

Semantic and Pragmatic Presuppositions in Advertising Slogans

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Abstract. The article deals with the semantic and pragmatic content of advertisement copy that is insufficiently developed in contemporary linguistics. The author defines the pragmatists and argues that advertising is designed to motivate those people to whom it is directed, that is, performs certain pragmatic functions. Author considers a slogan as a kind of advertisement copy, transferring the main content of the advertised information in compact and emotional form, as well as defines the slogan semantic features. Slogan semantics is focused on achieving pragmatic goals. The author notes that the presence of nonsense and linguistic carelessness leads to the fact that the effect of the advertisement copy weakens. In the course of slogan perception, its semantic content and linguistic structure are inseparable.

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Introduction

In recent decades, a number of studies on the language substantive and pragmatic aspects emerge due to the development of linguistics. The study of language processes, associated with the development and generation of the advertising technologies, is of particular interest. Improvements in advertising activity lead to the language enrichment of the contemporary advertising. During the long development history, advertising has evolved qualitatively. It has gone a long way from informing to the persuasion, from persuasion to conditioning, from conditioning to subconscious suggestion, from the subconscious suggestion to projection of a symbolic image.

A number of research papers have attempted to study the linguistic features of advertisement copies, though quantity of special scientific works on semantic and pragmatic study of advertisement copies is quite small. The semantic and pragmatic features of a slogan yet were not subjected to special scientific analysis. Currently, such phenomena as pragmatics and the linguistic facts in relation to human activity aspects are gaining a steady interest. Pragmatics allows one to explore a variety of shades of the actual use of speech units.

Main part

A number of studies on various aspects of the advertisement copy within the linguistic disciplines are steadily growing. Analysis of communicative-pragmatic and lexical-semantic parameters of advertisement copy was performed by domestic researchers Soloshenko (1990), Semaan (1997), Torichko (2001), Medvedev (2002), and others [1]. Operational methods of language game in the

advertising slogan were studied by A.V. Korshunova [2].

Works of the foreign experts, who analyzed the issues related to perception of the advertisement copy, are represented by such authors as D. Ogilvy (1963), H.A. Sampson (1974), Ch. Goodrum and H. Dalrymple (1980), G. Dyer 1982) and A. Goddard (1998) [3, 4]. The works of many foreign linguists focus on linguistic means of advertising (Leech, 1966; Bruthiaux, 1996; and others) [5]. The origins of pragmatics are associated with the names of Ch. Peirce, W. James, D. Dyun, Ch. Morris and L. Wittgenstein [6].

Pragmatics of advertisement copy is a directed action focused on the potential consumer. Advertisement copies are special characters representing pragmatic processing of information. According to S.V. Misyachenko, spectrum of language pragmatic means is rich and diverse; it includes lexical and semantic (estimated vocabulary, trails) means, phraseological (transformed phraseological units), morphological (particles, interjections), syntax (rhetorical questions, imperative constructions and verbless sentences) and stylistic (lexical co-occurrence of words) means [7, 8].

Slogan is an important element of the advertisement copy, which is characterized by both semantic content, in terms of intentionality, and brevity, in terms of its structure. Semantic field of evaluations and emotions in the advertisement copy, created by means of vocabulary, stylistic means and syntactic constructions with emotional and estimated potential, has a distinctly expressed communicative-pragmatic orientation.

Nowadays slogans have filled all the information space that surrounds us. Slogan functions as an expressive tool, allows one to "focus" attention on the main features, the image and name of the advertised product [9, 10, 11].

Slogan is the quintessence of all the scope of promotional information and other incentives that advertiser seeks to inform the consumer. Slogan should be able to convey maximum scope of basic marketing information by means of minimum possible number of words. Therefore, each word in the slogan must be extremely precise, considerable and reasonable.

Various lexical means are used to communicate information. According to the theory of language origin, verbs were the first words to emerge: they originated to describe actions, and then generated nouns and adjectives denoting objects, conditions and characteristic features. "Availability of the verb essentially improves the efficiency of the slogan, especially its involving ability. This is quite natural, since verb, designating the action, involves hidden dynamics and movement, and has a much greater motivating force than the nominal parts of speech" [12]. No wonder all the propaganda slogans (and not only Russian) are based on the use of verbal forms.

Though speaking of the comparative value of different parts of speech in a slogan, it should be noted that any significant difference manifests itself only when it comes to basic word. Under the basic word we have in mind the word, which emphasized the main point of entire advertising message, contained in the slogan.

Specific words represent real objects or phenomena of actual world that can be seen, touched, smelled, and tasted. The more specific is a certain word, the more emotional reaction it will trigger in human; indeed, he will be able to "try it on", to revive it, relying on his senses: hearing, sight, touch, taste and smell.

