

Advertisement Techniques: A Contrastive Study between Single-Gender and Coeducational Institutes

Reza Biria

Department of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Javad Boyer Hassani *

Department of Foreign Languages, Isfahan (Khorasgan) branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

Abstract

The key role of advertisement cannot be ignored nowadays and when it comes to education it should be considered more academically, especially when these advertisements are to compensate some defects. In this paper a qualitative study was carried out on discourse differences among advertisement techniques on two different types of institutes; in fact, the study endeavored to scrutinize the different lexicon used to attract customers. To do so, some single-gender advertisements of English language institutes were chosen and subsequently compared with their mixed counterparts. Using DA, the researcher has tried to analyze the diversification of the advertising techniques applied by the mentioned institutes. The syntactic and pictorial as well as all semantic features have been taken into consideration. The study came to this conclusion that in both stimulating phrases were of a noticeable dissimilarity. However, it was found that there were some discourse differences which were fundamentally concerned with the gender as well as educational and financial background of the target institute. Some word-bound features have been seen in each case which are missing in the other one. The results of this study may be of a high significance to those who are involved in teaching language business and tend to exhibit an appropriate efficiency to the most potential candidates.

Keywords: contrastive study, advertisements, advertising techniques, word-bound features

INTRODUCTION

It is no doubt true that people are unwontedly touched by the glamorous power of advertisements all around the world. Depending on the meaning which each single word carries people make different understandings and comments on what they observed.

Advertising is a single component of the marketing process. It's the part that involves getting the word out concerning your business, product, or the services you are offering. Advertising and marketing are key elements in a company's success. One cannot be used without the other. Advertising works based on statistics. So there are definitely some

people which are not reached by most ads. This essentially is charged with having a product or service and creating a need or a perceived desire of the consumer to buy it. The message is designed to create awareness that the product exists, how it will be of value to the consumer or make their lives easier because they have it and explain why they should buy it immediately.

This only equals one piece of the pie in the strategy. All of these elements must not only work independently but they also must work together towards the bigger goal. Advertising Conference underscored the fact consumers' trust other consumers more than they do marketers for product information. In today's oversaturated, fragmented media landscape, word-of-mouth marketing remains a cost-effective part of many advertisers' marketing mix. It is a single aspect of marketing, which involves spreading the word about a business, product, or service offered to the public. Strategy is definitely a key part here, as there are many avenues to use. Advertising can serve for marketing well if it is suitable for the marketing strategy. It is a way to marketing the products or service of a company. Advertising is one of the keys to a successful business. Advertising, personal selling, publicity, and public relations form the components of the marketing communication or promotional mix. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is the strategic use of the aforesaid components towards. Advertising is to "display" ones wares. It is entirely passive.

It isn't what it used to be. Media has changed dramatically. Advertising builds brand awareness, which builds trust and credibility. Of course, that translates to more purchases. Advertising and promotions managers may travel to meet with clients or representatives of communications media. At times, public relations managers travel to meet with special-interest groups or government officials. It reaches people through varied types of mass communication. In everyday life, people come into contact with many different kinds of advertising.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Advertisements are one of the most significant cultural artifacts influencing people's daily life these days. The posters and pictures surrounding us in our area of residence or even where we work are inevitable, though we may not be the fan of reading newspapers or watching television. The existence of advertisements in several media gives them a kind of independence which contaminates them to our own life. In fact, since the advertisements are constantly come across, they prove to be part of our daily lives. Advertising can be defined as any form of communication made by a public or a private entity in relation to trade, industrial activity, business, to make advancements in advertising any goods or services or even any ideas or principles.

Modern advertising actually began in the 18th century or towards the end of the 17th century. As mentioned by Vilanilam & Varghese (2004), Advertising is an organized method of communicating information about a product or service which a company or individual wants to sell to the people. It is a paid announcement that is conveyed through words, pictures, music and action in a medium which is used by the prospective buyers.

