CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1. Definition of Advertisement

The word "advertisement" derives from the Latin word "advertere". It means "to inform somebody of something", "to bring into notice" or "to draw attention to something", etc. (Xia Lei, 2003: 8)

So far different researchers have made different definitions of advertisement from different perspectives or purposes. Bolen (1984: 9) defines it as:

> "A kind of paid, non-personal communication through various mass media by business firms, non-profit organizations and individuals who are in some way identified in the message and who hope to inform or persuade members of a particular audience" (Bolen, 1984: 9).

Another definition of advertisement is: "Advertisement is the non personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors through the various media" (Bovee, 1992: 7). O' Guinn examines the conflicts on the definition of advertisement and concludes by arguing that "Advertisement is a paid, mediated form of communication from an identifiable source, designed to persuade the receiver to take some action, now or in the future" (O' Guinn, 1998:5).

From these definitions, we can know that advertisement refers to a paid tool of delivering message to attract the potential customers and persuade them to buy the product.

2.2. Advertisement Components

An advertisement is composed of different components, which are either verbal or non-verbal. The verbal components consist of the headline, sub-headline, the body copy, trademark (including brand name, corporate or store name and visual symbol) and slogan. Bovée and Arens (1992: 291) propose a similar division of advertising components: headline, the visual, subheads, body copy, boxes and panels, slogans and logotypes. They further stress the fact that not all of these features typically appear in one advert. The verbal component of advertisement which mostly appears is headline.

Bovée and Arens (1992: 292) give a definition of the headline as "…the words in the leading position of the advertisement, the words that will be read first or that are positioned to draw the most attention". Since the headline occupies a leading position in the advert and it is therefore a striking element, its major role is to attract the readers' attention. Bovée and Arens (1992: 292) state five headline functions:

1. to select the reader
2. to lead the reader directly into the body copy
3. to present the complete selling idea
4. to promise a benefit to the customer
5. to present product news of interest to the reader

The headline should embrace a short, clear message. It aims to attract the readers to be interested in the advertisement and the advertised product.

2.3. The Characteristics of Language in Advertisement

According to Leech (1966: 27), the language of advertisement is characterized by a number of preferred linguistic patterns and techniques:

1. Unorthodoxies of spelling and syntax including coinage, neologism, minor sentence, block language, misspelling word, unfamiliar vocabulary and semantic oddities such as pun, metaphor, personification are common to attract attention.
2. Simple such as the use of simple sentences and simple words, personal such as the use of second personal pronoun or personal words, and colloquial style such as the use of everyday or oral language, slang language and a familiar vocabulary are employed to sustain attention.
3. Phonological devices of rhyme, alliteration, parallelism and sheer repetition are utilized to enhance memorability and amusement. Repetition is usually of two types: intra-textual and inter-textual. In the former, the product's name and certain highlighted features are repeated several times. In the latter, a single slogan is consistently used in different ads for a single product or manufacturer.
4. An intimate, interactive addressing of the audience and a conversational mode including the use of second personal pronoun and interrogative sentence.
5. Abundant use is made of superlatives and hyperboles in characterizing the product, with often indirect reference to rival products, and imperatives are used to make persuasions and suggestions.

2.4. The goals of language in advertisement

According to Leech (1966: 27-31), to achieve successful advertisement, the language must have attention value, readability, memorability, and selling power.

1. Attention value

According to Leech (1966: 27) as cited in Alena Zapletalová (2008: 30), the advertisement must draw attention to itself, which is usually achieved by violation of some obvious rule of the language or unorthodox use of language. It includes untypical form of the language such as neologism, coinage, misspelling word, minor sentence, block language, unfamiliar vocabulary and semantic oddities such as metaphor, pun, and personification.

The first unorthodox use of language is neologism. Neologism refers to a new word, term, or expression newly created or an old word with new meanings. For example: “Dogbot doesn't rate Vivaldi. He's into tech no. If only he had an MP3 connector socket like the new Fiesta Zetec Climate.” (Glamour, p. 132). `Dogbot’ is a neologism which means a robot-like dog.

The second unorthodox use of language is coinage. Coinage is a word or phrase recently invented (Longman: 263). There are many methods to create new words, such as compounding, derivation, acronym, clipping, blending. A number of coinages in advertisements are names or brands of products. The example of coinage is *cellophane. Cellophane* refers to thin transparent material used for wrapping goods. It comes from cellulose and diaphane, two raw material names of cellophane.

The third unorthodox use of language is misspelling word. According to Xia Lei (2003: 49), misspelling some common words is also a clever use of coinages. The proper use of misspelling can reach an effect of novelty. Although misspelling words are different from original words in forms, they remain the same meaning and deliver effectively the information of products. For example: "For *twogether* the ultimate all inclusive one price *sunkissed* holiday." This is an advertisement on providing a couple with a holiday inn. "*Twogether*" and "together" are similar both in spelling and pronunciation. "To" is misspelled as "Two", to indicate that the couple could get the romantic yesterday once more if they spend their holiday together in this inn. Psychologically, emotion between lovers tends to become common and ordinary on the surface after a long period, "Twogether" here can remind them of the romantic time in the past.

