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РОЛЬ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКА КАК КУЛЬТУРНОГО ПОСРЕДНИКА В ПРОДВИЖЕНИИ ТАЙВАНЬСКИХ КОМПАНИЙ НА ПОСТСОВЕТСКОМ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕ

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Данное исследование фокусируется на тайваньско-российских деловых отношениях и ставит своей целью выяснить, какое влияние оказывает язык и культура обеих сторон при установлении международных экономических отношений. Уделяется внимание трудностям коммерческого перевода при установлении межкультурных отношений, особенно с тайваньской стороны, и делается акцент на языковом барьере и недостаточном понимании особенностей культуры при международном сотрудничестве. Автор статьи рассматривает существующие проблемы и предлагает решения для правильного использования языка и культуры, необходимые для установления более тесных и успешных межкультурных связей между Россией и Тайванем.

Исследование опирается на индуктивную методiku с использованием материала, собранного автором статьи, занимающимся устными и письменными бизнес-переводами на протяжении более чем десяти лет. При этом эмпирические данные основываются на нескольких общепринятых теориях перевода. Подчеркивается уникальная роль переводчика как культурного посредника. На примерах предлагается решение проблем по преодолению языковых и культурных барьеров с целью укрепления международного сотрудничества, особенно между Тайванем и Россией. Предполагается, что данное исследование может в значительной степени способствовать развитию коммуникаций и обмена опытом в сфере международного бизнеса.

Ключевые слова: культурное посредничество; культурная специфичность; творческий перевод; теория релевантности; теория Skopos; фонетический метод перевода; энциклопедическое (междисциплинарное) знание.

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Research background and goals

Based on the researcher's ten year involvement as an interpreter, translator and cultural mediator this project presents case studies derived from economic relations between Taiwan and Russia. This research examines the shift in Taiwan and Russia's increased cross-cultural cooperation over the last several years. Increasing numbers of Taiwanese and Russian academic researchers, business representatives, cultural activists and other specialists have been visiting both places in order to establish the cross-cultural contact for various purposes, such as conducting academic research, developing business and promoting culture. Over the last years, Russian media has often aired mostly positive stories about Taiwan and its culture (e.g. its subway system, parks, tea planting and sightseeing etc.). On the other hand, Taiwanese me-

dia has also been focusing on Russian lifestyle perspectives such as famous music schools, large cities and tourism. Some talk shows in Taiwan have also discussed Russian politics and policy. The media is a powerful way of educating people and facilitating an international cultural understanding.

This research focuses on the influence of language and culture in economic developments between Taiwan and Russia, with an emphasis on Taiwan's industry prospects. It aims to address the following research questions:

1. Which Taiwanese products receive greater promotion in the Russian market?
2. Why some Taiwanese companies achieve success while others fail in the Russian market? Which successful strategies are utilized when addressing language and cultural factors?

3. Which linguistic, cultural aspects and solutions have produced the most positive economic developments between the two countries?

4. What is the role of translator in developing these cross-cultural and commercial ties?

The last question in particular supports the premise that a translator's role is pivotal in the intermediation process. Data has been derived from many translation files that have been compiled over the last ten years. The researcher, who also worked as translator and cultural intermediate, is of Russian origin and has lived and worked in Taiwan for the last ten years. Therefore, the research has a greater capacity for identifying some of the problems Taiwanese companies have encountered when failing to promote products in Russian speaking markets. It will examine reasons such as lack of familiarity, understanding and consideration for Russia's cultural nuances and advertising that does not appeal to Russian consumers. It also highlights the importance of language as a tool for promotion in cross-cultural development and communication.

The literature review features studies on mutual relationships between Russia and Taiwan. The article "Russia's Unofficial Relations with Taiwan" by S. Vradiy [2007] gives an overview of the history of Russia's unofficial relations with Taiwan. The paper describes the political and economic importance of Taiwan to Russia and the status of Russian-Taiwanese relations. It assesses prospects for bilateral economic and trade relations.

Scholar Alexander Pisarev has also been researching Taiwan's issues and provides insight from the Russian Club in Taiwan and the state of political relations between Russia and Taiwan. American academic journals like the Kentucky Scholarship Online have produced articles with regards to China, Russia and Taiwan. However, this source mainly focuses on political and military matters. Due to the uniqueness of this research, there was very little existing literature that could be identified pertaining to the combination of language, culture and business ties between Taiwan and Russia. This lingua-cultural research is therefore a pioneer in this field as there is currently no scientifically designed research that has previously examined these interwoven aspects. Therefore, it is significant in the development of successful economic relationships between Russia and Taiwan. Due to the scarcity of existing research in this area, it is important that more researchers shed light on this phenomenon and the importance of effective language and cultural techniques in developing economic and cultural ties.

