

Uses of figurative language on product advertisement

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate the use of figurative language in printed advertisement and online advertisement of product advertisement. This paper discusses the type of figurative language use in product advertisement like metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche, hyperbole, alliteration, metonymy, pun and rhyme. Figure of speech plays a very important role in advertisements, acting as a key element for the success of an advertisement. Figure of speech is full of imagination. It can promote the transmission and communication of emotions and ideas. This paper discusses in detail the concepts of advertisement and figurative language, and makes a careful analysis of the use of the aforementioned figurative devices. Advertisement is a popular cultural phenomenon in people's daily life. It not only provides the information about the products which stimulates the purchasing power, but also enriches people's ideological life. There can absolutely not be a good advertisement without the use of figurative language. Therefore, it is necessary to make an analysis and study on this subject.

Keywords: *Figurative Language, Product Advertisement*

1. Figurative Language

Figures of speech as figurative devices of language are extensively researched in the context of language and communication studies (McQuarrie and Mick, 1996; 1999; McQuarrie and Phillips, 2005; Mothersbaugh et al., 2002). Phillips and McQuarrie (2004) conclude that consumers are more favourable to the use of figures of speech, as it helps them visualize intangible items. Figures of speech are one of the few linguistic elements of marketing activities that require academic interest (McGuire, 2000; McQuarrie and Mick, 1996; 1999; Mothersbaugh et al., 2002; Toncar and Munch, 2001). Rhetorical practice (practice of persuasion through language use) is known as a way to influence the opinions of addressees through language (Corbett, 1990). Figures of speech have a great impact on communication and they aim to enhance the techniques of this communication (McQuarrie and Mick, 1996). For the purposes of this research, figurative language is defined as various language techniques, which balance normal language use in any type of communication. By normal language it is meant all the components of language directly expressing the intended meaning. Normal meaning is denotative meaning, or the dictionary definition of the utterance (Barthes, 1964). It is a meaning, which does not require any extra processing effort from the addressee to understand it. According to Phillips and McQuarrie (2002), marketers choose to reduce the verbal explanation offered to consumers. Therefore, they place the intended meaning at risk of being misunderstood. Figures of speech have been found to increase elaboration process (interpretation time) because the consumer has to think and process the meaning of the figure of speech

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in the message (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999; Mothersbaugh et al., 2002). Furthermore, increased elaboration can benefit the mnemonic effect of the message. In addition, the consumers' pleasure in recovering a figure can lead to increased attention (McQuarrie and Mick, 1996) and a positive attitude toward the services described. The argument put forward in this research is whether the playfulness of figures of speech can satisfy the tastes of consumers or risk linguistic misunderstanding. Metaphors and puns are among the most commonly employed figures of speech in marketing communications channels and explored further in this article (Phillips and McQuarrie, 2002).

2. Advertisement

- 2.1 Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary advertisement definition: A picture, short film, song, etc. that tries to persuade people to buy a product or service, or a piece of text that tells people about a job.
- 2.2 Meaning in the Collins English Dictionary Advertisement definition: An advertisement is an announcement online, or in a newspaper, on television.
- 2.3 Definition of Advertisement by Merriam-Webster: Something (such as a short film or a written notice) that is shown or presented to the public to help sell a product or to make an announcement.
: a person or thing that shows how good or effective something is. : the act or process of advertising.

3. Metaphor

- 3.1 Definition of Metaphor by Merriam-Webster is - A figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting. The word daisy, for example, comes from an Old English word meaning.
- 3.2 Definition of Metaphor by Collins English Dictionary Metaphor definition: A metaphor is an imaginative way of describing something by referring to something else...
- 3.3 Definition of Metaphor: - The word metaphor is derived from the Greek word 'Metaphoria', which meant 'to carry'. Metaphor is a comparison of two different phenomena which share some common points. It is a kind of condensed simile that some parts of it, like topic or similarity markers are deleted to convey the meaning connotatively. The first definition of metaphor is expressed by Aristotle as "a shift carrying over a word from its normal use to a new one" (Richards, 1965: 89). For instance in the sentence, 'the customer is king', many qualities a king has, like influence, importance, power and so on are attributed to a customer. In the condensed metaphor 'a ship of state', the captain of the ship represents the government, the sea represents the flow of time, bad weather indicates a crisis and lack of wind signifies economic stagnation.

