in terms of content, style, and expressions. These results indicate that the constructed automotive English corpus is of high quality and reliability, effectively supporting subsequent analyses and research work.

4.3 Extraction and Classification of Common Automotive Marketing Terms and Text Features

Based on the constructed automotive English corpus, this study further extracted and classified common automotive marketing terms and text features. Using quantitative methods such as word frequency analysis and keyword extraction, this study identified a set of high-frequency words and phrases in automotive marketing texts, such as “performance”, “luxury”, and “innovation”. These words and phrases constitute the core vocabulary of automotive marketing, which is significant for understanding and analyzing automotive marketing texts.

Additionally, this study conducted an in-depth analysis of the sentence structures and rhetorical devices used in automotive marketing texts. The results showed the frequent use of complex and long sentences, as well as rhetorical devices such as parallelism and metaphors. These textual features not only enhance the attractiveness and persuasiveness of the texts but also elevate brand image and product recognition. By extracting and classifying these textual features, this study provides robust support and reference for subsequent research on automotive marketing text translation and cross-cultural communication.

5. Comparative Analysis of English and Chinese Automotive Marketing Texts

5.1 Language Characteristics of Marketing Texts

Lexical Level:

In English automotive marketing texts, specialized terms are frequently used to describe technical characteristics and performance of cars, such as “horsepower” and “torque.” These terms also have corresponding professional vocabulary in Chinese texts.

Adjectives and adverbs are extensively used in English automotive marketing texts to enhance vividness and appeal, such as “sleek” and “powerful”. In Chinese texts, similar effects might be achieved using four-character idioms or set phrases.

Syntactic Level:

English automotive marketing texts often employ complex sentences to convey rich information and use passive voice to emphasize product features or advantages. Conversely, Chinese texts tend to use simple sentences and active voice to maintain fluency and readability.

In terms of sentence structure, English texts may exhibit more variation, employing a range of sentence types to enhance rhythm and appeal. Chinese texts, however, may focus more on parallelism and antithesis for rhetorical effect.

Rhetorical Level:

Both English and Chinese automotive marketing texts widely use rhetorical devices to enhance appeal and persuasiveness, such as metaphors and personification. However, the choice and use of specific rhetorical devices may differ; for instance, English texts might favor metaphors, whereas Chinese texts might prefer similes.

5.2 Cultural Differences in Texts

Value Differences: English automotive marketing texts may emphasize values such as individualism, freedom, and adventure, reflecting a focus on vehicle performance and driving experience. In contrast, Chinese texts might stress family values and harmony, thus mentioning vehicle space comfort and safety more frequently.

Consumer Psychology Differences: Consumers in English-speaking countries might prioritize product quality and brand image, leading to marketing texts that highlight product uniqueness and premium branding. Chinese consumers might focus more on cost-effectiveness and practicality, resulting in texts that emphasize price discounts and rich features.

Aesthetic Preferences Differences: English automotive marketing texts may feature a more concise and grand visual design, focusing on overall visual impact. Chinese texts might emphasize detailed depiction and emotional resonance, aiming for cultural harmony with the target audience.

5.3 Analysis of Translation Strategies

In translating automotive marketing texts between English and Chinese, strategies like literal translation, free translation, and creative translation all have their places and effects.

Literal Translation: This involves retaining the original form and meaning, suitable for translating professional terms and brand names. However, literal translation can sometimes result in awkward or hard-to-understand text, so it should be used carefully.

Free Translation: This maintains the original meaning while adjusting the form to suit the target language’s expression habits. It’s appropriate for sentence structures and rhetorical devices, ensuring the translation is smooth and natural while preserving the essence and style

of the original text.

Creative Translation: This involves creative rewriting or restructuring to fit the target culture's needs and aesthetic preferences. It's useful for handling texts with significant cultural differences, making the translation more culturally relevant and effective. However, care must be taken not to excessively alter the original meaning and style.

In practice, the choice of translation strategy should be flexible, based on specific contexts to achieve the best translation and communication effects.

