

Dávila-Montes, J. (2009). Lorenzo, Lourdes y Pereira, Ana María (eds) (2004). Traducción subordinada III: Traducción y publicidad. *The Journal of Specialised Translation*, 11, 257-260.
<https://doi.org/10.26034/cm.jostrans.2009.655>

This article is publish under a *Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International* (CC BY):
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>



© José Dávila-Montes, 2009

Lorenzo, Lourdes y Pereira, Ana Ma. (eds.) (2004). *Traducción subordinada III: Traducción y publicidad*. Vigo: Servicio de Publicacións.

This volume comes to complete and complement the roughly half a dozen titles that during this decade have addressed the translation of advertising, either as edited monographs (Corpas Pastor *et al.* 2002; Adab *et al.*: 2004), fully fledged comprehensive studies (Bueno García 2000; Valdés Rodríguez 2004) or in the form of doctoral dissertations (Al-Shehari 2000; Huang 2005). To the list of these works, among which the contribution of Spanish and Arabic Translatology must be specifically noted, a series of articles by authors such as A. Shakir (1994) and M. Guidère (2000, 2001, 2003) needs to be added, confirming that the translation of advertising is one of the most current and promising research areas in the discipline.¹ While part of the reason for this may unsurprisingly lie on the natural need of the field for new areas of academic exploration, it seems undeniable too that advertising has always elicited a special interest among scholars and educators in the field of Translation Studies: there is something about advertising that is both distinctive of the nature of translation, and incongruous to a care-free, non-problematic notion of cross-cultural communication. An indisputable proof of this is how frequently advertising is used as extreme exemplification of translation phenomena, of all its possibilities and impossibilities.

Another ostensible indicator of this is how often exercises involving the translation of advertising are used both in the practice-oriented and in the theory-centered translation instruction. In this volume, and along these lines, Amaya Galván (p. 113-126) and Corpas Pastor (p. 169-204) discuss class-room strategies for the perusal of advertising in the training of translators, as a didactical tool that both goes beyond and stays within the actual translation of advertising as a goal: another instance of advertising being an optimal exemplification for the paradoxes and difficulties of broader communicative and translational prospects.

The collection of articles encompassed in this volume is representative of the theoretical frameworks within which Translation Studies have approached the advertising phenomena. The multidisciplinary nature of these approaches is also informative of the existing consensus among scholars about the fact that the translation of advertising staunchly resists fitting into traditional taxonomies, and that the field is in serious need of innovative methodologies (Munday: 2004) that help us to better comprehend the riches and the challenges of this marginal, yet extremely idiosyncratic, manifestation of translation as a textual and cultural activity.

However, the results of this unorchestrated multidisciplinary approach are also revealing of how often, in its attempt to establish a defined and

proprietary academic field, Translation Studies tend to limit themselves to a—no matter how varied—relatively restricted set of disciplinary approaches. There are indeed specific attempts to breach the limit of linguistic-oriented approaches, including the consideration of intercultural faultlines and lack of conceptual correspondence that become so vividly apparent in the translation of advertising. Other approaches include the reflection on issues related with design and the interaction between text and image, or ideological analyses from postmodern standpoints. These attempts do indeed hint interesting intuitions and instantiations about the complexity of audiovisual communication—and, hence, of its translation—. Too often altogether, these incursions into non-central theoretical bodies fall in commonplace statements that, before and after the translation of advertising itself, were and will be applicable to the study of translation in general. Along these lines, studies tend to make predictable landfalls in the areas of context, idiomatic phrasings and comparative culture, which oftentimes lead to less than informative conclusions about, for example, the need of translators to ponder inter and contextual aspects of a piece of advertising before attempting to translate it... as if this was not the case for virtually any sort of translatable material.

Traducción y publicidad–Traducción subordinada III, does provide neat samples of this assortment of merits and shortcomings resulting of the above mentioned trends. It seems obvious that a number of relatively unconnected case studies about any given phenomenon may be needed before reaching a sufficient critical mass for that particular subfield to evolve into a more comprehensive theoretical body. This seems to be fairly much so in the study of translation and advertising, and the reviewed monograph constitutes a vibrant exemplification of it.

Issues related with the professional practice of the translation of advertising are addressed in this monograph by Cruz García (p. 17-18) and Arevalillo Doval (p. 29-66), while, in the introductory chapter, Pererira Rodríguez briefly recounts the history of this activity in Spain (p. 11-16). Case studies are illustratively entertained by Acuña Partal and Rodríguez Espinosa (p. 103-102) and by Arevalillo Doval (*Ibid.*), while the first two and Valdés Rodríguez (p. 231-240) reflect respectively on aspects of methodological and professional relevance in the fields of cinema advertising and audiovisual advertising. Corpas Pastor (p. 169-204) elaborates about legislative aspects of the advertising of drugs and beauty products that markedly affect translation outcomes in a wide range of textual levels, from the lexical one to a more procedural dimension. Puga and Ramallo (p. 67-100) furnish interesting samples of sociolinguistic relevance in the field of advertising in bilingual societies, based on the case of Galician, while Kelly and Fuentes Luque (p. 205-212) do so in a broader international scenario, alluding to the ideological and sociocultural underpinnings of advertising in the establishment of a national identity—often an stereotypical one—in foreign markets.

