



# On Translation of English Automobile Brand Names Based on Appraisal Theory

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**Abstract:** *Translated brand names with local characteristics and exotic charm contribute to the establishment and expansion of foreign automobile brands in China. In the paper, 15 representative English automobile brand names have been selected for later analysis in qualitative research based on Martin's Appraisal Theory. The author evaluated the translation effect with three sub-systems of Attitude and compared the commercial effect of original and translated brand names from appraisal meanings. Through comprehensive analysis, she found that brand names are short but full of abundant appraisal resources, and then came up with two translation strategies under the guidance of Appraisal Theory (1) Choosing vocabularies bearing positive sentimental color and according with public aesthetics to strike a chord with consumers; (2) Adding or deleting appraisal meanings appropriately in accordance with target culture.*

**Keywords:** *Appraisal Theory; Attitude; English automobile brand names; translation strategies.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Research Background

Since China's joining the WTO in 2001, domestic automobile industry has grown rapidly into an outstanding one in the new industrial age. Moreover, with the increase of national economy, incomes and living standards of the public improved a lot. Consequently, many people can afford a car for the convenience of transportation and to improve the quality of life. Due to the increasing demands on automobiles and their popularity among Chinese consumers, the translation of English automobile brand names into Chinese admits of no delay.

According to network data, over 80% consumers believed that automobile brand names are closely related with the sales of automobiles. About half of the respondents or more claimed that they would never purchase a car with a negative or ominous brand name. In addition, when companies launch a new automobile model, they will create an attractive brand name to trigger consumers' purchasing desire and facilitate publicity. Some companies even rename previous models with an expectation of boosting sales.

A theory to translation is what a beacon to people in the dark. Researches will be more persuasive and in-depth due to the theoretical foundation. In the past decades, many scholars have studied Brand Name Translation under the guidance of varied translation theories or principles. In spite of their achievements, the existing problem is repetitive researches on the same point without innovation.

Appraisal Theory, proposed by J. R. Martin in the 1990s, has opened a new area to the interpersonal function with paying more attention to the semantics of evaluation, which explains interpersonal meanings more systematically and comprehensively. During the past ten years, it has been widely adopted by scholars at home and abroad to conduct studies in various fields while researches on automobile brand name translation

based on Appraisal Theory are rare. In the paper, the author attempts to explore the translation of English automobile brand names from a new perspective by applying Appraisal Theory.

### **Research Objectives**

With the internalization of market, a large quantity of automobiles from foreign countries is flocking in domestic markets. The automobile industry of China is booming, in which foreign automobile brands occupy the lion's share. In order to maximize the promotion and sales, it's urgent and essential for English automobile brands to be translated into Chinese to cater local people's taste and consuming psychology. Having taken the importance into consideration, the paper is expected to realize the goals listed below.

Firstly, translators could have a more clear idea of various automobile brand names from foreign countries.

Secondly, present the framework of Appraisal Theory in detail, from which translators can understand the theory profoundly.

Thirdly, provide some inspiration and reference for translators in terms of translating English automobile brand names.

### **Organization of the Paper**

The whole paper has been divided into six parts, and the detailed information of each part is as follows. Part One makes a general introduction to the paper, including research background, objectives and structure of the paper. Part Two focuses on the review of literature, previous studies on Appraisal Theory and on Brand Name Translation. Part Three provides an overview of Appraisal Theory and a detailed introduction to the framework of Attitude on which the paper is based. Part Four offers some essential information about automobile brand names. Firstly, the author distinguishes four terms: brand, brand name, brand mark and trademark. Secondly, the origins of foreign automobile brand names are introduced in the rough. Finally, four functions of brand names are summarized. Part Five is the central part of the paper, in which 15 representative English automobile brand names and their Chinese names are analyzed from three sub-categories of Attitude: Affect, Judgement and Appreciation. And then, the author evaluated the commercial effect through comparing appraisal meanings of original brand names and translated ones. Part Six comes to a brief conclusion that presents the main findings and some limitations of the paper, with an expectation to encourage further research in the field.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Studies on Appraisal Theory**

Appraisal Theory (AT) was put forward by J. R. Martin in 1990s, which was widely accepted as an effective supplement to Systematic Functional Linguistics. In the last two decades, AT has been broadly applied in various studies of different fields by a great number of scholars in China and abroad. Many previous studies on AT has proved it to be a feasible theory used to analyze different discourses and identify appraisal meanings.