The fourth unorthodox use of language is minor sentence. A minor sentence is one that does not necessarily have a main verb in it, but which can be understood as a complete unit of meaning. The absent part of a minor sentence might be the subject, predicate, or other parts. Minor sentence is a sentence which is chopped up into shorter bits by using full stops, dash, semi-colon and hyphen, where ordinary prose would use commas or no punctuation at all. Leech (1966: 113-116) calls it as 'disjunctive syntax'.

The fifth unorthodox use of language is block language. Leech (1966: 90 - 93) defines block language as "…the type of restricted variety of grammar called the disjunctive mode**.** In the writing style of printed advertising block language is a common feature. The need for short clear messages lends its way to short

sentences, styled in a way that they are easily understandable. Block language usually refers to a simple, short message which tends to be verbless and consists of a noun or a noun phrase.

The other characteristic of language in advertisement which is used to achieve attention value is semantic unorthodoxy. Semantic unorthodoxy can be crudely characterized as "playing with meanings of words" (Leech: 1981). It includes literary devices such as metaphor, personification and pun.

According to Myers, metaphor sets up a relation of similarity between two referents, as if they were the same thing. X is described in terms of Y' (Myers, 1994: 125). For example, "the world is a stage." The world is described in terms of a stage. Tanaka (1994: 82) agrees that metaphor and pun have power to draw attention and enhance memorability. Metaphor plays an important role in English advertisements. It renders advertisements attractive and picturesque to attract the customer's attention to the advertised product. So metaphor contributes to promoting the sale of products.

Semantic oddity also includes pun. According to *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* (1986: 1642), pun is "a humorous use of a word in such a way as to suggest different meanings or applications of words having the same sound or nearly the same sound but different meanings: a play on words." Nida (1993: 87) argues that "Plays on the meaning and formal resemblance of words (punning) is a universal phenomenon, and in some languages this rhetorical device is extensively encouraged and practiced." Pun is used to attract the customers' attention. However, to make a successful and impressive pun is not

easy, as Tanaka (1994: 82) points out, the extra processing effort needed to process the pun helps to sustain readers' attention and makes the advertisement more memorable. Therefore, puns which are often emp1oyed by the manufacturers to seek attention are almost the most attention-getting device of the rhetorical figures. The word used as a pun is usually related to the characteristics of product or the brand name of the product. For example: From sharp minds. Come Sharp products. In the first sentence, "sharp" is used as an adjective in its actual literal meaning. In the second sentence, it has double meanings: one is an adjective in its habitual sense; the other means the brand name or the company that produces the products.

Another semantic oddity is personification. According to *A Hand Book to Literature*, published by the Bobbs Merrill Company in 1972, personification is "a figure of speech which endows animals, ideas, abstractions, and inanimate objects with human form, character, or sensibilities; the representing of imaginary creatures or things as having human personalities, intelligence, and emotions; whether real or fictitious, by another person," For example, the wind whistled through the trees. By using personification, something without life is represented or thought of as a human being, or as having qualities or feelings of human being. Personifying the advertised product and giving it feeling and emotion aims to make an advertisement more acceptable.

2. Readability

According to Leech as cited in Kateřina Krčmářová (2008: 25), concerning the principle of readability, the message conveyed should be clear,

simple and short as not to discourage from further reading. This is achieved by the same elements which make language easy to listen to simple, personal, colloquial style and familiar vocabulary (which, however, as Leech (1966: 28) points out, can be in conflict with the attention and interest value which emphasize the importance of unexpectedness rather than predictability).

To achieve readability, the advertisement must be simple. There are some ways to make it simple such as using simple sentences, monosyllabic words or fewer letters. To make simple advertisement, it may contain less than ten syllables. There are 20 most common verbs according to Leech, which are monosyllabic. They are: make, get, give, have, see, buy, come, go, know, keep, look, need, love, use, feel, like, choose, take, start, taste. All these verbs are common and simple. These common verbs make advertisement in English simple and easy to understand. According to Leech, some verbs as '*look, see,* and *watch* are common in commercials of the demonstration type, where they call the consumer's attention to what is happening before the consumer's eyes' (Leech, 1966: 46). Leech (1966: 152) also lists the most frequently 20 adjectives: new, good/best, free, fresh, delicious, full, sure, clean, wonderful, special, crisp, fine, big, great, real, easy, bright, extra, safe and rich. Most of them are monosyllabic. These adjectives help to build a pleasant picture in reader's minds and manage to bring the potential consumers.