Some researchers (Grunig, 1990; Cook, 1992; Myers, 1994) have described advertisements, for instance, as a form of manipulation, a deliberate use of language, symbolism and imagery to entice audiences towards a fantasy world where dreams and desires may come true. Others who have analyzed advertising discourse have focused on word play in advertising copy, presenting advertisements more as a form of entertainment (as cited in Martin, 2006, P.22). Through the use of advertisements the language of objects is turned into the people's mind. This mental representation is primarily transformed through discourse. Exploration of the advertisements of different kinds of products and services may be represented through differing discourses, linguistic or pictorial techniques. Claiming that advertising directly leads to mere consumption of the advertised product or service may be considered as a kind of oversimplification though it may result in more attention directed to the product or service on part of the customers (Pajnik & Lesjak-Tušek, 2009, P.278).

In fact Martin(2006) believes a creative team's decisions regarding the verbal and visual elements of advertisements will depend on a variety of contextual matters, including the intended audience (country or region, specific segment of the population), the product or service, the main selling point or advertising message, media, budgetary constraints, and so on.

The incorporation of English and global imagery in the design of an advertising campaign also leads to a contextual analysis on a completely different level, where certain choices of music, text, and images are required to attract attention, enhance recall, convey information about the product, evoke certain connotations, and entice the consumer(Martin, 2006, P.8). To be exact, Central to our idea of an advert appears to be the factor of conscious intention behind the text, with the aim of benefiting the originator materially or through some other less tangible gain, such as enhancement of status or image. consequently, although a poster might not be selling us anything in terms of the material, it is still intentionally selling an idea - religion - in order to benefit the institution of the church by drawing converts and swelling its ranks(Goddard, 1998). Semiotics also plays an important role in the interpretation of advertisements. Semiotics is in fact, the study of signs. Wray(1981) believes it refers to the way any sign, whether it is a traffic signal, a thermometer, advertisement pictures, poetic imagery, musical notation, a prose passage, or a wink of the eye, functions in the mind of an interpreter to convey a specific meaning in a given situation (as cited in Martin, E., 2006, P.12).

Saussure believes that every single sign contains a duality which consists of the signifier which is the present part and the signified which is the invisible part. "With a repertoire of communicative strategies that reach far beyond those available in other forms of discourse, those who design advertising copy are keeping their finger on the pulse of society and have found ingenious ways of marketing identities through language." (Martin, 2006, P.21) Strategies used by ad makers to attract attention to their creations and stimulate the curiosity of their audiences include the use of foreign languages for special effect, and imitation varieties (Myers, 1994; Martin, 1998, as cited in Martin, 2006). As a matter of fact, the existing connections between language, power, and

ideology in advertising have been examined by many scholars interested in critical discourse analysis. Fairclough (1989) believes that images and concepts which are connected to nature, history and so on are culturally transferred into „systems of meaning’ associated with the entities with which they normally have no relationship. In fact, one of the reasons advertising is able to function ideologically and influence consumers’ attitudes and purchasing behavior is the fact that it is a shared experience .

Cook (1992) suggests that advertising sometimes provides entertainment to audiences who may be naturally attracted to „light-hearted code play’ when he compares advertisements to poetry. Sometimes other languages are used in advertisements to add to the prestige of the advertisements. For example, the use of Spanish to refer to the Dominican Republic as the Land of Shortstops (La Tierra de Mediocampistas) was too threatening for American audiences, despite the English subtitles and only 60-second exposure (Myers, 1994). In fact, in advertising, the writers are artists and can construct whatever they want to convey. In advertising the element of selling differentiates it from other ways of communication. Through advertisement we are actually communicating information but the purpose is totally different since we are aiming at selling the product (Vilaniyam & Varghese, 2004).