- **Researches on the Framework of Appraisal Theory**

AT derived from the project named *Write it Right*, conducted by James R. Martin and his colleagues in 1990s. J. R. Martin (2000) introduced the linguistic range of AT and stated that AT consisted of two parallel systems: Engagement/ Graduation and Attitude, which was a milestone of AT, playing an essential role in its development. Martin and Rose (2003) illuminated Attitude of AT and applied it to some different discourses. To some extent, it developed attitude system and enriched its application. Under the cooperation of Martin and White (2008), a book named *The Language of Evaluation- Appraisal in English* was published in order to make AT much more mature and comprehensive. In the book, an exhaustive introduction was made on both Engagement and Attitude. Ever since, AT developed into an integrated appraisal system with Attitude being its core system to analyze interpersonal meaning and different kinds of discourses.

In China, there are a number of researches centering on the introduction and summary of AT. Wang Zhenhua

(2001) presented the background, theoretical framework, concrete operating process and some existing problems of AT. From then, many scholars and linguists took up carrying out studies on AT from the perspectives of theory and application. Wang Zhenhua and Ma Yulei (2007) explored the charm of AT (consciousness of innovation, consistency, generality and explanatory power), the confusion it brought to people and approaches to eliminating confusion. Song Chengfang (2007) made a summary of the characteristics of AT from four respects: systematicness, meaning domain, system construction based on vocabulary and discourse analysis orientation. Besides, domestic linguists have conducted other advantageous explorations in AT and its various aspects, covering its essence, criteria, identification, accuracy, and external implementation approaches.

- **Researches on the Application of Appraisal Theory**

Iedema, Feez & White (1994) once studied the subjectivity and objectivity of press discourse, the characteristics of news report, appraisal value and their relationship with varied expressions of voice. Eggins and Slade (1997) carried a research on participants' tone when they shift conversation under informal context. It was revealed that the control level of speakers is relevant to the use of AT. Caroline Coffin (1996) ever came up with a new school-based literacy model, and explored how the model made a difference in education practice through the application in school. C. Painter (2003) have tested the mutual effect of expressing implicit and explicit attitude in the conversation between mother and child. In addition, he explored the significant role of Attitude during the process of language development. Martin & White (2005) discussed the interpersonal meanings of written words, which expanded the interpretation by Systemic Functional Linguistics to interpersonal meanings and contributed to the overall and effective development of AT.

On account of its good universality, the application research of AT in China is extensive, including but not limited to discourse analysis. It has spread to other many fields, like foreign language teaching, translation studies and literary analysis.

1. **Application into Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis takes the lion's share of studies of the application of AT. According to the statistics, discourses involved in the application of AT contained news discourse, legal discourse, advertising discourse, etc. Wang Zhenhua (2004) took hard news as object of study, and analyzed the types and implementation means of attitude resources in hard news. Wang Zhenhua (2006) adopted three metafunction theories of Systemic Functional Grammar and AT to compare and analyze the legal "surrender" and the so-called "surrender" in a case of rape and murder. Yuan Xiufeng (2007) analyzed the engagement resources in a group of English narrative admission advertisements. Cai Hong (2005) investigated the usage of evaluative pragmatic indicators as interventional method in discourse.

2. **Application into Foreign Language Teaching**

The application of AT in the field of foreign language teaching involves reading, writing and speaking. Zhong Lanfeng (2007) applied AT to the teaching of English newspapers, and demonstrated the intersection of AT research and media literacy research. Liao Chuanfeng (2011) took advantage of AT in the teaching practice of college foreign language writing, and he pointed out that adding AT knowledge and relative writing methods to the teaching of foreign language writing can effectively enhance students' writing ability. Xu Chao (2006), Ma Weilin (2007) proved that AT had implications for English reading classes and the teaching of spoken English respectively.

3. **Application into Translation Studies**

Zhang Xiangang (2007) stated that AT can be utilized as an attitude analysis tool in translation, and the introduction of AT into translation studies will promote the development of translation theories and translation teaching. Xu Jun (2011), taking social discourse as a case, explored the effectiveness and feasibility of applying AT to business translation practice. Qian Hong (2007) compared and analyzed the attitude resources in both English and Chinese texts of four perfume advertisements, and he surveyed

"unfaithful" phenomenon in translation and the reasons behind it.

#### 4. Application into Literature Analysis

AT is often applied to the study of literary works combined with the theory of narratology, which has strong explanatory power for them. Shang Biwu (2008) made an analysis on *A Thousand Splendid Suns* at its lexical level, and elucidated the roles that three subsystems of Attitude played in the depiction of characters' destiny. Wang Yali and Guan Shuhong (2006) took Hemingway's short story *In a Foreign Land* as example to explore appraisal resources and their embodiment hidden in its narration.

By looking back some previous studies, it can be concluded that the AT has gradually been proved a relatively systematic and integrated theory applied to different kinds of discourse analysis.

#### Studies on Brand Name Translation

Li Shuqin (2007) reviewed researches on the translation of brand names conducted by mainland scholars since China's reform and opening-up. She divided them into three stages: the enlightenment stage, the development period and the international brewing period. However, the author will summarize the research status from two perspectives: culture and theory.

