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STYLISTIC FEATURES IN ADVERTISING LANGUAGE: A BRIEF STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Is there a unique thing called advertising language? Undoubtedly, the language of advertising is neither a variety nor a register in its own right. Rather, the language of advertising is able to take on any form that is essential for conveying its message, thus covering and utilising the entire linguistic continuum. It has to be noted that the description of the linguistic features of advertising language does not represent a comprehensive overview, but rather an operational selection with regard to which of the numerous linguistic features and details can actually be operationalized for serving the marketing-relevant functions of advertising such as sales promotion or inducing a consumer to buy etc.

In its simplest sense, the word advertising means "drawing attention to something", or notifying or informing somebody or something. This paper tries to analyse some instances of figures of speech used in advertising language to enhance the effect of the rhetorical language and there by influencing the minds of the consumers, in other words by winning their hearts. It also focuses on the exemplary features of the figurative language, the various ways of images created by using such language and its grandeur in advertisement slogans.

Key words: Figurative language, alliteration, para language, verbal symbols, chiasmus and parallelism.

Introduction

The text type "advertising text" will be considered a rather classic type, and we will focus on the exemplary features rather than the peripheral variations. One has to bear in mind, however, that variation and creativity plays a major role in advertising language in particular. Without doubt, the ability to ceaselessly reinvent itself, to produce ever new shapes and to create ever more unexpected elements of surprise to attract attention and to remain up to date is one of the most typical features of advertising language in general. Advertising language has always tried to change styles and to break the conventions.

Instances of linguistic means of rhetoric in ads were critically analysed to appreciate the beauty of the figures of speech in ads. Language does the job of an icing on the cake of advertisement. Use of language and culture of the land affect the consumer processing of advertising. Ad language is a best specimen to witness the social changes and trends that influence the common people. A comparison is drawn regarding ethics and values in ads and lives.

Leech has called the language of advertising "loaded language", describing its intention to influence and change the will and the attitude of its recipients. A book on advertising by D. Bolinger even bears the title "Language: The Loaded Weapon". This aim is achieved by using simple language with a relatively

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weak structure grouped around a simple unit of meaning that can be easily remembered.

Leech identifies four major functions of a successful advertisement, each of which has significances on the language used to achieve those aims.

1. **ATTENTION VALUE:** Advertisements are supposed to attract attention and arouse curiosity. On the linguistic level, this can be achieved by breaking conventions of language use such as application of wrong spelling, neologisms, puns, grammatical blooper, rhymes, semantic deviations and putting language in unconventional contexts.

2. **READABILITY**: Once the advert has succeeded in catching the reader's attention, this interest needs to be continued, always weighing up with the fact that the reader searches for quick and simple information. Therefore, the style of adverts is mostly colloquial, using simple and familiar vocabulary. Leech has called this practice of using informal language associated with private contexts in public or business communication "public colloquialism". Informal styles suggest an easy-going social relationship between reader and writer, and they are categorised by informal address terms, direct address to the reader, mostly with the casual, colloquial expressions and a relative lack of politeness markers. In adverts, even written language displays many features of spoken language as it comes closer to the heart of the consumer.

Elliptic sentence structures are another sign of spoken communication which are typical of advertising language. Moreover, phrasal verbs, idioms, contractions and neologisms are characteristic features of advertising language bearing witness to its strong degree of colloquialism.

3. **MEMORABILITY:** Repetition is one of the most frequent techniques used in advertising to enhance memorability. From a linguistic point of view, several linguistic devices are highly repetitive and therefore feature often in advertising language, such as alliteration (repeating the initial sound), metrical rhythm (repeating the same rhythmic pattern), rhyme (repeating the same ending sounds), grammatical parallelism (repeating the same grammatical structure) as well as semantic and syntactic repetition (i.e. using the same syntactic structure or words from the same word field) and lexical repetition. It has to be noted that repetition and variation often go hand in hand.

4. **SELLING POWER**: Finally, advertisements are created to sell. Imperatives are ideally suited to tell people clearly what kind of action to take and therefore feature very frequently in advertising language. Due to the tendency to use elliptical sentence structures and omitting subjects, however, imperatives are often not perceived as open instructions but rather as shortened sentences or fragments of statements.. The strategy of using positive forms also extends to the lexical level. Particularly adjectives with a positive meaning play a major role in advertising language. Exception:*Dehortatio.*

A word or phrase is used figuratively, when it is supposed to convey, not its literal meaning but a derived meaning which is conveyed to and understood by the reader or listener. The sweet apples convey literally sweet taste, but we also speak of sweet words, sweet music and sweet-heart etc. These metaphors we use are all figures of speech, used unprepared to make the listener cheerful. This is in a way pun of words and advertising resonance as a play or twist within an ad's structure that serves to produce an echo or multiplication of meaning. The examples are the instances of resonance where wordplay in the headlines is reinforced by an accompanying illustration. It is the central role of the illustration and the rarity of the verbal- visual juxtaposition, outside of modern advertising, that justifies the use of the term resonance in place of pun or wordplay.

