Communicative Strategy of Attracting Attention in Advertising Discourse in Russian and Spanish Languages

Liliia Gumarovna Gazizova¹, Liliya Gaffarovna Dunyasheva², & Jose Joaquin Olivares Burgos³

¹Corresponding author, Department of Romano-Germanic Philology, Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication, KFU; liliksu@mail.ru
²Department of Romano-Germanic Philology, Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication, KFU
³Senior Lecturer, Department of Romance Philology, Russian State Pedagogical University A.I. Herzen; Assistant, Institute of Foreign Languages, St. Petersburg State University; karisyos@hotmail.com

Abstract

International language research in advertising emphasizes the importance of product-language matching. Advertisements with a match are more efficient; however, their effectiveness has not been compared with that of advertisements in the native language of consumers, which are not limited to matched goods but are used for a variety of products. The study intends to provide a summary of the speech techniques utilized to effectuate the communicative strategy of attracting attention in advertising discourse. The study material comprises 200 Spanish and 200 Russian advertising texts. The linguo-pragmatic investigation of the selected books revealed that for the purpose of implementing the communicative strategy of attracting attention, the advertising discourse of Spain and Russia employs speech procedures at different levels of the language. A comparative analysis of speech techniques demonstrates both the difference in the language structure and the distinction of the analyzed linguistic cultures. Eventually, it can be concluded that the particular measure for drawing attention, both in Spanish and in Russian texts, is to make use of foreign borrowings.

Keywords: Advertising Discourse; Attracting Attention; Communicative Strategy; Linguistic Culture; Media Discourse; Russian.

1. Introduction

Discourse has been described as frameworks and practices that through specific collections of words represent human thinking and social realities and that simultaneously create meaning in the world. A research approach for deconstructing discourses and fixed power relationships is proposed by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). In terms of coherent sequences of sentences, propositions, expression, or turns-at-talk, the objects of discourse analysis (discourse, writing, interaction, communicative event) are variously described. Unlike other conventional linguistics, discourse researchers not only use 'beyond the sentence boundary' to research language, but also tend to examine 'normal' use of language, not invented examples. From an epistemological point of view, the various possibilities of understanding and interpreting the universe are believed. We may also know about the world via mass media, mass communication is a form of communication between humans, how humans talk to each other through verbal and non-verbal means, but which involves messages that are ultimately distributed to a large number of people via a network (channel). From the outset, it is helpful to clarify what constitutes mass media in current communication studies for a clear point of view on the problems relating to mass media effects. In order to define a certain dimension of media expression, such as variation and style, or to inform related discourse level work, such as genre and register, researchers also rely on sociolinguistic insights. Non-linguistic analysis covers work in the paradigms of political science, media studies, or communication studies and to some extent, cultural studies. Although non-linguistic research is outside the reach of this chapter, it is important to note that media discourse researchers can refer to work in non-linguistic domains more than in any other topical field of discourse analysis. In linguistic studies of recent years, the term "media discourse", which involves any form of communication, either oral or written, targeted at an audience which is often not present at the time of broadcasting, is
becoming increasingly popular (Becerra, Biasini, Magedera-Hofhansl, & Reimão, 2019; Hellmich, 2019; Kibrik, 2003; O’keeffe, 2011). In this regard, advertising discourse can be referred to as media discourse. Advertising texts reflect the mentality, value-based orientations, and attitudes, lifestyle standards, cultural stereotypes of a certain linguistic culture, thus having a significant impact on the development of the language (Dunyasheva, Noskova, & Gazizova, 2016; Yakubova, 2016).

Scholars are paying close attention to professional communication at present. In oral intercultural business debate, communication concerns are related to discrepancies between and within cultures as well as the use of language by non-native speakers. There are difficulties in communicative and sociocultural incompetence that have to do with the insightful and social roles of the discourse of intercultural business as well as its national and cultural specificity. The present study is aimed to provide a systematic description of the speech techniques used to implement the communicative strategy of attracting attention in the advertising discourse of Spain and Russia (Enke & Borchers, 2019).