- **From the Perspective of Culture**

Where there is a language, there is a culture. Translation is not simply the translation of two languages but the transformation of two different cultures. Liang Xiao Dong (1997) studied the influence of national psychology on Brand Name Translation. In his opinion, differences in temperament, value orientation, religious belief and aesthetic taste produced direct effects on its translation. Ignoring the differences of national psychology in brand name translation will lead to products' failure in both domestic and foreign markets. Besides, Peng Shiyu (2001) stated that the internationalization of brand names was a special form of cross-cultural communication and that any brand name had its own cultural connotations.

- **From the Perspective of Different Theories**

Li Youhua (2003) discussed Brand Name Translation with applying Cooperative Principle in his paper. It was stated that quantity maxim, quality maxim, relation maxim and manner maxim should be abided in order to achieve the equivalence realization of cultural function between target and original language. Only in this way, could brand names produce a positive market effect.

Bai Shuxia (2005) explored Brand Name Translation from an entirely new perspective—Adaptation Theory of pragmatics. In the process of translation, it was believed that translators should attach importance to the choice of words to adapt to different political systems; pay attention to cultural differences to adapt to varied consumer demands; facilitate positive associations to adapt to consumer psychology and so on, thus making a beneficial attempt for the application of adaptation theory into other fields.

Shen Yuanyuan and Ren Xiaofei (2008) found that Skopostheorie has a good guiding significance for Brand Name Translation, and put forward some effective methods of translating foreign automobile brand names into Chinese under the guidance of Skopostheorie. Zhou Qinchao (2009) discussed the translation of cosmetic brand names with adopting Skopostheorie, aiming to improve the quality of translation and enhance the readability of translated names.

Under the guidance of Functional Equivalence theory, Zhang Jingfa, Zhong Hui (2010) explored the optimization of Brand Name Translation, and came up with three strategies for the translation of enterprises' brand names. Kong Peilin (2014) analyzed and appreciated the Chinese names of four types of English brand names according to the Functional Equivalence theory.

Up to now, few researches have been conducted on Brand Name Translation from the angle of Appraisal Theory. Zuo Qiong (2011) applied Attitude to analyze, compare and explain the semantic features of brand names and their translation, attempting to explore the factors that influence Brand Name Translation. On the basis of AT, Yang Pan (2012) evaluated the semantic features of selected automobile brand names and their Chinese correspondence. At last, he summarized three reasons of unfaithful phenomenon in translation

practice.

**Summary**

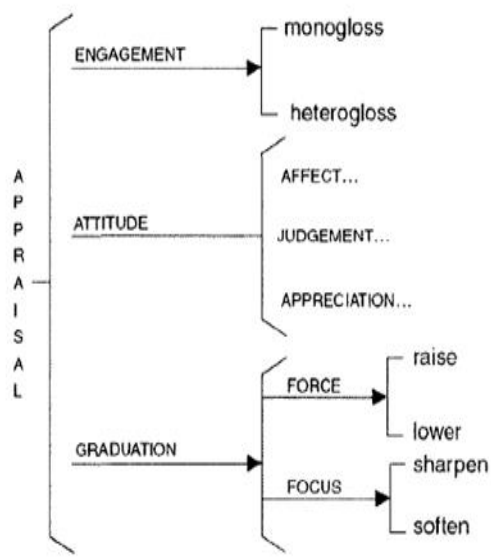
After reviewing the literatures mentioned above, it's not hard to find that scholars have made delightful achievements in researches of both Appraisal Theory and Brand Name Translation. However, studies on Brand Name Translation didn't reach a mature stage and some problems are still existing, such as inadequateness of profundity, repetitive researches on the same topic without innovation, not applying new translation theories, etc. In this case, the author tries applying AT to analyze 15 chosen automobile brand names and their translated ones, anticipating to provide a new perspective for Automobile Brand Name Translation.

**Theoretical Foundation**

**An Overview of Appraisal Theory**

Appraisal Theory is widely considered as a new development of Systemic Functional Linguistics. M.A.K. Halliday studied three major functions of language from the perspective of sociology: conceptual function, interpersonal function and textual functions, but the semantics of evaluation was ignored by him, under which circumstance arises Appraisal Theory. J.R. Martin, further developed Systemic Functional Linguistics and put forward Appraisal Theory creatively on original foundation.