Figures of speech serve many roles. They convey meaning beautifully and in a subtle way. They embellish the purpose of giving beauty and

Dr. T. RAJA SEKHAR

diversity to the words and elevate them from their common place to give them a new meaning. Without them there would be monotony in the writing. A complex subject is conveyed with a comparison.(simile)

So, the figures of speech are artistic and explanatory using which enhances the beauty of language itself. (Dict: figure- Latin: fashion) Metaphor / META - involving change + PHEREIN - to bear, carry)**.**

Verbal symbols: There is a general belief that words have clear and specific meanings compared to non-verbal symbols. This belief is misplaced. Words are no better than non-verbal symbols because words have no fixed meanings either. Dictionaries help us get an idea of what semantic areas they stand for. But what a word really means for an individual depends on several factors including his knowledge in general, background, personal experiences and even the mood.

Each word triggers a number of images in our mind. A few can be comparable. But the rest are not.

For example, death for someone who hasn't lost a loved one is a cessation of life, a process all living beings have to go through. But for someone who has lost a loved one, or for someone who was suffering from a terminal illness, or for someone who has been sentenced to death, it has vastly different meanings. The contours for the semantic field for a word are not the same for different individuals. This phenomenon is not only for common words, but also even for well-defined scientific words. The words molecule or plasma for an undergraduate student and for a scientist, vary in meaning, although both follow the same definitions. Hence, the richer the non-verbal components, the less the need for verbal symbols and the weaker the non-verbal component, the greater the need for elaborating the verbal symbols. In his 20th C. Anecdotes, Frank S. Pepper narrates a verbal exchange between Bernard Shaw and actress Cornelia Otis Skinner. Impressed with her performance in his play Candida on Broadway, Shaw sent her a two-word cable, "Excellent. Greatest." Although delighted, she called back in all modesty, "Undeserving such praise". "Meant the play",

replied the mischievous Shaw. Furious, Skinner cabled back "So did I".

Paralanguage: In Non-verbal language, messages can be sent or received "through any sensory channel such as gestures through visual perception, sound, smell, touch, body language, facial expressions, eye contact, object communication such as hair style, clothing, or even architecture: symbols and infographics, prosodic features of speech such as pitch, intonation, stress and other paralinguistic features of speech such as voice quality, emotion and speaking style" (www.wikipedia.org)

The use of paralanguage is an inevitable part of advertising language. Beautiful and attracting pictures and use of bright colours, romantic music in a perfume advertisement and a fragrant stripe in the middle of a magazine are examples of use of paralanguage in advertisements.

According to Durand, there are two fundamental operations in rhetoric, Addition where one or two words are added to a word, a sentence or an image and Suppression, where one or more elements in a sentence are suppressed, excluded or concealed. The two operations which result from these are, **Substitution**: wherein Suppression is followed by an addition, i.e., an element is concealed or suppressed and replaced by another and **Exchange** that consists of two reciprocal substitutions*.* Two elements of a sentence can be permutated. Example: "I eat to live not live to eat*."* The second phrase inverts the order of elements in the first phrase.

The nature of the relation

The relation or connection between the natural use of language and the figurative use of language can be based on:
Identity (same relations)
Similarity (at least one similar)
Difference (other relations)
Opposition: (At least one opposed relation)
False similarity (as in paradox or ambiguity)

The dimensions that are relevant to the analysis of the sample of advertisements are exaggerated/understated claims (e.g., hyperbole); absence/plenitude of expression elements (e.g., ellipsis); strong/weak assertive force (e.g., rhetorical

Dr. T. RAJA SEKHAR

question); and part/whole relations (e.g., metonym). Repetition applied to words creates the figures known as Anaphora (beginning words), Epistrophe (ending words), Epanalepsis (beginning and ending) and Anadiplosis (ending and beginning). Repetition applied to phrase structure yields the figure of comparison, as in K Mart's tagline: "The price you want. The quality you need." A limiting condition is that repeated words do not shift their meaning with each repetition. Such a shift would create the trope known as Antanaclasis. Let's examine some instances of figures of speech.

Linguistic Means Used in Advertising Language:

Advertising language often uses the techniques similar to those in poetic texts. The advantages of so-called mnemonic devices (rhyme, rhythm, alliteration and assonance) are innumerable. It guarantees that the receiver of the advertisement better remembers the text and recalls it at the right moment.