All the above are worthy contributions to the depiction of the complex phenomenon of advertising and its translation, and echo the tendencies outlined by the few previous monographs on this topic. This depiction is welcome and indispensable for the furtherance of a genuine theoretical and methodological approach, which is deemed necessary for a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. Zaro (p. 241-254) provides a good example of the immense potential that seems inherent to the study of this modality of translation, by supplying illustrative samples and reflections about the role of bilingual advertising in our postmodern society. But his article also becomes a proof of the recurrent scholarly reticence against the exploration the deep cognitive mechanisms that adverts and their intrinsically persuasive nature attempt to unleash. Too readily, the author dismisses David Katan's (2004) approach based on High Context Communication and Low Context Communication cultures, alleging that the current tendencies in the advertising world are increasingly closer and homogeneous (p. 245) and that, therefore, the proposed model, based on the disparate cognitive profiles that different cultures generate, does not apply.

There is indeed a patent neglect within the field of Translation Studies towards a concept that is key to advertising: persuasion. Persuasion is the goal and main mechanism of advertising and the cognitive import that this entails can hardly be overstated. However, the nascent interest of Translation Studies for advertising seems to dare not intrude in this area, frequently sticking to existing cultural taxonomies or sheltering themselves under umbrella terms —such as "Semiotics"—that are not often comprehensively considered or even further elaborated. Wide and unexplored avenues seem to await the study of the translation of advertising as a persuasion-driven cognitive phenomenon. Under this prospective, issues of cognitive and linguistic relativism such as the one proposed by Katan, after Edward T. Hall, cannot be promptly left aside. Some of the authors in this monograph do present illuminating realizations of the undeniable cognitive significance of advertising. All scholarly endeavors should consider this significance if they are to effectively reach a comprehension of the inner persuasive mechanisms of advertising that would sanction any subsequent attempt to theorize about its translation. This is the case of Christiane Nord (213-230), who carries out an extensive comparison of advertising samples from the standpoint of the Jakobsonian phatic function, thus hinting the strong link existing between culturally differentiated rhetorical strategies and the cognitive responses that persuasion necessarily seeks to elicit. Her proposed methodology of corpora comparison focuses on the recurrence of specific aspects in the discourse of advertising that have been selected on the basis of theoretical speculation. This seems to us one of the natural and promising routes for exploration of the persuasive dimension of advertising and its subsequent translation.

José Dávila-Montes

The University of Texas at Brownsville, USA

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

¹The publishing of *La traducción de la persuasión publicitaria— estudio psicoanalítico, semiótico y retórico de las estrategias traductoras y persuasivas en el discurso publicitario* (by the author of this review) is expected in 2009 (Edwing Mellen Press).

References

- Adab, Beverley y Valdés Rodríguez, Cristina (2004). *Key Debates in The Translation of Advertising Material*, en: *The Translator*, Vol.10, No.2, Manchester: St Jerome (161-178).
- Al-Shehari, Khalid (2000). *The Semiotics and Translation of Advertising Texts: Conventions, Constraints and Translation Strategies, with Particular Reference to English and Arabic*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation. Manchester: UMIST.
- Bueno García, Antonio (2000). *Publicidad y traducción*. Soria: Diputación Provincial de Soria.
- Corpas Pastor, G., Martínez García, A. Amaya Galván M.C. (eds.) (2002). *En torno a la traducción-adaptación del mensaje publicitario*. Málaga: Universidad de Málaga.
- Guidère, Mathieu (2000). "Aspects de la traduction publicitaire." *Babel* 46 (1), 20-40. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- — (2003). "The Translation of Advertisements: from Adaptation to Localization." www.translationdirectory.com/article60.htm (consulted 09.11.2008)
- — (2001). "Translating Practices in International Advertising." *Translation Journal*. Vol. 5, No. 1. <http://accurapid.com/journal/15advert.htm> (consulted 09.11.2008)
-
- Huang, Tsui-Ling (2005). *Estudio desde una perspectiva lingüística y sociocultural para la traducción de marcas comerciales a la lengua china*. Doctora Dissertation. Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona. www.tdcat.cesca.es (consulted 09.11.2008)
- Katan, David (2004 [1999]). *Translating Cultures*. Manchester: Saint Jerome.
- Munday, Jeremy (2004). "Advertising: Some Challenges to Translation Theory." Adab, Beverley and Valdés Rodríguez, Cristina (eds). *Key Debates in The Translation of Advertising Material*. *The Translator*, Vol.10, No.2, Manchester: St Jerome, 179-220.
- Shakir, Abdullah. (1995). "The Translation of Advertisements: Registeral and Schematic Constraints." *Meta*, XL (1).
- Valdés, Cristina (2004). *La traducción publicitaria: comunicación y cultura*. Barcelona: Bellaterra, Castellón y Valencia: Servicios de Publicaciones de las Universidades Pompeu Fabra, Atònoma de Barcelona, Jaume I y Valencia.