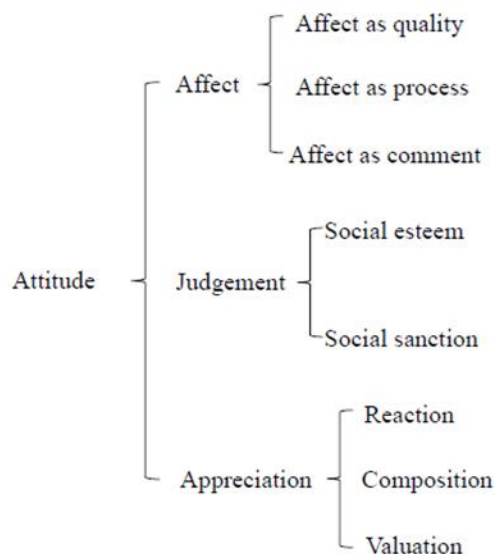
Appraisal Theory is a whole set of resources expressing attitudes by language. In Appraisal Theory, evaluative resources have been divided into three basic subsystems in the light of semantics: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. In more details, Attitude consists of affect, judgment and appreciation; Engagement includes monogloss and heterogloss; Graduation contains force and focus, among which the relationships can be illustrated clearly in the figure below.



**Figure 1** Overview of Appraisal Theory

**Three Sub-systems of Attitude**

Attitude is the central system of AT, defined as judgement and appreciation made towards human behavior, text/process and phenomena after influence in psychology. Attitude can be further grouped into three sub-systems: Affect (expression of human emotions), Judgment (evaluation of people's personality and behavior), and Appreciation (evaluation of things).



**Figure 2** Framework of Attitude

- **Affect**

Affect belongs to the category of reaction in psychology, referring to reactions towards behavior, text/process and phenomena, and involving three fields of meaning: affect, morality and aesthetics. Martin & White (2005: 42) argued that since Affect is an innate expressing resource, it enjoys a central position in the three fields of meaning mentioned above.

Affect itself fell into three parts, which were termed as affect as quality, affect as process and affect as comment. Affect as quality indicates the emotion expressed by language users by making use of quality lexicon. Affect as process means that language users reveal their feelings with employing process of clauses, which mainly consists of mental process and behavioral process. Affect as comment refers to the emotion of language users conveyed by modal adjunct.

Affect can be either positive or negative due to the fact that people may be pleased or sad. Moreover, Affect can be conveyed implicitly or explicitly because some express their emotional feelings indirectly while others prefer to a direct way (Martin & Rose, 2003). Quality lexicon with affirmative meanings are always used to convey positive emotions, while quality lexicon with adverse meanings are always applied to show negative emotions.

Affect is gradable, that is to say, the emotional feelings can be generally split into three grades according to the intensity of emotion involved in the utterance: low, middle and high.

- **Judgement**

Judgment belongs to the category of ethics, which makes assessment on people's behavior in accordance with a series of social norms, such as systems of value, laws, confections, social acceptability, etc. During judgement, an act is usually judged as normal or abnormal, moral or immoral, legal or illegal, as well as socially acceptable or not.

In general terms, the research on the language of news media sorted AT into two subsets: social esteem and social sanction. Social esteem includes three categories: "normality", "capacity" and "tenacity". Normality describes how special someone is, whether he is spontaneous, avant-garde, fashionable; Capacity tries to state how competent an individual or group is in solving problems, whether he is mature or wise; in the category of tenacity, AT attempts to present how resolute they are, whether the evaluation objects are brave, cautious,

devoted and so on. When it comes to social sanction, it is comprised of "veracity" and "propriety". Veracity is concerned with how truthful individuals or groups are, while propriety is related to the extent to which people's behavior is away from "criticism", in another word, how moral someone is.

Eggins and Slade (1997) have pointed out that, *social esteem tends to deal with oral culture, such as chatting, gossips, jokes and all sorts of stories, in which humor performs an essential part*. By contrast, social sanction is often codified in writing like laws and regulations.

- **Appreciation**

Appreciation belongs to the category of aesthetics, referring to the positive and negative evaluations of things, processes, phenomena, states of affairs apart from human behavior. But humans can also be evaluated by Appreciation when they are regarded as entities rather than participants who behave, for example, *a beautiful woman, a key figure*.

The system is composed of three variables, namely, reaction, composition and valuation. In more details, reaction is concerned with the extent to which text/process attracts our attention, which includes two dimensions: impact and quality. Impact is adopted to evaluate how things captures people's attention and quality is used to assess how attractive things are towards affect. Likewise, composition is further stratified into balance and detail. Balance refers to whether text/process is proportionate, while detail indicates if text/process cannot be understood due to complexity. Valuation has to do with the evaluation of the significance, value and worthiness of text/process (Martin, 2000).

The three sub-systems of Attitude are closely related with each other and interactive semantically in the sense that they are all motivated by emotional reactions. Both Judgement and Appreciation can be seen as institutionalized Affect, the distinction lies in that Judgement is concerned with proposal, but Appreciation is with respect to proposition.

