

Research Article

Comparison of Appraisal Resources in Translating and Creating Chinese and English Food Advertising

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Abstract: Advertisement as a bridge between advertisers and consumers has more and more obvious impact on people's daily life and how to better create advertisement has become the focus of attention with the increase of economic globalization degree. Guided by appraisal theory, this study contrastively analyzes distribution characteristics of appraisal resources in Chinese and English food advertising from a lexical perspective, especially the wording feature of attitudinal resources and its distribution rule, aiming to enlighten translation and creation of Chinese and English food advertising.

Keywords: Appraisal resources, Chinese and English food advertisement, resource comparison

INTRODUCTION

Appraisal theory, a systematic lexico-grammatical framework based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Breit, 2014; Roseman, 2013; Ma *et al.*, 2013) was first introduced by a linguist named by Martin in the early 1990s, used for describing and explaining the language use. It is a new lexical-grammatical frame developing from the research of interpersonal meaning. Martin and White (González Rodríguez, 2011) consider that evaluation is used in expressing speakers' or writers' opinions and viewpoints and by doing so, to reflect the value system of those persons and their community (Toledo and Cuervo, 2012).

In other words, we can say that this study mainly explores how speakers or writers use appraisal resources to express their attitudes, judgments and appreciation towards certain things (Dotti, 2013) and how to realize the interaction between hearers and readers, so as to achieve the purpose of persuasion. The study analyzes appraisal utterances from the levels of lexis and language other than the level of grammar. Appraisal theory consists of three subsystems: attitude system, graduation parallel system and engagement system (Adendorff, 2014; Caldwell, 2014; Miralles, 2015).

Commercial advertisement can be seen everywhere in our daily life through mass media as science and technology develop rapidly (Yue *et al.*, 2013). Discourse of English commercial advertisement as a sub-genre of advertisements is one of the most influential types of written text in contemporary society and contains many appraisal resources that express advertisers' real affection and intention. As to advertisement, especially commercial advertisement is a special artifact which conveys and represents its

culture (Chen, 2014). Therefore, advertisers' preference to appraisal resources and the way how these preferred resources are employed to realize the communicative function and the interaction between advertisers and readers would vary among different cultural and social contexts (Hussainy *et al.*, 2014).

Food advertisements increasingly appear in magazines and newspapers, while the food advertising has not been paid enough attention from scholars (Chapman *et al.*, 2006; Laura and O'Sullivan, 2015). Therefore, it is quite necessary to make a tentative study on food advertising and this thesis will conduct a comparison of the appraisal resources, especially the attitude resources between Chinese and English food advertisements based on Appraisal Theory. This thesis is designed to find out how the appraisal resources build up and maintain the relationship between advertisers and consumers, with both theoretical and practical significances.

Data collection: This study will be carried out on a corpus of 40 foods advertising discourses with a total number of 1944 words. They are divided into two sets in the corpus, one consists of 10 English foods advertising discourses and the other consists of 10 Chinese food advertising discourses. In order to guarantee the objectivity and credibility of findings in this thesis, all the discourses are collected from famous magazines. Within the corpus, 10 English food advertising discourses are from the most influential magazines in America-Business Weekly (issues of November and December 2007), Reader's Digest (from January 2001 to July 2010) and some other advertisement course books. Ten Chinese foods advertising are extracted from China advertising

Table 1: Two kinds of advertising texts

| | Ten English food advertising | Ten Chinese food advertising |
|---------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Total | 578 | 227 |
| Maximum | 117 | 78 |
| Minimum | 12 | 13 |

magazine (from January 2013 to February 2014). Those foods advertising cover a variety of products and services involving chocolate, beer, coke cola and yogurt and so on. The number of these 40 food advertising texts is presented in Table 1.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An appraisal analysis on 40 food advertising samples will be conducted through quantitative approach and qualitative approach.