Another way to achieve readability is that advertisement must be personal to create an intimacy between the advertisement/product and customers by using personal vocabulary, pronoun "you" and interrogative sentence. Mencher (1990

20) has looked into the aspect of vocabulary in advertisement and identified ten words as the most personal and persuasive. They are: “new”, “save”, “safety”, “proven”, “love”, “discover”, “guarantee”, “results”, “you” and “health”. Based on this theory, pronoun “you” is included in personal word. It is useful to create an intimacy as Alena Zapletalova (2008: 78) said that pronouns especially we/you, our/your are frequently used to bring an element of interactiveness between the advertiser and a potential consumer. The commonly employed technique of synthetic personalisation is used to make the consumer feel s/he is addressed as an individual. In connection to this, Ogilvy (1983: 80) advises copywriters to address readers in the second-person singular since readers are alone when reading the advertisement, and should therefore be addressed as individuals not as a crowd.

Besides using pronoun you, the use of interrogative sentence is also useful to make advertisement more personal because it creates interactiveness between the advertisement and the customers with conversational mode. An interrogative sentence is a sentence used to ask a question (Todd, 2000: 66). **It** has a function to elicit information (Givan, 2001: 318). Linguist G.N. Leech (1997: 77) discusses two main functions of interrogative sentences. Viewing from the perspective of psychology, interrogative sentences divided the process of information reception into two phases by first raising a question and then answering it. Thus it turns the passive receiving into active understanding. From the linguistic perspective, interrogative sentences decrease the grammatical difficulty, because they are usually short in advertisements.

3. Memorability

According to Leech as cited in Kateřina Krčmářová (2008: 25), to achieve memorability, some advertisers employ rhetorical devices such as parallelism, alliteration, repetition and rhyme.

The first way to achieve memorability is parallelism. Crystal (1995: 456) defines the term parallelism as "…the use of paired sounds, words, or constructions". Parallelism also could be thought as a kind of repetition due to accompaniment of repetition, but phrases or sentences with the same or similar structure, relative meaning and consistent mood are coordinately used in the sentence. Parallelism is used to emphasize message as Leech (1966: 190) said "Formal schemes, or parallelisms, are often 'rhetorical' in a familiar sense of the word, in that they heighten the emotional tone of the message, giving insistent emphasis to points of strategic importance." The examples of parallelism:

Foodfor life

Foodfor peace

Foodfor protection

Foodfor work

Foodfor stability

Foodfor education

Alliteration is also included in phonological device to achieve memorability. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English with Chinese Translation* (1989: 38), 'The occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of two or more words in succession is called alliteration.

Alliteration can be found in all the examples stated above: *Food for life*, *Food for peace*, *Food for protection*, *Food for work*, *Food for stability*, *Food for education*. Leech (1966: 188) calls this device striking and helpful as far as memorability is concerned. Alliteration is applied in advertisement because of its aesthetic feeling for the audience. Usually alliterations are pleasing to audience's ears because of the clever choice of the word by the advertiser

Another way to achieve memorability is repetition. Repetition is defined as saying the same thing again, though perhaps with a significant difference. Repetition, including repetition of key words and key phrases and that of similar structures, is an important rhetorical device employed to stress the tone and to bring out the message. In English advertisement, repetition is used to emphasize some important aspects of the advertised product or service or certain information.

Another phonological device to achieve memorability is rhyme. According to Nayak (2002: 74), rhyme is related to the use of an identical sound, letter or syllable at the end of adjacent words or lines. For example: The flavour of a Quaver is never known to waver. Rhyme is used to make advertisement rhythmical and leave impression on readers' mind.

4. Selling power

According to Leech as cited in Kateřina Krčmářová (2008: 25), the last goal presented by Leech is selling power. Once the advertisement is successful when arousing readers' action and getting into public awareness, it can be said that the advert has a selling power. Selling power is the crucial and most mysterious part of the advertisement process. There is no satisfactory way of

finding out what general linguistic features. However, according to Leech, imperatives, superlatives, hyperboles and abundant use are useful to achieve selling power,

The first way to achieve selling power is the use of imperatives. An imperative sentence is a sentence used to give an order or to make request (Todd, 2000: 66). According to Givon (2001: 318) it has a function to elicit an action. Linguistically, imperative clauses seem to be the most powerful devices. Leech (1966) further reminds, it is within human experience that telling someone to do something is less successful than politely asking him/her to do it (1966: 30). Imperatives aim to provoke the customers to take action and encourage them to buy something immediately.

Hyperbole is also used to achieve selling power. *LONGMAN Dictionary of Contemporary English* (1998: 751) defines hyperbole as "a way of describing something in order to make it sound bigger, smaller, better, worse, etc, than it really is." In advertisement, the use of exaggerated statements puts emphasis on the particular features of the products or services, or sometimes achieves humorous effect. For instance: It's time to rewrite history. (Ad. of cosmetic)

Vestergaard argues that the hyperbolic character of advertisement language, relates on the one hand to the desirability of a unique claim on behalf of the product, and on the other hand to the principle that an advertisement message should be positive and unreserved (Vestergaard, 1985: 67). Behm (2006: 3-4) said that advertiser shows unique and exceptional qualities of his goods to arouse desire of having this product. It causes that customer goes and buys the product.