

A Pragmatic Study of Persuasive Analogies in English Ads

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دراسة تداولية للمماثلات المقنعة في الاعلانات الانجليزية

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Abstract:

Analogy is a figure of speech used in different fields including advertising. Metaphor and simile are the figurative devices used for creating analogy. Unlike metaphor and simile, analogy has not received enough attention from researchers. There are limited number of studies on analogy as an independent literary phenomenon and is rarely studied as a persuasive tool used in advertising. Accordingly, the main aim of this study is to highlight successful applications of analogy in advertisements to demonstrate its persuasive effect in directing the audience to purchase the products being advertised. Also, it is aimed at revealing the pragmatic strategies and persuasive appeals contribute in making persuasive analogy. The main findings of the study have been: 1) analogy is an effective figure of speech which plays a significant role in the field of advertising to raise the audience's interest and respectively raise the essence of persuasion; 2) the use of images (visual metaphor) are noticeably greater than verbal

ملخص:

المماثلة هي شكل من أشكال الكلام يستخدم في مجالات مختلفة بما في ذلك الإعلانات. الاستعارة والتشبيه هي الأدوات المجازية المستخدمة لإنشاء المماثلة. على عكس الاستعارة والتشبيه ، لم يحظ التمثيل بالاهتمام الكافي من الباحثين. هناك عدد محدود من الدراسات حول المماثلة كظاهرة أدبية مستقلة ونادراً ما تتم دراستها كأداة اقناع تستخدم في الإعلانات. وبناءً على ذلك ، فإن الهدف الرئيسي من هذه الدراسة هو تسليط الضوء على التطبيقات الناجحة للمماثلة في الإعلانات لإثبات تأثيرها المقنع في توجيه الجمهور لشراء المنتجات التي يتم الإعلان عنها. كما أنه يهدف إلى الكشف عن الاستراتيجيات البراغمية والنداءات المقنعة التي تساهم في صنع التمثيل المقنع. النتائج الرئيسية للدراسة كانت: (١) المماثلة شكل من اشكال الكلام الفعالة والتي تلعب دوراً مهماً في مجال الإعلانات لزيادة اهتمام الجمهور ورفع جوهر الإقناع على التوالي. (٢) استخدام الصور (الاستعارة الصورية) أكبر بشكل ملحوظ من الأدوات المجازية اللفظية. (٣) فيما يتعلق بأفعال الكلام، تم استخدام التوجيه والتمثيل بشكل متكرر. (٤) اعتمد

figurative devices; 3) with regard to the speech acts, directive and representative have been used most frequently; 4) the advertisers relied mainly upon metaphor in creating advertisements, while little use of similes have been made; and 5) pathos has been the main appeal the advertisers employed for the purpose of persuasion.

Keywords: Analogy, metaphor, simile, advertisements, speech acts, persuasive appeals.

المعلنون بشكل أساسي على الاستعارة في إنشاء الإعلانات، بينما تم استخدام القليل من التشبيهات. (٥) مناشدة مشاعر وعاطفة الجمهور هي الوسيلة الرئيسية التي يستخدمها المعلنون لغرض الإقناع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: المماثلة، الاستعارة، التشبيه، الإعلانات، أفعال الكلام، وسائل الإقناع.

Introduction

Comparing two objects or ideas is a common practice in the English language, it is as useful in writing and literature as in everyday speech. There are many forms of comparison, but there is only one literary term that includes most of these types. The term is known as analogy. Analogy primarily refers to a comparison made on the basis of the structural relationships between the terms involved in the comparison. The intention of an analogy is to aid in the explanation of an idea or thing by comparing it to something that is more familiar to the reader or listener. Literary tools such as simile and metaphor are often used in analogies to facilitate the comparison.

However, the phenomenon of analogy has not been given enough attention by researchers compared to other figures of speech. Accordingly, there are limited number of studies on analogy as an independent literary phenomenon. Moreover, analogy is rarely studied as a persuasive tool used in advertising. On this basis, this study is an attempt to trace the successful applications of persuasive analogy in

English advertisements in order to discover how it has been used in the advertising world. The choice of analogy rather than any other figure of speech is motivated by its significance role in clarification and the audience's shown interest in it.

