A PHONOLOGICAL ANALYSIS ON ADVERTISEMENT STRAPLINES

N. Nirmeen

Department of Linguistics, Bharathiar University
nirmeennimmu95@gmail.com

Abstract

Advertisements behave as a vehicle of communication between the advertiser and the consumer. Advertisements gain the attention of the target audience. The aim of the advertisers is to produce an effective advertisement which obtains its goal when it communicates to the selected audience. Advertisements are distinguished, not by its subject matter but by the use of language in a way that would stand out against ordinary uses. Language of advertisement is unique. People usually assume that language is transparent, that they can express themselves through it without the exact words and sounds. As poetry often tries to break this transparency with alliteration, assonance, metaphor, simile, rhyme and other patterns that make people respond to the form, the advertisers also use such language to attract the audience by creating commercial straplines, which are both informative and memorable at the same time. The idea behind the concept of the strapline is to create a memorable dramatic phrase that will sum up the tone and premise of an audio/visual product or to reinforce and strengthen the audience's memory of a literary product. Straplines often use language that would not be accepted anywhere else except for advertising. The present paper analyses the language of advertising straplines in phonological level to identify the phonological features that advertisers choose to attract the audience.

Keywords: Advertisement, Straplines, Mnemonic devices

1. Introduction

Advertising is an activity by which visual or oral announcement of a product, service or an event is addressed to the audience. It plays a crucial role in establishing contact between the buyer and seller. It is the medium through which the customer comes to know of the existence and the utility of the items available in the market. Internet, Newspapers, periodicals, cinema slides, wall hoardings banners, radio and television are the various mediums of advertising. These methods compete with each other in the field of modern advertisement. Advertisements are used by most of the companies in order to inform prospective customers about their products and to increase the sale. It also draws the audience to act favourably towards the idea or institution featured. The intention of advertisement is usually to create demand to make the public buy a product. Advertisers use a variety of techniques to win our attention, to establish credibility and to motivate us to buy the product, vote for the right political party, invest money into the particular

service or download the particular application. Our mind is better focused on the visual part of the advertisements. Thus, the messages conveyed in advertisements should be attractive and unique. It should also provoke some kind of emotion and be memorable. For this purpose, most of the companies create commercial straplines, which are both informative and memorable at the same time.

A strapline is a short text which serves to clarify a thought for, or is designed with a form of, dramatic effect. Many straplines are reiterated phrases associated with an individual, social group, or product. Other terms for straplines are Memory hooks, Slogans, Taglines and Unique selling propositions. As stated by *(Charles Whittier, 1995)* in his book 'Creative Advertisement' "A slogan should be a statement of such merit about a product or service that is worthy of continuous repetitive advertising, is worthwhile for the public to remember; and is phrased in such a way that the public is likely to remember it." Straplines often use grammatical structure that would not be accepted anywhere else except for advertising. Advertisers try to convey their message in an interesting manner. A clever use of words in an economic way is the beauty of advertisement straplines. One of their focal goals remains to use such a combination of words which is easy to comprehend and recall. The entire impact of advertisement depends predominantly on the smart selection and arrangement of words. The language exploited for advertisement remains informal and conversational. Poetic element and rhythm are some often key ingredients of straplines.

The language of advertising is complex and catchy to attract the audience. The present paper focuses on the advertisement straplines. People usually assume that language is transparent, that they can express themselves through it without the exact words and sounds. Poetry often tries to breakdown this transparency with alliteration, assonance, metaphor, simile, rhyme and other patterns that make people respond to the form. Like poetry, to persuade the audience, advertisements also try to breakdown the transparency of the language by various linguistic techniques. It is part of the fascination of advertisements that they play with the language.

The aim of the study is to analyse advertisement straplines from the phonological point of view and to identify the language strategies used in the straplines.

The data has been collected by watching different channels of three different languages; Tamil, Hindi and English and YouTube advertisements. The data for the study were randomly collected from the three languages.

2. ANALYSIS

Advertising language is comparable to poetic texts. Advertisers also use mnemonic devices in their advertising straplines as these mnemonic devices attract the audience. It also helps to remember and recall the text.

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3. Rhyme

Rhyme is believed to be one of the best techniques in advertising. Rhyme always refers to sounds, not spelling *(Xiaosong, 2003)*. It attracts the audience and it helps them in remembering the strapline.

a) Tamil Advertising Straplines:

3.1   taram enra mantiram verriyin tantiram (*Ambuja cement*)

3.2   ottiko kattiko (*Ramraj*)

3.3   Bore to jo:r (*Chinnis Pickle*)

3.4   Balm ondru ceyal mo:nru (*Zandu Balm*)

The above straplines hold rhymes, where '**mantiram – tantiram, ottiko - kattiko, Bore - jo:r, ondru - mo:nru** are rhyming words respectively.

b) Hindi Advertising Straplines:

3.5   Taste mast energy zabartast (*Glucon-D*)

3.6   Fun ko seriosusly lo (*Chupa chup*)

3.7   Uapna: asli flavour bo:lna: never (*Bingo*)

3.8   Slow, slow maze: lo- slow – lo (*Eclairs Crunch*)

In the above straplines **mast – zabartast, ko – lo, apna: - bo:lna:, Slow – lo** are rhyming words respectively.

c) English Advertising Straplines:

3.9   Chick hair is thick hair (*Chick shampoo*)

3.10 Utterly butterly delicious (*Amul butter*)

3.11 Protect, detect and love the skin you're in (*Olay*)

3.12 Not only cure its ensure (*Ensure*)

In the above straplines **Chick – thick, Utterly - butterly, Protect – detect, Skin – in and Cure – ensure** are rhyming words respectively.