The way the pictures and words are represented to people matters a lot in terms of the effect they cause on the customers’ minds. Schema Congruity Theory (Mandler, 1982) proposes that people have several schemata in their memory that represent previous expectations and experiences with something, a brand, a product, or someone like a salesperson. The overarching element of this theory is that consumers’ reactions to new information depend on the level of congruity between this new incoming information and their previous self-schemata because they expect certain information given their established schemata. According to this theory, when people are exposed to a message that conforms to their expectations there is little need to process the information in-depth because incoming information is coherent and confirms previous expectations in consumer’s memory (Heckler and Childers, 1992; Mandler, 1982; Meyers-Levy and Tybout, 1989). In this situation, a high level of consistency in the message can be easily processed employing few cognitive resources. However, when people are exposed to incoming information that is not coherent with previous expectations consumers need to resolve the conflict. Such a solution can in fact generate positive effects on information processing because the need for resolution needs a more extensive processing and careful elaboration (Heckler & Childers, 1992; Fiske et al., 1983; Lee, 2000, as cited in Terlutter & Diehl, 2010).

The advertising industry has developed during the past two decades in Iran and because of the increasing competition in product and service market, companies are paying more attention to advertising now (Aghajanian & Modares, 2000). The most important point in the advertising thus far has been the manipulation of audiences with differing ideological processes.

METHOD

Sampling

The sample advertisements for the current study were selected out of a hundred advertisements. The present study has primarily concentrated on seventeen advertisements randomly chosen out of a hundred and all of them have been analyzed based on the syntactic, semantic and pictorial factors contained on each. The present paper, predominantly, focuses on the analysis of seventeen fliers of language institutes. The advertisements, however, were randomly selected out of the ones come across throughout the city, on the billboards, brushers, in newspapers, magazines, on the walls, on the internet, etc. The focus of the present study is English language institute ads; the collected ads, consequently, just included the advertisements concerned with the English language institutes only .

Rationale for selecting the research instrument

Service providers as well as the people who are in the field of business are always trying to persuade the customers resorting to some psychological appeals. These appeals are used to stimulate people's internal desires and they directly or indirectly affect people's subconscious mind (Shams, M.R., 2009).

The samples for the present study were analyzed based on the advertising techniques mentioned on the internet. The techniques include the ones mentioned in the following sites:

<http://www.billiondollarincome.com/typesof-advertisingstrategies.html#ixzz1uML6v8EB>

<http://www.propaganda101.com/>

<http://carmen.artsci.washington.edu/>

RESULTS

Single-gender institutes

Single-gender (Figure 1)

زندگی بدون ارتباط با دنیای خارج زندانی کردن خود و بچه هایمان است-1

Life without relationship with abroad is imprisoning yourself and your children

The technique used in the first sentence is called TRANSFER STRATEGY in that you see an obligation in learning a second language. However, neglecting the necessity expressed in the sentence shows how cruel you might be compared to other open minded people living around.

آموزش سریع مکالمه انگلیسی-2

Teaching a fast English conversation

This sentence contains a technique called QUANTITY ADVERTISING STRATEGY which tries to make the readers understood that the process of learning is much shorter than

what is thought. In addition, the sentence mentioned in parentheses gives various options to the candidates with regard to their free time.

3- کلاسها کم جمعیت حداقل هشت و حداکثر شانزده نفره-

Low populated classes from eight to sixteen

It can be claimed here two strategies were used simultaneously. First FACT AND FIGURE STRATEGY which emphasizes on the minimum and maximum number of students so as to indicate the efficiency of classes. Another technique which can be felt here is ASSERTION STRATEGY in which candidates are convinced to be in a friendly and student-oriented class, while for those who are experienced know that the mentioned quantity of participants highly decrease the quality and most students, especially those who are shy and introverted, have no chance to participate in discussions and exercises.

4- برگزاری تورهای تفریحی و علمی-

Holding recreational and scientific tours

WIT AND HUMOR TECHNIQUE is a strategy which is cited here, showing some entertainments for learners who join them. Mostly, this is a technique extremely popular in coeducational classes since learners are given motivation to be with a different gender and have fun with. Normally, single sex outings are not so welcome.