In the light of the problem stated above, the study is based to fulfill the quest of answering the following questions:

1. What is analogy and what are its components?
2. What are the figurative devices employed in creating analogy?
3. What is the function of analogy and how it is effective?
4. What is the concept of persuasion and how analogy is considered as a persuasive tool?
5. Which theories of pragmatics dealt with analogy?

Definitions of Analogy

Analogy has been defined by different literary and linguistic dictionaries and investigated by many scholars from a variety of disciplines. This results in many definitions of analogy mostly different in wording but share the same concept. In its most common definition, as defined by Gentner (1983) and Holyoak (2005), analogy refers to "a comparison between two things or ideas which are similar to one another (though not completely), mostly for the purpose of clarification." Quinn (2006: 22), defines analogy as "a comparison based upon a similarity between two things." That means, as a figure of speech, analogy functions as an extended simile or metaphor. As a mode of thought, it refers to the process of reasoning from parallel examples, for example, the common Renaissance belief that the four humors in a person's body (blood, phlegm, choler, and bile) are analogous to the four elements in nature: earth, air, fire, and water. It is also defined by Scott (1985: 12) as "the process of reasoning from parallel cases (in its logical sense). In the literary way, it is the description of something known in order to suggest

in certain respects something unknown. An analogue is a word or thing bearing analogy to, or resembling, another."

Strategies of Analogy

Analogy has a strong relation with the other pragmatic phenomena metaphor and simile (Gentner, 1983, 2001; Holyoak, 2005: 117-37). Moreover, Gentner & Holyoak (ibid) have mentioned that metaphor and simile are the literary tools or figurative devices used to make an analogy. Therefore, analogy is more extensive and elaborate than either a simile or a metaphor. The term analogy is reasoning or explaining from parallel cases, while simile is an expressed analogy and metaphor is an implied one (See Richards, 1936: chapters 5-6).

Analogy in Advertising

The use of figures of speech is highly influential in the language of advertising to the extent that it determines the effectiveness and success of an ad (hence this abbreviation stands for advertisements). Those figures are of different types including analogy, metaphor and simile and they can appear verbally or\and visually. Analogy being one of those figures become an important persuasive tool which plays a great role in business and advertising. Phillips and McQuarrie (2004) build their predictions on the findings of McQuarrie and Mick (1992), Tom and Eves (1999) and Mothersbaugh et al. (2002), who claimed that ads which contain a rhetorical figures provoke more elaboration, better recalled and liked than ads without them.

On the same basis, Forceville (2002) confirms that applying rhetorical speech in advertising can be very worthwhile to lure consumers into central processing. He (ibid) asserts "being one of the main rhetorical devices analogy, metaphor and simile are very much useful in advertising specially when they are visual. The advantage of using visual rhetoric is self-evident, there is no need for translation or adaptation and the costs can be very much reduced." Ang and Lim (2006) show that brands using metaphors (especially visual) in ads were perceived to be more

sophisticated and exciting, but less sincere and competent than those using literal headlines or pictures. Ad attitudes, brand attitudes, and purchase intention were also enhanced with metaphoric advertising.

The Persuasive Power of Analogy

Persuasion has been described as the symbolic process through which a communicator constructs an argument in order to persuade others to modify their attitudes or behaviors in a free-will environment. Persuaders, on their hand, can only generate a need and a case for change; after all, it is up to their audience to decide whether or not to change in response to their appeals (Perloff, 2003: 8). Sutherland (2008: 276-300) comments: what makes a message persuasive is understanding as at the heart of things persuasion is about the audience understanding what is being communicated. Understanding leads to acceptance when the argument is sound, well-targeted, and the conclusion seems unavoidable.

When it comes to creating effective understanding, analogies are hard to compete with. Most of their persuasive power comes from the audience arriving at the intended understanding on their own. Instead of simply saying something analogy allows the audience to come to that conclusion on their own, which is much more persuasive (Holyoak, 2005). A large number of cases of successful use of analogy for the purpose of persuasion can be found in ads. Using analogies help advertising agencies to create compelling, interesting and persuasive ads design that will help consumers want to buy. An example of employing analogy as a persuasive technique that try to convince an audience is the ad bellow.



