

Research Article

An analysis of Advertisement Violating Grice's Cooperative Principle

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Abstract: Advertising expression is an indispensable element in advertising and also an important factor to realize advertising purpose. Nowadays, advertisements as a means of sales promotion have spread quickly through all over the world, sellers all try their best to create wonderful advertisements to catch consumers' attention and achieve the goal of promoting products. The violating of Grice's cooperative principles is one of the methods used by them. In this paper, the quality analysis is used to analyze those violating cooperative principles advertisements. It is found that it can make advertisements more attractive and helps to improve sales volume, on the other hand it can remind consumers to do rational consumption.

Keywords: advertisement; cooperative principle; violate.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising is an important way to establish product brand and reputation and at the same time, it is advertising that makes influence on the consumers and help to make the brand famous. The ultimate aim of advertisement is to encourage consumers to buy the product, broaden its sales, and improve sales volume.

It has been just about one hundred years since the appearance of the advertisement. It has been researched by many researchers from many perspectives, such as communication, economics, journalism and psychology and so on, and researchers all have a lot of harvest. Researchers also analyze advertisement from the perspective of linguistic through words used in it. For example, in his English in Advertising, Leech researches advertising words from phone, phoneme, grammar and vocabulary and so on. Dale emphasized the aspect of communication, he took advertising words as corpus and analyzed their communication characteristics. In his Advertising Language, Kaik made a systematic and comprehensive analysis on advertisement by using the theories of pragmatics. Huang Guowen using theories of discourse analysis to analyze advertisements in “语篇分析的理论与实践”. Li Yuee and Fan Yaxiong also used discourse

analysis in their “话语分析”when analyzing advertisements.

All these results have positive leading effectiveness on the research and practice of the advertising expression. Inspired by them, in this paper, the author aims to analyze advertisement from the perspective of cooperative principles. As many advertisements are kinds of persuasive language that aim to persuade consumers to buy the promote products or services. In this way, many advertising planners often use some strategies and skills to emphasize those things that attract consumers and neglect those things that consumers do not interested in. For this reason, Grice's cooperative principle would be violated in some cases.

2. COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

This principle is proposed by the philosopher and logician Herbert Paul Grice to explain the course of natural conversation, in which implicated messages are frequently involved. His idea is that in making a conversation, the participants must first of all be willing to cooperate; otherwise, it would not be possible for them to carry on the talk.

Apart from Grice, it can be considered that people have assumed that speakers and listeners involved in a conversation are generally cooperating with each other. This sense of cooperation is simply one in which people having a conversation are not normally assumed to be trying to confuse, trick, or withhold relevant information from each other. In most circumstances, this kind of cooperation is only the starting point for making sense of what is said.

In most circumstances, the assumption of cooperation is so pervasive that it can be stated as a cooperative principle of conversation. In order to further explain the cooperative principle, abbreviated as CP, Grice borrows from the German philosopher Immanuel Kant four categories: quantity maxim, quality maxim, relation maxim and manner maxim. That is, the CP is specified from these four aspects. And the content of each category is known as maxim. The following are the cooperative principles.

The cooperative principle: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

The maxims:

Quantity

- Make your conversational contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of exchange).
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality Try to make your contribution one that is true.

- Do not say what you believe to be false.
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation Be relevant

- Manner Be perspicuous
- Avoid obscurity of expression.
- Avoid ambiguity.
- Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
- Be orderly.

3. METHOD

The quality analysis is used in this paper. The author collected advertisements that violating Grice's cooperative principle firstly. And then basing on the four maxims, quantity maxim, quality maxim, relation maxim and manner maxim, the author divided the 12 pieces of advertisement into four groups. As a result, each part would be followed by three examples. The author would analyze them one by one.

4. VIOLATING OF COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE

In this part, the author would analyze the four cases one by one. And three examples of advertisements would be analyzed. The author firstly pointed out why the advertisement violated the specific maxim, and also pointed out what effect has made by this way. No matter which maxim is violated, the ultimate goal is the same, it aims to sell more promoting products.

4.1 Violating Of Quantity Maxim

The maxims of quantity are making your contribution as informative as required, and not making your contribution more informative than is required. According to Grice, if a speaker expresses more or less information than the situation required, then violating the maxims of quantity occurs. Considering expensive costs of advertisements and long-term memory in consumers' mind, advertisers prefer to use brief and simple expression to promote some products. The following are some examples of advertisements that violate the maxims of quantity.

