

Ads analysis



In this course I have learned how to analyze advertisements from different social semiotic perspectives. In this project I apply the strategies to this Starbucks advertisement. The selected advertisement will be discussed in the following five aspects: arrangement, language, images, readership and implications. First the compositional arrangement of the poster. The poster is divided into two major parts. The upper part takes the image at close shot with a man holding a cup of Starbucks coffee with no eye-contact.

It occupies a large proportion of the poster. In addition, there are some ingredients of the coffee placed at the left corner. The Starbucks logo at the right corner, a slogan and some wordings become the second part of the poster. There are three points about the language strategies. First, Starbucks Coffee belongs to a functional name which is purely descriptive of what the company does. Readers can know this company sells coffee at first glance on the logo.

Second, the denotative meaning of the phrase ‘ make it your drink’ is that choosing Starbucks as your drink. The connotative meaning is that make your own preference drinks in Starbucks. In the poster the word ‘ your’ is underlined in order to sharpen the significance of customizing one’s own drink. Third, there are three sentences in small and white letters. ‘ I’ve discovered a latte that I can call my own’, ‘ I take my Latte with the jolt of double espresso, but then sign it off with a dash of sweet hazelnut syrup’ and ‘ Make it your drink’.

There is interrelation between these three sentences. The second sentence ‘ I take..... hazelnut syrup’ explains the first sentence ‘ I’vemy own’.

Readers may be confused why they can call their own drink without the second sentence. Readers can understand the idea clearly only when two sentences exist. The second sentence tells the readers that how they can call their own drink according to their flavor. Moreover, the first two sentences explain the third sentence.

If the poster only has the third sentence ‘ Make it your drink’, readers may get the idea that choose Starbucks be their drink. However Starbucks wants to sell their uniqueness of making one’s own drink according to his preference rather than only promoting the brand. Therefore, it is vital to have the first two sentences to explain the third sentence. As for the image strategy, the poster is in black and white except the Starbucks logo and the brown background color at the bottom of the poster. The Starbucks icon becomes the salient part in the poster.

The outstanding icon can generate greater visual power compared to the blurred background. The brown background color is one of the colors using in Starbucks products. The use of color in the poster follows the theme color of Starbucks. Moreover the smiling face of the man shows a positive signal to readers. The facial expression together with the words designed to deliver a message that he is happy because he can find a cup of coffee that suits his taste. Next the poster uses a Chinese male rather than Western people as the model.

It is more persuasive for readers since the advertisement is published in the Asia edition of National Geographic Magazine. For the readership of the poster, it is shot at a horizontal angle that shows an equal power status with

the readers. In addition, the poster has a close shot at the man with only head and shoulders. The close distance indicates an intimacy between readers and the figure. It shortens the distance between the man model with readers. The greater degree of involvement helps to maintain a sense of interaction with readers.

As for the implications in the poster, the idea of the poster is that people can make their favorite drink according to their preferences in Starbucks. If the poster does not have any words on it, the advertisement still works. Since the logo is still on the poster readers can know which brand the poster belongs to. However the original idea of choosing your preferred coffee cannot be presented. Readers will know that the advertisement is about promoting the Starbucks Coffee rather than choosing Starbucks Coffee to make their preferred coffee.

Therefore, it is important to have both the linguistic and non-linguistic elements on the poster to present the intended Starbucks promotion idea. In conclusion, this advertisement is an effective one which delivers the main idea through verbal and non-verbal elements. Readers can understand the unique benefits of choosing Starbucks. The company uses these phrases so as to stand out their product features from the masses. All the elements work jointly when they are integrated together. As a result, this Starbucks Coffee poster is an effective advertisement.