This research will provide guidelines for optimizing mutual economic interests and emphasize the

need for Taiwanese companies to reconsider their marketing strategies in Russia. It is hoped that a greater appreciation and understanding of appropriate linguistic and cultural mediation will increase success for these companies and its promotion of culture could also draw interest in various industries. The conclusion will provide suggestions for developing appropriate advertising strategies in terms of savvy language and cultural awareness. Findings will also provide practical assistance for Taiwanese companies in terms of understanding how to approach integral cultural knowledge when engaging in international cooperation. It further exemplifies linguistic and cultural difficulties that Taiwanese companies are experiencing when advertising their products in Russia. This study also beholds pedagogical value for teaching translation, offers substantial solutions for existing issues and achieves effective outcomes in the translation process.

Methodology

Qualitative data derived from translation files are utilized throughout the research. These involve case studies from ten years of research and experience in the field. Translations are a compilation of English, Russian and Chinese. English was always used as the primary language. The data was classified into the following three categories according to the following purposes:

- 1) Documents (e.g. diplomas, company's financial statements, or birth certificates)
- 2) Cultural information (e.g. art works)
- 3) Technical instruction
- 4) Product advertising

The bulk of the data, however, is derived from the fourth category. Most of the case studies refer to commercial translation and are analyzed in terms of Taiwanese products that were advertised the most in the Russian market (e.g. high-tech products, machinery and food). The language used within the advertisements has been analyzed and translation difficulties regarding targeting consumers are identified and discussed. Lack of cultural salience in the context will also be illustrated.

This research methodology has been primarily based on an inductive practice-oriented investigation method and utilizes commonly adopted theories including the role of the translator as a cultural mediator using a "cultural filter". This perfect combination of linguistic and cultural mediation is pivotal for any high-quality translation and for successful marketing strategies. The detailed analysis intrinsically links language and culture in the translation process and provides multi-faceted perspectives for successful international cooperation between Russia and Taiwan.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical review includes elaborate translation theories and techniques and presents how they are relevant for various purposes with regards to international economic relations. Many researchers try to define the translation process and often fail to identify other relevant aspects. Catford [1965] exemplifies this by primarily focusing on matching sound and meaning of the source to the target language but neglects socio-cultural factors. These linguistically-oriented approaches could be useful in understanding the technical and scientific aspects of translation such as finding exact equivalences for technical terms. However, cultural aspects are now widely accepted in translation research. Both translators and marketers must understand the importance of cultural values in the target groups and find effective ways of transferring cultural salience from source language (SL) into target language (TL).

Skopostheorie by Hans J. Vermeer [1989] has been adopted as a guiding theory for this research as it focuses on communication purpose and links targeted text to its audience. To achieve such an effective outcome is substantial, particularly with regards to translation in business. In terms of commercial translation, it is important to take into account several translation factors such as “phonetic appeal, suitable meaning, socio-cultural adaptation, and consumer acceptance” in order to better target consumers of different cultures. Linguistic, cultural and commercial perspectives are all aspects crucial to this process [cf. Sang & Zhang 2008: 225]. This functionalist approach emphasizes translation of the target text with the source text being of secondary importance [Sang & Zhang 2008: 232]. With regards to product advertising, the translator should focus on Skopostheorie and take into consideration the aim of the translation in terms of successfully promoting the product when targeting consumers. To achieve this purpose, the translator needs to fully understand the cultural conditions of the source text [cf. Vermeer 1994: 14]. “Cultural sensitivity in Skopostheorie is influential and decisive in formulating an effective translating method” that is particularly true in advertising translation [cf. Sang & Zhang 2008: 232]. Translators must consider culture as a changeable phenomenon that “has an important role in specifying what is acceptable and appreciated” and a knowledge of which factors are taboo [Sang & Zhang 2008: 235]. He and Xiao also stated that well-translated texts can be adjusted to suit local markets in terms of lingual, cultural and legal environments, while still conveying the product information of the source text [2003: 131]. Therefore, besides primarily considering linguistic and cultural aspects, the marketing and legal issues should

also be considered. For this purpose, it is theorized that the following preliminary work is required [He & Xiao 2003: 142]:

