

PHONOSEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF ADVERTISING TEXTS AIMED AT CHILDREN

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Abstract: Advertising texts aimed at children represent a specific type of discourse characterized by emotional intensity, simplicity, and high persuasive potential. One of the most effective tools used in such texts is phonosemantics, which studies the relationship between sound structure and meaning. This article explores the phonosemantic features of children’s advertising texts in English, focusing on how phonetic devices such as alliteration, assonance, rhyme, sound symbolism, and intonation patterns influence children’s perception, emotions, and behavior. The study demonstrates that phonosemantic elements play a crucial role in enhancing memorability, emotional engagement, and persuasive impact of advertising messages directed at young audiences. The findings confirm that sound symbolism in children’s advertising is not accidental but strategically employed to evoke positive associations, trust, and desire for advertised products.

Keywords: children’s advertising, phonosemantics, sound symbolism, advertising discourse, psycholinguistics, persuasive language

Introduction. In the modern media space, advertising addressed to children occupies a special position due to the cognitive, emotional, and psychological characteristics of its target audience. Children are more sensitive to sound patterns, rhythm, and melody than adults, which makes phonetic and phonosemantic tools especially effective in influencing them. Advertising creators actively use sound-based strategies to ensure that messages are easily perceived, remembered, and emotionally appealing.

Phonosemantics, as a branch of linguistics, examines how sounds convey meaning and emotional coloring. In children’s advertising discourse, phonosemantic devices contribute to creating playful, friendly, and attractive messages that resonate with children’s linguistic competence and emotional needs. Therefore, the phonosemantic analysis of advertising texts aimed at children is essential for understanding the mechanisms of linguistic influence in media communication.

Theoretical Background of Phonosemantics. Phonosemantics is based on the assumption that there is a non-arbitrary relationship between sound and meaning. Certain sounds or sound combinations can evoke specific emotions, images, or associations. This phenomenon is particularly evident in children’s language acquisition, where sound symbolism helps children understand and remember words more easily.

Researchers such as Sapir, Jakobson, and Ohala have emphasized that sounds may convey impressions of size, speed, softness, or strength. In advertising discourse, these phonosemantic properties are exploited to shape positive attitudes toward products. For children, whose abstract thinking is still developing, phonosemantic cues often play a more significant role than semantic content alone.

Phonosemantic Features of Children's Advertising Texts

Sound Symbolism. Sound symbolism is one of the most prominent phonosemantic features in children's advertising. Soft consonants and front vowels (e.g., /i/, /e/) are often associated with smallness, friendliness, and cuteness, which align with children's preferences. For example, brand names and slogans frequently contain diminutive or playful sounds that create a sense of warmth and safety.

Alliteration and Assonance. Alliteration (repetition of consonant sounds) and assonance (repetition of vowel sounds) enhance the musicality of advertising texts. Phrases such as "fun, fresh, and fruity" or "sweet, soft, and silly" attract children's attention and facilitate memorization. These devices make advertising slogans sound like rhymes or chants, similar to nursery rhymes familiar to children.

Rhyme and Rhythm. Rhyme and rhythm are central elements of children's advertising. Rhyming slogans are easier to remember and reproduce, increasing the likelihood that children will recall the advertised product. Rhythmical patterns also evoke positive emotions and create a playful atmosphere, reinforcing the entertaining nature of advertising messages.

Intonation and Prosody. Intonation patterns in audio and video advertisements aimed at children are usually exaggerated and dynamic. Rising intonation, varied pitch, and expressive stress patterns contribute to emotional engagement. Such prosodic features help maintain children's attention and convey enthusiasm, joy, and excitement.

Psycholinguistic Impact of Phonosemantics on Children. From a psycholinguistic perspective, phonosemantic elements directly influence children's cognitive and emotional processing. Children tend to associate pleasant sounds with positive experiences, which can lead to favorable attitudes toward advertised products. The repetitive and melodic nature of phonosemantic devices also supports implicit learning, allowing advertising messages to be absorbed subconsciously.

Moreover, phonosemantic strategies reduce cognitive effort, making messages easier to understand and accept. This explains why children's advertising often prioritizes sound effects over complex informational content.

Conclusion. The phonosemantic analysis of advertising texts aimed at children reveals that sound-based linguistic strategies play a decisive role in shaping the persuasive power of advertising discourse. Devices such as sound symbolism, alliteration, rhyme, and intonation are systematically used to attract attention, evoke emotions, and enhance memorability. The study confirms that phonosemantics is a key factor in understanding how advertising influences children's perception and behavior. Further research may focus on cross-linguistic comparisons or empirical studies examining children's responses to different phonosemantic patterns.

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