Figure (1). Ad for BMW.

This ad is a simple example of how advertisers utilize a successful visual analogy alongside with a verbal one implied in the headline. BMW warns against drinking and driving in this advertisement example through the strong resemblance of a humane artificial part to a spare part for a car. Back to the concept of persuasion, Aristotle is considered to be the most influential philosopher whose insights on this topic (persuasion) still carry a lot of value. One of his most fundamental contributions was the composition of persuasive speaking which are timeless and persuaders of all types have been relying on them since. Aristotle (as cited in Herrick, 2000: 75) identified that the art of persuasion consisted of three parts: ethos (appealing to ethics, morals and character), pathos (appealing to emotions) and logos (appealing to Logic).

Image in Advertising and Persuasive Imagery

As mentioned in previous sections, (Phillips, 2000; Kovecses, 2010; Phillips and McQuarrie, 2004&2005; Ang and Lim, 2006; Mulken, 2014) emphasized that visual analogies and metaphors in advertising can take the form of an audio visual form in TV commercials or an image in print ads. On the same basis (Malkewitz, Wright, Friestad, 2003: p.4) mention that successful persuasion can also occur by design, that is via a picture conceived in the human mind to engineer an intended change in

someone's mental states that is instrumental to their performing an action sought by the agent.

At this point, it is important to mention that as Wellek & Warren (1973: 192) state communicating only visually is not a simple task. There is a deep psychological process the designers and the audience go through when making and understanding a visual analogy. It has to be something new and original to encourage the audience make an effort to understand it but it cannot be too difficult because people could associate this difficulty with a negative image of the product. Instead, it has to be something balanced in order to be solved within the right time frame to work well and occur smoothly.

Data Collection

In order to investigate the persuasiveness of analogy and its effect on the audience's comprehension, 30 ads of random brands and companies are collected from TV commercials, website ads, print ads (newspapers and magazines) and outdoor ads such as banners and billboards. The ads are selected in such a way to include different categories of products such as, food advertising, cosmetics, cars, common health awareness ads, etc... Afterwards, the ads are carefully analyzed in the light of the model built for this study.

The data includes companies and brands of different categories which have used analogy significantly in their ads as an instrument to promote for their products. They have clearly investigated the power of analogy and have been using them over a number of decades. Many of the brands and companies from which the data of the study is selected, reported that using analogy as an advertising strategy is actually successful. Furthermore, feedbacks of some of these ads proved that they made the best seller rate.

Model of Analysis

The framework adopted for the analysis of the data in this study is based on an eclectic model consisting of: first, Searle's (1969) typology of speech acts, second, Gentner's (2001) and Holyoak's (2005) pragma-cognitive model for analyzing the two main figurative devices used to create analogy, that is, metaphor and simile. And thirdly, Aristotle's classical persuasive appeals. Constructing on the first model, the researcher attempts to classify the speech acts in the ads according to the major types of illocutionary acts introduced by Searle. The study also focuses on the relationship between the form and the function of the speech acts used in ads, that is, either a direct or an indirect relationship.

The second model is pragma-cognitive based, because metaphor and simile are among the core concepts in cognitive linguistics (Gentner, 2001 & Holyoak, 2005). The model embraces the two main categories of figurative devices used in ads to create an analogy, that is, metaphor and simile. These devices, are in turn divided into two types: verbal and visual. The model consists of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory, Phillips and McQuarrie's (2004) pictorial metaphorical structures, and Chiappe and Kennedy's (2001) model of interpretation and analysis of similes.

The third model is based upon Aristotle's classical persuasive appeals. It is through using these appeals the speaker or the writer can persuade his audience. Analogy can contribute to all these techniques. Concerning ethos, analogy helps to reveal the advertisers' good character which includes: expertness, trustworthiness, and good intention toward the audience (Heinrichs, 2007: 288). In respect to pathos, analogy is very useful in stirring the audience's emotions. Pathos is the technique through which the advertisers can arouse the audience's emotions. Using figurative language like metaphor and simile contribute to create pathos appeal (Ramage, 2010: 113). Moreover, ads involving pictures contribute even greater to the stimulation of emotions of the ad's audience. Logos on the other hand, is a persuasive appeal to reason. In the case of analogy

it can be used to make the strongest cases of argumentation and reasoning to make effective messages. This is due to the power of reasoning it carries (Holyoak & Morrison, 2005: 122). It is gained through the use of comparison between two similar cases and mapping their components which leads to logical conclusions.