5- کلاسهای مجهز به تلویزیون ال ای دی-

Equipped classes with LED TVs

A very outstanding strategy here is GLITTERING GENERALITIES STRATEGY in that it is giving appealing words to satisfy candidates concerning the distinctive equipment existing in this center and also attempts to highlight the importance of educational facilities to improve language skills.

6- کتابهای به روز-

Up dated books

AVANTE GRADE STRATEGY is the technique used here to say our learners are ahead to other learners because the materials used here are up to date and covered the weak points of previously taught materials.

Meanwhile, what is noteworthy about its picture is that PLAIN FOLK STRATEGY is well used here to illustrate different age groups of normal people have attended their recreational programs.

Single-gender (Figure 2)

1- بهره گیری از اساتید مجرب و کار آزموده-

Using experienced and skillful teachers

The obvious technique used here is GLITTERING GENERALITIES STRATEGY in that it just presents some tempting words to draw candidates attention to the fact our distinctive instructors know their job and you are not going through trial and error to achieve your goals.

ارایه مدرک معتبر در پایان هر دوره-2

Presenting a valid certificate at the end of course

Undoubtedly a very familiar and commonly used strategy which is known as WEASEL WORDS STRATEGY is used here in which candidates are promised to be given a valid certificate, but how valid and to what extent, nothing is clear. Each institute claims to give a valid certificate but by validation nobody clarifies where and how this certificate could be used in the future.

کلاسهای مخصوص فیلم و بحث آزاد-3

Specialized classes for film and free discussion

Typically, language learners tend to be able to communicate in the target language rather than know about grammar, writing or reading. That is why tempting the participants with these kinds of services could be a strategy called SIMPLIFICATION STRATEGY since majority of language learners hope to become fluent in speaking rather than other skills. In their point of views speaking is the bough of tree while other skills are the branches and they highly need to stand out by fluent speaking.

شش ماهه انگلیسی صحبت کند-4

Start speaking English in just six months

It goes without saying that the strategies utilized here are known as both QUANTITY ADVERTISING STRATEGY and ASSERTION STRATEGY in that the first promises the shortest possible time to learn a language and the latter exaggerates and boasts in the duration of time regarding the fact that six months could not be sufficient to learn a language satisfactorily by any existing means.

شهریه اقساط-5

Pay by installment

Taking people's minds off the stress of full payment at once could be a strategy named REASONABLE PRICE STRATEGY. However, it should not be ignored that most people's first concern certainly is financial issue. Therefore, giving people the chance of long term payment is an appreciating relief.

Single-gender (Figure 3)

تنها آموزشگاه هفت ستاره ایران-1

The only seven-star institute of Iran

SNOB APPEAL STRATEGY is the impressive strategy which is placed in a frame to draw viewers' attention to the issue that by joining this center you will be a different member of society because there is no other center to be as superior and luxurious as this center. Furthermore, ASSERTION STRATEGY could be to some extent sensed here since it seems to be more boasting than a necessarily true claim.

با سرویس رایگان رفت و آمد-2

Having free transportation

Considering the mentioned sentence, BRIBERY STRATEGY is the first technique which clicks to mind in that candidates are assured to have free transportation along with other

educational services which will be presented. Here the center endeavors to give extra services to show how different it is from its competitors. Another strategy which can come up through this sentence could be CARD STACKING STRATEGY because the center could not normally have transportation for all parts of the city. The services might move from some special points and for sure some learners must go to institute on their own because their distance to service might be farther than the institute itself and is not worth spending time and money on.

3- با تخفیف بیست درصدی

Giving twenty percent discount

Presenting discount could be glamorous to some candidates and the strategy covering this action is called REASONABLE PRICE STRATEGY in which learners feel they can afford the costs of courses.

