

# Precedent Texts and Statements in Advertising for Children<sup>1</sup>

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## **Abstract**

The article is dedicated to the advertising texts for children and teenagers and precedent texts in it. In spite of the growth of precedence in advertising discourse it doesn't refer to advertising for children. The authors of advertising texts aimed at children and teenagers do not often appeal to precedent, which can be explained by the age features of advertising for children addressee. As it is known, the advertising text will have an impact if it is well understood by the majority of recipients, and children, due to their age don't have a number of texts meaningful to them. Thus, one cannot be sure that they recognize the text and understand it right and one needs to be careful appealing to the precedence in advertising. Nevertheless, we should point that advertising for children uses precedent as an expressive means carefully. Precedent starts working only in case of being well-known. So such examples as citations from popular films and cartoons, children's stated speech formulas, some speech "clichés" are found in advertising.

**Keywords:** Advertising; Precedent Texts; Citations, Speech "Clichés".

## **1. Introduction**

Copywriters possess different means to make advertising text vivid, attractive, memorable and effective. Using precedent texts in advertising discourse is one of such means.

Speaking about advertising in general one can note the scale of precedence. These are various citations (from fiction, songs, films, famous persons' speech), aphorisms, proverbs and sayings, fiction works names, films, cartoons, historical persons' names, characters, speech clichés.

In spite of the growth of precedence in advertising discourse it doesn't refer to advertising for children (Murzinova et al, 2018).

The authors of advertising texts aimed at children and teenagers do not often appeal to precedent, which can be explained by the age features of advertising for children addressee. As it is known, the advertising text will have an impact if it is well

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understood by the majority of recipients, and children, due to their age don't have a number of texts meaningful to them. Thus, one cannot be sure that they recognize the text and understand it right and one needs to be careful appealing to the precedence in advertising (Nailevna & Huiqin, 2017; Bahrami, 2018).

## **2. Materials and Methods**

Advertising texts for children and adolescents, selected on several principles: products for children children's products, especially food products (chocolate, chips, candy, soda water), and clothing, gadgets, sport goods.

The following General scientific methods were used: analysis, comparison, generalization, observation, methods of classification and systematization, linguistic methods: direct linguistic observation, component and contextual analysis.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

It should be noted that the term "precedent" earlier was used only in law to refer to recurring events. In linguistics this term was introduced by Karaulov (1987). According to Karaulov precedent texts are those which "are meaningful for this or that person in cognitive and emotional attitudes having extrapersonal character that is well-known to the surrounding of that person, including its' ancestors and contemporaries and at last those appeal to which is repeated more than once in that language person discourse" (Karaulov, 1986). Zemskaya (1996) defines precedent texts particularly in advertising discourse as follows: "precedent texts are those included in the text both in an invariable form, for example – citation, and in the transformed, changed – quasi-citation as they are well known to a wide range of persons and frequent in different texts" (Zemskaya, 1996). Researchers observed large expressive potential precedent in advertising. Amiri (2007) believes that the precedent texts provide an opportunity to "stimulate the attention of consumers. This is achieved by creating a certain "intrigue" in the advertising text, forcing the recipient to think about advertising". Russian language reality always assumes the presence of special techniques for successful communication (Kolosova, 2016; Kapralova et al., 2018; Yapparova et al., 2018; Sadykova et al., 2015), here we can also include a precedent.

The presence of precedent is widely spread in modern publicist and feature texts and advertising during the last decades has been taking this quality. Including the precedent texts into advertising makes communicative situation dynamic, performs the entertaining function, helps to potential client better memorize the advertising content and convince him to use this firm's services or buy the suggested product.

Let's consider some examples of including precedent texts in the structure of advertising texts for children.