1. Examine the company’s marketing strategy and the target marketplace including target consumers and image of the name which will be used in the foreign market

2. Examine the nature of the product in terms of function, performance and benefits etc.

Similar functional approaches focusing on linguistic-cultural relativity include House’s theory of translation as re-contextualisation and the Third Space phenomenon [2008] which emphasizes the following aspects:

- An extra-linguistic world which is often perceived differently by members of L1 and L2 communities

- Translator’s creativity

- Bridging the juxtaposed language and culture

- Functional pragmatic equivalence when covert translation of an original text appears in the new L2 context, but the functional equivalence remains the same. In this case, the translator manipulates the language and text according to cultural filters.

Every translator has faced challenges in finding suitable equivalents for the target text. “Untranslatability is a common phenomenon in translation [Benjamin 1923/1977; Berman 1985/1999; Bhabha 2000] with every language having its own unique lexicon and indigenous to only that culture [He & Xiao 2003: 135]. This research aims to understand how conveying concepts on different levels can accurately reflect the translation. M. Baker [1992] categorized four levels of equivalence:

1. *Word Level and above Word Level Equivalence* (i.e. number, gender and tense congruence of a single word)

2. *Grammatical Equivalence* (i.e. number, person and gender, tense and aspect and voice congruence across languages)

3. *Textual Equivalence* (i.e. transfer of information and consistency considering the text type, the purpose of the translation and the target audience)

4. *Pragmatic Equivalence* (i.e. author’s purpose for the target language).

The last category focuses primarily on translator’s creativity if the context equivalent does not exist and needs to be created by the translator. In his early study, R. Jakobson coins the term ‘creative transposition’ in inter-lingual translation, where verbal signs are interpreted in another language [1959: 238]. He acknowledges deficiency in terminology, which may be qualified and amplified by loanwords or loan-translations, neologisms, semantic shifts and circumlocutions [234]. Consequently, the original text must be exposed to transformations [Benjamin 1923].

Besides linguistic and cultural competence, the translator also needs to apply an encyclopaedic knowledge to the context. According to Relevance Theory proposed by Sperber and Wilson [1986] and emphasized by A. Vermes [2007], assumptions are fundamental for some contexts which convey a number of implications. Therefore, conceptual meaning is comprised of truth-functional logical and encyclopaedic entries, containing various types of representational information and possible conceptual connotations such as cultural or personal beliefs that may be stored in a memory [129]. Therefore, such inferential processes carried out by the translator must include interpretation of cultural specifics that don't exist or prevail in the target culture. The translator needs to explicate such encyclopaedic, culturally specific knowledge. Content can then be made directly accessible to the target reader, even if additional explanations and integration are required within the running text [Vermes 2007: 132]. By granting the translator relative freedom translational creativity can be achieved [Kussmaul 2000; Loffredo and Perteghella 2006; Sternberg 1999; Wills 1996 in S. E. Pommer 2008]. S. E. Pommer [2008] points out three aspects of creativity from a psychological perspective. These include novelty, appropriateness and acceptance [356]. Sternberg and Williams also propose three types of thinking that must also be taken into consideration when carrying out this type of creative work. This includes synthetic thinking of new and interesting ideas, analytic thinking with critical appraisal, possible solutions and practical thinking when identifying a potential audience for innovative ideas [Sternberg 1999: 433]. Appropriate creativity and critical thinking are indeed important for effective translation.

Scholars also warn that inconsistency and superficiality in the translation must be avoided [e.g. Leonardi 2010; Meltai 1999; Vermes 2007]. Translation should not be minimalized in terms of achieving necessary encyclopaedic assumptions within the cultural context [Vermes 2007: 139]. The translator must understand the text completely; otherwise the source text will not be understood by the target reader. The translator must be fully aware of the fact that he is the direct interpreter, while the target reader is the subsumed interpreter, dependent on the translator's assistance [Vermes 2007: 139]. In order to avoid superficiality, the translator must find a logical transfer of idioms or proverbs when none or little previous translatability is available. It must still, however, fall within the parameters of the chosen strategy with interpretation of one term or a certain cultural specificity being maintained in the existing context. A. Vermes [2007] claims that in order to avoid perplexity and effectively combine linguistic