A rhyme is a repetition of similar sounds in two or more words and is most often used in poetry and songs. Identity or close similarity of sound between accented syllables can be defined as rhyme. . Rhyme refers to sounds, not spelling. It is commonly found in jingles, slogans and headlines. End-rhymes are words at the end of successive lines that rhyme with each other. A rhyme in the final syllable(s) of a verse (the most common kind) is called an end rhyme. Eye rhyme, a kind of rhyme in which the spellings of paired words appear to match but without true correspondence in pronunciation: dive/give, said/maid. Some examples, like love/prove, were originally true rhymes but have become eye rhymes through changes in pronunciation: these are known as 'historical rhymes'.

a) Shower power- Grundfos pumps
b) Mystic masseur—Panasonic massage lounger
c) Time to shine-shine luxury watches for women from Ramond Weils
d) A roof with a proof of quality and trust.-Proflex-Roofing solutions.
e) Coffee in a measure, is a treasure.-Coffee board, India
f) Mountain to plain, a feast of terrain-Nepal Tourism

g) Slow the flow, Save H_2O

Rhymes with brand name : One of the best techniques for bringing in the brand name is to make the slogan rhyme with it. An ad slogan is better if it reflects the brand's personality. By this kind of rhyming, the brand name is highlighted. The ad slogan is thus highly purposed. It can differentiate a slogan from others by the brand name and the special rhyming which is the identity of the slogan.

For example:

Live the Hafele Life.-Hafele Appliances
Beanz Means Heinz-Canned Beans
Love it, Moser Baer it.-Moser Baer CDs

The above three adverts reflect the brand's personality and created a special identity. Rhyme and personification are used here.

Rhythm: The aim of advertising is to be creating slogans which could be catchy and easy to remember. Here copywriters use prosodic features which include intonation, rhythm and lexical stress. Copywriters use language with rhythmical arrangement. The reader or listener perceives it subconsciously without noticing it. The result is a memorable text with linguistic features. If there is regularity in rhythm, it is called metre. It consists of a series of stressed and unstressed syllables. Unstressed syllable is represented by x and a stressed syllable is /.Ad slogans often benefit from the metrical regularity.

Instances of Alliteration in the Advertising English: Alliteration can be defined as "a literary technique, in which successive words (more strictly, stressed syllables) begin with the same consonant sound or letter." (www.wikipedia.org). It is widely used in advertising slogans. Out of the 20 consonant sounds p, t, k, b, d, g, m, n are most used, because they stand out more than others as they are pronounced stopping the air stream completely. It is the repetition of sounds including consonants in words close together, particularly using letters at the beginning of words or stressed syllables. In Old English, each line is divided by a pause, and the stressed syllables in the first half-line alliterate with those in the second half-line.

Instances of Simile in advertising English: A simile is used to make a comparison between two unlike elements having at least one quality or characteristic in common. In the ad world, simile is the one which is used very often and is lively and vivid. Simile is a direct, expressed comparison between two things essentially unlike each other, but resembling each other in at least one way using the words "like" or "as" in the comparison. In formal prose, the simile is a device both of art and of explanation, comparing the unfamiliar thing (to be explained) to some familiar thing (an object, event, process, etc

Instances of Dehortatio: It is a rhetorical term for dissuasive advice given with authority. Dehortatio generally takes the form of a negative imperative beginning with do not, never, or stop.

Examples:

DON'T BUILD YOUR HOUSE WITH STEEL MADE OUT OF SCRAP.

BUILD IT WITH PURE STEEL.-JSW NEOSTEEL

Don't paint your home till you call 040-27955972-Berger Paints.

Don't leave home without it.-American Express

Stop ignoring bleeding gums-Pepsodent GumCare

Instances of Syllepsis: Syllepsis is a rhetorical term for a kind of ellipsis in which one word (usually a verb) is understood differently in relation to two or more other words, which it modifies or governs.

"Does it make sense to jump out of a warm bed into a cold cereal?"-Quaker Oats Cereal

Instances of Antithesis: Antithesis is a rhetorical term for the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases or clauses. In grammatical terms, antithetical statements are parallel structures which create surprise in the minds of the reader or listener of the ad.

"Melts in your mouth, not in your hand."---M&Ms candy

Neighbour's Envy-Owner's Pride- Onida

Instances of Negative-positive restatement (grammar): *Negative-positive restatement* is a method of achieving emphasis by stating an idea twice, first in negative terms and then in positive terms.

Negative-positive restatement often takes the form of parallelism.

"We didn't call it the kitchen in our house. We called it the burns unit."

"Things haven't changed much here for a thousand years. On the other hand, just one visit can change you forever." Enchanting Tamilnadu - experience yourself.

