

# LANGUAGE FOR SALES

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## Abstract

*Language used in every advertisement should be able to catch the attention of the reader and motivate him to take immediate action. Despite the development of sophisticated non-verbal techniques, language continues to remain a powerful customer-catching tool. To evoke the desired responses advertisement use certain wordtriggers. These are used to bring about a close association of a particular quality or state with a particular product. The task of creating the language of advertisement is by no means an easy one. The ad maker has to stretch his creativity and fantasies the consumer goods. He has an almost unlimited scope for violating the rules and conventions of language to create advertisement literature. He may coin a telling phrase, an epigram or a rhyme to drive his message home but he must be conscious that his advertisement does not make false promise, exaggerate a claim or misinform the customer because they may lead to legal action. The present study focuses on the importance of language in advertisement.*

## Objectives Of The Study

- To study the importance of language in advertisement.
- To study the various components of print advertisement.
- To study the language characteristics of English advertisement.

## Introduction

Today, the word ‘advertisement’ is very common term known to us. It figures in each of our lives every day. We see it on television, in the sky, on the match box, in the newspapers, in the magazines, on our mail, on the vehicles, in the vehicles, and so on. It is part of our daily life and every one is conscious of it. The specific purpose of it is (a) It is a macro concept representing the entire advertising industry and is an institution (b) It is micro-managerial concept standing for the specific managerial function of any organization intending to send the information to other members of the society.

The term ‘advertising’ is derived from the original Latin word ‘advertere’ which means to turn the attention. The basic purpose of an advertisement is to turn the attention of the readers or the listeners or the views or the onlookers towards a product or a service or an idea. In fact, it’s a complex form of communication that operates with objectives and strategies leading to various types of impact on consumer thoughts, feelings and actions.

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## **Size And Structure Of Advertising Industry**

Advertising is a social and business process responsible for the mass communication. It is the fastest growing industry that has come to stay so long as the forces of competition are at constant work deciding the destinies of the firms. The growth of this industry is measured based on the amount spent on this creative activity of education and entertainment.

In India, the growth rate of the advertising industry is phenomenal. To the estimation in the year 1971 the country spent 650 million on advertisements when compared to 2005 it was 5, 60,000 million. The numbers have proved that there is constant grow in the industry.

## **Origin Of Advertising**

Though we fail to answer the question as to the exact age of advertising, it can be said that advertising began the moment man discovered the art of communication. Advertising by 'word' is the earliest form of advertising because oral skills were developed before reading and writing skills. During the 5th to 8th centuries public barkers equipped with the horns and bells were capable of attracting the attention of the consumers. In those days advertising was done either by human voice and or by hand execute signs and placards. News papers were used to publish advertisements during 17th century. 19th century was marked by a new trend of brand advertising. Magazines – both weeklies and monthlies started catching the imagination of the people by popularizing brands. 20<sup>th</sup> century was marked with the advent of two fascinating media of communication namely radio and television. Today companies are using the signboards, SMS, e-mails to campaign their products. Thus the advertising industry started with barkers and has culminated into a very powerful mass media of communication which requires lot of creativity.

(C.N.Sontakki,2006)

## **Creativity**

Creativity refers to the 'generation and presentation of novel idea, differently, innovatively across the target audience. Advertising creativity refers to conversion of idea to be used to solve communication problem.

## **Creativity Process**

The creativity process has five steps.

1. Immersion: put yourself in the problem- gather information through background research.
2. Digestion: do your home work, thinking, rethinking.
3. Incubation: look at the problem with your subconscious mind.
4. Illumination: birth of a new idea.
5. Reality or verification: refine and polish the idea for improvement.

## ***The Challenge***

## **Components Of Print Advertising**

The following are the components of print advertising:

1. The Headline
2. Body copy
3. Illustrations and visual elements.

### **The Headline**

The headline refers to the words in the leading position of the advertisement i.e, the words that will be read first or the one which should draw most attention. The headline should achieve the following:

- a. The headline should attract attention to the advertisement.
- b. It should select the right prospects.
- c. It should present the complete selling idea.
- d. The headline should present product news of interest to the reader.
- e. Captions.