4. Simile

4.1 Definition of *Simile* by Merriam-Webster is – A figure of speech comparing two unlike things that is often introduced by *like* or *as* (as in *cheeks like roses*)

4.2 Definition of *Simile* by Collins English Dictionary *Simile* definition: A simile is an expression which describes a person or thing as being similar to someone or something else.

4.3 Definition of *Simile* by Cambridge is – An expression comparing one thing with another, always including the words "as" or "like".

4.4 Definition of *Simile*: - The word simile is derived from the Latin word 'Simile', meaning 'resemblance and likenesses', technically it means the comparison of two objects with some similarities. Shamisa (1383) has said simile is the claim of likeness of two things in one or two attributes "Simile is fundamentally a figure of speech requiring overt reference to source and target entities, and an explicit construction connecting them" (Gibbs, 1994: 40)

5. Hyperbole

While hyperbole has received less empirical attention compared to metaphor and irony, various scholars have concerned themselves with identifying hyperbole. A first step in establishing any identification procedure concerns the definition of the phenomenon at hand. Current definitions of hyperbole identify the trope by emphasizing elements like exaggeration (e.g., Carston & Wearing, 2015), overstatement (e.g., Colston & Keller, 1998), extremity (e.g., Norrick, 2004) and/or excess (e.g., Cano Mora, 2009). In doing so, these definitions implicitly or explicitly assume three elements: hyperbole (1) is scalar, (2) involves a specific shift between the propositional and the intended meaning, and (3) includes a specific referent. First, when considering scales, hyperboles typically revolve around at least one of two types of scales: scales of quality and scales of quantity (e.g., Ferré, 2014). A scale of quality suggests that hyperbole includes some qualitative dimension on which the literal statement is more extreme than the intended statement. Clear examples are: (2) that was the best concert in the history of the known universe! (3) That was the worst concert in the history of the known universe!

6. Personification

Historically, personification has been defined as a figure of speech in which inanimate objects are characterized in terms of human attributes, thus representing the object as a living and feeling person (Ricoeur 1977). These human attributes can include any aspect or element of "intelligent, animated beings, like beliefs, desires, intentions, goals, plans, psychological states, powers, and will" (Turner 1987, p. 175). The reason that personification can be comprehended by consumers is because of anthropomorphism—the cognitive bias whereby people are prone to attribute human characteristics to things.

7. Synecdoche

In terms of etymology, the term 'synecdoche' has been taken from the Greek *synekdoche* which means "understanding one thing with another" (Baldick, 2001: 254; Mey, 2009: 888). Synecdoche is an "oblique manner" of speaking and writing (Waicukauski et al., 2001: 136). Synecdoche is "a figure of speech by which a more comprehensive term is used for a less comprehensive one or vice versa." (Harvey, 1967: 795-796). Similarly, Bussmann (1996: 1163) defines synecdoche as "a rhetorical trope that refers to something with a semantically narrower term or a broader term".

8. Concepts of advertisement and figurative language

Figurative language in advertising is used to help the consumer picture himself benefiting from the product or service being mentioned. For example, a tourism bureau for a fictional place called Megatown can develop an advertising campaign around the phrase "Megatown is calling you." The town itself cannot call out to you, but the advertising uses figurative language to create the idea that Megatown is the ideal place for you to vacation or hold your next corporate function.

9. Example:

9.1. Metaphor

In this advertisement of car they try to show the comparison their speed of car and tiger. This is an advertisement of metaphor in which they compare car and tiger.



9.2. Simile

Comparison between rock and trucks this advertisement shows Strong's truck as like a rock.

Interpretation: - This is an advertisement of simile. In this advertisement of Chevy Truck they use linkage like and compare trucks like a rock.



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9.3. Hyperbole

This is an advertisement of hyperbole in which they compare his mouth of whale that is extra-large. This is an advertisement of burger in which they offer extra size.



9.4. Personification

This is an example of personification and in this advertisement Google was compared with a guy (person) it means that non-living things compare with living things.



9.5. Synecdoche

This is an advertisement of synecdoche. In this advertisement they try to show the wheel to represent the four wheeler car.



10. Conclusion

In this research paper, it showed that how figurative language use in printed advertisement. This article deals with variety of rhetorical devices. It helps to establish a relationship between product advertisement and rhetorical devices. It enhances the product and makes the advertisement more attractive and persuasive. They can make the advertisement according to the target audience with the help of rhetorical devices.

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