



PROBLEMS OF LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION AND PRINT ADVERTISING

Mirzatojiyeva Mushtari Karimjonovna

Master's student of Namangan State Pedagogical Institute, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

The article examines the problems faced in linguistic analysis of the language of television and print advertising. Advertising discourse, being highly dynamic and multimodal, presents significant challenges for linguistic research due to its hybrid nature, pragmatic orientation, and reliance on cultural codes. The study highlights the complexity of identifying semantic layers, decoding implicit meanings, and differentiating between linguistic and non-linguistic components. Television and print advertising are compared in terms of their communicative strategies, revealing the difficulties of analyzing language when it is integrated with visual and auditory elements. The article argues that a comprehensive approach is needed to fully understand the persuasive mechanisms of advertising texts.

KEYWORDS

linguistic analysis, advertising discourse, television advertising, print advertising, multimodality, semantics, pragmatics.

INTRODUCTION

The language of advertising has long been a subject of interest for linguists, cultural theorists, and communication specialists. However, its study is complicated by the fact that advertising is not a purely linguistic phenomenon: it is a multimodal form of discourse that merges words with images, sounds, and cultural associations. Television and print advertising each offer unique challenges to linguistic analysis, not only because of the variety of semiotic systems they employ, but also because of their pragmatic orientation toward persuasion rather than information. An exploration of these problems is essential for understanding how language functions within advertising as both a communicative tool and a cultural construct.

One of the central problems of linguistic analysis lies in the hybrid structure of advertising discourse. Unlike traditional texts, advertisements rarely rely on verbal content alone. In television, language interacts with music, visual images, and gestures, forming a unified persuasive message. In print, words are interwoven with images, colors, and typographic design. For the linguist, this raises the question of how much of the overall meaning can be attributed to the verbal component, and how to distinguish the role of language from that of other semiotic elements.

Ambiguity and implicit meaning. Another difficulty is the frequent use of implicit meanings and ambiguous structures in advertising texts. The language of advertising thrives on suggestion, metaphor, and allusion, rather than direct statement. Slogans often carry multiple interpretations, relying on the audience to fill in the gaps with their own cultural knowledge and personal associations. From a linguistic standpoint, this ambiguity complicates analysis, as the meaning of the text cannot be fully understood without reference to context,

cultural codes, and shared assumptions. The challenge, therefore, lies in developing methodologies capable of capturing both explicit and implicit dimensions of advertising discourse.

Advertising language is inherently pragmatic: its goal is not to describe reality but to influence perception and behavior. Traditional linguistic approaches, which emphasize grammatical or semantic accuracy, often fall short in analyzing texts whose main function is persuasive. The manipulation of language through exaggeration, hyperbole, or selective framing complicates the task of determining the boundary between linguistic creativity and deliberate distortion. For linguistic analysis, this means moving beyond structural description toward a study of intentionality, persuasion strategies, and their effects on the audience.

Problems specific to television advertising. Television advertising poses unique analytical challenges because the verbal component is inseparable from audiovisual elements. A slogan may derive its meaning not from words alone, but from intonation, background music, or the image accompanying it. Linguists must therefore engage in interdisciplinary methods that include elements of discourse analysis, semiotics, and media studies. Additionally, the fleeting nature of television advertisements makes detailed linguistic examination difficult, as messages are delivered rapidly and are designed to be processed subconsciously. In print advertising, the challenge is different. Here, the brevity of the text and its integration with visual design create difficulties in analyzing how meaning is distributed between word and image. A single word, when placed within a striking visual context, may carry disproportionate weight, and its interpretation often relies on the cultural background of the reader. Moreover, the stylistic devices of print advertising—such as puns, alliteration, or syntactic fragmentation—are intended less for logical clarity than for memorability. This makes linguistic analysis problematic, as the criteria for effectiveness differ from those used in conventional texts.

The role of cultural and social context. Linguistic analysis of advertising cannot be divorced from cultural context. Advertising language is saturated with cultural references, stereotypes, and symbols, which give rise to meaning beyond the literal text. A slogan that resonates strongly within one cultural environment may appear opaque or meaningless in another. Thus, the challenge for linguists lies in incorporating sociolinguistic and cultural analysis into their methodology, recognizing that the interpretation of advertising language is always context-dependent. Given these challenges, it becomes clear that linguistic analysis of advertising requires an integrative and interdisciplinary approach. Purely linguistic tools—syntax, semantics, morphology—provide only a partial understanding of how advertising functions. Instead, analysis must also draw from pragmatics, discourse theory, semiotics, and even psychology, in order to grasp the full complexity of how words interact with images, sounds, and cultural codes. Only through such a holistic perspective can scholars overcome the inherent problems of analyzing a discourse that is, by its nature, hybrid and multifaceted.

CONCLUSION

The language of television and print advertising resists straightforward linguistic analysis due to its multimodal, pragmatic, and culturally embedded nature. Television ads blur the boundaries between verbal and non-verbal communication, while print ads compress meaning into highly concentrated linguistic and visual units. Both forms exploit ambiguity, suggestion, and cultural codes, making analysis complex and context-dependent. The problems identified



demonstrate that advertising discourse cannot be studied solely within the framework of traditional linguistics; rather, it requires a broader, interdisciplinary approach that takes into account its hybrid structure and persuasive orientation. Understanding these challenges is essential for advancing the study of media language and for revealing the subtle mechanisms by which advertising shapes thought and behavior.

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