Global Social Sciences Review (GSSR)
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-II).38

Exercising Metaphoric Impact on Advertisements: An Ecolinguistic Appraisal

Muhammad Farooq Alam [*] Zafar Ullah [†]

Abstract *Metaphors may produce desired sensations because of figurative metaphoric connections, and they can speed up the processing of complicated or abstract material. As a result, a growing body of advertising research has focused on this topic in recent decades. This study provides a review of metaphoric research in the marketing literature, explains why metaphoric advertising is important for achieving key advertising objectives and points out critical research gaps in the existing literature. Marketers often use metaphors in their persuasive discussions with customers, and they suggest that a product, brand, service, or company propagate a distinct concept. Marketers accomplish a variety of goals, including gaining customers' attention, engraving imagery, highlighting comparisons, suggesting a bond between an idea and product, explaining a complicated or technical product, and affecting the opinions and thoughts of consumers. Advertisers would benefit from understanding how people process metaphors, if consumers understand metaphors employed in marketing.*

- DOI: 10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-I).38
- Vol. VI, No. II (Spring 2021)
- Pages: 384 – 391
- p- ISSN: 2520-0348
- e-ISSN: 2616-793X
- ISSN-L: 2520-0348

Key Words: Ecolinguistics, Advertisements, Metaphors, Imagery, Symbols

Introduction

Metaphors' importance in discourse, cognition, and experiences cannot be overstated (Thibodeau, Matlock, & Flusberg, 2019). Many academics have defined, conceptualized, and utilized metaphors in a variety of ways (Caballero, 2003; Semino & Demjén, 2016; Charteris-Black, 2009). Metaphor is defined as the examination of commonalities between two dissimilar things or processes for one to be imagined, understood, experienced, and discussed in the context of the other. For example, there is a machine operating our thoughts, wherein the external forces are our deep emotions, animals are personified as humans, and likewise. (Semino & Demjén, 2016). The qualities of one thing are transferred to another entity via the use of metaphors. Metaphors build conceptual image and play an important role in forming societal facts, in addition to being a rhetorical element in linguistic knowledge (Jensen, 2006). Through the employment of metaphor in the language system, an analogy may decide or influence future actions. As a result, it creates a parallel between two incongruent experiences (Musolff, 2012).

Advertisements serve an important function in product promotion and have a psychological impact on customers (Rai, 2013). Burgers et al. (2015) demonstrated that it necessitates the effective and attractive use of words or, to put it another way, the appropriate way of using a language in a suitable setting. Because commercials have the power to affect the receiver end, thus, the impact cannot be overlooked. Such linguistic components are used by firms or brands to enhance the price of their goods. Three global corporations' advertising was used in this study. Under the conceptual perspective of Conceptual Metaphor Theory, it examined the metaphors utilized in these advertisements. The research was analyzed using Stibbe's (2015) ecolinguistic analytical approach.

In today's environment, a company's success is determined by the effectiveness of its marketing. Advertising companies employ enticing language to capture customers' attention and boost market share for this aim (Saeed, Ahmed & Mukhtar, 2001). Throughout

[*] PhD Scholar, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad, Pakistan.
Email: farooqalam1@hotmail.com *(Corresponding Author)*
[†] Department of English, Virtual University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Citation: Alam, M. F., & Ullah, Z. (2021). Exercising Metaphoric Impact on Advertisements: An Ecolinguistic Appraisal. *Global Social Sciences Review, VI*(II), 384-391. https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2021(VI-II).38

this procedure, they often disseminate dogmas that are at odds with the dominant norms and ideals. An advertisement is a form of communication that persuades the general public to buy a product and aids marketers in stimulating economic growth. Different modes of promotion are used for this purpose, including television, commercial radio, magazines, newspapers, outdoor media, blog sites, web pages, as well as texts, and emails (Ahmed & Ashfaq, 2013; Haider & Shakib, 2018). Language has a big influence on people's actions. To persuade the audience, the advertising company may use language and visuals. The audience's emotions are also activated throughout this process, whether it's their mood while viewing the ad or their cognitive judgment of the goods (Yang, Lee, Kwak, Choi, Kim, & Kim, 2015).