(1) Good to the Last Drop

From the literal meaning of this advertisement, it is difficult to understand what products it promotes for lacking of information. Actually, it is a famous ad of Maxwell coffee. Although it is meaningless on the level of source, it has deep meaning behind the literal meaning. In my view, "It tastes delicious even the last drop" is the meaning sellers want to convey to consumers. By connecting the good taste of the coffee with the feeling in heart, it creates a peaceful situation where everyone can feel comfortable. So in an indirect way, it stimulates target consumers to have the desire and impulsion to buy the coffee. It is a way in which consumers unconsciously want to taste whether the last drop of the coffee is good.

(2)Start Ahead

It is the advertisement of Rejoice, people can see there is limited information in this ad, to some extent, it can be said that none information of Rejoice is represented in this ad. While what effect can this ad makes?

Head is one of the most important organs, as the start part of human figure, which often symbolizes "start". By combining the two words together, it seems have the deep meaning of a blessing, such as "start into the future". The key information it wants to convey is that, successful people all have shining hair, If you have shining hair, you will be succeed too. In other words, it can be concluded that if you use Rejoice, you will be succeed in the future. By the deep meaning and the character of short, this advertisement can leave unique impression on target consumers, and encourages them to buy.

(3) "Here's a single-minded young man who's eating Kellogg's Corn Flakes with his hat on. Is this allowed? Where's mother? Mother's there some place, but she's letting well enough alone. The small boy is happy. He's dipping up that milk and spooning in those golden flakes."

To understand this advertisement, people need some information on the protection of under age in America. Everything they do needs to be supervised by parents and they should bear legal responsibility for any damage to their children. This advertisement aims to emphasize the safety of the food, when children eating it, parents can leave them alone. Because too much more information is used than actually needed, it violates the quantity maxim.

4.2 Violating of quality maxim

In order catch more consumers' attention, violating the maxims of quality is frequently used in creating advertisements. It is means use some figures of speech to strength the persuasive power of advertising. Several rhetoric devices like simile, irony, personification and metaphor are often used in this way.

(4) 白丽美容皂，今年二十，明年十八。

Form the literal meaning, this advertisement is rather ridiculous as people can grow older but never younger. Because the product it promotes is beauty product, so people can understand its deep meaning. "By using this kind of beauty soap, people can become young and beauty, their face will glow with good health. By the rhetorical device of hyperbole, the information conveyed by the advertisement beyonds the real situation, thus violating the quality maxim.

(5) 飞利浦小家电：我家的小猫也学会了做鱼。

It is the advertisement of Philips. From surface meaning, it shows that even cats can cook fish with their products, which is impossible, so in this level, it conveys false information. No matter how much a cat loves fish, it can not cook it by itself, let alone using Philips products. Then people need to think what information it conveys, the cat is clever? The fish is delicious? The product is convenient? As the promote product is Philips, a brand of home appliances, so it mainly wants to convey the last assumption that the product is convenient, even a cat can use it. So it conveys its ideas by violating quality maxim.

(6) **Cool as a mountain steam...cool fresh Consulate.**

Clearly, by the use of "as", this advertisement use the rhetorical device of simile, and the meaning conveyed from it also belongs to the violating of quality maxim. It does not tell the exact and real feeling when smoking, while in a way that compared with feeling in mountain steam. The advertiser wants to express the

idea that when you smoke this kind of cigarette, you seem to be in the mountain stream and feel pleasant, neat and cool. The advertisement gives people a beautiful experience to imagine. It is wise that the advertiser chooses this expression to attract those who love smoking.

4.3 Violating of relational maxim

Advertisement in which an implicature is achieved by real, an distinct from apparent, violation of the maxim of relation are perhaps rare. To promote products is the main task for advertisers. It is certain that advertisers will not spend time talking anything unrelated with the products. But to peddle commodities directly sometimes will run counter to advertisers' desire. On the other hand, consumers will feel broad and even not believe in the products. Therefore, in some cases, slogans or headlines of advertisement seem unrelated to the products which are promoted.

(7) 如果你听了一课之后发现不喜欢这门课程，那你可以要求退回你的费用，但必须用法语说。

This is the advertisement of French training class in Italy. Some students think it will troublesome to refund, if they do not like the class. Considering their scruple, advertisers promise students that they will refund if students are unsatisfied with the class. People have to say it is a big temptation for those who are hesitating. But the last part of the advertisement "必须用法语说" seems having nothing to do with the whole. Actually advertisers' intention is implied in deep meaning. If students want to ask for a refund, they must learn French to express themselves, while their successful expression shows that they learn the language well. And only they learn well, they will continue to learn. In a word, although the last part seems unconnected, it is just this part, which tells students if they come, they will learn well.