An advertising that uses French as a foreign language for perfume is an example of an advertisement that has a coherent relationship between the product and the language used. If Russian is used as a foreign language in the same commercial, the association between the foreign language and the commodity is incongruous since Russia is not generally associated with perfume. There are quite a few studies on the efficacy of the relationship between the marketed product and the foreign language used, congruent vs. incongruent. The general inference these studies draw is that congruent ads are more productive than those that are incongruent with the language or country and the product. However, despite the frequent use of advertisements in foreign languages other than English, most of the advertising in one country is in the native language of the user. Of course, these ads are often incongruent with the item they advertise, especially if the item is of foreign origin. In fact, few studies have compared advertisements using foreign languages other than English) to advertisements in the native language of consumers to see if the use of foreign languages is actually more productive than the use of the native language of consumers in advertising. We equate the two kinds of advertising in the present analysis (Nederstigt & Hilberink-Schulpen, 2018). To a lesser degree, the usage of other foreign languages such as French, German, or Spanish, is a matter of standardization (this is possibly why they are used less often because languages other than English are usually used to invoke associations that go hand in hand with the language or country in which they are spoken.

More and more marketing efforts that cross-cultural borders are created by the creation of a global economy. Sometimes these limits are a function of nationality; other times, in a broader sense, they are defined by culture. In either case, in their attempts to connect with individuals of different cultural backgrounds, marketers and advertisers are becoming increasingly aware of the need to be culturally conscious. Effective communication relies, to a large degree, on the comprehension of culture's dynamics. Acculturation thus explains the modifications to the standards of the other cultural group in the attitudes, beliefs and actions of the members of one cultural group. Online advertising has taken new forms in recent days, gaining more advantages over conventional media such as print, television and radio. Communication in marketing is becoming accurate, intimate, interesting, interactive and social. On various social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Orkut, various communication strategies are followed. They not only have an effect on the viewer, but also make them engage with the developed marketing statistics. In social networking sites, individuals are attached to brand contact than normal banners and pop-up advertising. These networking sites offer more immersive advertisement contact. For highly targeted content and advertisement, social networking platforms will become the primary arena. The study of communicative strategies used in advertisements has become a relevant topic of modern linguistic expertise (A Chupryakova, A Votyakova, & S Safonova, 2019; Radikovna Sakaeva, Aidarovich Yahin, Vladimirovna Kuznetsova, & Venera Latipovna, 2019). The reason is that advertising discourse, characterized by a high persuasive potential, is one of the most effective tools of modern mass culture. An abiding interest in the problems of interaction of language and culture has determined the linguistic and cultural approach to the research.

Post-structuralism is the literary and philosophical work within structuralism, the intellectual project that preceded it that both builds on and rejects concepts. While post-structuralists all present numerous criticisms of structuralism, the rejection of the self-sufficiency of structuralism, as well as an interrogation of the binary opposition that constitutes its structures, are common themes among them. Therefore, within pre-established, socially-constructed systems, post-structuralism discards the concept of reading media (or the world). By means of a system modeled on language, structuralism implies that one can grasp human culture. This understanding varies from concrete reality and
from abstract theories, instead of mediating between the two as a "third order" Building on structuralist conceptions of reality mediated by the interrelation between signs, a post-structuralist critique might imply that one must (falsey) presume that the meanings of these signs are both true and fixed in order to construct meaning from such an understanding, and that the author using structuralist theory is somehow above and apart from these constructs they are represented. A common goal of post-structuralist thought is the rigidity, propensity to categorize, and titimation of universal truths contained in structuralist thinking. Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge that socially situates human development and creates knowledge through contact with others. Social constructivism's key argument is that a sociological study of science and scientific understanding is fruitful and exposes science's social existence. Social forces, fundamentally contingent and independent of objective methods, and analyzable in terms of causal processes of belief forming, are seen to decide the creation of scientific knowledge. There are three main constructivist social approaches. The Edinburgh School of the Sociology of Science maintains that social influences influence not only the creation but also the substance of scientific theories. The key concept of the theory of the actor-network is that scientific information is an effect of existing relationships involved in scientific activities between objects, animals and humans. Social constructivism is an explicit social ontology program that seeks to explain how social constructs such as social groups and organizations are built. According to the theories of post-structuralism and social constructivism, discourse presents a network of social topics, voices, presuppositions and actions (Gritsenko & Dunyasheva, 2013). It constructs a vision of the world captured in texts (Litosseliti, 2014), and therefore it is always recognizable, contextually determined, and is a product of the historical development of a certain linguistic culture (Berninger & O’Malley May, 2011).