It is necessary to mention here that the current study provides both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data. First, a detailed qualitative analyses of selected ads is represented using an eclectic model to discover the pragmatic aspects of persuasive analogy in ads. Also, special consideration is given to the roles played by the textual and pictorial components and the complex conceptual structures that are constructed around the metaphorical centre. Since this study is a qualitative and quantitative analysis, it is also within its scope to determine how frequently metaphors and similes (the two main categories of figurative devices that are used to create an analogy) occur in ads and what types of speech acts and persuasive appeals are most likely to occur. To achieve this, the plan is to describe what happens in those ads where analogies are involved plus discussing the statistical results as a representation of the quantitative part.

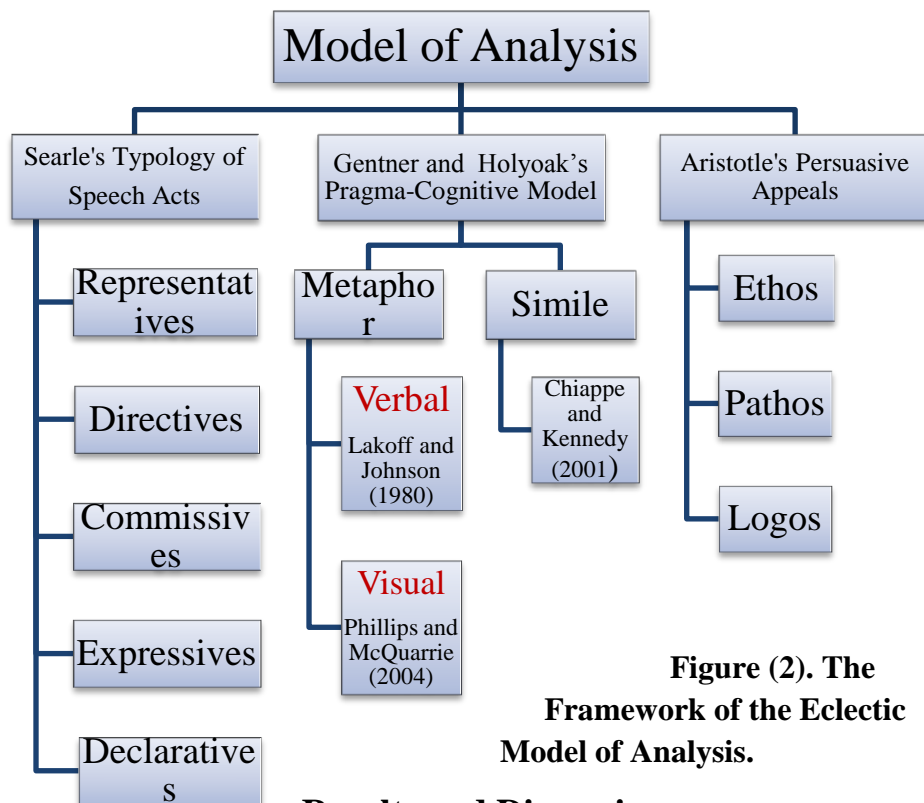


Figure (2). The Framework of the Eclectic Model of Analysis.

Results and Discussion

After the qualitative analysis of the data based on the selected model, this section will be concerned with the quantitative analysis of the data. The frequencies and percentages of the use of speech acts, the figurative devices and persuasive appeals will be counted.

A. Speech Acts

Speech Acts	Frequencies	Percentages
Directive	١٧	36.95 %
Representative	١٦	34.78 %
Commissive	١٢	26.08 %
Expressive	١	2.17 %
Declarative	٠	0 %
Total	46	100%

Table (1). The Frequencies and Percentages of Speech Acts.