Environmental narratologies are related to the environment or ecosystem that is common in daily life, including the media. As a continuation and extension of critical linguistic studies, the critical ecolinguistic analysis aims to emphasize the role of speech in perpetuating unsustainable consumption and economic essentialism on investment financial (Yuniawan et al., 2017). "Ecolinguistic studies language to uncover narratives we live by, judges those tales including a positive and productive manner, and participates to the quest seeking new stories to live by," writes Stibbe (2015, p. 183). Ideologies, metaphors, frames, appraisal, personalities, determination, erasure, and salience are all part of these narratives because commercials fluctuate from country to country, the commercial advertisements for these items from Pakistan were used for this research. The metaphor may be found in both the language system and the mental process (Hampe, 2017). Metaphors are being used to discuss certain aspects of life and to see them in a certain way because certain intellectual backgrounds of life are used to envisage other life characteristics; these representations are considered conceptual metaphors. It is shown with this instance wherein life has been regarded as a journey, for which the metaphor employed to define life determines its meaning. Life is seen as a trip in which plans are formed, objectives are set, and certain roads are preferred above others to arrive at the desired destination. Existence is understood in the context of the metaphorical, i.e., "LIFE IS A Trip," because of such analogies, resulting in the use of the journey as a metaphor for life (Kovecses,2017).

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to accomplish the following objectives:

i. To investigate the relationship between both metaphoric advertisement and effectiveness in increasing the perceived worth of items in commercials.
ii. To examine the kind of stories that product manufacturers through their marketing.
iii. To draw attention to the emotive and evaluative effects of metaphoric product promotion.

Research Questions

The current research raises the following research queries:

i. What are the benefits of utilizing metaphors in advertising?
ii. How are metaphors employed in commercials to elicit emotional responses from customers?
iii. How do product producers use language to establish ecological preferences?

Significance and Purpose of the Study

The research is unique since it explores why metaphors are used in commercials and how they assist manufacturers convinces people to purchase their items. The employment of metaphor raises the perceived worth of the goods. Consumers, on the other hand, disregard the relevance of the good under consideration and mistakenly judge the impression of an item as something that brings them satisfaction and pleasure. From the standpoint of ecolinguistics, the research explores metaphors in ads. It explains the rationale for why companies employ metaphors in their product promotion. It also tries to determine the function of metaphor in the development of customer sentiments toward items.

Literature Review

Ecolinguistics is a branch of science concerned with the nature and quality of language. (Kravchenko, 2016) defines the term and refers to the way a biological system (human society) is organized, as well as its involvement during the

© 2021 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License

development of mind, brain, and (self-) awareness. The link between both communication and the cultural context is the main emphasis. Linguistic ecology, language ecology, and green linguistics are all terms used to describe this area of research. Ecolinguistics, following the study of Alexander and Stibbe (2014), who considers a domain that examines the role of language in endurance and attempts to connect humans, supplementary organisms, and the natural or physical milieu in order to ensure a long-term correlation between humans and additional organisms surrounded by an ecosystem further investigated in ecolinguistics. Apart from this, standard linguistic approaches to the practical situations and speech of conservation relevance, yet in its true contrast, profound thoughts on the philosophies of languages influenced by the all-inclusive standard of ecology, Bang and Trampe (2014) split ecolinguistics under two paradigms. Ecolinguistics is also known as green discourse when it comes to the environment (Yuniawan, 2018).

Critical ecolinguistics emerged from ecolinguistics. Linguistic ecological and critical discourse is combined in critical ecolinguistics (Stibbe, 2014). Critical ecolinguistics looks at the philosophical underpinnings of ecological discourse that affect humans and the surroundings. The usage of related lexical items in emerald vocalizations has an impact on people's thinking and is rationally integrated into the conversation, writers, and viewers (Nahak et al., 2019). According to an ecolinguistics study, if people speak in a favourable way about the environment, they will act in a positive way about the environment. Green discourse, simply put, according to the studies conducted by Döring et al. (2008) may harm the environment if it is unhelpful and unjust.

The employment of emblematic tropes, including these metaphors for the purpose of marketable discourses, is also shown by ecolinguistics. Metaphors are important in commercial communications because they engage clients and persuade them to buy a commodity (Nuzwaty et al., 2014). For this genre, metaphors have a persuading purpose. In this vein, Fill, and Muhlhausler (2016) illustrated that various tactics are used with the intent to attract to the emotions, emotions and evaluative judgment of customers by ascribing good features to the product. Using metaphor, comedy, and linguistics to convince the audience and accomplish the intended result is an indirect tactic (Stoyanova, 2021). Moreover, these Metaphors are frequently employed to link the promoted item with something that differs in several aspects, where the goods/items traits are attributed to the advertised manufactured goods, in addition to being utilized as an attention-getting method. The employment of such metaphors in profitable advertisements is often viewed as a communal performance in complex cognitive discourse, and it may emerge in the text as practices that viewers have adopted or rejected. In this regard, Qiushi (2020) and Mohammed (2020) sharply pointed out that they could also spread them in various societal settings. It has the potential to shape certain parts of reality, as well as reproduce power relationships and other societal prejudices. Metaphor has the ability to integrate consciousness through the use of communication in a social process, in addition to influencing reality (Ding, 2020). As a result, Delbaere et al. (2011) demonstrated that personification as a metaphor has an impact because it presents abstract concepts and things, such as companies and their facilities as if they were real persons with certain characteristics.