One of the main goals of media discourse is influence, both verbal and psychological. In today's information warfare climate, the media's skewed influence has increased, moving behind other positions, including the insightful one. The modes of media control have also changed: tacit coercion, which evolves into overt violence, has replaced direct persuasion. Since aggression in the media discourse may be both verbal and non-verbal, we suggest using the term aggression of knowledge (or media), which is wider than verbal aggression. Media violence - in relation to the referent (affective aggression) and in relation to the viewer - can be seen as a binary mechanism (cognitive aggression). As a consequence, the media violence data refers to the expression of open hostility and hatred towards the referent and a major effect on the recipient's perception (the target audience) of its ideological subordination. When creating a text of an advertising message, it is important not only to use the persuasive potential of the discursive resources of the language properly but also to apply a certain strategy of action, considering the needs it will meet and the audience it will be addressed to (Hudson, 2002).

Taking into account the specificity of the study material, when covering the issue of implementation of the strategy of attracting attention, we consider it possible to view the concepts of communicative and speech strategies as synonymous, by which we mean a complex of speech acts aimed at achieving a certain communicative goal.

1.1. Research Objective

The research aims to summarize the speech strategies used to execute the communicative technique of gaining interest in advertisement discourse.

2. Methodology

Carried out within the framework of the post-structuralist anthropocentric paradigm, the study is based on an understanding of language as a social practice (Alberro, 2020; Hoppe, 2020).

The general method of study of the strategy of attracting attention in the advertising discourse of Spanish and Russian linguistic cultures is the inductive method. In the stage of gathering and interpreting information, the semantic and stylistic interpretation, discourse analysis, and linguo-pragmatic methods were used (Kozlova, 2020; Marsovna Gritsenko & Dunyasheva, 2013). While identifying the similarities and differences in Spanish and Russian advertising discourse, the descriptive and the comparative methods were employed.

The selection of the discursive practices was based on the presence of techniques and tactics of the strategy of attracting attention.

The methodological basis of the work is formed by the concept of communicative strategies, the linguacultural concept, and the ideas of critical discourse analysis (Bloor & Bloor, 2013; Lin, 2011; Odegova & Zabulionite, 2014; Rogers et al., 2016; Sweetser & Kelleher, 2016; Van Leeuwen, 2008; Vasilyeva & Sinagatullin, 2018).

3. Results and Discussions

In advertising, attention is attracted both voluntarily and involuntarily (Postnova, 2001). The strategy of attracting attention in advertising discourse aims to create an advertisement that could influence the viewer, catch their eye, and make them focus on the message. The advertising message mechanism is based on the process of turning involuntary attention into voluntary (Lebedev, 2003).

Linguistic and pragmatic analysis of the texts of television advertising discourse in Spain and Russia revealed a number of genre-specific techniques for the rhetorical-persuasive strategy of gripping involuntary attention (Aleshinskaya, 2019; Candace, Sheldon, & Horowitz, 2014) with its subsequent transference into voluntary attention at different language levels:

3.1. Phonetic level

Among the main methods of implementing the strategy of attracting attention, we should highlight onomatopoeia as one of the most effective methods. An analysis of Spanish advertising of insurance services "Directseguros" reveals a phonetic imitation of the car engine and the horn signal, as well as the rhyme: "Ran, ran, ran. El ahorrar es un placer // En el auto de Raquel. // En comprar me gastaré // lo que ahorro con Direct. <...> ¿Vamos de paseo? // Si? Si? // No, que sois muy feos. Pi, pi, pi" (Ran, ran, ran. Saving is a pleasure // In Raquel's car // For the purchase, I will spend // what I save with Direct. <...> Let's go for a walk? Yes? Yes? Yes! // No, because you are ugly. Pi, pi, pi - Hereinafter, the translation is ours. – L.G., et.al.) (https://www.antena3.com).

Advertising texts often contain rhymes which also help to attract attention. Thus, in a Russian advertisement of chupa chups the rhyme is accompanied by music: «Когда мы вместе, полный экстрим. // Мы ищем ФАН – он необходим. // Chupa Chups XXL Trio экстра большой. // Пора оторваться, показать, кто крутой. // Chupa Chups XXL Trio с тобой!» (When we are together, it’s complete extreme. // We are looking for FUN - it is necessary. // Chupa Chups XXL Trio Extra Large. // It's time to go nuts, show who is cool. // Chupa Chups XXL Trio with you!) (https://ctc.ru/)

When analyzing examples of the implementation of the strategy of attracting attention in the Russian advertising discourse, the usage of homographs was revealed: «Нам всем любые дороги дорого» (We all cherish any roads) (https://russia.tv/). This advertising text refers us to the song of friends from the cartoon 'Bremen Town Musicians", which represents a precedent text.