According to the table above, directives, representatives and commissives are the most frequently used speech acts whose percentage of occurrence amounted (36.95 %), (34.78 %), (26.08 %) respectively. Applications of directive speech acts in ads plays an important role in making them informative and persuasive. Directives have been presented differently every time, mostly as a request, advice or invitation. The main purpose behind the frequent use of representatives, on the other hand, is to introduce the product and service by making claims and assertions about its quality. Therefore, the consumer will show interest to buy the product or to use the service being advertised. Regarding commissives, they have been used indirectly as implied acts of promising and warning. Expressive and declarative speech acts are the less frequent type with (2.17 %) and (0 %) percentage of occurrence.

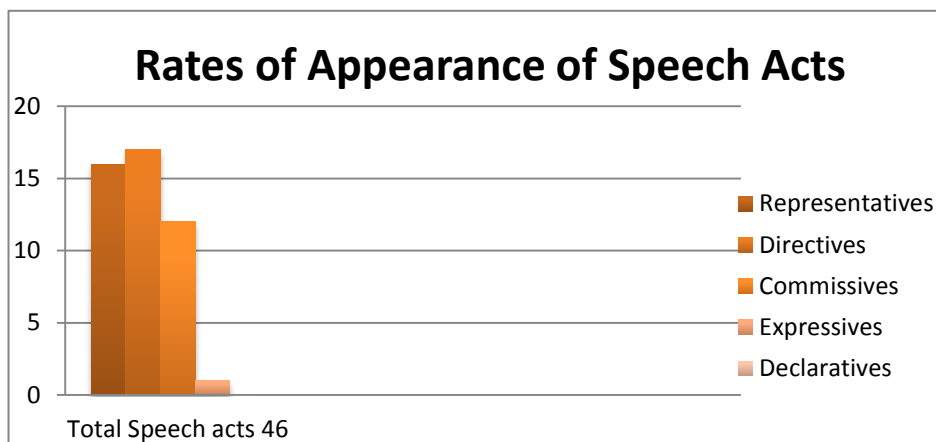


Figure (3). Rates of Appearance of Speech acts.

B. Figurative Devices

Visual Figurative Devices	Frequencies	Percentages
Visual Metaphor	27	100 %
Visual Simile	0	0 %
Total	27	100 %

Verbal Figurative Devices	Frequencies	Percentages
Verbal Metaphor	2	40 %
Verbal Simile	3	60 %
Total	5	100 %

Table (2). The Frequencies and Percentages of Figurative Devices.

The results of table (2) and figure (4) show that the use of images (visual metaphor) rating (27) are noticeably greater than verbal figurative devices rating only (5) out of (30) ads. Metaphoric images or visual metaphors with (100 %) percentage scored the highest use. The same results reveal that unlike metaphors, similes used as a way to catch the audience's attention only verbally with (60 %) percentage more than verbal metaphors with (40 %) percentage. The common use of metaphor (especially visual) is to activate the consumers' cognitive processing, so they can connect between the literal and figurative meaning of an item. In addition, the application of metaphor plays an important role in advertising, which does not only make ads attractive, but also make them informative and persuasive.