mediation with the cultural mediation, the translator should produce an interpretable text for the target reader. In this case, both the foreignising and/or the domesticating translation strategies can be applied [Vermes 2007; Bhabha 2000]. The translator in actuality has to introduce new aspects regarding the source culture such as words that may not exist in the other culture. The translator then adapts the source text as much as possible to match the target text and translate it into the target language. Both strategies are commonly employed in the translation process and are often interwoven. These two strategies illustrate three aspects of creativity and are highlighted by S. E. Pommer [2008]. Creativity then combines new ideas that are subtly tied to the old ones, allowing for exploratory creativity with knowledge of relevant rules, transformational creativity and significant adaptation. One context can combine several translational strategies for better comprehension and effectiveness [356]. Pommer also emphasizes the impact of culture on creativity through language, pointing out the translator's textual limitations and stressing the importance for a margin of creativity even when it comes to legal translation [2008: 364]. Therefore a translator must possess creativity and the ability to identify translatability solutions [cf. Pommer 2008: 359]. Wills [1996] states creativity is a domain-specific attribute and is pertinent for some contexts. The degree of creativity varies in terms of type of translations such as literature, commercial, religious, technical or legal. "Acceptable creativity" of the target context should be congruent with the contents of the source context and also consider corresponding encyclopaedic knowledge and cultural specificity, clearly illustrating the necessity for a translator to possess excellent critical thinking skills. The translator must practice multi-disciplinary skills in order to translate effectively [cf. Forstner 2005 in Pommer 2008: 363].

Linguistic-cultural interdependence is central to most modern translation theories. Terms such as "cultural hybridity" coined by Bhabha [2000] are also pivotal in translation processes that combine elements of both source and target languages. Logical assumptions and implications based on the translator's encyclopaedic competence are also crucial for effective and clear translation. The translator must carefully read, interpret and assess the cognitive environment of the source and target context with creativity and adequacy in the translation process. Creativity and understanding of multiple disciplines are key aspects in effective translation. The translator must be multi-talented, competent, flexible and responsible in order to provide a successful translation. In a summary, referring to W. Benjamin, translation can be metaphorically likened to a tangent, which

touches the circle (i.e. the original) at one single point, whereas it later follows its own way [1996/2004: 253ff.].

In order to effectively carry out all these practices, the translator must follow six principles proposed by H. Belloc [1931]:

1. Regard the work as an integral unit, however translate in sections

2. Decode idiom by idiom

3. Translate intention by intention

4. Avoid *les faux amis* (false cognates)

5. Alter courageously

6. Never overstate

In conclusion, translation is a fluid process, which creates a new corresponding meaning in the target language. The translator must consider the stylistic and idiomatic norms of both languages, as well as the peculiarities of both cultures. They must be granted liberty in the translation process in order to transmit the context adequately [Haque 2012: 108].

Research Results

This research focuses on translation difficulties, cultural differences and sociolinguistic aspects of commercial translation with regards to the advertising of Taiwanese products in Russian-speaking markets, including many CIS-countries. This study is based on the integral experience of a Russian native speaker who is an English, German and Russian translator. Taiwanese companies must do a lot of work in translation in order to promote their products in international markets and become internationally accepted. Taiwanese companies, which are already recognized internationally, include computer and accessory companies, such as Acer, Asus, HTC, semi-conductors, LED, rubber company Gmor and Ruby Rose cosmetics. Yet, there has been an increase of Taiwanese companies expanding in the international marketplace. These include products such as tea, intellectual toys and environmentally friendly products. Marketing these products in the foreign languages of the countries that they want to expand is crucially important and often required by local authorities. Product marketing translation in the target language must be consumer-friendly and help the product to become widely accepted in countries where English is not commonly used. Since Taiwan's high-technology industry has already developed in the international marketplace, a lot of existing commercial texts refer to technological products such as computers or machinery. Therefore, the translator must provide accurate information and understand the appropriate terminology required in technical translation. Sometimes, explanations of new technological terms are recommended for both the company and the translator.

In Taiwan, commercial translation is common and just from Chinese into other foreign languages but also from English into different target languages. Due to close business ties with America, many Taiwanese companies already have websites in English. However, usually the original Chinese version of the text is translated first into English and then from English into another language. Thus, the first source language (SL1) may lose its connotation in the transition into the third target language (TL3) through the second foreign language (TRL2): SL1→TRL2→TL3.

