



The Usage of Deixis in Advertising Slogans Related to Fragrance

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Keywords: *deixis, personal, temporal, spatial, slogan, fragrance.*

Introductory observations

Language plays a crucial role in the process of social interaction, i.e. communication, as it is used both as a medium in giving information and as means of establishing and maintaining relationship with other people. The study of language as a means of communication has become an important aspect in linguistics. As noted by Robert Van Valinand Randy La Polla (2002, 82), “the communicative functions of language are central to the analysis of its structure, and one (but not the only) function of language is reference and predication, that is, representing things that happen in the world (or a possible fictional world) and the participants involved in those situations”. Furthermore, John Lyons (1969, 275) adds “Every language-utterance is made in a particular place and at a particular time: it occurs in a certain spatio-temporal situation”. Each such utterance is made by a particular person (the speaker) and is usually addressed to some other person (the hearer). Communication from the perspective of advertising takes into consideration the contextual dimension that is a matter of pragmatics which investigates those parts of the discourse that are often the essential factors of the advertising discourse and its hidden message.

With Geoffrey N. Leech’s study “English in Advertising” (1966), the discourse of advertisements became the subject of extensive linguistic research. The morphological, semantic, syntactic, and textual peculiarities of advertising language have been extensively studied by Judith Williamson (1978), Dennis Kurzon (1985), Guy Cook (1992), Jim Aitchison (1999), Sean Nixon (2003) to mention a few. Being a matter of utterance, advertising is obviously a tool of persuasion. The advertisers make use of persuasive strategies in order to reach their goals, i.e. to persuade a consumer to buy the product. To put in other terms, they encode the messages that are meant to reach the target audience (i.e. consumers).

Traditionally, the phenomenon of ‘deixis’ in discourse analysis underlines the relationship between language and context and has been defined as the encoding through language of spatial or temporal contexts, or, to put in simpler terms, deixis

points via language as it refers to demonstration and reference. The discourse of advertisements code and decode messages in context. Deictic words (personal pronouns, demonstratives, place and time adverbials, etc.) rely on the 'situation' or 'context of utterance' (L e e c h 1966, 156; L y o n s 1969, 275; G o d d a r d 1988, 106).

The aim of this study is twofold: to analyze the use of deixis and its persuasive strategy in advertising slogans related to fragrance. The notion deixis is applied in the present study in order to introduce and handle the features of language which are relative to the time and place of utterance. Deixis is extensively used in slogans related to fragrances as a strategy to make direct appeals to consumers. However, according to Cook (1992, 104), "A smell has no denotation <...> a new perfume can be called virtually anything". Fragrance slogans can spark a feeling or memory. This is where deixis plays its role.

Methodological considerations

The corpus that the present study is based on consists of the slogans of fragrances drawn from the websites <http://www.mimifaufrau.com>, www.perfume-berry.com, specializing in fragrances as well as fashion magazines "Vogue", "Cosmopolitan", etc. as well as television commercials.

The methodology is based on linguistic and semiotic analysis. The uses of deixis were decoded and classified within the content analysis in a pilot study. The direction of the analysis follows the generally accepted semiotic triangle: ADDRESSER – MESSAGE – ADDRESSEE, where addresser is a producer, message is a slogan, and addressee is a consumer. The main question to answer is what different types of deixis are used in the selected sector. The sector of fragrances was chosen for research because it is assumed that this commercial sector offers some distinctive features and the enormous scope for creativity while targeting consumers in certain ways.

Theoretical prerequisites

In advertising, visual materials, trademark, brand, logo, and slogan play the role of providing continuity of the message of the advertisement. Generally accepted, slogan is a catch phrase that is combined in a special way to identify a product or company. Slogans are linguistic statements designed to produce an emotional connection between an audience member and a persuader (B o r c h e r s 2002, 181). As referred by Williamson (1978, 19), an advertisement does not create meaning at the first time but invites us to make a transaction where it is passed from one thing to another.

Deixis, as noted by Laimutis Valeika and Daiva Verikaitė (2010, 10), "is a term used to denote a word or a phrase which directly refers to entities (objects, processes, attributes, and circumstances)". To specify this definition by Kurzon (1985, 187), "Deixis is the set of linguistic elements used by the speaker to refer to the context of situation in order to orient the hearer as to the time and the place of

the discourse (*here and now*), and to setting up of the a direct communication link between the speaker and the hearer (*I and you*)”.