Citations from popular films and cartoons are widely used: “*Winx. Only together we are strong!*” (dolls advertisement includes a well-known motto of the characters from animated cartoon serial (Winx fairies)); “*Star Wars and clone wars. Clones against droids*”; “*There’ll be just one winner!*”, “*May the power be with you!*” (an advertising of a game on the motif of a well-known film saga «Star Wars» uses not only film titles as precedent, but includes well-known phrases of the characters (“May the power be with you!”). Including such preceding texts creates in a child’s conscious a feeling of involvement in the film events, makes him/her a “hero” of “Star Wars”, thus fulfilling a film fan’s dream). The same motto is chosen as a basis in the other advertising motto in a modified version: “*Let the Cheetos be with you!*”

It is notable that advertising cites only the characters of modern films and cartoons, ignoring, for instance, soviet ones. Perhaps, it can be explained by modern tendencies among the youth. Children are familiar enough with old cartoons characters (which they get to know in their early childhood) but modern superheroes are more preferable and respected to them, so in the advertising they appeal more to their speech.

Appealing to the precedent texts like phraseological expressions, aphorisms, proverbs and sayings in advertising for children is not so popular, which, perhaps, might be explained by the fact that, an advertiser cannot be sure that, the wordstock that a child possesses includes the phrase used and thus the text would be understood correctly. Karaulov fairly supposes that precedent texts are obligatory “well-known to the wide surrounding of this person, including its’ ancestors and modern, and, at last, such ones the appeal to which appear more than once in the discourse of that language person” (Karaulov, 1987). More than that, in case of non-precedence of the text, if it is not well-known, “the minus-effect of communication takes place” (Zemskaya, 1996). Here we can face the examples as following:

“*Compashki. Zamori chervyachka*”. (“*zamorit’ chervyachka*” - to snack)

“*Would you eat an elephant? Eat Snickers super! The biggest one in history!*” (“*to be about eating an elephant*” - to be hungry).

Quite often precedent phrases are changed according to the aims of advertising of a concrete product: “*Fruktime. For taste an color – one answer*” (the version of saying “*Nu vkus I tsvet tovarishcey net*”); “*Moskovskiy kartofel. Golod ne tyotka, golod – dyad’ka*” (responding to the child word-forming, the saying “*golod ne tyotka*” acquires quite logical for children continuation “*raz ne tyoutka, znachit, dyad’ka*”). A successful play with precedent utterance has a working advertising effect – immediately attracts attention and is memorized).

The most frequently used precedent utterances in the content of advertising for children are stated speech formulas. Speech play usage often serves as a source of reminiscence for advertising texts for children. Children, especially the kids, spend much time in game. Loud and funny group games (hide and seek, catch-up) have a set

number of various sayings, rhymes which are used by children in their original form. The use of such play speech “clichés” is justified, as they are understandable for a kid and for a teenager.

“*Nuts strawberry. Zakroy glazki, otkroy rotik*” (compare with children joke “*Zakroy glaza, otkroy rot*”).

“*One, two, three, four, five. Kinder we are coming!*” (sentence from a children hide and seek game).

“*Katilsya apelsin... Juice Tropikana*” (beginning of children’s counting “*Katilsya apelsin po gorodu Berlin...*”).

“*Apokalypsis is not a chickenpox – it happens twice. Computer game*”. (popular worldly wisdom “chickenpox doesn’t happen twice”).

“*Antilopa. Dazhe youzhikam ponyatno*”. (In the advertisement of children’s boots the phrase “*i yezhu ponyatno*” is transformed, according to the target audience “*i yozhikam ponyatno*”).

The **fairy tales’ motives** are actively used in the advertising for children. The fairy tale is close to the children's worldview, and the appeal to the fairy tale, magic, miracles in advertising not only appeals to the life experience, the child’s knowledge, but also gives a sense of fulfillment of the dream.

“*Fruttis. Milk rivers, fruit shores*” (compare: fairy “milk rivers, jelly shores”).

“*Koschey, come down! – I’m afraid, won’t be able to gather my bones! – Then you should have eaten Rastishku, like me!*” (A well-known character Koschey Bessmertnyi and saying “to gather bones” are well united in meaning, corresponding to the main quality of an advertised product – high calcium content “for strong bones”).

