

The main features of Speech Acts usage in food advertising discourse

Las principales características del uso de *Speech Acts* en la publicidad de alimentos

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ABSTRACT:

Food industry is one of the most profitable industries in the world. How do food producers convince the customers to buy their products? What are the traits of these advertisements that influence the consumers' needs in buying? This article outlines the importance of the analysis of the speech acts in advertising. The major aspects of Speech Acts usage in food advertising discourse are discussed in this article. This study offers an in-depth understanding of the speech acts present in the messages of about 1,240 of advertising texts in the Russian language and 1,230 of advertising texts in the English language. The conclusion made is that the main goal of advertising discourse is the influence on consumers, so the addressers use only such Speech Acts via which they can realize the dominant idea.

Keywords: Pragmalinguistics, addresser, influence, addressee, speech act

RESUMEN:

La industria alimentaria es una de las industrias más rentables del mundo. ¿Cómo convencen los productores de alimentos a los clientes para que compren sus productos? ¿Cuáles son los rasgos de estos anuncios que influyen en las necesidades de los consumidores en la compra? Este artículo describe la importancia del análisis de los actos de habla en la publicidad. En este artículo se discuten los aspectos principales del uso de los Actos del habla en el discurso publicitario de los alimentos. Este estudio ofrece una comprensión en profundidad de los actos de habla presentes en los mensajes de alrededor de 1240 de los textos publicitarios en el idioma ruso y 1,230 de los textos publicitarios en el idioma inglés. La conclusión es que el objetivo principal del discurso publicitario es la influencia sobre los consumidores, por lo que los destinatarios solo usan dichos Actos del habla a través de los cuales pueden realizar la idea dominante.

Palabras clave: Pragmalingüística, destinatario, influencia, destinatario, acto de habla

1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is the consideration of the speech acts (SA) features in advertising discourse of food products on the example of the Russian and English languages.

Achieving this goal involves the following tasks: - classification of speech acts, most often seen in the advertising discourse of food; - applying methods of pragmalinguistics, of a comparative analysis with the involving of method of surveillance, interpretation, classification and processing of features of speech acts application in the Russian and English advertising. Using the mathematical statistics to obtain and assess data relating to the degree of correlation between the types of speech acts to be compared in the English-language and Russian-language advertising texts of food products.

The functional-pragmatic approach allowed us to consider the advertising discourse on the example of advertising food products from the position of illocutionary types of statements functioning in it. The dominant form in advertising food products is informing the consumer about the characteristics of the product. Based on such illocutionary acts as representative, directive, commissive and expressive acts we are going to find out which speech acts prevail in the Russian and English language of advertising. In the advertising texts of food products, all listed types of illocutionary acts are encountered, but in different numbers, the frequency of consumption of which, as our studies have shown, is determined not so much by national specifics as by the referent, that is, by the category of the product group advertised.

The material for this article is based on the advertising message of the publications from 2005 to 2015. About 1,240 of advertising texts in the Russian language and 1,230 of advertising texts in the English language were analyzed, and more than 7,000 of speech acts were identified. This fact suggests the reliability of the study.

Advertising communication is a special type of relationship that is a "conscious, organized and planned use of means which influence on the people aimed at achieving some goal" (Shatin 2002, pp. 41). **Intensification** of the addressee's interest and creation of favorable conditions for **strengthening** the object of the advertising text and its characteristics in the mind occurs due to the "use of marked language elements and deduces the addressee from the state of automaticity of perception of the advertising text". (Davidenkova 2009, pp. 76)

While the attention of the advertising communication is focused on "the impact of the utterance on the addressee, the enhanced awareness of the destination, changes in emotional state, views and evaluations of the recipient, the impact on acts committed" (Linguistic encyclopedic dictionary, 1990, pp. 389), the consideration of advertising messages from the point of view of pragmatism it seems worthwhile, because within pragmatism the essence of advertising communication receives the most adequate expression.

Pragmalinguistics focuses on "man's relation to linguistic signs, fixed in the language, but also on the choice of the most appropriate units (in the orientation on the whole situation, per beneficiary) for the production of utterances/ texts which the speaker in speech acts to reach their goals" (Formanovskaya 1998, pp. 14).

Advertising involves a certain kind of creativity in communication. According to Okigbo (Okigbo 1990) advertising creativity is to be viewed "in terms of how well it enhances communication to an intended audience, in terms of the particular communication task deemed most important by the advertiser, and in relation to the particular interpretation of 'want-satisfying' that seem most likely to appeal to the desired audience segment". Thus we can say that advertising as a means of communication, takes place within discourse is sensitive to its situational context

2. The Speech Acts Theory

The theory of speech acts is the center of pragmalinguistics. Under the speech act refers to the statement posed and spoken with a purpose and having a particular motive to carry out practical or mental (as typically addressed) the action, using a tool such as language/ speech.