### **Body Copy**

Body copy is a logical continuation of headline and sub-head. It is of a smaller size than the headline. This is where “ salesmanship in print” begins. It contains the product features and the claim made with a proof about the product. The reader should be persuaded step by step to a point where some definite action will be taken by him.

### **Illustration And Visual Elements**

The visual elements should emphasize the following

- a. The points must be driven home quickly
- b. It must be decided whether emotional appeal or rational appeal is to be used
- c. How to create a mood for a positive response from the viewers. (WELLS. W.D, New Delhi, PP355-385.)

### **Copywriting: The Language Of Advertising**

Words are powerful tools in advertising and the person who understands their beauty and power, as well as how best to use them is the copywriter.

### **Copywriter**

The person who shapes and sculpts the words in an advertisement is called a copywriter. Copy is the text of an ad or the words that people say in a commercial. In most agencies, copy writers work in teams with art directors, who design the way the ad will look. Copywriters love words and they search for clever twist, the pun, the powerful description, the punch, the nuance- for

### ***The Challenge***

words that whip and batter, pleased, sob, cajole, and impress. They are the experts of the words. They know meanings and derivations as well as the moods and feelings of words and the reverberation and vibrations they create in a readers' mind. Many copywriters have a good background in English or literature. Versatility is a common trait of copywriters. They can shift their writing style to match the product and the language of their target audience.

## **Advertising Writing Style**

Advertising writing is tight: every word counts because both space and time are expensive. The tighter the copy, the easier it is to understand and the greater its impact. Copywriters try to write the way the target audience thinks and talks.

## **Tone Of Voice**

To develop the right tone of voice, copywriters write to the target audience. If they know someone who fits the audience profile, then they write to that person as if they were in a conversation. If they don't know, then they may go through a photo file, select a picture of the person they think fits the description and write to that person.

## **Grammar**

Copywriters also are attuned to the niceties of grammar, syntax, and spelling, although sometimes they will play with a word or phrase to create an effect, even if it 's grammatically incorrect.

## **Adese**

Formulaic advertising copy is one problem that is so well-known that comedians parody it. This type of formula writing, called adese, violates all the guidelines for writing effective copy that we described in the practical tips. It is full of clichés, superlatives, stock phrases and vague generalities.

(Krishna Mohan and Meera Banerji,1990)

## **Language**

The language of ads makes an extensive use of lexical and rhetorical devices to convey the message. The potentialities of language are widened and deepened in several ways, the sole aim being to find fresh, interest-provoking methods of conveying meaningful information on the reader's own terms. There is a large variety of linguistic such as simile, metaphors, Pun, Parallelism, rhyme, etc are used in advertising.

(Murthy,S.N and Bhojanna, U,2010)

## **Simile**

### ***The Challenge***

Many advertisers have used similes in their advertisements. It is an explicit comparison recognizable by the words 'like' or 'as'. It is equally common in advertisements as it links two objectives through a comparison. The use of a simile not only helps the copywriter to catch the immediate attention of the reader, but also keeps the attention captivated for some time.

For example

- a. Amul: "Twice as creamy as any other condensed milk."
- b. "A fragrance as precious as gold".
- c. Fabric : "Light as mist, soft as spring".
- d. "Breakfast without orange juice is *like* a day without sunshine."

Though simile is an important rhetorical device in English advertisements, it is far less frequently employed than metaphor, which is one of the most frequently used rhetorical devices in English advertisements.

## **Metaphors**

It is a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another. This is a basic figure of speech in poetry. In metaphor, a comparison is usually implicit, where as in simile it is explicit. A creative copywriter frequently uses metaphor because they suggest those emotions associations for the product which is wished by the copywriter.

- a. "Go and seek the sun at your nearest Bombay Dyeing stockiest now"
- b. MRF: The tyre with muscles.
- c. "Satin is the way it feels".

## **Personification**

In this figure of speech, there is impersonation or embodiment of some quality or inanimate objects. Personification is inherent in many languages through use of gender and it appears to be very frequent in ads. A few illustrations of personification are given below against the product name. Personification is very often employed in English advertisements.