Google translator is a very helpful tool for translators as it primarily saves time. It usually provides a sufficient basis for the target language. After using the software, the translator should polish it by selecting precise words, refined language and implementation of corresponding cultural realities before the transfer of context into the target language. Data for this research has utilized the help of Google translate. In most cases texts were later revised and changed. Another popular Russian translation tool comes from the website *slovari.yandex.ru*, which can be utilized, when translating colloquial wording or idioms from or into Russian.

The commercial translation analyzed in this research focuses on product advertising, its characteristics, branding and company slogans. With company and brand names, the translator used a phonetic translation method, this being the process of translating names to resemble the phonetic sound of the original. Overlooking the name's meaning is a widely accepted practice in the translation field. Taiwanese export companies usually have an English name whose pronunciation can be easily transliterated into Russian. The Englification process has recently become more commonly used. When English foreign words are adopted, they are transliterated and subsequently used in the Russian speaking environment despite the existence of a direct Russian equivalent. This methodology is growing rapidly, especially with regards to business language and advertising. Therefore, with this transliteration methodology *ИИ Вин Корп.* became the adopted Russian name for Taiwanese company *In Win Corp.* Easily understood by Russians, words will often sound relatively similar in both languages but contain a specific meaning in Russian as exemplified in the case of *Industrial Machinery Ltd.*, which in Russian was translated as *ООО "Индастриел Машинери"*.

It was also found to be harder to promote a meaningless brand name of the company. He and Xiao suggest brand names should be translated to be semantically relevant to product attributes and its original name, combining phonetics, semantics, and graphics" [2003: 145]. Many Taiwanese companies create slogans that express the spirit of the firm. A

good translated slogan must be simple, meaningful, distinct, easy to remember and persuasive enough to attract the target language. Therefore, to reach this goal, the translator needs to apply a creative translation methodology that can even deviate from the original, but not from a concept. According to the Skopostheorie, the translator should use the most appropriate strategies to achieve the purpose of the TL in the target context [cf. Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997: 156]. He and Xiao claim the translated text should combine corporate marketing strategy with the socio-economic climate of the target country [2003: 141]. The translation process should be considered as a journey from one culture into another. In this case, Far Infrared Heating Pad System can be exemplified. Its product is described as follows:

Far Infrared heat energy for deeper penetration to improve blood circulation and then effectively and temporarily relieve muscle/joint pains and discomfort or simply be used for keeping warmth.

The following is a letter from the Taiwanese company to a Russian company, describing Far Infrared Heating Pad System:

It's ideal for anyone who needs a relief of pains or simply wants to keep warm. We really see a big potential of this product in Russian market. If you are interested in knowing more about our products and prices, please feel free to contact us at any time.

It is obvious that the second sentence is incomplete and not persuasive enough. It alludes to Russia as a cold country and therefore, substantiating potential demand for the heating device. The translator then transferred the sentence into: "We really see a big potential of this *'hot'* product in such a *'cold'* country as Russia", placing the emphasis on the opposition of *hot* vs. *cold* which could be potentially more attractive to consumers.

Sometimes what a company in one culture considers to be attractive may generate negative perceptions or connotations in another [cf. Sang & Zhang 2008: 243]. Such differences might include manipulating the feelings of Chinese consumers, rather than focusing on characteristics and facts that are greatly valued by Western society. Also, Taiwanese ads and slogans are often greatly exaggerated. This can be exemplified in rubber producer GMOR's website which reads: "*We are the best! Believe us! Trust us!*" Such a strong claim might have a negative effect on their credibility in Western cultures. Therefore, the simple slogan "We are one of the best" would be more pertinent.

Another difficulty that arises in translation refers to culturally based legends, literature and historical figures, as well as proverbs and idioms. This becomes challenging when conveying the connotative meaning from the source text to the target text and