3.2. Morphological level

At the morphological level, the strategy of attracting attention to an advertising message is implemented mainly through personal pronouns in the function of appellatives. The Spanish linguist M.A. Aijón found out that the informal address form (tú) is more up-to-date than the polite address form (usted), the latter emphasizing professionalism, quality, and commitment to tradition. The analysis of address forms in Spanish advertising texts showed 65.5% of cases of informal treatment and 3% of formal address form (the pronoun "usted") when advertising financial and insurance services and medical products (Oliva, 2009).

In Russian advertising discourse, the most frequently applied pronoun is «мы» (we), found in 9% of advertising texts. This pronoun allows the addressee to identify themselves with the team, a close-knit community: «Мы ждем Вас, как фотограф яркого момента... Мы ждем Вас, как писатель вдохновения» (We are waiting for you just as a photographer is waiting for a bright moment... We are waiting for you just as a writer is waiting for inspiration) (https://www.1tv.ru/). The first-person plural pronoun emphasizes the collective integrity inherent in Russian linguistic culture.
The corresponding pronoun in the Spanish-language selection was found in 6.5% of advertising texts. The famous scientist Américo Castro noted that the Spaniards are characterized by the opposition "we" - "they", which is explained by the centuries-old confrontation between the Catholics and other nations which lived on the same territory, such as the Muslims, the Jews, the Protestants, the Lutherans (Castro, 1965). Moreover, as Miguel García-Yeste points out referring to the scientific work of Guillén-Nieto, "people in Spain are likely to identify themselves as members of small groups, such as a company or a family, which is reflected, for example, in their preference of plural" (García-Yeste, 2013).

Another tactic for attracting attention is the intentional violation of grammatical norms, which helps to draw attention to the main points. Thus, in the Spanish advertisement of Azucarera, there is a case of ungrammatical forming of the superlative degree when the suffix "-ísimo" is used along with the particle "más": “más riquísimas magdalenas” (the most delicious cupcakes) (https://www.telecinco.es/).

Numerals and lexical units containing numeral sesmes in advertising discourse are also used as a means of attracting attention: «В 50 выглядеть на 35?!» (Look 35 at 50?) (https://russia.tv/), etc. The Spanish advertisement of puff paste "Hojaldre La Cocinera” claims that there are 196 layers in the paste (https://www.telecinco.es/). In the Russian-language selection of advertising, the percentage of numerals used was 4.5%, and in the Spanish one, 19%.

3.3. Syntactic level

Based on the analysis of Russian and Spanish advertising discourse, the communicative strategy of attracting attention is expressed in the form of syntactic anaphora and epiphora, parallel syntactic constructions and interrogative sentences: “Amamos el aceite de oliva, el jamón y las bombillas de colores. Amamos la amistad, la pasión y soñar a mediar tarde” (We love olive oil, ham and coloured light bulbs. We love friendship, passion and dreaming in the afternoon) (https://www.telecinco.es/). In the example of Russian advertising of sweets (“Вы самая нежная! Вы самая любимая! Ты самая красивая! Raffaello поздравляет Вас с восьмым марта!” – You are the most tender! You are the most beloved! You are the most beautiful! Raffaello congratulates you on March, 8) we see an example of parallel syntactic constructions and anaphora. The use of the "you" pronoun makes the way of communicative strategy smoother. The target recipient will associate herself with the protagonist of the advertising.

Interrogative sentences also hold the potential in the framework of the strategy of attracting attention. Questions force the recipient to turn to their inner feelings («А ты бываешь нежным?» – Can you be gentle?, “¿Te da miedo el Arroz?” – Are you afraid of rice?) or engage the recipient in a cognitive conversation and refer to specific needs (“¿A qué no os atreéis con eso?” – Why don't you try it?, “¿Tu Pelo dañado, teñido no resiste más?” – Your damaged, dyed hair can't take it anymore?).