Instances of Chiasmus: Apart from the fact that it's part of a great speech, one of the reasons why John F. Kennedy's famous "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" line is so striking is that is a fine example of *chiasmus*, a clever rhetorical formation in which the order of a pair of words or phrases in one clause is inverted in the next. This gives a rhythmic and instantly memorable criss-cross pattern, AB-BA, which appropriately enough takes its name from the X-shaped Greek letter *chi*.

Ex:"I am stuck on Band-Aid, and Band-Aid's stuck on me."---Band-Aid bandages

Promise what we deliver. Deliver what we promise. That's certainty.-TCS

Instances of Parallelism and Anaphora: Anaphora is the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of verses or other units of speech. It dates back to biblical psalms. It is a form of repetition, of either sound or pattern, which constitutes an effective technique of memorizing a particular statement, a method that is valuable in advertising.

The ad includes parallel sentences of similar structure. The subject is the same and the whole ad is well organized; with the rhythm sharp and the idea conveyed smoothly. It is particularly useful since the commercial's primary aim is the persuasion of the consumer, which can be most easily achieved when a slogan is repeated and hence memorized by the client. Parnellism is often accompanied by Anaphora.

Example:

WE PLAY TO WIN.

WE PLAY TO WIN OVER.

WE PLAY WITH A STRAIGHT BAT.

WE PLAY WITH A CROOKED SMILE.

WE PLAY THE PITCH.

WE PLAY THE OPPOSITION.

WE PLAY WITH OUR HEARTS.

WE PLAY WITH THEIR MINDS.

WE PLAY FOR OUR TEAM.

Dr. T. RAJA SEKHAR

WE PLAY FOR OUR FANS.

WE PLAY TO MAKE HISTORY.

WE PLAY TO MAKE SMILES. ----GIONEE INDIA

In this ad we can see anaphora and parallelism together.

Epiphora is the repetition of the same words at the end of successive phrases, clauses or sentences. Such as:

- *"Cash in a flash."*-*"City financial*
- *"Look fresh, Feel fresh."*-Beauty Soap
- *"Noise Proof, Monsoon Proof, Dust Proof"*.- Fenesta windows

Instances of Hypophora: A rhetorical term for a strategy in which a speaker or writer raises a question and then immediately answers it.

- Ex: "Do you know the difference between education and experience? Education is when you read the fine print; experience is what you get when you don't." (Pete Seeger in Loose Talk, ed. by Linda Botts, 1980)
- "Should a woman have to worry about tires? Goodyear says no!"---Goodyear tires
- "How will you keep your children away from the TV this summer?"

a) Go on a cruise   b) Visit Disneyland

c) See Hong Kong   d) All of the Above

Instances of personification:

Personification is ascribing human characteristics to machines or inanimate things. Examples of such are:

- "Don't just book it. Thomas Cook it."
- "Smooth talking lipstick: OLAY"

"When you are planning for your family's future, I'm here to help. - I'm prudential."

Prudential - Always Listening. Always Understanding.

Instances of Neologisms: A neologism (/niːˈɒlədʒɪzəm/; from Greek néo-, "new" and lógos, "speech, utterance") is the name for a relatively new or isolated term, word, or phrase that may be in the process of entering common use, but that has not yet been fully accepted into mainstream language.-(Wikipedia)

The use of some neologic words *are fantabulous, edutainment, infotainment, trip tease, sportfolio, epicuriosity, soulful shots* (pics*),star power, shelf life*(books*), screenario*(ideas of cine stars) SBI-

Global *Ed-vantage* (oversea education loan)etc these are both new and memorable. We ponder over the different meaning conveyed and marvel at the smart ideas of the creators.

Conclusion

English, which represents a generic description, is very peculiar in its way. Generic trademark or proprietary eponym is a trademark or brand name that has become the colloquial or generic description for or synonymous with a particular class of product or service. In other words, the ad is not for a brand but for a product category, such as eggs, diamonds, or gold. Classic examples include Escalator, Zipper, Frisbee, Cellotape, Xerox (photocopier), Band-Aid (adhesive bandage), Hoover (vacuum – cleaner, U.K.), Kleenex (facial tissues, U.S., Canada), Kurkure (India). A trademark typically becomes "genericized" when the products or services with which it is associated have acquired substantial market dominance or mind share.

Finally, after observing many ad slogans, it can be concluded that the use of stylistic features in ads make the expression more striking, accurate, vivid , forceful and makes it unforgettable experience to the consumer by creating an indomitable effect. The advertisements used for this research were from Indian magazines and newspapers, and do represent only Indian culture.

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Dr. T. RAJA SEKHAR

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Dr. T. RAJA SEKHAR