6 Case Studies in Translation

6.1 Comparative Analysis of Typical Automotive Marketing Texts

To explore translation issues in automotive marketing texts more concretely, this study selected several representative texts from different brands and market segments for comparative analysis.

Example 1: An English marketing text for a luxury car brand emphasizes keywords like "luxury," "performance," and "innovation," using complex and long sentences to convey rich information. Rhetorical devices such as metaphors and parallelism enhance the text's appeal and persuasiveness. In the Chinese translation, the main information and style are retained, using four-character phrases and idioms to align with Chinese expression habits, making the translation smooth and natural while conveying a sense of luxury and technology.

Example 2: An English marketing text for a family car brand focuses on "safety," "comfort," and "fuel efficiency," using simple sentences and active voice for fluency and readability. Rhetorical devices such as similes and personification enhance vividness and imagery. The Chinese translation also emphasizes these aspects, using language forms that resonate with Chinese consumer aesthetics, such as "warm family," and "energy-saving and environmentally friendly," making the translation culturally relevant and aligned with consumer needs.

Comparative analysis of these typical texts and their translations reveals differences in vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric between English and Chinese, and how these differences impact translation. It also showcases the strategies and techniques translators use to address these differences and the effectiveness of these strategies in practice.

6.2 Discussion of Translation Challenges and Strategies

There are common challenges in translating automotive marketing texts, such as translating professional terms, handling cultural differences, and reproducing rhetorical devices. This study proposes corresponding strategies to address these challenges.

For translating professional terms, translators need solid professional knowledge and rich translation experience to ensure accuracy and consistency. They should also use specialized dictionaries and online translation tools to improve efficiency and quality.

For handling cultural differences, translators should deeply understand the cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences of both source and target languages to avoid cultural misunderstandings or conflicts. Specific strategies like domestication or foreignization can be used to better integrate the translation into the target culture.

For reproducing rhetorical devices, translators should be familiar with common rhetorical devices in both languages and their effects. Flexible use of translation techniques can help reproduce the original text's rhetorical impact. Strategies like literal, free, or creative translation can be employed to handle the conversion of metaphors, personification, and other rhetorical devices between English and Chinese.

6.3 Criteria and Methods for Evaluating Translation Effectiveness

To evaluate the effectiveness of automotive marketing text translations, this study uses the following criteria and methods:

First, from the lexical level, evaluate the accuracy and consistency of the translation. This involves checking whether professional terms are translated correctly and whether common words are translated smoothly and naturally, in line with the target language's expression habits.

Second, from the syntactic level, assess the fluency and readability of the translation. This involves checking if the sentence structure is clear and reasonable and if it conforms to the target language's grammatical norms. Sentence length and complexity should be appropriate for easy understanding and acceptance by readers.

Finally, from the rhetorical level, evaluate the expressive effect and appeal of the translation. This involves checking whether the original rhetorical devices are appropriately reproduced or converted in the translation, whether the overall style of the translation aligns with the original or innovatively diverges, and whether the translation is attractive and persuasive enough to resonate with and interest the target audience.

In terms of evaluation methods, this study combines quantitative and qualitative analysis. Quantitative analysis involves comparing objective indicators like word frequency and sentence length between the original text and the translation to assess translation quality. Qualitative analysis involves inviting professionals or target audience members to subjectively evaluate the translation to gather opinions and feedback for further refinement and optimization of translation strategies and methods.。

7 Research Results and Discussion

7.1 Main Findings

Common Issues in Translation

In the process of translating automotive marketing texts, this study identified several common issues. Firstly, inaccuracies at the lexical level were noted, including errors in translating technical terms and unnatural translations of ordinary vocabulary. These issues might stem from a lack of professional knowledge or insufficient translation experience on the part of the translator. Secondly, there were syntactic problems such as confusing sentence structures and grammatical errors, likely due to significant syntactic differences between the source and target languages and the translator's inability to adequately address these differences. Lastly, there were issues at the rhetorical level, including improper reproduction of rhetorical devices and inconsistencies in style between the original text and the translation. These issues might arise from the translator's insufficient understanding of the original text's

rhetorical devices and cultural connotations or from a lack of proficiency in translation techniques.