In linguistics three main types of deixis are distinguished: person, spatial, temporal. Besides these traditional and fundamental categories, linguists also speak about social deixis and discourse deixis (see Valeika, Verikaite 2010). Deictic words and structures usually refer to demonstratives and personal pronouns, time and place adverbs, tenses, definite articles, etc. Moreover, deictic words can be used as cross-reference in referring to the linguistic context in advertisements which are accompanied by visual materials.

As it was already mentioned, deixis actually “create” the context of the situation of communication: not only the time and place are set but also the relationship between the message sender and the receiver. Laura Hidalgo Downing (2000) proposes that deixis and presuppositions often play an essential role in creating a persuasive advertising message and contribute to adopting a familiar, conversational tone.

The use of deixis in slogans helps to differentiate between the addresser (company / advertiser) and the addressee (consumer). The specific features of deixis create a unified spatial and temporal frame, common to both the addresser and addressee, where all references coincide. Thus, the role of all deictic words is to contextualize and place the text within ‘the addressee’s environment’.

In the next section, all forms of deictic markers, such as person, spatial and temporal will be analyzed.

The use of deictic markers in advertising slogans

Person deixis

Personalization is closely related to deixis and is enhanced by the conversational nature of the slogan. Person deixis is based on the following division: first person (*I, we*), second person (*you*), and third person (*he, she, it*). Person deixis is the one providing the background to understanding deictic words in a dialogic discourse; hence, all deictics in advertising discourse (slogans) are also to be understood as based on two fictitious participants in a conversation.

Talking about deictic word *we*, it is clear that one of its components is the addresser. As for the other components of *we*, its scope is mostly determined by the inclusion of the addressee (i.e. consumer). The role of deictic pronoun *we* is to place the addresser and the addressee within the same scope concerning the product advertised in such a way that the marketing chain is to be born. Consider the examples in which *we* and *us* encompasses *I* and *you*, as if there were some kind of simultaneous presence of both participants:

(1) *Aren't you going to introduce us? <...> How much longer can we possibly all be so happy together?* (Prada Candy)

(2) *We are One* (Calvin Klein CK one)

(3) *A perfume's scents can transport us from this moment and take us with them to blissful memories* (Déjà Vu)

In the slogans above, the addressee places her/himself within the same frame of reference as the addressee by performing identical actions: <...> *can we possibly all be so happy* <...>, *We are* <...>, <...> *can transport us* <...>. These consumer-friendly slogans use pronouns such as *we* and *us* to lend a friendly and personal image.

Another person deictic words are *you* and its reflexive form *yourself*. In advertising, second person pronoun *you* refers to the consumer.

(4) *Are you on the list?* (212 VIP)

(5) *It's your chance. Embrace it* (Chance Chanel)

(6) *Perfectly formed, perfectly free, you don't discover this essence, it discovers you* (J'Adore Dior)

(7) *If you want to capture someone's attention, whisper* (Coty Perfume)

(8) *Create your world of happiness* (Especially Escada)

(9) *Do You Dare?* (Curious)

(10) *Let desire lead you* (JLo Deseo)

The reflexive form of the pronoun is present in slogans related to fragrance as well:

(11) *See through yourself* (C-THRU Blooming)

(12) *The greatest freedom is to believe in yourself* (Britney Spears Believe)

In the slogans above, the message is to be thought of as directly addressed to an individual.

We may observe that the usage of pronoun *you* offers a number of advantages. Firstly, it is the most direct of addressees. Secondly, through this placement as a grammatical subject the consumer is given the main role in the action described in the slogan, which highlights our individuality. The consumer unintentionally pictures her/himself as the one depicted in the visual material provided in concert with slogan.