3.4. Lexical level

The lexical level shows the great use of lexical units with the semantics of something new. 17% of Spanish advertising texts under study demonstrate this tendency: "¿Quieres saber por qué el nuevo detergente Disiclin" (Do you want to know why it is the new Disiclin detergent?), "La mayor innovación de Evax de todos Los Tiempos" (The greatest Evax innovation of all time) (https://www.telecinco.es/). Such lexical units make it possible to launch the strategy of attracting attention and to capture the involuntary attention of the recipient. In the Russian-language sample, this technique was encountered in 6.5% of cases: «Новый Fairy до двух раз гуще» (New Fairy up to two times thicker) (https://ctc.ru/), "Впервые "Черный жемчуг" №1 от марчи" (For the first time "Black Pearl" No.1 for wrinkles) (https://www.1tv.ru/), etc.

Unusual lexical collocations can also help to attract attention (Kayumova et al., 2019). For example, “кофейные кристаллы” (coffee crystals), “кофе молотый в растворимом” (ground coffee instant). Foreign-language vocabulary (33.5% of Russian-language advertising) also serves the purpose of attracting the recipient's attention. Most of the foreign words form part of car advertising, which is a quite logical and international sign of quality. For instance, in a Zwei Meister, beer advertising the foreign words are written on the screen ("Pudelmacher. Vogelwaffen. Lastenkryaken" (https://ctc.ru/)), which can capture the recipient's attention.

In Spanish advertising, lexical borrowings (28.5%) are present in the brand names or in the advertising text itself: "Pon BB en Tu Vida y te cambiará la Cara. Garnier" (Put B.B. in your life, and it will change your face. Garnier)
3.5. Stylistic level

The strategy of attracting attention is verbalized in the advertising text through various stylistic techniques, i.e. rhetorical figures. In 9% of cases of Russian advertising we found poetic texts: «Мороз и солнце; день чудесный!» (https://ctc.ru/) (Pushkin’s poem), «С чего начинается отдых?» (https://www.1tv.ru/) (allusion to the poem by Matusovskiy), etc.

The communicative strategy of attracting attention is often verbalized using precedent names and texts (16% of Spanish ads and 9% of Russian ads). For example, in the advertising of Verti insurance company there is a reference to the "Snow White" fairy tale: "Espejito, Espejo, ¿quién es del Reino la más Hermosa?" – preguntó la Reina. "Pues, no sé, mi señora, pero guapa, guapa la promoción de Verti", – respondió el Espejo” ("Mirror, mirror, who is the most beautiful in the kingdom?", - asked the Queen. "Well, I don't know, my lady, but pretty, pretty is the promotion of Verti", - replied the mirror) (https://www.antena3.com/).

4. Summary and Conclusion

The verbalization of attracting attention in advertising texts is nearly accomplished through lexical units with something new's semantic meaning. It is notable that in the Russian-language advertising discourse, the number of words with the semantics of novelty is only 6.5% compared to 38% in the Spanish-language texts. This may indicate a higher tendency to conservatism in Russian linguistic culture and a different perception of time in Spanish-speaking cultures (Yakubova, Pleuchova, & Muñoz, 2016). The particular tactic for attracting attention, both in Spanish and in Russian texts, is foreign borrowings. There were 33.5% of cases of foreign-language lexical units in the Russian advertising discourse and 28.5% in the Spanish one. For both linguistic cultures, foreign words in advertising discourse are correlated either with a sign of product quality or with a younger age group targeting. Foreign borrowing is a marker of prestige.

The discourse of advertising, being a network of social topics, presuppositions, and actions, has a high persuasive potential due to the use of a communicative strategy of attracting and maintaining attention. Linguistic and pragmatic analysis of discursive practices showed that the verbalization of the communicative strategy of attracting attention in the advertising discourse of Spanish and Russian cultures is carried out at different language levels: phonetic (onomatopoeia, rhymes, homonyms), morphological (personal pronouns in the function of appellatives, violation of grammatical norms, the abundance of numerals), syntactic (anaphora, epiphora, parallel constructions, questions), lexical (units with the semantics of novelty, unusual lexical collocations, foreign borrowings) and stylistic (precedent texts, rhetoric figures). The comparative analysis of the application of this tactic in advertising texts revealed the difference between the analyzed linguistic cultures in terms of the manner of presentation and perception of culturally specific suggestive techniques.

4.1. Contribution

The linguistic-pragmatic study of the selected books showed that the advertising discourse of Spain and Russia utilizes speech processes at various levels of the language in order to enforce the communicative strategy of attracting attention. For both linguistic communities, foreign words are associated with either a symbol of product quality or targeting a younger age demographic in advertisement discourse. A marker of prestige is international borrowing.

Acknowledgments

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.
References