## **A General Introduction to Automobile Brand Names**

### **Definition of Related Terms**

Before making a further introduction about brand names, it is necessary to distinguish several closely related but easily confused terms: brand, brand name, brand mark and trademark.

Brand is a name, term, sign, symbol and pattern design or the combination of these elements, which is attached to commodity, packing, service facility or relative advertising materials. According to Longman, brand indicates a type of product made by a particular company that has a particular name or design. A brand name refers to the vocalized part of a brand, usually consisting of words, letters, and/numbers. A brand mark can be recognized by sight and easily memorized but cannot be expressed in words, made of design, symbol, words, numbers and distinctive color, which can impress consumers by its visual effect. A trademark is a brand or part of a brand that has been registered by relevant government departments, enjoys exclusive right and is given legal protection. Once registered, a brand or part of a brand is a trademark. In this paper, the term "brand name" will be used for the research.

### **Origins of English Automobile Brand Names**

To have a good command of the translation of automobile brand names, a basic premise is to know about the naming characteristics of them.

#### **1) Being Named after Places of Interest**

Employing scenic spots as brand name is a typical practice, and such examples in the field of automobile are beyond count. "Elysee" of Citroen is named after the Elysee Palace located in east of the Champs Elysees in Paris. It has a long history of nearly 300 years and all the dwellers in it were distinguished personages and high officials. Louis XV and Louis XVI once lived here sequentially when they were in power, which endows the car with romance and dignity.

#### **2) Being Named after Natural Phenomenon**

Naming its products in various wind names is an age-old tradition of Volkswagen. We are familiar with the brand name “Santana”, originally the name of a valley in California where a strong whirlwind often blows, and the locals call it Santana. When Volkswagen produced the new car model in 1981, the wind name was used to name it with an indication that this kind of car would sweep across the world like whirlwind.

### **3) Being Named after Personal/Geographic Names in Myth and Legend**

Due to cultural differences, some cars in western countries are named after personal names or geographic names in ancient myths and legends. Mazda is the wrong English transliteration of the company's founder “Matsuda”, but the company no doubt welcomes the spelling because it happens to be the "god of light" in ancient Persia fire worship.

### **4) Being Named after Foreign Words**

If a brand name aims to convey the luxury of a car, it will use English, such as Crown; if a brand name needs to emphasize the elegance and dignity of a car, it will use French, such as Ballade; if a brand name wants to reflect the quality of a racing car, it will employ Italian, such as Leon. In the eyes of the world, Britain and the United States is a symbol of quality, France is famous for its elegance. Italy, on the other hand, is capable of producing world-class sports cars such as Ferrari.

### **5) Being Named after Fabricated Words**

In the process of car naming, some innovative words are fabricated based on the characteristics and performance of the car, corporate culture, social culture, popular culture and market demands, with the combination of psychology, aesthetics, linguistics and other scientific systems to embody uniqueness of the car and achieve expected effects. The brand name "Excele" of Buick is evolved from the word "excellent", there is no any word more appropriate than Excele.

### **6) Being Named after Historic Person's Names**

The brand names of some cars derive from historical celebrities or prominent people from all walks of life. It is not only aimed to commemorate those giants, but also aimed at increasing the cultural background of cars. For example, “Benz” is to commemorate Carl Friedrich Benz who was one of the pioneers of German auto industry. In 1886, he invented and manufactured the first vehicle with gasoline engine of one cylinder four stroke, and became the largest car manufacturer all over the world at that time.

### **7) Being Named after Common Words**

Common words are also one major source of automobile brand names. “Golf” represents green and friendship. “Golf” of Volkswagen develops its original meaning and reflects its dynamic concept of comfort and fashion. Likewise, “Compass” of Jeep, launched in 2016, also reflects its tremendous momentum of leading a groundbreaking trend.

## **Functions of Automobile Brand Names**

As a matter of fact, a brand name is the symbol of a product or an enterprise which acts an essential role in enhancing brand awareness and customer loyalty. By and large, a brand name usually has four main functions: distinctive function, informative function, aesthetic function and legal function, all of which will be elaborated next.

First of all, the most basic function of a brand name is distinctive function that distinguishes one manufacturer's/seller's products of the same category. Products produced by certain manufactures may differ in terms of performance, quality and after-sales service, as a result, brand names are adopted by them to identify their own products and highlight their particular characteristics.

In addition to that, a brand name has informative function. In other words, a brand name may indicate some information about products, such as effects and features; imply the origin of the brand name; convey the target customers; stand for one's social status; deliver cultural connotations and so on. For example, “Polo” of Shanghai-Volkswagen is especially developed stylish women, with fashionable and pretty appearance as well



as varied colors catering modern women’s taste and consuming psychology.