Although personalizing seems to be a popular strategy used in advertising, third person pronoun *it*, on the other hand, has an impersonal effect and is commonly used in advertising slogans as well. Consider the examples below:

(13) *It touches everything* (Calvin Klein Beauty)

(14) *It's your chance. Embrace it* (Chance Chanel)

(15) *If it's out there, Dior will find it* (Dior)

Other third person pronouns, such as *she*, *he* imply shared knowledge between the addresser and the addressee:

(16) *Her heart. Her soul. Her beauty. Her scent* (DonnaKaran Woman)

(17) *Promise her anything, but give her Arpege* (Arpage)

(18) *A woman is an island. Fidji is her perfume* (Guy Laroche Fidji)

(19) *The new fragrance for him, The new fragrance for her* (Gucci Guilty Intense)

Other examples of person deixis to decode the distance between the product and the consumer include personal pronouns *I* and *my*:

(20) *My secret* (Nina L' eau. Nina Ricci)

(21) *I am made of blue sky and golden light, and I will feel this way forever... share the fantasy* (Chanel No. 5)

(22) *I can't seem to forget you, your Wind Song stays on my mind* (Wind Song)

(23) *Whoever loves me will follow* (Guerlain Insolence)

References above make it clear, through the use of deixis, who is who and what the relation between the parts is as *I* and *we* are 'metadiscourse elements'. First person singular (*I* and *me*) are generally regarded as being too personal, individualized and even exclusive. On the other hand, first person singular may specify the addressee, with the aim of "awakening" inner thoughts and in her/his personal context, introduce new needs and desires.

Personal pronouns play a pivotal role in determining the position of the participants and their relation. The usage of person deixis invite the consumer to recognize him/herself as the individual being spoken to and about.

Spatial deixis

As an introduction to spatial (place) deixis, let us propose the example featuring the use of place adverbial *here*. We have to understand the utterance by supposing that the addresser, the addressee and the fragrance itself are in the same place:

(24) *What begins here never ends* (Eternity. Calvin Klein)

(25) *How'd you get in here?* (Prada Candy L'eau)

Demonstrative *this* refers to a present common ground supposedly common to both the addresser and the addressee, with a strong evocative and emotional connotation:

(26) *Sophistication, elegance, Energy, Complexity: who knew that smelling like this city could be so seductive?* (Bond No. 9)

These are other cases of spatial deictics we have found in advertising slogans, all involving a presumed space common to the addresser and the addressee:

(27) *But wherever I go, there you are...* (Chanel No 5)

Deictic words like *this*, *here*, and *there* are used as cross-reference in referring to the linguistic context in advertisements. The meaning these expressions is not to be found in real space or time, but in text as a figured spatial-temporal environment (or co-text):

A second kind of deixis, defined as text deixis (K u r z o n 1985), is based on the relations between the elements in language as a linear manifestation:

(28) *The spirit of femininity* (Esprit d'Oscar eau de parfum)

(29) *The essence of a jeweler* (Mou Jasmin Noir)

(30) *The new essence of joy* (Giorgio Armani)

(31) *The first fragrance for women* (Bottega Veneta eau de parfum)

The definite article is used to demonstrate uniqueness of a referent. Appositional constructions in advertising most often employ the definite article together with the brand name as the first element. To cite Leech (1966, 157), "These constructions have the character of particular definitions; they equate one kind of name, a brand-name, with another – an expression describing some unique entity".

Temporal deixis

As noted by Valeika and Verikaitė (2010, 21), “Temporal deixis identifies entities and processes with respect to the temporal deictic centre, which is the speaker’s time of utterance”. In the time deictics one of these forms occurs in an advert it may entail the advertiser providing a space where the addressee is invited to enter. The common factor is the union of both participants in the message. To cite Torben Vestergaard and Kim Schroeder (1985), “deictic words related to time are always present ‘as tense is an obligatory category’”. Time deixis is a device implying reference to a presumed time frame, as in the following example, in which the temporal adverbials place the advertiser and the consumer within the same time:

(32) *Film slows down time, but a moment can last **forever*** (Dolce and Gabbana)

(33) *Bring back Valentina **immediately!*** (The new eau de parfum by Valentino)

(34) ***Never** resist the call of the game* (Lacoste Challenge)

The case of deictic word *just* places the addressee within the same time frame as the addresser’s or, in other words, it creates the impression that the addresser materializes her / himself right with the addressee:

(35) ***Just** beautiful* (Naomi Campbell Wild Pearl)

(36) ***Just** different* Hugo (Hugo boss)

(37) *No bottles to break – **just** hearts* (Arpege)

The use of *today* is a lexical deictic word meaning ‘nowadays’ or ‘at present’, it might be interpreted as ‘when you read this advertisement’:

(38) *Who will you be **today?*** (Sephora)

The usage of present tense in advertising slogans may also be considered as temporal (time) deixis:

(39) *It **touches** everything* (Calvin Klein)

(40) *Between love and madness **lies** obsession* (Calvin Klein’s Obsession)

(41) ***I am made** of blue sky and golden light, and I will feel this way forever... share the fantasy* (Chanel No. 5)

(42) *If you **want** to capture someone’s attention, **whisper*** (Coty Perfume)

(43) ***Promise** her anything, but **give** her Arpege* (Arpage)

(44) *Every woman **has** two sides* (Kat Von D Saint & Sinner)

(45) *Life without passion **is** unforgivable* (Unforgivable by Sean John)

These implied time frames justify the use of *now*, which functions here as a deictic marker, presupposing a context common to both the addresser and the addressee.

