

ONOMATOPOEIA IN MODERN ADVERTISING TEXTS

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Onomatopoeia is an integral part of the lexical system of the English language. It is a figurative expressive device which is widely used in modern advertising texts. Sound imitating items that appear in advertisements are of two main kinds: those, which are everyday words in the language, and those, which are special coinages. The main semantic features of English sound-imitating words of advertising texts are the following:

1) the meaning of sound-imitating words is concrete. These words have denotatum and significatum. Denotatum of sound-imitating words is a compound acoustic complex of nature sounding, while significatum is reflection of real features of natural sounding in human mind;

2) primary and secondary generalization is inherent in these words. For example, the word '*chuckle*', on the one hand, generalizes sounds, emitted by poultry, but on the other hand, expresses specific human laughing;

3) the distinctive feature of the semantics of onomatopoeic words in advertising is considered to be expressiveness. The expressive side of onomatopoeia is described in terms of phonemes, i.e. as belonging to the language in question, or as sounds (phones) not belonging to the phonemic inventory of the language in question. More seldom it is described in terms of some kind of phonological or phonetic features;

4) sound-imitating words also have qualitative and quantitative indices that are the essential part of their semantic structure.

Qualitative induces are determined by four factors – type of sound movement, type of sound source, nature of movement (impulsive, sudden, enduring),

environment, where the sound appears. They determine such sound qualities as pitch of tone, timbre, sonority, intensity, etc.

Quantitative indices of sound-imitating words are instantaneity, recurrence, duration, brevity, etc. All above-mentioned quantitative indices can be expressed lexically, semantically and phonetically. Sound-imitating roots as lexical items express sound duration and sound recurrence. Reduplicative words such as *'tick-tick'*, *'pat-pat'*, *'puff-puff'* also express repetition.

As it was mentioned, the quantitative indices are reproduced grammatically. Suffixes -le, -er are added to the sound-imitating roots. For example, *chat – chatter*, *chuck – chuckle*, *crack – crackle*, *dab – dabble*, *fiz – fizzle*, *frizz – frizzle*, *gab – gabble*, *jab – jabber*, *jog – joggle*, *sniff – snuffle*, etc. These suffixes impart some additional notional shades, as, for example, recurrence. Some final consonants reduplicate, to express the duration of the word. These are hushing and vibrant consonants: *'chirr'*, *'puff'*, *'buzz'*, etc.

In advertising, the sound a product makes, and the emotion it is claimed to generate in the user, are often given onomatopoeic expression: a particular make of car goes *Vr-o-o-m*; a smell of perfume or gravy evokes *M-m-m-m-m*. Brand names commonly use sound symbolism, as the world of breakfast cereals crisply demonstrate, with its *crunches*, *puffs*, *pops*, and *smacks*. And slogans often rely on it too.

Cap'n Crunch: the crunch always gives you away.

Advertising uses onomatopoeia as a mnemonic so consumers will remember their products:

Alka Seltzer - makes a *"plop, plop, fizz, fizz"* noise when dunked in water.

Advertisers, knowing the special “sensitive” sounds, use sound-imitating words with such voices in their slogans. Here are some sounds and clusters of them.

Initial consonant clusters with /s-/:

1) /sl-/ conveys downward movement, direction, or position: *slack*, *slash*, *slither*, *slope*, *slouch*, *sluice*, *slump*, etc.; often a generally negative association: *slag*, *slap*, *sleazy*, *slob*, *slop*, *slosh*, *sloth*, *sludge*, *slum*, *slur*, *slurp*, *slush*, *slut*;

2) /sn-/ conveys unpleasantness: *snaffle, snag, snare, snarl, snatch, sneak, sneer, sneeze, sniff, snigger, snoop, snooty, snuffle*;

3) /sw-/ conveys smooth or wide-reaching movement: *swallow, swamp, swarm, swat, sway, sweep, swell, swerve, swift, swill, swipe, swirl, swish, swivel, swoop*.

Laterals:

1) /- ɜ : (r)l/ conveys roundness: *purl, swirl, whirl*;

2) /gl-/ conveys brightness and light: *glare, gleam, glimmer, glimpse, glisten*.

3) /-l/ (preceded by short vowel and single consonant) conveys uncertain or repeated movement, or lack of size, structure or importance: *babble, bubble, chuckle, cuddle, dabble, diddle, dribble, gabble, gaggle, giggle, gobble, joggle, nibble, piddle*.

Final consonants:

1) /-f/ conveys swift or strong movement: *bash, clash, crash, crush, dash, flash, gnash, gush, lash, mash, push, rash, splash, squish, swish, thresh*.

2) /-p/ (preceded by a short vowel) conveys suddenness or shortness: *bebop, blip, bop, chop, clap, drip, flap, flip, flop, hop, pip, plop, pop, slap, snap, tap*.

3) /-b/ (preceded by a short vowel) conveys largeness or lack of shape or direction: *blab, blob, clobber, club, lob, gob, jab, mob, stab, tab*.

So, due to their emotional and stylistic coloring and ability to attract attention of a reader and make some pragmatic impact on them sound-imitating words are very popular in modern English advertising texts.

References

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