Quantitative approach is applied in analyzing the corpus (Pérez, 2012), firstly, all the appraisal resources in each food advertisement are labeled and then classified into Attitude, Engagement and Graduation with the guidance of Appraisal Theory. Since Attitude system is the core of the whole Appraisal Theory, it will be further classified into several subsystems. Secondly, frequencies and distributions of all the appraisal resources in these 40 food advertising are carefully calculated and presented in the form of tables. Finally, according to the distributions of appraisal resources in Chinese and English food advertising discourses, results are analyzed to generalize appraisal features in English and Chinese food advertising as well as similarities and differences of appraisal resources between English and Chinese food advertising.

Qualitative approach (Zhao and Nagurney, 2008) acting as a complement to the qualitative approach identifies appraisal resources and gives an explanation to how the appraisal resources are used in building up the interaction and negotiation between advertisers and consumers in English and Chinese food advertising discourses.

CONTRASTIVE ANALYSES OF APPRAISAL RESOURCES

Food advertising aims to persuade consumers to purchase. The assessment of product and service is very important in the process of promotion. Therefore, there are abundant appraisal resources in Chinese and English food advertising discourses.

Here, appraisal resources and their subsystems in English and Chinese food advertising texts, especially the Attitude system, will be compared and analyzed. Table 2 shows the distribution of appraisal resources per hundred words in Chinese and English food advertising texts.

Data above displays that:

Table 2: Distribution of appraisal resources in Chinese and English food advertising

| | Chinese food advertising (phw) | English food advertising (phw) |
|------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Total | 14.13 | 17.75 |
| Attitude | 11.90 | 9.14 |
| Engagement | 1.55 | 2.32 |
| Graduation | 0.66 | 6.22 |

Table 3: Distribution of appraisal resources

| Appraisal | | Advertising | |
|------------|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Chinese food advertising | English food advertising |
| Attitude | Freq. | 27 | 53.00 |
| | Prop. | 84.37% | 51.70% |
| Engagement | Freq. | 4 | 14.00 |
| | Prop. | 10.94% | 13.17% |
| Graduation | Freq. | 2 | 36.00 |
| | Prop. | 4.69% | 35.12% |

- Attitude resources are frequently applied in Chinese and English food advertising discourses covering 14.13 and 17.75 phw, respectively, to the greatest extent.
- Graduation resources are most unused in Chinese food advertising text while Engagement resources are most unused in English food advertising discourses.

However, Table 3 showing the distribution of appraisal resources is presented to guarantee the accuracy of data.

From Table 3, we can see that the distribution of appraisal resources is not balanced in Chinese and English food advertising. Attitude resources in Chinese and English food advertising texts occupy the largest proportion, so Attitude is the major way to realize the purpose of persuasion. Thus, this study focuses on analyzing Attitude resources. Next, the contrastive analyses on the subsystems of Appraisal Theory will be elaborated.

Contrastive analyses of attitude system: As we've mentioned that Attitude system deals with assessment, judgment and appreciation of speakers and writers on human's behaviors, process/text and phenomena, it is made up of three subsystems, i.e., affection that involves people's emotions and feelings, judgment that deals with human behaviors and appreciation that is connected with natural phenomena (Li, 2011). This part is going to state and analyze configuration of affection, judgment and appreciation in Chinese and English food advertising in detail.

Distribution of affection, judgment and appreciation: It can be known from Table 4 that advertising language is full of attitude resources since it aims to persuade consumers to take action to buy products and service. However, there are still some differences in the distribution of subsystems of Chinese and English food advertising discourses. Different frequencies and proportions of attitude resources in

Table 4: Frequencies and proportions of attitude in Chinese and English food advertising

| Attitude | | Advertising | |
|--------------|-------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | Chinese food advertising (%) | English food advertising (%) |
| Affection | Freq. | 9.000 | 13.00 |
| | Prop. | 33.33% | 17.62% |
| Judgment | Freq. | 2.00 | 3.00 |
| | Prop. | 7.42% | 6.48% |
| Appreciation | Freq. | 16.00 | 41.00 |
| | Prop. | 59.25% | 75.92% |

Chinese and English food advertising are shown as follows.

Contrastive analyses of affection: Affection involves people’s emotional response to behaviors, texts or processes and phenomena. Both Chinese and English food advertising try to stimulate consumers’ emotional response. As we all know, affection concludes four subtypes, i.e., dis/inclination, un/happiness, in/security and dis/satisfaction, this study summarizes the distribution of these four subsystems in Chinese and English food advertising discourses (Table 5).