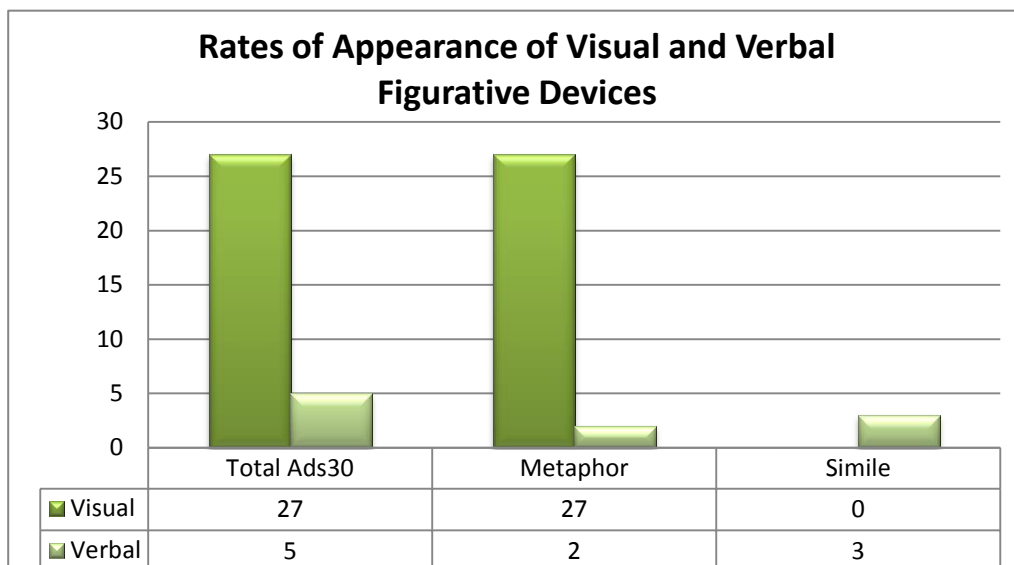


Figure (4). Rates of Appearance of Figurative Devices.

C. Persuasive Appeals

Persuasive Appeals	Frequencies	Percentages
Pathos	28	71.79 %
Logos	7	17.94 %
Ethos	4	10.25 %
Total	39	100%

Table (3). The Frequencies and Percentages of Persuasive Appeals.

Related to the persuasive appeals, table (3) shows that pathos has been the main appeal the advertisers employed for the purpose of persuasion with (71.79 %) percentage followed by logos and ethos appeals with (17.94 %) and (10.25 %) respectively.

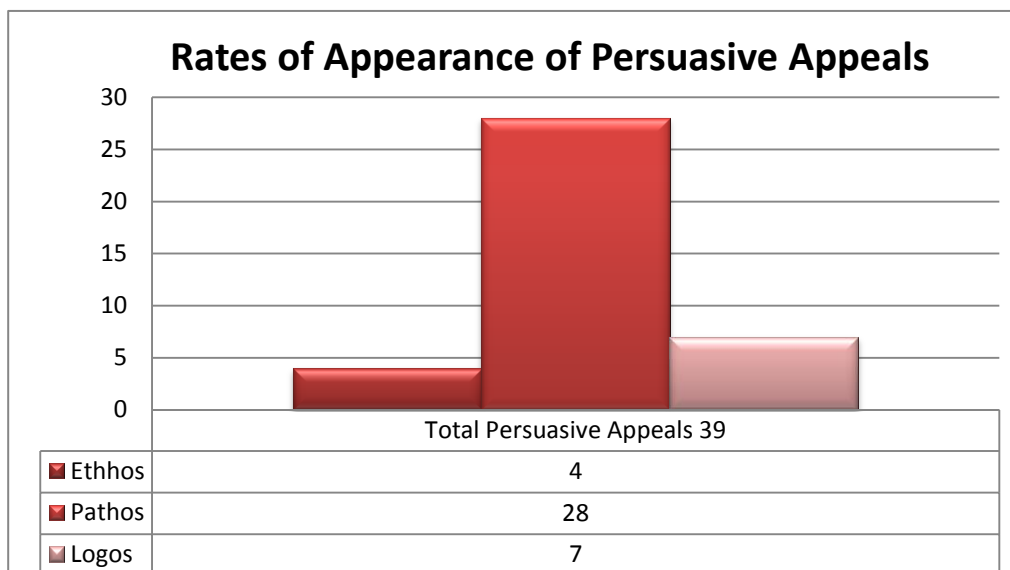


Figure (5). Rates of Appearance of Persuasive Appeals.

Conclusion

The study has arrived at a better understanding of analogy as a pragmatic phenomenon used in English ads. Its main task is to make an explanation for the processing of analogy in ads based on the developed model of analysis which consists of Searle's speech acts theory, figurative devices (metaphor and simile) used to create analogy and Aristotle's classical persuasive appeals. The selected model has proven itself as a clear-cut framework for the analysis of the data. The study has also shown the positive effect of the use of analogy in English ads. On the basis of the qualitative and quantitative analysis of thirty samples of English ads and the findings of the analysis, a set of conclusions have been arrived at. They are as follows:

1. Analogy has proven to be a very effective figure of speech used in different fields such as, rhetoric, pragmatics, learning and advertising, for it plays a significant role in the clarification of abstract ideas by comparing them to more familiar concepts.
2. The main function of analogy in the in the field of advertising is to raise the audience's interest and respectively raise the percentage of persuasion so the advertisers achieve higher sales.
3. With regard to the data analysis it was found that not all types of speech acts were used in the ads. Directives, representatives, commissives and only one expressive have been used. The advertisers use directives and representatives most frequently, because they can help to suggest the right amount of information about the product.
4. The use of images (visual metaphor) are noticeably greater than verbal figurative devices. In fact, the results revealed that creating visuals to send their message across was the first priority of the advertisers. The bright side is that visual messaging provides additional interest, curiosity and attention, which works as a motivator for an ad's audience.
5. Unlike metaphors, similes can be used as a way to catch the audience's attention only when the comparison is made via a phrase introduced by 'like' or 'as'. Without the accompanied comparison marker it is hard to tell whether the picture is a metaphor or a simile.
6. Metaphor is the strategy most frequently used, while similes have been used less (three of them only). The common use of metaphors is because they can help to suggest the right kind of emotive associations for the product. Clearly, the application of metaphor plays an important role in advertising which does not only make ads attractive, but also makes them informative and persuasive.
7. Related to the persuasive appeals, pathos has been the main appeal that advertisers employed for the purpose of persuasion. Logos and ethos appeals have also been used respectively in some ads. Famous brands, companies and organizations employ ethos and logos more than pathos appeal. This may be due to the important goal or message they want to

send and. So, they fulfill the virtue and credibility appeal alongside logical demonstration to persuade people of their quest. Small brands (mostly of cosmetics, food industry and entertainment) on the other hand, use pathos to appeal to the audience's senses and emotions to attract their attention and to persuade them of their products.

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Appendix. English Ads Used in the Study