- a. Servo Kool Plus: "Let your car enjoys winter round the year."
- b. Fiat: "Power dressing just acquired a stylish new accessory."
- c. Volvo: "They will *stay on* the job longer than most employees."

## **Oxymoron**

It is a figure of speech which combines incongruous and apparently contradictory words and meaning for a specific effect. In advertisement the use of this figure of speech is limited. There is juxtaposition of two expressions which are semantically incompatible.

- a. Foard Ikon: "The josh machine provides a very welcome departure."
- b. DCM: DCM textile has chaotic symmetries that screwball the eye.

## **The Challenge**

## **Onomatopoeia**

It is the formation of a word using sounds that resemble or suggest the object or action to be named. It is capable of contributing to the magical effect of writing.

- a. HYATT Regency: Fell the HAYTT touch.
- b. Digital Global soft: When the similarities end, the value differential begins

## **Alliteration**

It is a figure of speech in which consonant, especially at the beginning of words or stress syllable, are repeated. Alliteration and rhyme are the most favorite figures of speech of the copywriters. They use them to create impression on the readers with their slogans.

- a. Just tasty, tender, tiny garden peas.
- b. The suede that's in style to suit all occasions.
- c. Irish dress maker: Dancing designs that dazzle.
- d. Goldspot: The zing thing.
- e. The suede: That's in style to suit all occasion.

## **Allusion**

It is usually an implicit reference, perhaps to another work of literature or art to a person or an event. It is often a kind of appeal to the reader to share some experience with the writer. A copywriter makes use of an allusion with the point of view of expressiveness with economy. Some times the brand names itself is an allusion as in the case of Hotel Taj, Hotel Ashoka where the name evokes all the splendor, grandeur and luxury of the royal court. Mc Donald:

## **Pun**

It refers to humorous use of words, suggesting different meanings. Such words may have the same or nearly same sound but different meanings.

- a. Why not be in vogue tonight?( thermal blankets)
- b. I'm a Khaitan fan.
- c. Your son is sure to rise, if fed on pure Sunshine.( butter)

## **Parallelism**

Parallelism is a repetition of phrase or sentence structure. It gives a melodious effect to the message. This is one of the figures of speech which a copywriter uses without hesitation. Parallelism is the opposite of deviation. In a deviation, there are aberrations from normal usage, while by use of parallelism, language is organized in a regular pattern. Parallelism may be either syntactic repetition of structure or a verbal repetition.

## ***The Challenge***

- a. Foad Ikon: Go green, Go Foard
- b. Coca-Cola: Always the real thing, always Coco-Cola.
- c. Mercedes Benz: Some times, the “other woman” is not a woman at all.
- d. Neighbor’s envy, owner’s pride. (Onida, TV add)
- e. Shave after shave, Crest after shave.( after- shave lotion)

## Slogans

Copywriters create slogans to showcase a product. The following are some of the popular slogans:

- a. Air-India- the airline for youth.
- b. Britannia- India’s best Biscuits.
- c. Horlicks- the Great Nourisher.
- d. Bajaj bulbs- the ultimate choice.

## Rhyme

There is an echo in a rhyme and so it is a source of aesthetic satisfaction. There is pleasure in the sound itself and in the coincidence of sounds and this pleasure must be associated with the sense of music of rhythmic and beat the pulse sense which is common to all human being. Rhyme is a rhythmic device for intensifying the meaning as well as for binding the slogan together. Usually copywriters use of a rhyme in the headline as it helps to catch the attention.

- a. Brooke Bond Taj Mahal Tea Bag:

Dip, dip, dip  
If you want it stronger  
Dip a little longer  
Dip, dip, dip.

- b. Johnson and Johnson Baby Oil. Soap:

Don’t cry my child  
I know the world seems strange and new  
But you are safe and in my arms  
No harm will ever come to you

## Linguistic Deviations

It is not very uncommon in our daily life to come across situations where in we mean to say some thing and end up conveying something else. In advertising world also, it is the same story. The only difference is that here advertisers try to take advantage of this ambiguity in the name of creativity. Linguistic Deviations have been used very effectively in advertising and it is very important that we know about ins and outs of this aspect of advertising. The different kinds of deviations used copywriters are phonological, graphical, grammatical, lexical, semantic, and typographical.