Speech act is a unity of the following components: 1) locutionary act - the utterance of the message; 2) illocutionary act - an action in the process of pronouncing and 3) perlocutionary act - the exercise of influence on the addressee. Making a speech act, the speaker simultaneously performs actions. The statement has not only the communicative aspect but

also influencing effect on the listener (Ostin 1986, pp. 22-131).

The system of speech acts proposed by J. Searle and D. Vanderveken included the following classes: assertives or representatives - represent the state of affairs, describe the reality; directives - serve as motivations for the commission of some act; commissives - impose certain obligations on the speaker; declarations - express "institutional", ritualized actions; expressives - serve for the expression of assessments and emotions, descriptions of the subjective picture of the world of the speaker (Searle and Vanderveken 1985, pp. 12-20).

3. Data and Analysis

Analysis of factual material showed that the product of the advertising discourse of food products, the sender of advertising texts are used out of five, mainly four types of speech acts.

Table 1
Correlation of speech acts in Russian and English languages

Types of speech acts	Russian language	English language
representatives	30% (% of SA total amount)	36% (% of SA total amount)
commissives	21(% of SA total amount)	20% (% of SA total amount)
expressives	21(% of SA total amount)	14% (% of SA total amount)
directives	28% (% of SA total amount)	30% (% of SA total amount)

As can be seen from Table 1 in the advertising messages the representative and directive speech acts dominate. The sender of the advertising message use representative who claim the truth of the expressed propositions and guidelines having the purpose to induce the recipient to purchase an advertised object or to change opinion on the subject of advertising.

In the study of an advertising discourse, **it is reasonable to** touch upon the question of direct and indirect speech acts. The direct speech act is a production and utterance of such a statement, which clearly expresses its illocutionary power. However, quite often in a statement, another force occurs in the background of explicit illocutionary force, i.e. more content than its surface structure gives appears in the speech act and the addressee must recognize it. Thus, some speech acts can be expressed through other speech acts. Addresser, using an indirect speech act, relies on the addressee understanding, based on a background knowledge, presupposition and conventions - unwritten agreement installation, accepted in this community (Nefedova 2011, pp. 37)

In advertisements information is coded by means of language features and updates implicitly more often. Implicit information **gives** the high estimated value to an object and, unlike finished information, is perceived without criticism and doubt. **It is a little** controlled by consciousness and is used for manipulation. The effectiveness of implicit information is based on the difficult mechanism of its extraction and interpretation by the addressee (Pirogova 2001, pp. 209).

The pragmatic function of implicit advertising information is its action on the addressee. The presupposition is the most important expression of implicit information in the advertising strategy.

The pragmatic presupposition is the central element, characterizing the advertising context, as it forms conditions to understand the statement and to mention knowledge and beliefs of the addresser and the addressee.

Both rational and hedonistic motives are exploited in advertising messages, and convincing influence is implicitly expressed through explicit, discriminative and informative content that

is actualized in various models of SA structures. According to L.A. Nefedova "in the human mind there is an undifferentiated distribution of the situation of its interaction with the world, which manifests itself in the curtailment of the corresponding layer of linguistic semantics, which cannot be expressed explicitly." (Nefedova 2011)

In this article we tried to reveal those language means, through which representative and directive speech acts are realized. Their domination is obvious in an advertising discourse of foodstuffs.

Table 2
Basic language means of directive in an advertising discourse

Language means	English language	Russian language
Imperative structures	95% (of the total number of directive SA)	92%(of the total number of directive SA)
Exclamation sentences	48%(of the total number of directive SA)	73%(of the total number of directive SA)
Modal structures	38%(of the total number of directive SA)	42%(of the total number of directive SA)
Rhetorical questions	68%(of the total number of directive SA)	81%(of the total number of directive SA)
Personal, possessive pronouns	71%(of the total number of directive SA)	78%(of the total number of directive SA)
Evaluative vocabulary	58%(of the total number of directive SA)	67%(of the total number of directive SA)

Advertising directives (see Table 2) differ in intensity of illocutionary force, but both in the Russian and English advertisement the most widespread communicative type of statements are the incentive, imperative sentences. They usually **call** for immediate purchase, showing the obvious benefit and necessity of such an action without delay. It **is related** to psycholinguistic features of the advertising text: as a rule, minimal time is used for its perception, therefore the advertising text must be extremely forceful, to affect the addressee more:

1.Experience the power to elevate. **Enjoy** Smoothie King's new Coffee in delicious caramel, mocha, and vanilla flavours.(Cosmo, sep 2008)

2.Wake up your friendly bacteria. **Get** Healthy Inside today.(Cosmo,Janury 2007)

3.Boostkid's immune system with Nutrilon
(Nash Malish, Okt.2009)

4.Change easily. Open EFES world. (Cosmo, Sep.2006)

The use of "softer" directions, constructed in the form of dialogue is also frequent. As a rule, this method is used in indirect speech acts:

1.How do you feel? I feel like a Toohey's (Marie Claire, sep 2008)

2.So what are you waiting for? You can enjoy the sweet taste of our Manuka Honey on any snack that takes you fancy.(Cosmo, nov2011)

3.Again gave the promise to eat properly in the new year?
Eat Aktivia every day.