Among the various rhetorical devices employed in commercials is personification. For example, such metaphor as "BRANDA ARE LIVING ORGANISMS" and "BRANDS ARE PEOPLE" are used to make brands tangible (Stibbe, 2015, p. 327). The products are symbolically shown as real individuals who have received favorable feedback. Metaphors are used in the mission and vision, and logos of firms that represent their identities (Kraljevic-Mujic, 2017). In cultural and biological variety, Grant (2012) examines metaphorical and factual knowledge. Biodiversity and cultural variety are figuratively connected, which is said to aid something during the creation of insubstantial and elusive cultural resources, also including composition and speech. The study examines these difficulties and offers recommendations to policymakers, government agencies, and autonomous organizations, as well as culture carriers and stakeholders who are coping with cultural diversity.

Processed meals and commodities are seen as an alternative to natural foods and drinks, and consumers prefer to purchase promoted products over natural sources (Ahmad et al.,

2021; Hasyim, 2017). Customers place themselves at a point when promoted items become their preferred method of achieving a healthier outcome than natural methods (Kao & Du, 2020). Consumers with environmental knowledge feel that whether a manufactured product is beneficial in the large interest of the environment devoid of understanding of how it affects the atmosphere (Martin & Simintiras, 1995). Therefore, commercialism has a negative effect on the natural commodities (Chen, 2016; Norton & Hulme, 2019; Damico et al., 2020).

The papers afore-mentioned provides a deeper insight on ecolinguistics and commercial, promotional tactics. According to the research, a variety of literary strategies are employed for the purpose of product marketing. Metaphors are prevalent among these literary strategies. As a result, a practical strategy to assess metaphors and determine how they match with ecolinguistics goals is required. The current research looked at the ads of global corporations. Its goal was to discover how metaphors are employed in advertising to elicit emotional responses from customers, as well as the reasons for their usage. Manufacturers employ metaphors in their product advertisements.

Research Methodology

The study was conducted using a qualitative technique. The current research focuses on ads for drinks and dairy products from five food manufacturing businesses' official websites throughout the year 2019. Only five multinational corporations with goods sold in many countries were chosen for the research. In comparison to local enterprises and their commercial advertisements, their unique style of contacting the wider public is more sophisticated and enticing, based on their knowledge.

Research Model

The ecolinguistic analysis paradigm of Stibbe (2015) was used to analyze the advertising metaphors. "Ecolinguistics examines language to disclose the stories we live by, assesses those tales in light of a deeper perspective, and delineates further to the quest for new stories to live by" (Stibbe,2015, p. 183). The chosen scaffold aims to disclose the tales that surround us and to fight those stories-we-live-by' that are destructive to our environment. It's done by looking at people's language closely since language gives us clues about the presence and shape of the tales we live by. According to Stibbe (2015), there are eight main types of narratives. Only one tale, i.e., metaphorical, has been chosen for the present study. "Metaphors take a framework from a definite, tangible, and conceivable aspect of life to organize how a separate region of existence is imagined," according to the definition (64). The use of linguistic features, connectives, hyponymy, and metonymy are language concepts that aid in the development of metaphors.

Theoretical Framework

To support the study's claim, the conceptual theory was used. Metaphor, as defined by Lakoff and Johnson (2008), is a stretched piece of speech that influences cognition and helps people comprehend, talk, and justify others. Metaphors are described by means of conception, in which the reference domain and target image are matched. The original domain is mapped to the source sphere of influence, and the objective and marked domain is discussed in terms of both the source domain. In contrast to the target realm, the foundation field is the conventional conveyance, which is, probably, a lesser amount of conceptual, i.e., readily perpetual or imagined by the human faculty of thinking. The typical tenor is the intended field. The notion of travelling on a route to achieve a goal is connected to the concept of love. In this instance LOVE IS A JOURNEY (Ibáñez, 2011)

Sample and Setting

The information was gathered from four global firms' official websites. A total of 07 adverts were chosen for their relevance to the metaphor notion. Only those adverts are picked in each of the businesses. The information chosen comes from two global corporations, and their marketing is targeted toward Pakistani customers.

Data Analysis

This section analyzes different metaphors used in advertisements.