4. Alliteration

Alliterations are commonly used in the advertising straplines. In many straplines, a pattern of similarity is build up for effect. The simplest and by far most common technique is to repeat a sound.

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a) Tamil Advertising straplines:

4.1   a:rokyam a:nantam a:cirva:d (*Aashirvaad*)

4.2   puttam putu polivuṭan (*Narsu's Coffee*)

4.3   paṭṭin pa:rambariyam (*Bharani Pattu Center*)

The above straplines hold alliterations **/a:/, /p/** and **/p/** respectively

b) Hindi Advertising straplines:

4.4   pehala pya:r, amul pya:r (*Amul*)

4.5   kacca: a:m ka: copy (*Kaccha mango bite*)

4.6   Crunch macca: munch macca: (*Munch)*

The alliterations are **/p/, /k/** and **/m/** respectively

c) English Advertising straplines:

4.7   Clean, Clear & Confident (*Clean & Clear*)

4.8   Refresh, Recharge, Restart (*Fresh*)

4.9   Toyota Today, Tomorrow, Toyota (*Toyota*)

4.10 Burger King Bigger, Better, Burger king! *(Burger King)*

The alliterations are **/k/ /r/ /t/** and **/b/** respectively

5. Amplification

It is used in the advertising straplines to increase rhetorical effect, to add importance, to make the most of a thought or circumstance, to add exaggeration or to change the arrangement of words or clauses in a sequence to increase force.

a) Tamil advertising straplines:

5.1   te:cattin a:rokkiyam te:cattin uppu (*Tata Salt*)

5.2   romba Tasty romba Crunchy (*Bindu Appalam*)

The amplification used in the above straplines are **te:cattin** and **rumba**

b) Hindi advertising straplines:

5.3   da:nt fit toh life fit (*Anchor white*)

The amplification used in the above straplines is **fit**

c) English advertising straplines:

5.4   Fits perfect, Feels perfect (*Signature*)

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5.5 <u>Nonstop</u> shoes for <u>Nonstop</u> kids (*Paragon*)

5.6 <u>Live</u> young – Live free (*Mahindra*)

5.7 <u>Double</u> your pleasure, <u>Double</u> your fun (*Wrigley's Doublemint*)

The amplification used in the above straplines are **Perfect, Nonstop, Live** and **Double** respectively

6. Assonance

Assonance is repetition of stressed vowel sounds within words with different end consonants. It is unlike rhyme in which initial consonants differ but both vowel and end consonant sounds are identical.

a) Tamil advertising straplines:

6.1 taṅkam va:ṅka taṅkamayilukku va:ṅka (*taṅkamayilu*)

6.2 ṉallatukku ma:rina:l atu nallatu (*Tata coffee*)

The assonance used in the above straplines are **/a/, /a:/** and **/a/** respectively

b) Hindi advertising straplines:

6.3 ṭeḍa he, par mera he (*Kurkure*)

6.4 pehala: pya:r amul pya:r (*Amul*)

6.5 asli treat is in the middle (*Britannia Treat*)

The assonance in the above straplines are **/e/, /a:/** and **/i/** respectively

c) English advertising straplines:

6.6 Impossible is nothing (*Adidas*)

6.7 Hello Tosh, Gotta Toshiba (*Toshiba*)

6.8 Power to move you (*Kawasaki*)

6.9 For those who do (*Lenovo*)

The assonance in the above straplines are **/i/, /o/, /u/** and **/u/** respectively.

7. Homophones

Homophones are words that sound the same or similarly but are spelled differently. This kind of play with words works best with advertisement. It is often used to create puns and to deceive the reader or to suggest multiple meanings.

7.1 It's better <u>no</u>? (*Yippee noodles*)

7.2 <u>Meat</u> and eat (*KFC*)

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7.3 Sainsbury's have discovered that the finest whisky is kept under <u>loch and quay</u> (*Sainsbury*)

The above straplines hold homophones, where, **no, meat** and **loch and quay** are the homophones which indicates 'know', 'meet', 'lock and key' respectively.

8. Graphological Aspect

The graphical aspect plays an inevitable role in advertisement. The simplest way to attract the audience in written text is done by using stylish fonts, enlarged and colourful fonts, and by using the rarely used letters. Divergent spellings are also used by the advertisers in their strapline or brand name. Any deviation from expected spelling usually attracts the attention of the audience.

8.1 One life <u>LuvIt</u> (*LuvIt*)

8.2 Finger <u>lickin</u> good (*KFC*)

8.3 Drive – <u>Thru</u> (*McDonalds*)

8.4 The ABC's of <u>BBQ</u> (*Bar B-Q Nation*)

8.5 Drive <u>@</u> earth (*Mitshubishi Motors*)

8.6 Go the _____distance (*Apollo Tyres*)

In the above straplines mentioned above, 'love it' is written as 'LuvIt' and the word 'licking' as 'lickin', through as Thru, Bar B-Q as BBQ, at as '@' and the lengthy line (_____) represents too long distance.

9. Findings and Conclusion

The study analysed straplines of advertisements at the phonological level. In the analysis of the straplines collected for the research, rhymes, alliterations, amplifications, assonance and homophones were identified. Out of the total sample of 150, 20 rhymes, 42 alliterations, 38 amplifications, 23 assonances, 3 homophones and 6 divergent spellings were identified. It was noted that alliteration and amplification occurred more frequently than other devices.

Everyday language is influenced by advertising straplines. The corpus of the analysed straplines is limited and were chosen randomly from the three languages; Tamil, Hindi and English. Therefore, results of the analysis are not generalised. However, the playfulness of language and the importance of straplines for developments of languages can be still confirmed.

Thus, language has a powerful influence over people and their behaviour. Straplines have a great impact on the consumers. It is the language that helps people to identify a product and remember it.

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