Thirdly, a brand name performs an aesthetic function. The aesthetic value of a brand name includes three aspects: image, sound and meaning. Some positive associations can be added to brand names for the purpose of improving the image of commodities. Furthermore, homophonic or repetition can be applied to reinforce the beauty of sound. In the meanwhile, the names of giants or celebrities can be adopted as brand names which will endow products with positive meaning.

Last but not the least, a registered brand name is under the protection of laws, which is the legal function. There is no doubt that a famous brand name will receive wide acceptance and popularity among the public. Consequently, some companies may manufacture fakes and counterfeit some renowned brand names in order to reap staggering profits. For the sake of both enterprises and consumers, it is significant to have brand names registered.

### Analysis of Effect Evaluation from Appraisal Theory

The above chapters have made an introduction to the framework of Appraisal Theory, especially its core system—Attitude, as well as some basic but necessary information about automobile brand names, which lay a solid foundation for this chapter where a detailed analysis on the translation effect will be conducted from three sub-categories of Attitude, besides, appraisal meanings of original brand names and translated ones will be compared to evaluate the commercial effect.

### Evaluating Translation Effect from Three Sub-systems of Attitude

- **From the Perspective of Affect**

From the above chapter introducing Appraisal Theory, it is learned that words related to psychology belong to Affect. In fact, a portion of English automobile brand names are translated into Chinese on the basis of consumer psychology.

**Table 1** Analysis with Attitude

Affect	Cadillac	凯迪拉克
	Rolls-Royce	劳斯莱斯
	Benz	奔驰
	Family	福美来
Judgement	Pardo	普拉多
	Lexus	雷克萨斯
	BMW	宝马
Appreciation	Hummer	悍马
	Jaguar	美洲虎
	Epica	景程
	Sagitar	速腾

Certain English automobile brand names, deriving from the names of historical figures or their company’s founders, are translated into Chinese directly to commemorate those great persons. In this case, a “celebrity effect” will be generated in that products named or endorsed by celebrities are of good quality and reputation in consumers’ mind.

#### **Example 1 Cadillac (凯迪拉克)**

The famous auto model from America is to commemorate Cadillac, a royal officer in French and explorer who

dared to exploit a new world, and pays tribute to him for his establishing Detroit known as “Capital of Cars” in 1101. And the proper noun contains another meaning in English: the best one. As a result, Cadillac was directly translated into “凯迪拉克”.

**Example 2 Rolls-Royce (劳斯莱斯)**

As a brand of British aristocracy, it is named after the company’s founders, Frederick Henry Royce (a British engineer) and Charles Stewart Rolls (a British aristocrat and car salesman). The brand is considered as a token of status and identity. It is the royal vehicle of British Queen, with noble appearance and grand decoration inside. There was once such a stipulation: only intellectual aristocrats can become its owners. In addition, a number of Chinese correspondences of English automobile brand names are put additional appraisal meanings by free translation so as to cater consumer psychology, reminding consumers of positive associations.

**Example 3 Benz (奔驰)**

Benz derives from the name of its inventor with no any special connotation in western countries. But in China, it was translated into “奔驰”, signifying that the automobile gallops at high speed and delivering an excitement of driving. Besides, its Chinese equivalence implies that the car model is and will be in the frontier of era forever. Therefore, it has captured the attention of thousands of Chinese consumers.

**Example 4 Family (福美来)**

Family, a type of family car made in Japan, was translated into “福美来”, adding an atmosphere of warmth and luck to car. The translated one caters to Chinese expectations for good fortune and happiness and creates a festive climate, by which a huge reservoir of Chinese clients will be drawn to it.

- **From the Perspective of Judgement**

It is clear that words concerned with sociology or moral philosophy are within the scope of Judgment. The translation of English automobile brand names into Chinese is a type of cross-cultural communication instead of a process of mechanical language transfer. Therefore, translators must attach enough importance to local culture of target language in order to enter Chinese market successfully.

**Example 5 Prado (普拉多)**

Prado was translated into “霸道” at first when it entered Chinese market, with the purpose of reflecting its excellent cross-country performance and superiority to other car models in function, which has gained widespread concern. However, on account of the ethnic contradiction between China and Japan in history, the translated name implied a serious contemptuous tone, caused Chinese consumers’ antipathy and had a negative impact on their recognition. In this case, it can be concluded that cultural differences must be attached importance to and local conventions of target country must be followed during the translation of automobile brand names.

