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Use of Literary Devices in Advertising

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ABSTRACT

Advertising for the longest time has been the prime source for one-way communication between potential customers and businesses. The task, however, is to establish the brand and the product in the minds of the end user. While it may sound easy, advertising can be a handful. This research paper explores a certain small but important aspect of an entirety that is advertising. It deals with the use of literary devices such as puns, rhetoric, dramatization, and personification, in advertising. It explores how it has been used and suggests how it can be further used.

Keywords: Puns, Advertising, Consumer, Literary Device.

1. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements, in a marketing sense, is a medium of communicating to the end user the particulars of a product in order to encourage him to buy the product. There are a lot of elements that go into an advertisement, ranging from product features, taglines to brand inclusions and visuals. While each element plays a role in capturing and holding the attention of the viewer, it is important to understand the impact of each on the final consumer. While it is hard to measure which element is the star of the show in most advertisements, it is often the language that attracts attention. The use of language also happens in varied methods, from narrations and dialogues to written statements in the advertisement, there is a huge scope. Use of language efficiently requires it to be used in such a manner that the receiver does not get distracted. One way to ensure this is by using literary devices such as puns in the advertisement. Literary devices, each in its own way, have a way to lure the regard of customers. Puns usually used in a humorous manner establish the brand in the minds of the end user by creating a mental image for un-relatable elements being related in a funny manner. Similarly, other literary devices ensure various goals through their usage. This research article aims to understand and explore the same.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Mc Quarrie & Mick, 1996) This research finds that rhetoric as a device for effective advertising integrates the efforts to reach goals such as making the advertisement memorable. Further, rhetoric functions as an accelerant for advertisement recall, liking as well as attention-grabbing and holding. While rhetoric drives attention towards the text centered advertising parts, understanding rhetoric, however, require reader-designer awareness which can be sometimes hard to achieve.

(Kadry, 2016) This paper finds that when visual metaphors are used in Advertisements, mainly in printed advertisements, potential consumers tend to understand the deeper meaning of advertisement and associate better with the product. Visual metaphors have the ability to bring together different categories and demonstrate the similarities in their characteristics. It is also a very familiar literary device to comprehend and hence makes it easy for consumers to appreciate the advertisement.

(Stern, 1988) the research paper explores the use of language by the way of poetic explication to understand how advertising works in the service industry. the research paper explores the various poetic devices that can be used in advertising and gives further directions for optimum usage of the literary devices available. The paper talks about how advertising is most effective when dramatics is included to introduce the product.

(Hoang, 2013) This research article is based on the consumer decision process and how humor has an effect on this purchasing decision. It relates specifically to the Vietnamese market. The research goes on to show that there are various kinds of humor in social media advertising i.e. comparison, pun, sarcasm, exaggeration, and personification. Both primary and secondary data were used for the study. An empirical research was done and information was collected through interviews and recorded observation.

The research found that humor such as personification, surprise, silliness, and exaggeration was found to have the most influence on purchase decisions and was also found to be entertaining. The impact of humor also seemed to have been affected by the brand loyalty of a consumer with a product. When humor was attached to a product, it increased the recalling power of consumers.

(Margot van Mulken, 2004)The research article looks at how slogans with or without puns make a difference to consumers and which out of the two is more appreciated. It looks at how a humorous device can lead potential consumers into buying a particular product. The research was conducted with the help of 68 participants and 24 slogans were used to see which one attracted the participants the most. It was found that participants found slogans with a pun more attractive and favorable as compared to a slogan without a pun. This goes on to show how using puns is a more effective way of attracting people to your product.

(Yi-bo)The research paper looks at how puns have become increasingly popular as a means of advertising in recent times. The paper identified various types of puns such as homophonic pun, semantic pun, grammatical pun and idiomatic pun. Using puns in advertisements proves to be beneficial as it creates ambiguity and hooks the people to the product. Basing on relevance theory, the article shows how using puns creates interest among consumers. It also helps make advertisements short as everything is circumscribed into one sentence.

(Djafarova, 2008) This article discusses the role of puns in marketing and how each pun is inferred differently by different people backed by their background and inferential knowledge. This article tries to show important issues that lie within advertising communication in the form of texts. Therefore, it can be interpreted within the concept. It's important to not use easily misunderstood puns in order to avoid conflict by not hurting the interests of the people at large.

(Leigh, 1994)There was an experiment conducted to look into how common figures of speech were used in ad headlines. A figure of speech is basically a use of words in different ways. Results from the experiment had concluded that figures of speech like alliteration, puns and resonance were more widely used than others and various factors were found to be related to the use of figures of speech.

3. METHODS

This research primarily looks at establishing a link between puns and advertising. For this very purpose: the research uses secondary data to gain a better understanding on the topic. The secondary data already exists and the same were reviewed to gather information on the topic. The articles which were reviewed were taken from a broad spectrum of years which gives an understanding about the use of literary devices has evolved over the years. Reviewing articles from different years gave more depth to the research.

4. RESULTS

Qualitative data was collected for the research. Usage of literary devices has become increasingly popular in the recent times. The study revealed that using literary devices in advertisements has a positive effect as they become more lucrative and capture the attention of the viewer. Slogans which had literary devices in them were found to be more attractive as compared to those without the use of any literary devices. The research highlighted the fact that using literary devices such as puns or rhetoric in advertisements had a positive effect on the sales of the product and also instilled the brand name in the minds of the consumer.

5. DISCUSSION

Literary devices have various interpretations based on the culture of the viewer. Although, in most cases, puns prove advantageous when used in advertising, they sometimes can have a downside if not taken in the right sense by the viewer. It is not necessary that these literary devices are taken in the right light by the viewer. Perceptions on such advertisements are always bound to vary and hence can cause trouble for the concerned company. Even though literary devices have become increasingly popular, it is not necessary that all kinds of advertisements should make use of the same. Sometimes, using simple language can have more effect on the viewers than using puns or any other literary device. It is important to understand that every advertisement is not the same and they need to be carefully curated according to the product and the target customer. Sometimes literary devices can have two meanings in a sentence instead of one and so, it becomes imperative to carefully choose a literary device. On the other hand, literary devices help in easy comprehension of the advertisement and allows consumers to associate better with the product. Using visual metaphors creates a greater impact on the minds of the consumers as they tend to remember the product better in such cases.

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