requires a translator with a profound understanding of both cultures in order to avoid unfortunate results [Sang & Zhang 2008: 236]. Chinese folklore features several common characters, such as dragons, lions and monkeys, however the significance of these icons are not easily translated into Western cultural understanding, "which focus more on narration, beliefs, values, and imagery" [Sang & Zhang 2008: 241]. In these types of cases, scholars Haque [2012], Sang and Zhang [2008] and Wiersema [2004] advise the appreciation and conveyance of such differences rather than assimilation of them into the target culture since such foreignness can also have a positive effect on the curious consumer, who may be seeking an ethnic experience from the source culture that they are purchasing the products from. Z. Haque [2012] stresses literary creativeness or the re-creation of one language in another, while still transmitting the message and not the meaning. This will still imply the original definition of translation [97f.]. R. Jakobson [1959] states that translation is a reported speech; the translator recodes and transmits a message received from another source. Therefore, translation involves creating two equivalent messages for two different codes [233]. According to Z. Haque, the translator needs to have "a delicate common sense of when to paraphrase or 'translate literally' and when to paraphrase in order to guarantee exact rather than fake equivalents between the source- and target-language texts" [2012: 105]. This means the translator must find a pertinent equivalent with different degrees of translatability for any text; therefore translators should not only be bilingual but also bicultural.

Furthermore, Sang and Zhang point out that in the process of translation, translators and marketers should not only promote as many features as possible, but also evaluate which features are most important or appealing to the target consumers [2008: 237]. Commercial translation with regards to advertising often combines an accurate translation without substantially altering the source text or idiomatic translation within the target language [Haque 2012: 107]. In advertising texts, the metaphoric language is very common. However, it should be used carefully and more legibly, otherwise misunderstandings could arise. In reference to the following sentence: "*Some Taiwanese auto parts makers are still pinning high hopes on earning some green by going green*", the concept of "GREEN" contains cultural specificity for several languages. While translating the slogan of one Taiwanese company, regarding its green features, from English into Russian and German, the translator needed to use different inferential processes, including different encyclopaedic backgrounds in order to target two cultures. Here the first meaning

of *green* refers to the greenish banknote of the US dollar, whereas the second meaning of *green* includes environmentally friendly bio-materials. Metaphoric statements will later be explained as some cultural concepts are more common than others. This can be exemplified in the Russian common use of the word *green* with reference to the US dollar. However, Germany's Green Party promotes an eco-friendly environment; therefore the word *green* with reference to US currency would not be so readily understood in Germany since the Euro is used there. Russians, on the other hand, in the past were less aware of the term *green* with regards to eco-friendly technology. Therefore, the translator's knowledge of social realities in both cultures is integral to successful comprehension of substantial translation.

Another advertising example includes: *solar powered air freshener is a green product that is not only energy efficient but also eco-friendly*. Here, the term *green* was directly translated into the following German translation: *Der solarbetriebene Duft-Zerstäuber ist ein grünes Erzeugnis, das nicht nur energieeffizient, sondern auch umweltfreundlich ist*. However, in the Russian translation, *green* was replaced with the term *eco-friendly* which carries the literal meaning of being *pollution-free*: *Работающий на солнечной энергии воздухоочиститель – это экологически чистый продукт, который является не только энергосберегающим, но и безвредным для окружающей среды*. Therefore, the metaphoric terms *green*, *eco-friendly* and *environmentally friendly* were used in the translated advertisements interchangeably with the Russian translation meaning harmless to the environment. Therefore, *green* product (Ge. 'grünes Produkt') and environmentally friendly products (Ge. 'umweltfreundlich') maintain a greater linguistic denotation in both English and German speaking environments but with the literal name for eco-clean products being *экологически чистый продукт* in Russian.

A. Vermes [2007] emphasizes this encyclopaedic knowledge is highly important for every translator. Another example was with regards to the geographical locations of *Mainland China*, *Cross-Straits* and *islands*. Besides requiring geographical knowledge and familiarity of political issues between Taiwan and China, the translator must maintain a geopolitically correct translation. Thus, the name Taiwan is often described as just an *island* or *one side of the straits* and therefore would not transliterate to other nations. It should be understood that not everyone knows about Taiwan's issues. Taiwan is often mistaken for Thailand by many members of the international community. Furthermore, the phrase '*both sides of the strait*' meaning China and Taiwan requires a greater understanding of the region's geo-

political nuances. It is therefore advisable to utilize the recognized name of Taiwan in the translation considering many products maintain the label "Made in Taiwan". In this case, Taiwan is identified with specificity. These examples demonstrate complexities involved in the act of naming.