**Example 6 Lexus (雷克萨斯)**

Lexus is a high-end automobile model produced by Toyota, the etymology of which is luxury. From the brand name, it can be got that its positioning is high-end and luxury, distinguished from other ordinary ones with features of fuel saving or low cost. When noticing the brand name, foreign consumers will naturally connect it with satisfying comfort and superior quality. So Lexus is appropriately to be used in foreign markets to catch potential customers. If Lexus is directly translated into “奢侈”, it will be left without anybody to care for it in Chinese markets, because it conflicts with the reserved life style of locals. It is learned that Lexus was translated into “凌志” at the beginning of entering China, communicating a sense of “壮志凌云” to people but far from the implication of product positioning. Later, taking the poor sales into account, the translated name was changed into “雷克萨斯” close to Lexus in pronunciation and then its sales got promoted.

**Example 7 BMW (宝马)**

BMW is the abbreviation of its company name without conveying any particular meaning in German. Nevertheless, its translated name (宝马) can remind Chinese consumers of positive associations. In Chinese

culture, there is a statement of “宝马良驹”, referring to a kind of rare horse with extremely high speed, from which “宝马” was evolved. The brand name contains rich cultural deposits and shapes a favorable image that the car is as fast as “千里马” in Chinese legends, sure to bring about popularity among domestic consumers.

- **From the Perspective of Appreciation**

On the basis of previous introduction to Appraisal Theory, it’s not hard to get that words in connection with aesthetics locates in the category of Appreciation. With the ultimate goal of commercial success, it’s critical for translated versions of English automobile brand names to accord with Chinese aesthetic concept.

**Example 8 Hummer (悍马)**

The literal meaning of Hummer is “蜂鸟”, but it was translated into “悍马” in line with its exterior and function as Sport Utility Vehicle. In the Chinese correspondence “悍马”, the word “悍” clearly delivers its arrogant style and rough appearance, besides, horse was human traffic tool in ancient times and a heroic creature in Chinese legends that can run one thousand li a single day. And thus adopting such a brand name will paint the car model with the color of strength and conquest, which can provoke consumers’ purchasing inclination.

**Example 9 Jaguar (美洲虎)**

The automobile brand name Jaguar was once translated into “美洲虎” by literal translation, but Chinese translators then changed it into “捷豹” creatively with the combination of transliteration and free translation. The latter is similar to “Jaguar” in pronunciation and indicates that the automobile model is as fast as leopards. In Chinese notion, leopard is much faster than tiger. The brand name gives people a feeling of extreme pleasure and thrill, maintaining elegance in its wild feature and reflecting its performance as Sport Utility Vehicle.

**Example 10 Epica (景程)**

Epica is a Latin word, the Chinese correspondence of which is “景程”, sticking out its performance of comfort and security and implying the meaning that consumers can enjoy beautiful scenery in the travel of driving and life.

**Example 11 Sagitar (速腾)**

The brand name Sagitar is made from the Latin root *sagitt* and the word *sagittarius*, In Europe, people of Sagittarius are characterized by their pursuit of speed, adoration of freedom and abundant enthusiasm. Considering that Chinese consumers may not be familiar with the cultural background, Sagitar was translated into “速腾” that highlighted the high speed of the automobile model.

**Evaluating Commercial Effect from Appraisal Meanings**

Favorable commercial effect is considered as the ultimate goal of the translation of automobile brand names. In order to better publicize products to consumers of target language, translators have to adopt different translation methods flexibly instead of sticking to one pattern. Under the guidance of Appraisal Theory, during the translation of automobile brand names, two possible situations exist:

**Table 2** Analysis from Appraisal Meanings

Consistent with original appraisal meanings	Crown	皇冠
Inconsistent with original appraisal meanings	Legacy	力狮
	Ecosport	翼博
	Cruze	科鲁兹

- **Being Consistent with Original Appraisal Meanings**

"Faithfulness" has always been an important criterion for translation, which means being faithful to both the content and the style of originals. If a translator follows the "Faithfulness" principle, the appraisal criterion of the translator is consistent with that of the author.

**Example 12 Crown (皇冠)**

In western countries, crown represents imperial kinsmen, luxury and glory. In ancient times, crown can only be owned by the emperor or king, symbolizing supreme power and position. As a brand name of automobile, it associates consumers with honorable status and superiority over commons. In China, there is a similar connotation. In order to coincide with the author's opinion and style, "Crown" was translated into "皇冠" by literal translation, completely different in pronunciation but serve the same function of alluring consumers as the original.

- **Being Inconsistent with Original Appraisal Meanings**

Owing to differences in culture and consumer psychology, the translator and the author don't necessarily have completely consistent appraisal criterion. Taking the cultural background of target consumers into serious consideration, sometimes translators will translate automobile brand names flexibly for achieving a desirable translation effect from two aspects:

1. **Adding new appraisal meanings to translated brand names**

When appraisal meanings of original brand names conflict with the culture of targeted countries, new appraisal meanings will be added to Chinese correspondences by translators to make sure that consumers' psychological needs are met, information of products is clearly conveyed, and products' characteristics are highlighted.