It can be seen that, in the Chinese food advertising, un/happiness takes up the largest proportion with a percentage of 66.67% and is followed by the dis/satisfaction and dis/inclination resources with a percentage of 16.67%. While, in the English food advertising discourses, un/happiness resources also occupy the highest percentage, accounting for 46.15% and is followed by dis/inclination resources which covers 15.79%. The dis/satisfaction and in/security resources that have the same percentage of 15.38% take up the smallest proportion. Therefore, un/happiness resources are preferred in Chinese and English food advertising discourses.

Table 5: Distribution of affection in Chinese and English food advertising

| Appraisal | | Advertising | | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| | | Chinese food advertising | | English food advertising | |
| | | Frequency | (%) | Frequency | (%) |
| Un/happiness | + | 5 | 66.67 | 6 | 46.15 |
| | - | 1 | | 0 | |
| In/security | + | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 15.38 |
| | - | 0 | | 1 | |
| Dis/satisfaction | + | 3 | 16.67 | 1 | 15.38 |
| | - | 0 | | 1 | |
| Dis/inclination | + | 3 | 16.67 | 3 | 23.08 |
| | - | 0 | | 0 | |
| Total | + | 8 | 88.89 | 11 | 84.62 |
| | - | 1 | 11.11 | 2 | 15.38 |

Table 6: Distribution of judgment resources in Chinese and English food advertising

| Judgment | | Advertising | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| | | Chinese food advertising | | English food advertising | |
| | | Frequency | (%) | Frequency | (%) |
| Social esteem | Tenacity | 1 | 25 | 0 | |
| | Capacity | 0 | | 2 | 33.33 |
| | Normality | 3 | 75 | 0 | |
| Social sanction | Veracity | 0 | | 4 | 66.67 |
| | Propriety | 0 | | 0 | |

Contrastive analyses of judgment: Judgment refers to resources that assess human character or behavior according to social norms, such as rules, conventions, social requirements and value systems, etc. Judgment resources account for 7.42% in 10 Chinese food advertising discourses and 6.48% in English food advertising discourses. Judgment is composed of two subsystems of social sanction involving veracity, propriety and normality and social esteem involving capacity and tenacity. Distribution of these subtypes of judgment is illustrated in detail in Table 6.

From Table 6, it can be seen that social esteem resources account for 100% and there is no social sanction resources at all in Chinese food advertising discourses, while in English food advertising texts, social sanction resources take up a large proportion (83.33%) and social esteem resources share a small proportion (16.67%). In food advertising discourses, normality deal with resources that assess whether consumers’ behavior is usual or unique; capacity resources are about energy, education, cleverness, competency, etc.; tenacity resources show consumers determination or insistence on food; veracity resources describe the truth idea of consumers to products.

Contrastive analyses of appreciation in Chinese and English food advertising: Appreciation system refers to people’s positive or negative evaluations on things, performance and some natural phenomenon. In Table 7, appreciation resources are most widely used compared with the other two subsystems of attitude in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. Besides, appreciation system is made up of three subcategories: reaction, composition and valuation.

Table 7: Distribution of appreciation system in Chinese and English food advertising

| | | Advertising | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------|-------|
| | | Chinese food advertising | | English food advertising | |
| Appreciation | | Frequency | (%) | Frequency | (%) |
| Reaction | + | 26 | 81.24 | 64 | 83.12 |
| | - | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 2.60 |
| Composition | + | 2 | 6.24 | 4 | 5.20 |
| | - | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 1.30 |
| Valuation | + | 5 | 15.63 | 5 | 6.49 |
| | - | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 1.30 |
| Total | + | 33 | 100.00 | 73 | 94.81 |
| | - | 0 | 0.00 | 4 | 5.19 |