The slogan is intended to motivate the potential consumer of the goods or services. This idea can be illustrated referring to the analysis of the public slogans use. As is obvious from the foreign studies, open constructions are efficient for high involvement products, which are purchased not suddenly and require from the consumer collection and analysis of factual information about the product (for example, home appliances, cars, and pharmaceuticals) [11]. In this case, the public slogan triggers in consumer analytical skills, stimulates his thinking process that is consistent with the nature of the advertised product. Conversely, when we are talking about products that are purchased by inertia (everyday food, small household goods, hygiene items, etc.), the analytical activity of consumer is so insignificant that likely he

will not be wasting time on completion of an open sentence.

Inaccuracy in language use, ambiguity, total nonsense of some slogans, and violation of lexical collocation of words reduces the impact of the advertising on a person to whom it is addressed. "Here language negligence is inexcusable, as the impact of public texts on people is huge" [13].

The advertising message is focused on perception, i.e., it should be conceived. In this case, there is a conditional reader or addressee, who perceives a given message. Message related to a certain thing takes shape of some ideally-typical construction, expressing the thing. In order to express the thing, one needs to have a holistic view of its existence, containing the image of the thing that announces itself. R. Barthes, when considering the advertising message structure, wrote: "The value of any advertising image is always surely intentional: designatums of advertising messages themselves are a priori properties of the advertised product and should be conveyed to the consumer with all possible certainty. If every image carries a certain signs, it is certain that in the advertising image, these signs have a special soundness. They are made in such a way that it would be impossible not to read them: advertising image is explicit, at least, extremely expressive" [14, p. 298]. Thus, both pictorial and linguistic messages are consistent with each other and focused on the expression of meaning. "... Privative message is self-sufficing because it has at least one strong sense at the level of substantive identification of objects presented" [14, p. 309].

When perceived by consumer, the image is endowed with some linguistic structure. Consumer determines the image, endowing and filling it with a certain meaning. Image is interpreted, receiving linguistic expression, and embedded into the thinking processes.

The image is a message that implies also the interpretation process. Image is sufficient to identify the subject in terms of a thing, though the image can be represented and comprehended only by means of containing linguistic structure. That is, the image itself already contains language component.

By definition of R. Barthes, besides denotative and connotative messages, the linguistic advertising contains also declarative statement. "In the advertisement there is a third declared message (it can also be called referential); this is a trade mark, brand or product itself, which is certainly presented in the advertisement and which transforms the advertisement into a kind of explicit communication, directly expressing its ultimate sense" [15, p. 446].

Today declarative message in the advertising is either hidden behind other messages, or opens

before the eyes at the very last moment. Advertising message needs to be done in a manner that hides its essence (that actually it is advertising) and thus attracts the viewer's attention and goodwill. Once the viewer gets the opportunity to find his own meanings in the message, he faces declarative message and the announced "brand" of a product. Advertising discourse is always trying to give us "things" through their best qualities using different configurations. Linguistic pathways are used to express the main designatum of the advertising, i.e. they are perfect "things".

Since any characteristic of a thing is finite and reducible to a particular trait or item's property (item's traits have no hierarchical structure), it cannot be distinguished out of other characteristics. The only specification, which is not threatened by such reduction to the actual property, is purely linguistic characteristic of a thing or its name. It is the "best" characteristic of a thing in language structures, because in the capacity of a concept it exists abstractly. In advertising discourse the "brand" becomes a name of thing.

Having no distinct functionality, advertising, as an advertised "thing" begins to be consumed itself. Consumption occurs at the linguistic level, at the level of signs.

Interpretation process is triggered by a peculiar semantic coercion, i.e. impetus is given to the interpretation.

Net signs provoke consumer society to endow them with a certain sense.

Final part

Thus, the set of semantic characteristics, inherent in the slogan, is determined by its pragmatic orientation. Language properties of advertising slogan are effective means to influence consumers of goods and services.

Importance of a slogan in advertising communication system. Based on the studied literature we can come to the conclusion that contemporary science appreciates the importance of advertising in the communicative space as one of the most powerful levers for formation and modeling of public opinion. Slogan bears if not the main, but serious enough information and emotional burden, and thus is of particular interest as a test object.

Information model is built with the need to use for interpretation increasingly diversified and exciting information. The impact principle on the consumer is based on the activation of specific knowledge, skills and abilities. This extends the capabilities of using linguistic resources for the

implementation of communicative task. Thus, in the slogan language the semantic and pragmatic components are inseparable.

Conclusions

1. Advertising slogan has a set of structural and semantic characteristics subordinated to pragmatic purpose. Unity of semantic and pragmatic origins in the course of the advertising communication facilitates the optimization of the impact on the message recipient.

2. Special semantic content of an advertising slogan promotes the implementation of certain communicative and pragmatic goals within the advertising communication.

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