**Example 13 Legacy (力狮)**

The Chinese meaning of legacy is "遗产", with a connotation that the new car will inherit the advantages of the old model and seize new market. But the word "遗产" seems not very auspicious to Chinese, which refers to what the dead have used. Therefore, the translator translated Legacy into "力狮". In western culture, lion is the symbol of strength, bellicosity and valor. In Chinese culture, "狮" means having a successful official career and get rapid promotion. Consequently, The translated name different in language but equally satisfactory in effect will be sure to attain the favor of Chinese consumers.

**Example 14 Ecosport (翼博)**

Ecosport is a fabricated word, the translation of which is "经济运动版" in the light of its literal meaning. Despite the fact that the translated name embodies its selling points, there is nothing special. So it was translated into "翼博" by the translator who applied free translation. Its Chinese name afterwards "翼博" seems to depict a picture of soaring between sky and ground with wings, bursting out the atmosphere of youth and sports. As an auto model targeting fashionable and young consumers, it is obvious that it is more likely to draw target clients' attention.

2. **Deleting redundant appraisal meanings of original brand names**

It might occur to translators that some information is meaningful to readers of source language but not to those of target language when conducting translation. Having taken that into account, translators are required to delete some redundant appraisal meanings in original brand names based on local culture for making translated ones conform to target readers' needs.

**Example 15 Cruze (科鲁兹)**

Cruze comes from a Spanish word that means "traverse and span" in Spanish. In foreign markets, the brand name gives people a sense of movement and fashion. It sounds that the automobile can step over any obstacle and run smoothly all the way. In addition, it delivers a feeling of speed. However, if translated into "跨越", it will leave an impression of insecurity on Chinese. So it was directly translated into "科鲁兹" according to its pronunciation so as to avoid negative effects in Chinese markets.

## **Suggestions for Brand Name Translation under the Guidance of AT**

### **1. Choosing vocabularies bearing positive sentimental color and according with public aesthetics**

From the angle of affect and appreciation, it is suggested that brand name translators should select vocabularies with positive emotions or favorable associations when translating brand names. It can't be denied that embodying the features and performance of commodities is of great importance. However, what matters more is to cater consumers' consuming psychology and aesthetic standards, which helps to strike a resonance with potential consumers and then realize preferable commercial effect.

### **2. Adding or deleting appraisal meanings appropriately in accordance with target culture**

According to judgement, translated brand names ought to conform to social norms and local customs of target countries. As a matter of fact, some information of original brand names significant to source language may conflict with culture of target language or offend its cultural taboos. In this case, translators are advised to carry out creative translation on the basis of local culture rather than adhere to original meanings completely. More specifically, redundant appraisal meanings of original brand names can be deleted and appropriate ones can be added into translated brand names to adapt to local culture.

## **Conclusion**

### **Major Findings**

Different from academic translation and literary translation, Brand Name Translation is a special kind of intercultural communication, the final purpose of which is advertising products and promote sales in the increasingly competitive markets. Compared with previous researches of the same field conducted by other scholars, the paper studied the translation of English automobile brand names from a relatively new perspective, namely Appraisal Theory.

The author made an analysis on the translation effect from three sub-systems of Attitude, in which she found that brand names are brief but actually full of rich appraisal resources. And thus she believed that it's wise of translators to select vocabularies with positive affect and propitious implications with taking public aesthetics and consuming psychology into account. Besides, the author compared appraisal meanings of original and translated brand names. When some connotations of original brand names appear improperly in target culture, translators will cut down unseemly appraisal meanings and put appropriate ones into translated brand names based on target culture for preferable commercial effect.

After detailed analysis and comparison, it's not difficult to conclude that translating automobile brand names under the guidance of AT is of necessity and significance, which can contribute to producing a more satisfying translation effect and productive commercial effect. In addition, it is anticipated that the paper can help to the accuracy of automobile brand names translation and consumers' correct understanding of connotations implied in different vehicles.

### **Limitations and Suggestions**

The paper is a tentative research on Brand Name Translation with applying AT in which some limitations exist. In the first place, without a thorough understanding of the Appraisal Theory, the analysis made on translation of automobile brand names is shallow in a general way. In addition, the examples discussed above are just a small part of a huge number of English automobile brand names, which may make the research less convincing. Finally, some definition of three sub-categories of attitude system isn't so specific or explicit that distinguishing varied appraisal resources just depends on the author's opinions and stance, which may reduce the preciseness of final conclusion. It is suggested that researchers have a good command of relevant knowledge and learn from in-depth studies to go deep into the research. Moreover, future researches are expected to utilize theories of various fields, like psychology and marketing, combined with scientific research methods.

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