Company A

Product 1(A)

The milk "empowers a woman," according to the

metaphor incorporated in product 1(A) discourse. It motivates women to modify their attitudes and lifestyles. The product is utilized as a behavioral technique that empowers women to take control of their life and accomplish their clearly defined objectives. "Inspiring a shift in thinking and lifestyle... allows women to make good decisions and achieve their objectives." This metaphor supports the narrative that the commodity is a tremendous force that alters the mentality and lifestyle of women. These phrases show it as an authorized entity with the capacity to grant power to women and modify their life, rather than as a kind of milk or drink.

Product 2(A)

Here metonymy is used twice, with the product being given the traits of a partner, i.e., human people, as "market leader" and "tea partner." The product is being awarded the human characteristic of leadership. Likewise, the partner is someone who is always with the other person. Whenever the reader must choose amongst teas, the phrase partner is symbolically used to imply the sense that this specific product is your companion, as in the sentence, "your go-to tea partner." It is indirectly replacing this commodity for human companionship.

The supply structure of "riding" is transferred against the particular section of dry milk in another example of a metaphor in almost the same advertising. "We guarantee you a KHAAS sensory journey that will enhance your every teatime," the writing says. The ride frame helps readers visualize the trip's schemata, travel, enjoyment, and thrill. The flavor of tea prepared with the help of this manufactured item follows the same schemata. The manufactured goods metaphors might be classified as harmful metaphors. They are substituting milk for humans and other forms of pleasure, so tacitly promoting materialism.

Company B

Product 1(B)

The manufactured goods "brings you genuine natural deliciousness of butter," according to the marketing. The butter is utilized as a metaphor for the fact that it was not humans that harvested the dairy from natural resources. Instead, it was created by the firm itself. The customer is shown as a passive entity, whereas the product is portrayed as an actor. It conceals the fact that people cannot be held liable for consumer suffering or annoyance caused by bad results or side effects.

Product 2(B)

The claim that the drink is "an attractive drink that ensures the safety of your daily food requirements" gives it the status of a living being that looks after the nutritional needs of humans. It is a metonymy example. It is neither mentioned nor printed that the producers have created it to meet the daily nutritional needs of humans. Energy is indeed present in natural goods, but it is up to humans to satisfy their daily nutritional needs, regardless of what items they eat to do so. These human features are being attributed to the commodity in this discourse, which is considered to be a sentient creature that is aware of or aware of human nutritional needs on a regular basis.

Delimitations

The study is restricted to two food manufacturing businesses' commercials. These businesses were chosen increasing popularity of their goods and the glitzy advertising they use. These firms' goods are regarded as high standard and have a consistent flavor. Furthermore, the research is confined to the chosen firms' drinks and dairy products since these are the ones that are utilized as a replacement for natural goods.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the different sorts of metaphors used in advertising. The study emphasizes multinational firms' public relations—the output of four international companies chosen to investigate metaphors and their relevance. The research used Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) conceptual metaphor theory, as well as Stibbe's (2015) ecolinguistics model. These analogies are harmful to the environment because they encourage excessive consumption and they can make the viewers feel as though they are inhaling emotions and ideas through metaphors (Coulter et al., 2001). It has the potential to empower individuals and allow them to take control of their life. Success and inspiration expand a child's vision for forthcoming objectives, and it is a human nature to take tea in the company of friends and tea companies utilize this human inclination.

Similarly, feeling nice and enjoying hours on an island are supposed to be interchangeable with product consumption. Furthermore, via metonymy, human features are assigned to items or corporations with certain aims and aspirations, granting them authorization to execute human activities. Companies may convince the audience through their linguistic patterns and influence the audience's perception when makingmaking decisions.

Conclusion

The current study focused on analyzing metaphors in advertisements from an ecolinguistic perspective. According to the findings, metaphors play a critical role in advertising discourses because they have a persuasive appeal to readers. The manufacturers of the products exploit a correlation in order to draw the attention of the audience to their goods and to appraise them in the readers' minds by associating them with admirable characteristics or characteristics of other entities. The audience's emotions are influenced by the metaphors used in advertisements. The public frames offered good similarly in their thoughts with the metaphors. It has an impact on their intellect, which in turn has an impact on their conduct. The audience may choose to pay for things in order to get those desired sentiments without having to do any additional work. These analogies may be harmful to the environment because they disregard the worth of other people and nature in favor of human-made goods.