The following exemplifies the lack of clarity that can sometimes occur: *The firm has an R&D and operation office in Taiwan and two production facilities in mainland China, with a total cross-strait employment of over 300 workers*. Firstly, it is unnecessary to write '*Mainland China*' since the west utilizes the terms China and Taiwan and are considered as separate parts. The term '*Mainland*' with reference to China is therefore uncommon. As mentioned above, the term **cross-strait** refers to Taiwan and China, although it may not be understood by Westerners. However, it is translated into Russian and German as "on both territories". These two territories have different political systems with their own governments, although Taiwan is also sometimes referred to as the Republic of China. This original name for China originated in 1911, after the Manchurian monarchy was overthrown. In 1949, after the Nationalist government was defeated in the civil war, the People's Republic of China was established. Therefore terms such as *cross-strait*, *mainland China* and *island* should be avoided in advertising. Instead, the names *Taiwan* and *China* should be utilized since foreign companies and consumers are more familiar with the labels "*Made in China*" and "*Made in Taiwan*".

Another example of translation regarding a Taiwan auto-parts maker reveals a similar problem: Another advantage of local auto parts makers is their division-of-labor manufacturing networks in Taiwan, Mainland China and other countries. With plants **on both sides of the Taiwan Straits**, producers can meet a wide range of customer needs in terms of pricing, quality, quantity, and lead times. RU: Другим преимуществом местных производителей автозапчастей является их производственная сеть с разделением труда на Тайване, в Китае и других странах. Благодаря предприятиям **по обе стороны Тайваньского пролива**, производители могут выполнить широкий диапазон потребностей клиента в отношении цены, качества, количества и времен выполнения.

This example indicates *the Taiwan Straits*, instead of the commonly used phrase *Cross-Strait*, while still maintaining the separate references of Taiwan and China.

The next case exemplifies a children's furniture manufacturer that produces its wares exclusively in Taiwan: In Taiwan, the children's furniture industry has been shrinking as manufacturers move to **China** and other countries. The companies that have stuck

it out **on the island** have survived by upgrading and focusing on innovative high-end products provided for both domestic and foreign markets. RU: На Тайване производство детской мебели уменьшилось с тех пор, как производство переехало в Китай и другие страны. Компании, которые остались на **Тайваньском острове**, выжили за счет модернизирования и фокусирования на новаторские, высококачественные изделия, снабжающие как отечественный, так и иностранные рынки.

In the second reference, Taiwan is referred to as an *island* which exemplifies an autonomous state of isolation and independence. The translation in Russian refers explicitly to "*Taiwan as an island*". The advertisement emphasizes high-end innovative Taiwanese products in contrast to products from other countries, particularly those of China. This was also exemplified in: "*Lextar Electronics Corp.'s president, F.J. Su said that Taiwan's extensive developments of LED-backlight and information-technology (IT) industries have built a solid foundation for the island's LED-lighting industry.*" 'Solid foundation' of the island's LED industry implies good quality LED products. Here, Taiwan is referred to as an island, again maintaining the reference in which few people have an in-depth understanding. Few consumers know that many Taiwanese companies run factories in China, where the labor costs were originally cheaper. However, although their products are manufactured in China, they are still labeled as Taiwanese technology and branded with 'made in Taiwan'. In contrast, some Taiwanese companies proudly emphasize they operate exclusively in Taiwan implying a better quality compared to products manufactured in China. "*We are one of the few school furniture makers that operate exclusively in Taiwan,*" says George Chiu (Corporate Marketing Manager) who emphasizes their business has prospered solely in Taiwan and does not engage in manufacturing in China or any other outsourcing country. However, this isolated factor is specific to Taiwan and is usually not fully comprehended by foreigners doing business in the region. Emphasis should therefore be on the production process based only in Taiwan (not in China). This reference also alludes to Taiwan's superiority in quality control with many products being exported to high-end markets such as Japan, Germany and the USA. This illustrates how companies maintain a better image if they operate exclusively in Taiwan; a factor may not be understood implicitly by other countries.

Interdisciplinary knowledge is often required throughout the translation process, including commercial translation. According to the data, besides linguistic and cultural competence, sometimes the translator was required to have a basic knowledge of

the product in terms of its technical or chemical composition etc. An elementary understanding in areas of computer technology, high-tech systems, chemical engineering, medical and business scopes has also been identified as being necessary.

Commercial translation allows for the translator to contribute creative input in the target context in order to make the company or their product's information more trustworthy and appealing. The ultimate goal of commercial translation is to market products faster, more efficiently and offer added value while improving the company's global competitiveness.