Table 8: Distribution of heterogloss in Chinese and English food advertising

| | | | | Advertising | | | |
|------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------------|--------|
| | | | | Chinese food advertising | | English food advertising | |
| Engagement | | | | Freq. | Prop. | Freq. | Prop. |
| Het. | Dialogic contraction | Disclaim | Deny | 6 | 75.00% | 8 | 26.66% |
| | | | Counter | 2 | 25.00% | 11 | 36.67% |
| | | Proclaim | Concur | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | Pron. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | End. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Dialogic expansion | Entertain | Attribute | 0 | 0 | 11 | 36.67% |
| | | | Dist | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | Ack. | Dist | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | Ack. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | Ack. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | | | | 8 | 100% | 30 | 100% |

Table 9: Distribution of graduation system in both food advertising

| | Advertising | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-------|
| | Chinese food advertising | | English food advertising | |
| Graduation | Frequency | (%) | Frequency | (%) |
| Force | 4 | 100 | 62 | 84.93 |
| Focus | 0 | 0 | 11 | 15.07 |

Distribution of these three subsystems of appreciation is not well proportioned. Reaction resources covering 81.24% in Chinese food advertising discourses and 79.27% in English food advertising discourses take up the largest proportion in the appreciation system. Composition resources take the second place and valuation resources share the least percentage in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. That is to say, reaction resources are the major appreciation resources applied in evaluating product's quality and effectiveness. In food advertising discourses, reaction deals with how food catches consumers' attention and what emotional influence that food has on consumer.

Contrastive analyses of heterogloss: Heterogloss recognizes several dialogistic alternatives. Its evaluation about things does not represent speaker's more objective viewpoint. This study focuses on analyzing the heterogloss resources, which consist of four subtypes, entertain, attribute, disclaim and proclaim. The first two belong to dialogic expansion and the last two are the dialogic contraction.

Form Table 8, we can find that dialogue contraction covers 100% and there is no dialogic

expansion resource in Chinese food advertising discourses while dialogic contraction is just 63.33% and dialogic expansion resources account for 36.67%. That is to say, dialogic contraction resources share a large proportion in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. In addition, deny, concur and entertain are used frequently and there is no attribute resource in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. Disclaim means that the author introduces a position and then rejects it, replaces it or dismisses it as irrelevant. Chinese and English food advertising discourses use disclaim frequently, which emphasize specific position.

Contrastive analyses of graduation: Graduation system refers to resources grading or scaling attitude intensity. It is labeled into graduation into two dimensions: force and focus. Force refers to resources which are gradable according to intensity or amount. Focus refers to resources which are applied to adjust the boundaries of non-gradable categories. Table 9 shows the distribution of graduation resources in Chinese and English advertising discourses.

Force takes up the large proportion in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. Namely, both advertising prefer to employ force to grade or scale the appraisal resources.

CONCLUSION

This study conducts a contrastive analysis on appraisal resources between Chinese and English food

advertising discourses, the major findings are as follows:

- Both Chinese and English food advertising discourses abound with appraisal resources. However, the distribution of its three subcategories is not well proportioned in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. Among three subsystems, attitude system outweighs engagement and graduation system in two advertising discourses.
- Appreciation resources share the largest proportion in Chinese and English food advertising within the attitude system. Therefore, appreciation acts as a linguistic feature in food advertising discourses (Saunderson, 2004). With regard to the whole attitude system, some similarities of subsystems distribution between Chinese and English food advertising discourses are generalized. Firstly, un/happiness resources are used more frequent than the other three subtypes in the affection system. Secondly, reaction resources are used more compared with composition and valuation in the appreciation system. Thirdly, as to the judgment, social esteem resources are used more in comparison with social sanction resources in Chinese and English food advertising discourses. However, some differences also exist in Chinese and English food advertising discourses in the subsystems of attitude. First of all, Chinese food advertising discourses exceed English food advertising discourses in using affection and judgment resources. In the second place, English food advertising discourses apply more appreciation resources than Chinese food advertising discourses. These distinctions are attributed to different cultural backgrounds of Eastern and Western countries.
- Compared with dialogic expansion resources, dialogic contraction resources are used more in the engagement system in Chinese and English food advertising discourses.
- In terms of graduation, force occupies a more important position than focus in Chinese and English advertising discourses.
- Chinese and English food advertising discourses prefer to use positive appraisal resources for evaluating their product and service so as to attract consumers' attention easily or arouse consumers' interest in product and services.

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