Start a new life with Aktivia! (Cosmo, Feb.2008)

4. How to become a better mom in the world? Have patience and, of course, milk! You have pedigree pads for puppies now. Let the baby grow healthy! (Caravan Stories, March 2012)

In advertisement the interrogatives don't realize the main primary function of information request. They are called to excite and maintain attention, therefore they perform rather introductory function, i.e. precede the basic information expressed by the main textual proposition.

An interesting fact is that for Russian-language advertisement, the use of exclamatory sentences is more typical than for English-language. The intonation in Russian-language advertisement tends almost to a constant "exclamation."

1. GranShef. Spend time with taste! (Caravan of Stories, March 2010)

2 Vegeta is more fragrant and tastier! (Cosmo, Oct.2006)

3. Bio - Max. Find out your maximum! (Cosmo, Jan.2009)

4. Try Nashen, the Prostokwashen! (Cosmo, May2009)

Table 3

The main language means of representatives realization in advertizing discourse

Language means	English	Russian
Complex sentences	78% (from the total number of representative SA)	41% (from the total number of representative SA)
Exclamatory sentences	69% (from the total number of representative SA)	52% (from the total number of representative SA)
Question-answer structures	58% (from the total number of representative SA)	45% (from the total number of representative SA)
Modal structures	37% (from the total number of representative SA)	39% (from the total number of representative SA)
Personal, possessive pronouns	75% (from the total number of representative SA)	69% (from the total number of representative SA)
Numerals	83% (from the total number of representative SA)	87% (from the total number of representative SA)
Precedential names	53% (from the total number of representative SA)	59% (from the total number of representative SA)
Adjectives in a superlative degree	73% (from the total number of representative SA)	71% (from the total number of representative SA)
Specialized lexicon	+ 88% (from the total number of representative SA)	+93% (from the total number of representative SA)

The statistical data of Table 3 and the examples following the table allow us to draw a conclusion that more complete description of product characteristics by means of specialized lexicon usage is peculiar for the representative speech acts: Omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, iron, minerals, polyunsaturated oil, cholesterol-free, iron, vitamin C, potassium, protein, hydrogenated, rehydrated, MSG, fat free, calories.

1. New "Ermik" yogurts with natural **fructose** are created especially for daily care of the kids' growing organism. **Fructose** is almost **twice** sweeter than **sucrose** therefore the ready-made product contains much less **carbohydrates**, and the taste loved by all little sweet teeth remains the same! (Our Kid, May 2010)
2. New mayonnaise "Calvé Extra Easy" contains only **30 kcal** in one spoon! (Cosmo, October 2009)
3. Actually, a medium- size spud has only **110 calories**, is naturally **fat free**, high in **vitamin C** and packs more **potassium** than a banana. So a little respect please. (New Idea, May 2008)
4. Bega Super Slims have **50% less fat** and less **cholesterol** than normal cheese slices. Kraft Light Slices claim to have **30% less fat**. Plus Bega Super Slims have around **twice the calcium** of Kraft Light Slices. (The Times, March 2007)

Thus, "Claims or conclusions demand investigations and verifications; therefore, the representative acts in the adverts subtly invite prospective buyers to verify for themselves the claims that the adverts raise" (Chiluwa 2007).

The purpose of the advertizing message is to induce the addressee to purchase a good, and the impact on the emotional level of the recipient considerably increases the appeal of the advertized object. This also explains the fact that all advertizing messages are penetrated by emotionally evaluative lexicon that causes the positive steady associations connected with the offered product.

1. There is a taste which you will forget almost instantly. But sometimes you will meet such taste without which you can't do any more. That is "Mattoni". The temptation growing with each drink. The **unique harmonious taste** created by an **ideal** combination of the Karlovy Vary minerals. **Uncompromising, not having equal and not knowing alternatives.** "Mattoni" mineral water. You will see it on the most **refined** tables of the world. There are moments when the perfection can tempt. (Caravan of Stories, June 2009)
2. To create **the best** decaffeinated coffee we take **the finest** Arabica and Robusta beans and then wash the caffeine away in **pure, natural** water. (Anything else wouldn't be to our taste.) (New Idea, July 2007)

4. Conclusion

Taking into consideration all mentioned above, we can state that the representative and directive speech acts are the major SA possess the most illocutionary force in written advertisement of food staff. The cause of it is the main intention of food advertising process to appeal customers' attention via representing the features of advertised products and encourage them purchasing it.

Thus, the food advertizing discourse, unlike, for example, the advertizing discourses of cars, cosmetics, business services implements the dominant purpose by means of such language means as: imperative structures, exclamatory sentences, question-answer structures, emotionally evaluative lexicon.

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