The examples presented above prove that deictic words are popularly used in the slogans to guide the consumer through the time in the direction intended by the advertiser. Deictic words such as *forever*, *immediately*, *never*, *just*, *today* and the use of present tense play an important part in persuading the consumer as they help the consumer focus on the aspects of the intended message hidden in the slogans.

Concluding remarks

In advertising, we conceive the persuasion at a distance. In any advertising slogan, the usage of deictic words confers the existence of a surrounding time-space frame in which the conversational exchange takes place. Furthermore, deictic words create such a context where participants (addressers and addressees) in this persuasive discourse can, even at a distance, feel as if they were facing each other.

Looking at the functions of various pronouns, it is evident that they are 'metadiscourse elements' used to link a product with a company. For instance, *you* is used to express a one-to-one relationship and *he / she, it* indicate shared knowledge between the persuader and the audience or consumer. Although advertisements reach a huge number of people at any time, these pronouns or other deictic elements provide a consumer with a personal touch. Thus, persuaders can use language to shape the way the audience views the world.

To put everything in a nutshell, it may be stated that in the world building process, deictics play important roles: they introduce the spatio-temporal frames of a discourse situation with regard to a deictic centre or point of reference. The findings prove that advertisers use this persuasive strategy in creative ways to persuade consumers to buy their products.

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Deiksės vartojimas kvėpalų reklamos šūkiuose

S a n t r a u k a

Pagrindinės sąvokos: *deiksė, kvėpalų reklaminiai šūkiai, adresatas, adresantas, žinutė.*

Kalba vaidina svarbų vaidmenį socialinės sąveikos procese, t. y. komunikacijoje, nes ji yra ir mediumas, ir priemonė norint užmegzti ir palaikyti santykius su žmonėmis. Žiūrint per reklamos prizmę, komunikacija siejama su kontekstine dimensija. Kontekstinė dimensija yra pragmatikos dalykas, tiriantis diskurso dalis, kurios yra esminiai reklamos diskurso veiksniai ir paslėptos žinutės. Reklama – įtikinėjimo įrankis. Deiksė vartojama kaip lingvistinė priemonė reklamoje, nes taip galima pagrįsti santykį tarp kalbos ir konteksto. Deiksė gali būti laikoma nurodymu per kalbą.

Šio straipsnio tikslas – išanalizuoti deiksės vaidmenį ir vartotojams įtikinti skirtą strategiją kvėpalų reklamos šūkiuose. Medžiaga tyrimui rinkta iš interneto svetainių, kuriose parduodama parfumerija, pvz., <http://www.mimifaufrau.com>, www.perfume-berry.com, taip pat iš įvairių žurnalų. Tyrimo metodologija paremta kokybine lingvistine ir semiotine analize. Analizėje remiamasi tradiciniu semiotiniu trikampiu: adresantas – žinutė – adresatas.

Analizė parodė, kad nagrinėjamuose reklaminiuose šūkiuose pasitelkiama trijų tipų deiksė: asmeninė (verbalizuojama asmeniniais įvardžiais *I, me*), erdvės (ją atskleidžia vietosrieveiksmiai *here, there*) ir laiko (vartojami laikorieveiksmiai *now, tomorrow, immediately*). Galima daryti išvadą, kad reklamos šūkių kūrėjai sumaniai naudojami deiktiniais žodžiais norėdami įtikinti vartotoją įsigyti vieną ar kitą prekę.

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The analysis proved that in the corpus under investigation three types of deixis were found: person deixis (realized by personal pronouns *I, we, you*), spatial deixis (realized by place adverbials *here, there*), and temporal deixis (realized by time adverbials *today, just, forever* as well as realized by verbs used in present tense). The findings show that advertisers use this persuasive strategy in creative ways to persuade consumers to buy their products.

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