### *The Challenge*

## Phonological

Advertising language does not give much scope for phonological deviations. It takes into consideration only those advertisements where the pronunciation of words is different from the accepted pronunciation.

- a. Lakme Mascara: EYE-MANCIPATION for the today's girl. Here the pronunciation of initial phoneme /i/ has been changed to the diphthong /ai/
- b. Volvo's ReVOLVOlution is taken from revolution.

## Graph Logical Deviations

The copywriters can make almost unlimited use of change in spelling keeping the pronunciation intact.

- |                  |   |                       |
|------------------|---|-----------------------|
| a. Cadbury KRISP | - | in the place of CRISP |
| b. Tata Fone     | - | in the place of phone |
| c. ServoKool     | - | in the place of cool  |

## Grammatical Deviations

It has been found that in most of the advertisements, there is deviation from the normal system of rules in using language for writing the advertisement.

- a. VIP skybags: It speaks the world of you
- b. BPL TV: Unmatched picture quality.

## Lexical Deviations

Copywriters take unlimited advantage of lexical deviations for their creative copy as this constitutes one of the richest sources of new expressions for them. The three types of lexical deviations, which are observed in advertisements, are:

- a. Functional conversion
- b. Neologisms and nonce-formations
- c. Anomalous lexical collocation

## Functional Conversion

It is also known as "zero affixation". Since the order of words in a sentence is more or less fixed, functional shifts within the sentence do not endanger intelligibility greatly. When one part of speech operates as another part of speech, the language acquires fresh vitality and variety.

- a. Less oil is more healthy (n-ad)
- b. Perfectly partnered (n-verb)

## *The Challenge*

c. Have you gold spotted today ( n-verb)

## Neologisms

Here the copywriters share with poets the prerogative to coin new words, most of which remain nonce words, made up for a few occasions and unabsorbed by the standard language. These are formed by compounding, affixation, composition or derivation.

### Compounding

Once in a life time

Tea times

Adjective derivatives

Zing thing

Lime n lemoni

### Brand name

LIC

Marie

Goldspot

Limca

## Anomalous Lexical Collection

When a copywriter is in search of a striking new adjective or a noun, anomalous lexical collocation comes to his/her aid. This deviation consists of an unrestricted choice of nouns where only a noun from a limited list of nouns is normally used.

a. Limca: love appears at thirst site

## Semantic Deviations

Illogical unqualified comparatives and role borrowing are few of the techniques of semantic deviations used by a copy writer.

a. Lipton: A flavor that's pure Darjeeling.

b. Halo shampoo: Halo spells beauty all the world over.

## Unqualified Comparatives

There are the comparative adjectives with nothing in the context- either in the text or in the visual layout to compare them with. This is done in order to show superiority of the product.

a. Promise toothpaste: Healthier teeth and gums

b. Diamond super: Long life.

## Role Borrowing

In this deviation, the linguistic features of one role are employed in another. A few examples of role borrowing are as follows:

a. Hotshot: just aim and shoot

(Sangeetha Sharma and Raghuvir Singh,, 2006, PP280-308).

## *The Challenge*

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## Conclusion

Language has a powerful influence over people and their behavior. This is especially true in the field of marketing and advertising. Visual content and design in advertising have a very great impact on consumer, but it is the language that helps people to identify a product and remember it. Words and pictures work together to shape a creative concept; however, it is the clever phrases and ‘magic words’ crafted by copywriters that make ideas understandable and memorable. It is here that the role of Copywriter becomes very important and challenging because of the ever-increasing competition. To make the product superior than others he/ she has to take full liberty of language. To lure the potential customers copywriters use the rhetorical language.

A copy writer has license to deviate from traditional rules and conventions of the language in order to enrich expression. He / she has the prerogative to be away from the criticism of grammar. Occasionally rules of writing and grammar are broken deliberately for better effect, in the same manner as the poets break rules to achieve their effect. The copy writers who have an ear for language match the tone of the writing to the target audience and make the text exciting and alluring.

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