In order to provide an accurate, professional translation, translators must be provided with all necessary information regarding the company and its products. If a company maintains too much secrecy or confidentiality regarding their product, such as releasing the product name or drawing, it could lead to serious errors and mistakes in the target language, resulting in an inaccurate or weak translation and failure to attract an international market. Translators must also consider languages that are gender-related (e.g. French, German, Russian and Spanish) where the (in)definite article or the inflection indicate the gender of the word of which it is being referred and the syntactical relationship between the words through inflectional morphemes. In this case, the morphology and syntax are highly important for making the text grammatically correct and content comprehensible. In one case, the company didn't want to disclose what the product was because it was a business secret. Therefore, the translation strategy for both Russian and German contexts utilized an indefinite pronoun 'it' for the unidentified product. However, this resulted in a translation that lacked professional style and therefore sounded somewhat strange to the potential consumers in the target countries. In order to produce a competent and attractive translation, it is strongly advised that companies provide the translator with sufficient information regarding the product. Most companies are usually willing to provide necessary detailed information and clarify professional content-related or linguistic text-related questions in order to maximize their product's future success. Furthermore, in technical translations such as instruction manuals, the company should attach illustrations of how the product is used and apply the appropriate terminology in product description. Text often accompanies visual aids and illustrations that definitely facilitate better and more accurate translations.

Conclusion

To summarize the relevant aspects regarding commercial translation presented in this study, it can be substantially concluded that language and culture

are inseparable factors. The translator must be competent on multiple levels of the process. Prerequisites for an effective translation require in-depth knowledge of the source's language and culture, while having an integral understanding of the language and culture of the target consumer. Therefore, translators not only need to be bilingual but also bi-cultural. An encyclopaedic and culturally specific knowledge, along with a wide range of understanding of different industries is often crucial for effective translations. Synthetic, analytical (critical) and practical thinking is also required of the translator. In cases where there is untranslatability, the translator should be granted the freedom to create a corresponding equivalent, which reflects the source culture, yet can be adjusted to retain meaning, while still being comprehensible in the target culture. This more specifically refers to the logical transfer of idioms and proverbs in particular, which require a different degree of translatability. In these types of cases the importance of correctly transmitting the message rather than the meaning must be implicitly understood. However, superficiality and inconsistency in the target text must be avoided at all costs. The translator also takes on the role of cultural mediator, which also requires the creation of a translation that delivers optimal marketing messages within the target market. Therefore, the translator must be allowed to add some positive meaning to the source text without infringing on the concept and characteristics of the advertised product, while facilitating an optimal impact upon the target consumer. The translator must emphasize important features of the product without any exaggeration. The reader depends on the translator for comprehension; therefore he must find a happy medium between the legitimacy of the content of the translation and the attractiveness of the text to the target audience. This is always a big challenge for translators. Their creativity should be comprised of novelty, appropriateness and acceptance. Well-translated phonetic or semantic translation methodology should be adopted with regards to brand and company names, slogans and new terminology. Furthermore, the company needs to provide a clear and transparent source text in order to avoid any ambiguity. To sum up, the company cannot underestimate the role of translator and must utilize a highly professional translator who is competent in both source and target language and culture. All factors, which were examined throughout the research, have been identified as being crucial for a company's success in the international marketplace.

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THE ROLE OF A TRANSLATOR AS A CULTURAL MEDIATOR IN THE PROMOTION OF TAIWANESE COMPANIES IN THE POST-SOVIET AREA

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This research focuses on Taiwanese and Russian business relations and aims to elucidate how it is influenced by both parties' language and culture when establishing international economic relations. The study considers commercial translation and difficulties encountered when developing cross-cultural relations. It presents a perspective derived from Taiwan's international industrial development and focuses on language barriers and a lack of competence in understanding culture in international collaborations. The research investigates existing issues and suggests solutions in terms of accuracy in language and culture necessary for establishing closer and more successful intercultural ties between Russia and Taiwan.

This research includes a researcher participant and inductive methodologies, with the author's observational data collected over ten years of interpretation and translation. With these components and the application of several commonly adopted translation theories, it provides a unique, cultural perspective based on work derived from Taiwanese and Russian business and cultural intermediation. As a result, solutions have evolved on how to overcome language and cultural barriers and improve cooperation between Taiwan and Russia. This research can greatly assist in the development of communications and exchange in the realm of international business.

Key words: creative translation; cultural intermediation; culture-specificity; encyclopedic (interdisciplinary) knowledge; phonetic translation method; Relevance theory; Skopostheorie.