1. One Out All Down



2. Grow Your Own



3. Breath Speaks Louder Than Words



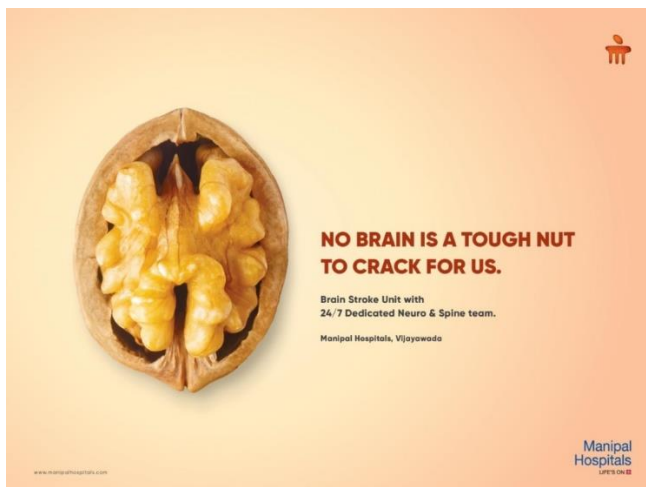
4. For Skin as Smooth as a Peach



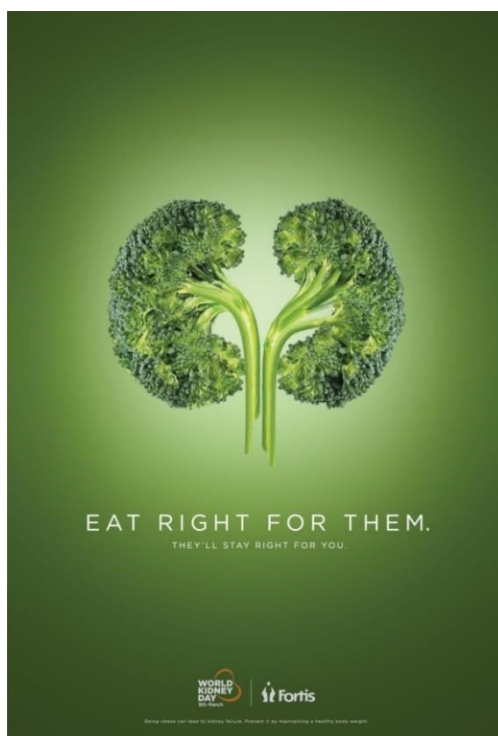
5. Shame No More



6. No Brain Is a Tough nut to Crack for Us



7. Eat Right for Them



8. We Serve Fresh Press Ad



9. Hello I'm a Pc\ Hello I'm a Mac



Watch Mitchell and Webb as PC and Mac
apple.com/uk

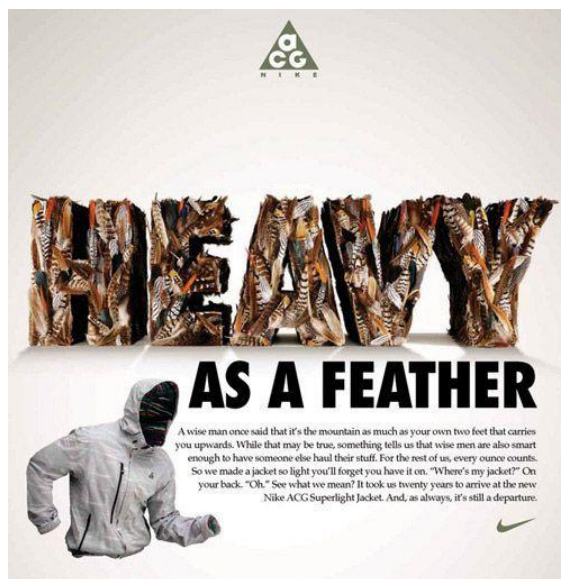
10. Kill a Cigarette and Save a Life



11. It's More Than Technology. It's Instinct.



12. Heavy as a Feather



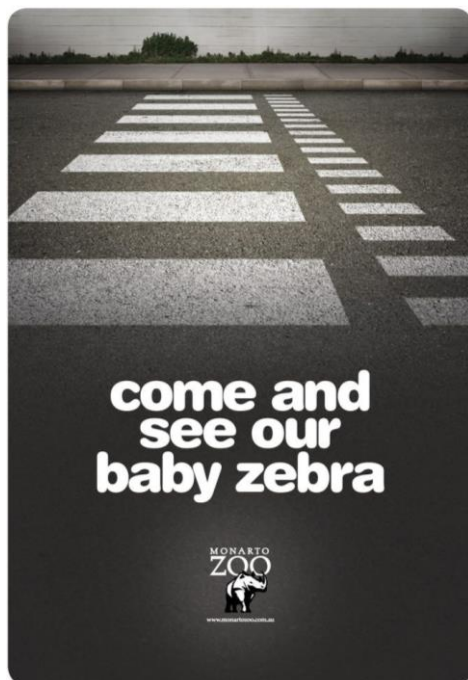
13. As Cool as a Cucumber



14. Stop Stains from Settling in.



15. Come and See Our Baby Zebra



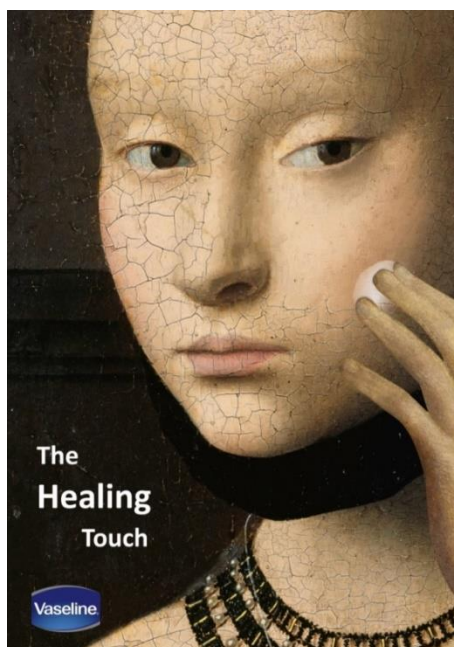
16. Recharge



17. Wake up to Life



18. The Healing Touch



19. An Unwashed Vegetable Can Become A Deadly Weapon



20. Anti-dandruff



21. We're Sorry



22. Take Care of Your Car the Way You Take Care of Yourself



23. Get Fully Charged



24. Discover the Great Fun of Light Coffee



25. The Manual of Whiteness



26. Amazing Tea!



27. How Long Can You Live?



28. Fresh & Tasty



29. Why Obesity is America's Greatest Threat



30. Keep Your Distance