(8) 请把你家的狗栓牢，否则它会跑到卡斯克公司来。

This is an advertisement of pet food. The words in advertisement show no relevant to the products they promote. While if consumers know what they sell is pet food, they will understand how delicious their product is. Their pets will enjoy and fall in love with it. Although the advertisement seems disconnecting to the product, it is graphic. People can imagine a cute dog runs into the store or company and finds food to eat. It is a good way to encourage pet owners to buy it.

(9) 哇哈哈纯净水 我的眼里只有你

From the advertisement, people can see the promoted product is "娃哈哈纯净水" while how about the later part, what does it mean? Is there any

relationship between the two parts? Actually, it has no relationship from the surface meaning but in the deep meaning it has. Water is a necessity for everyone. People can skip meals but must drink water. And the later part“我的眼里只有你”contains meaning that you are very precious, it can be understood from the perspective from people to water, and also can from the perspective from sellers to consumers. It chooses to use emotion strategies to attract consumers.

4.4 Violating of manner maxim

The category of manner, different from other maxims, relates not “to what is but, rather, to how what is said to be said.” (Jiang Wangqi, 2000, p.40). For the maxim of manner, there are some sub-maxims, such as avoiding obscurity of expression, avoiding ambiguity, being brief and being orderly.

(10) I'm More satisfied. I want More.

It is the advertisement of “More”, a brand of cigarette. The “More” in the advertisement can be understood as the More cigarette, and also people can comprehend it as several more cigarettes. So from literal meaning, it shows that “I am satisfied with the cigarette More, and I want to buy more.” While the implied meaning the advertisers aim to convey is that “I am satisfied with the cigarette More than any others, and I want to buy more cigarette of this brand.” By violating the maxims of manner, this advertisement expresses two kinds of meaning. It can encourage consumers to associate and imagine, connecting the cigarette with other things. The direct effect of this way is to make a deep impression in consumers' mind and persuade them to buy the cigarette.

(11) 聪明的妈妈会用“锌”

This advertisement is to promote an oral liquid which contains zinc for children. The surface meaning is easy to get. It shows the fact that if you are a good mother, who cares for your children or if you are a wise mother, you will choose this oral liquid for your child, because this product contains zinc which is an indispensable element for children's health. While from“用锌”, people have another way to understand the advertisement. “用锌”has the same pronunciation with the phrase “用心” which means “taking care of somebody carefully”. Then from this level, it means that if you are a responsible mother and look after your child carefully, purchasing this oral liquid for your children is a good choice and you will never regret owing it.

(12) 事件是捉不住的……Canon (照相机) 凝固它！

记忆是水，时间是河；捞起来的是回忆，流
失掉的是岁月。

有一天，您会感叹：岁月如梭，时光荏苒。
何不此刻？马上！

拥有 Canon 照相机，凝固您的人生。

把喜把悲把笑把泪把一切，统统交给世界级的
Canon。您会说，我的人生好精彩，虽然时间是
抓不住的，Canon 照相机凝固它！

It is the advertisement of Canon, a brand of camera, it does not introduce the camera in a brief and clear way. This advertisement is not limited to only explaining the functions of the camera. But discussing how time flies, Canon is introduced to the public to tell the fact that taking photos can retain the old memory. It seems the advertisement flouts the maxim of manner, because it does not use any definite words to describe the features of the camera.

While consumers can still cooperate at some deeper level and infer what the goal of advertisers is. The conversational implicature indicates “time and tide wait for no man”. People can not let the time stop going. How can people catch something which happened in the past? Maybe Canon can realize the dream of retaining every wonderful period in one's life. By this way, advertisement can make a great influence upon consumers and even lure people to buy the product at once. Advertisers avoid the simple expression here, but more attention from consumers is gained.

4.5 Summary

In this part, the author gives examples of violating of the four maxims of cooperative principle. While readers need to pay attention that implied meaning of the advertisement is analyzed in the context. Besides there has the cases that one example violates more than one maxim at the same time.

5. CONCLUSION

In a word, as the special communication tool between advertisers and consumers, advertisements must to have strong persuasion and attraction, selling power, attention value and memory value. Only in this way, can advertisements gain sound social feedback. Besides, aims to sell more products, advertisement need to be novel, vivid and alive. For these reasons, advertisers choose to violate the cooperative principles. It is a way that can not only make advertisement interesting as much as possible, but can conform to the principle of advertisement designing that keep it short and sweet. It is the way that can attract more consumers, stimulate them pay more attention on it and encourage them to buy the product. On one hand, understanding the usage of violating cooperative principles can provide information for advertisers in

advertisement designing. On the other hand, it can help consumers to comprehend advertisements.

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