4- با آموزش برای سه نسل چهار سطح و سه گرایش

Teaching three different generations

Taking three different generations into account shows the PLAIN FOLK STRATEGY. The strategy in which ordinary people with different age gaps have an opportunity to either be in the same class or different classes at the same institute. In the following the advertisement tries to say how precise and detailed they face with various levels and the strategy used here can be GLITTERING GENERALITIES STRATEGY in order to satisfy all interests with variety of wants and requirements.

Coeducational institutes

Coeducational (Figure 1)

1- زیر نظر اساتید و مدرسین دارای مدرک بین المللی

Under the supervision of instructors possessing an international certificate of TESOL

It seems ASSERTION STRATEGY is a strategy used here to give this confidence that very unique instructors were recruited to teach, and all this looks to be more deceptive and misleading since most centers have such a claim to stand by far different from competitors and rivals. WEASEL WORD STRATEGY can be trivially understood in that one or few of instructors might own the mentioned certificate.

2- دوره های تضمینی

Guaranteed courses

The word guarantee at the first sight sounds to be tempting but by just digging under the surface the reality starts emerging. Sometimes no matter how experienced and able the instructor is as long as the learners show no sign of talent, effort and seriousness. Therefore, the strategies used here can be apparently SAFETY ADVERTISING STRATEGY and ASSERTION STRATEGY respectively; the first because learners trust the center in which their money is not wasted in any potential condition but due to the above mentioned reasons this guarantee will involve some conditions which in the end it does not apply to learners. The word guarantee even could carry another strategy named

CARD STACKING STRATEGY because in this strategy half of a tempting story which favored by addressee is defined but the rest which might get the addressee into some totally unpredicted trouble is not mentioned at the beginning of commitment.

Coeducational (Figure 2)

یک ترم مکالمه کاملاً رایگان - 1

One term free of charge

BRIBERY STRATEGY plays the pivotal role here to absorb customers suggesting a free service in the hope of fascinating them towards the institute.

آموزش از طریق بازی - 2

Teaching through playing games

SIMPLE SOLUTION STRATEGY seems to be more rational strategy among all to convince the candidates to learn a foreign language through a very easy technique.

Coeducational (Figure 3)

دارای مجوز از وزارت علوم

Having permission from Ministry of Science

TESTIMONIAL STRATEGY which indicates the validity of the institute was used here in that the name of Ministry of Science shows how superior and prestigious is compared to other language centers. This name also indicates that in such centers under the supervision of Ministry of Science mixed classes containing both genders can be held.

CONCLUSION

Through the interpretation of the advertisements, it was clearly found that single sex institutes have to make too much effort to convince people in terms of their acceptable level of proficiency and expertise through various written claims in their advertisements, whereas mixed institutes by some brief advertisements seem to be standing on the safe side in terms of attracting language candidates. However, what is obvious is that people particularly young generations, who form the highest proportion of the institutes' crowd, are willing to attend mixed institutes rather than single sex ones. To put it brief, simply no matter how skilled and experienced their teachers are, most learners avoid attending single sex classes.

The single sex centers by knowing this fact are trying their best to highlight and sometimes overstate in terms of their incredible facilities and abilities in order to fill up the institutes' seats. Apart from financial issues which are the main concern of each family language learners care about the sexuality of classes which are in since instinctively each gender can be naturally proliferous as long as they find themselves in a proper competition with the other gender. Despite the fact that different types of techniques were used by the single sex institutes, still these were mixed centers which powerfully enroll the most proportion of language learners with much less made effort. Interestingly, mixed institutes claim mostly on guarantee which looks nearly inconsistent to refund just because by this technique they can make a striking amount of money out of such a claim

and on the other side they are not concerned about being into trouble because of losing their learners; the truth is the number of interested learners at such centers are remarkable. By doing this research, it was clarified that the single sex institutes psychologically go through variety of strategies to survive and keep themselves on the path of education, while their rigorous competitors, the mixed centers, profess on whatever makes the most money through the briefest possible way.

SINGLE-GENDER FIGURES



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

COEDUCATIONAL FIGURES



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

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