“*Svet moy zerkal’tse skazhi... Children’s cosmetic Princess*” (fairy appeal to the mirror “*Svet moy zerkal’tse skazhi!*” requires no continuation in the advertising slogan, children know well that they turn to the mirror for an answer to the question “*Ya l’ na svete vseh milee?*”, which corresponds to the cosmetics advertising).

A large number of fairy-tale beginnings, sentences, sayings as precedent statements are sometimes combined into an occasional fairy tale that meets the traditions of Russian folk tales with typical characters and a characteristic manner of performance:

“*Zhila-bylya semya. I byla u nih dochka - Alyonka. Zaletel k nim drakon. Uma malo, golov mnogo, da vse ne v ladu – sebe na bedu. Dali yemu vody. Odna bashka p’yot, drugaya ne dayout, tret’ya s dosady v koryto pluyot. Prinesli, znachit, gostu, sushu, tot zhe sam sebya ne skushal. Alenka: «Hvatit orat’ da drat’sya, pora ugoschat’sya! » Oi, chudovische razrydalosya, samo s soboi pobratalosya, da i*

*uletelo na Goa. Eh, c Alyonkoi vse sladko da gladko!*” (chocolate «Alyonka» advertisement).

The text possesses all the features of folk tale with some transformation: the beginning *zhili-byli* transformed into *zhila-byla sem'ya*, colloquial speech (*razrydalosy, pobratalosya*, declining “sushu” instead of indeclinable “sushi”), typical fairy character – three-headed *zmey Gorynych* – is transformed into modern Oriental dragon, rhymed presentation. That is why the effect of unexpectedness is created by modern reality: sushi, Goa.

Speaking about citation it should be noted that sometimes advertising citrates itself. The M&M's brand, in order to stay recognizable, goes on with the number of popular slogans, such as “*M&M's. Milk chocolate. Melts in mouth, but not in your hands*”, “*M&M's. Melts in mouth, but not in the heat*” (the transformation of a slogan for summer time).

At the same time the citation of advertising happens not only in advertising discourse, but the slogans sometimes become specific aphorisms, which are widely used in speech. Children are active users of “advertising language”. The following slogans became popular:

*“Everyone likes Mamba. Serezha as well!”*

*“Dirol Kids. Now banana!”*

*“Juicy Fruit. Completebananas!”*

*“Nuts. Zaryazhay mozgi”.*

*“Stimorol. Sometimes it is better to chew, than to speak”.*

*“Twix. Sweet couple”.* The nature of this aphorism is expressed even in lexicography. “Sweet couple”. From television advertising video of chocolate bars “Twix” which has been demonstrated in Russia since 1993. One box contains two equal bars – “sweet couple”. Allegorically: about two lovers; inseparable people; two partners, whose partnership or its' results call irony (jokingly ironic)” (Serov, 2003).

#### 4. Summary

To sum it up, we'll point that appearing in the advertising text of any above mentioned kinds of precedents performs several important for the advertising functions simultaneously: attracts and holds involuntary attention, causes interest, evoke specific emotions, promotes the inclusion of the memorization mechanism.

Precedents cause no doubt and are easily recognized. More than that, with the help of precedent units the minimization of presented material becomes possible.

Nevertheless, we should point that advertising for children uses precedent as an expressive means carefully. Advertising for children as a precedent often uses

fairy-tale motifs, citation of modern movies and cartoons. That is all that a child of a certain age should be familiar with. Citation of works of art and Soviet songs and films, frequent in advertising for a wider audience, as well as aphorisms, in children's advertising are practically not found.

## 5. Conclusions

Precedent starts working only in case of being well-known. Therefore, the creators of the ads relate to the precedent texts with care. Only the audience familiar with the original can understand all the semantic content of the advertising text and comprehend its' meaning in a right way. Children due to their age don't have developed vocabulary, don't possess the whole language picture of the world, and probably can't recognize precedent unit, unknown text will not make an implied influence and the advertisement will not achieve its' aim.

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