Impact of Cultural Differences on Translation:

The study also found that cultural differences significantly affect the translation of automotive marketing texts. Due to varying cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences between the source and target languages, the same text can be interpreted and received differently in different cultural contexts. Therefore, translators need to fully consider the cultural background and consumer needs of the target audience, adopting appropriate translation strategies and techniques to handle cultural differences. This ensures that the translated text integrates well into the target cultural environment and resonates with the audience.

7.2 Significance of the Results

Implications for Automotive Manufacturers' Market Strategies:

The results of this study offer important insights for automotive manufacturers' market strategies. Firstly, manufacturers need to thoroughly understand the cultural background and consumer needs of their target market to develop marketing strategies and texts that align with local consumer preferences. Secondly, they need to prioritize the quality of marketing text translations by selecting translators with professional knowledge and extensive experience to ensure accuracy and consistency. Lastly, manufacturers should be aware of the impact of cultural differences on marketing texts and use appropriate translation strategies and techniques to address these differences, ensuring effective communication in diverse cultural environments.

Guidance for Translation Practice:

The results of this study also provide valuable guidance for translation practice. Firstly, translators need to possess solid professional knowledge and extensive translation experience to tackle the challenges of translating automotive marketing texts, such as technical terms and complex sentences. Secondly, they need to deeply understand the cultural backgrounds and aesthetic preferences of both the source and target languages to handle cultural differences appropriately during translation. Lastly, translators should flexibly apply various translation strategies and techniques to reproduce the rhetorical effects and stylistic features of the original text, making the translation more vivid, expressive, and persuasive.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although this study has made some beneficial discoveries and conclusions regarding the translation of automotive marketing texts, it has certain limitations. Firstly, the study primarily focused on the comparison between English and Chinese, without addressing translation issues involving other language pairs. Future research could expand the range of language pairs and explore translation issues between more languages. Secondly, this study mainly employed qualitative analysis methods for subjective evaluation and data collection, lacking the objectivity and accuracy that quantitative analysis methods could provide. Future research could integrate quantitative analysis methods for deeper data mining and analysis. Lastly, this study mainly focused on issues and strategies in the translation process without covering

post-translation evaluation and feedback. Future research could further refine the translation evaluation system and methodological framework to conduct more comprehensive, objective, and scientific assessments and analyses of translation effectiveness.

VIII. Conclusion

8 Conclusion

8.1 Summary of Research Findings

This study conducted a comparative analysis of English and Chinese automotive marketing texts, delving into common translation issues and the impact of cultural differences. The research identified that accurately translating vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric in automotive marketing texts is a significant challenge. Cultural differences further complicate the translation process. To address these challenges, the study proposed a series of effective translation strategies and techniques aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of automotive marketing text translations.

8.2 Recommendations for Automotive Manufacturers and Translators

Viewing it as a crucial means of enhancing brand image and market competitiveness, this study recommends that automotive manufacturers prioritize the translation of marketing texts. When selecting translators, manufacturers should emphasize the translators' professional knowledge and experience to ensure that translations accurately convey the brand's values and product features. Additionally, manufacturers should conduct thorough research on the cultural background and consumer needs of their target markets to develop more targeted and appealing marketing strategies.

It is necessary for translators to continuously improve their professional competence and translation skills to tackle the challenges presented by automotive marketing text translations. During the translation process, translators should consider the linguistic and cultural differences between the source and target languages, employing various translation strategies and techniques to achieve accurate and effective text conversion. Furthermore, translators should stay updated with new technologies and methodologies to adapt to the evolving demands of the translation market.

8.3 Theoretical and Practical Value of the Study

This study enriches the theoretical framework and methodology of translation studies, offering valuable references for future research. Practically, it provides important guidance and application value. The analysis and discussion presented in this study help automotive manufacturers and translators better understand the significance and challenges of translating automotive marketing texts, enabling them to develop more effective translation and marketing strategies. Additionally, this research offers insights that can benefit translation practices in other fields, contributing to the overall advancement and development of the translation industry.

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