References

Ain, Q., Ahmed, F., & Nawaz, M. (2021). An Ecolinguistic Analysis of Linguistic Discourses in Advertisements Frame Stories to Enhance their Importance to Replace Natural Products. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews, 9*(2), 150-159. https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2021.9215

Alexander, R., & Stibbe, A. (2014). From the analysis of ecological discourse to the ecological analysis of discourse. *Language Sciences, 41*, 104-110. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2013.08.011

Bang, J. C., & Trampe, W. (2014). Aspects of an ecological theory of language. *Language Sciences, 41*, 83-92. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langsci.2013.08.009

Burgers, C., Konijn, E. A., Steen, G. J., &Iepsma, M. A. (2015). Making ads less complex, yet more creative and persuasive: The effects of conventional metaphors and irony in print advertising. *International Journal of Advertising, 34*(3), 515-532. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2014.996200

Caballero, R. (2003). Metaphor and genre: The presence and role of metaphor in the building review. *Applied Linguistics, 24*(2), 145-167. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/24.2.145

Coulter, R. A., Zaltman, G., & Coulter, K. S. (2001). Interpreting consumer perceptions of advertising: An application of the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique. *Journal of Advertising, 30*(4), 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.2001.10673648

Damico, J. S., Baildon, M., &Panos, A. (2020). Climate Justice Literacy: Stories-We-Live-By, Ecolinguistics, and Classroom Practice. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 63*(6), 683-691. https://doi.org/10.1002/jaal.1051

Delbaere, M., McQuarrie, E. F., & Phillips, B. J. (2011). personification in advertising. Journal of Advertising, 40(1), 121-130. https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367400108Study, 8(2), 46-57. https://doi.org/10.4236/als.2020.82005

Forceville, C. (2000). Compasses, beauty queens and other PCs: Pictorial metaphors in computer advertisements. *HERMES-Journal of Language and Communication in Business (24),* 31-55. https://doi.org/10.7146/hjlcb.v13i 24.25568

Grant, C. (2012). Analogies and links between cultural and biological diversity. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development, 2*(2), 153-163. https://doi.org/10.1108/20441261211273644

Hampe, B. (2017). *Metaphor: Embodied cognition and discourse:* Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108182324

Harnendaz, F. J. R. M. I. L. P. (2011). The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor: Myths, Developments and Challenges. *Metaphor and Symbol, 26*(3), 161-185. https://doi.org/10.1080/10926488.2011.583189

Hasyim, M. (2017). The metaphor of consumerism. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 8*(3), 523-530. https://doi.org/10.17507/jltr.0803.10

Jensen, D. (2006). Metaphors as a bridge to understanding educational and social contexts. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(1), 36-54. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500104

Kao, T.-F., & Du, Y.-Z. (2020). A study on the influence of green advertising design and environmental emotion on advertising effect. *Journal of cleaner production, 242*, 118294. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118294.

Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2008). *Metaphors we live by*: University of Chicago Press.

Liu, Y., Li, K., Li, L., Zhang, J., Lin, Y., DiFabrizio, B., & Wang, H. (2020). Morphological Metaphor Mapping of Moral Concepts in Chinese Culture. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.554061.

Martin, B., & Simintiras, A. C. (1995). The impact of green product lines on the environment: does what they know affect how they feel? Marketing Intelligence & Planning. https://doi.org/10.1108/02634509510089991.

Musolff, A. (2012). The study of metaphor as part of critical discourse analysis. *Critical discourse studies, 9*(3), 301-310.

https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2012.688300

Nuzwaty, A. M. M., Setia, E., & Zein, T. T. (2014). Metaphorical Expression of Bahasa Aceh in Trumon of South Aceh: Ecolinguistics Study. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), 19*, 32-37. https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-191133237

Qiushi, L. (2020). A Corpus-based Analysis of Multimodal Metaphor in Chinese Ecological Educational Advertisements. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics, 8*(2), 60. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ijll.20200802.11

Rai, N. (2013). Impact of Advertising on Consumer behaviour and attitude with reference to consumer durables. *International Journal of Management Research, 2*(2), 74-79.

Stibbe, A. (2014). An ecolinguistic approach to critical discourse studies. *Critical discourse studies, 11*(1), 117-128.

Stibbe, A. (2015).Ecolinguistics:Language, ecology and the stories we live by: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1080/17405904.2013.845789

Stoyanova, E. V. (2021). Metaphor as a means of creating a humorous effect in Bulgarian media texts. The European Journal of Humour Research, 9(1). https://doi.org/10.7592/EJHR2021.9.1.Stoyanova.

Thibodeau, P. H., Matlock, T., &Flusberg, S. (2019). The role of metaphor in communication and thought. *13*(5), e12327. https://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12327.

Yanow, D. (2008). Cognition meets action: Metaphors as models of and models for. Political language and metaphor, 225-238.