

Advertising language assignment

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BUSTER**

To a large extent, good advertising leads to success, while bad advertising can mean failure. How can we evaluate whether an advertisement is good or not? How can advertisers make advertisements be attractive? There are several important factors in advertisements, especially the advertising language, and advertising language is different from any other kinds of language. Advertising language is very specific that lots of weasel words are used in advertising language, and advertising language are always very simple; these features can be illustrated by an advertisement that I found in a magazine.

Different from any other kinds of language, weasel words are very useful and important in advertising language. In the article ‘With These Words I Can Sell You Anything’ the author William Lutz gives an example with the weasel word “help” to illustrate the effect of weasel words in advertisements. Lutz points out, “The trick is that the claim that comes after the weasel word is usually so strong and so dramatic that you forget the word “help” and concentrate only on the dramatic claim” (2010, 9. 3). In fact, the role of advertisements is to make consumers pay attention to the products.

Although the weasel words are actually making no claim at all, they can attract consumers’ eyes and make advertisements attractive. Just as Lutz says, “Remember, the ad is trying to get you to buy a product, so it will put the product in the best possible light, using any device, trick, or means legally allowed” (2010, 9. 19). If the weasel words can attract consumers and make them buy the products, the weasel words are good and useful. Of course, in most kinds of language, weasel words are improper, and that is why advertising language differs from other kinds of language.

Besides the weasel words, advertising language has another specific feature that it is very simple. Obviously, advertisers believe that advertisements are the simpler the better. Why do advertisements need simple language? In the article “ The Language of Advertising’ the author Charles O’Neill gives us the answer of this question. He says, “ The average American adult is subject to an overwhelming number of commercial messages each day... Today’s consumer cannot take the time to focus on anything for long’ (1 998, 9. 36).

Indeed, because of the fast modern pace of life, people are so busy that they don’t have time to waste on reading voluminous words in advertisements.

Moreover, simple words are easier to be remembered and understood.

O’Neill also illustrates this point in his article that “ difficult words or images... Are edited out and replaced by simple words or images not open to misinterpretation. You don’t need to be a college scholar to grasp” (1998, 9.

37). In fact, easy to be understood is also very important for advertising

language. For example, one of the Hagen- Dads’ advertisement says, “ Love her, love Hagen-Dads. The words in this advertisement are pretty simple.

There are just four words in it, but you can easily understand that the goal of this advertisement is to tell us that Hagen- Dads is good and worth to be

loved. This advertisement is so simple that we can easily understand it and remember it in a short time. We can imagine if the consumers even can’t

understand what the advertisements are talking about, how the

advertisements attract the consumers and make them buy the products?

Therefore, advertising language should be simple, and it is one of the features of advertising language.

To be more specific, I will take a real advertisement that I found in a magazine as an example to illustrate these two features. It is an advertisement about a restaurant that I found in the magazine. The target audiences of this advertisement are people who want or like to eat seafood. In this advertisement, some weasel words are used like “ the freshest seafood” and “ the finest view”. Consumers always very care about the environment of a restaurant, and they also mind whether the food which the restaurant provides is fresh or not very much, so the advertiser uses “ freshest” and “ finest” in the advertisement to attract nonusers.

In fact, what does “ the freshest” and “ the finest” mean? How can they guarantee that they are “ the freshest’ and “ the finest??? Anyway, this advertisement is successful because the weasel words “ freshest” and “ finest” are really attractive. Moreover, there are very few words in this advertisement, and it is really simple. It means that the consumers only need a very short time to look over the advertisement and remember it. The advertiser uses the weasel words and simple language successfully, and we can find the two features of advertising language in this advertisement.