

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I would like to state some concluding points based on the discussion on doublespeak in some governmental speeches and some advertisements printed in both local and imported magazines.

I conclude that doublespeak can easily be found in many different kinds of mass communication, especially where the information giver gets more advantage than the audience or the readers. This point is evident in Chapter III, where relatively a great amount of doublespeak in governmental speeches and advertisements is analyzed. The presence of doublespeak is almost irresistible because doublespeak enables someone to say something without really saying it or at the very least avoiding undesirable reactions. In metaphorical words, doublespeak allows someone to get to one destination through the smoothest way possible.

In the governmental speeches, I have analyzed that there are at least four major kinds of doublespeak: euphemism, jargon, gobbledygook, and inflated language. Euphemism and inflated language are the mostly used doublespeak in the governmental speeches. Euphemism and inflated language have some degrees

of similarity. Both euphemism and inflated language require a broad range of vocabulary. Though similar, the two types of doublespeak have different purposes. The main purpose of euphemism is to avoid using more transparent meaning that might be too sensitive and might invite negative reactions. On the other hand the purpose of inflated language is to make a simple fact that normally will not get any significant reaction appear more important than its more transparent meaning and so, it brings pro reactions. Bureaucratese talk or gobbledygook might not be found as many as the earlier two doublespeak. Nevertheless, it has a significant contribution to the delivery process of the speech. Though it rarely has real sense or more transparent meaning, gobbledygook makes the speech longer, more fiery, and with the right poetic twist, more pleasant to the ears. More importantly, gobbledygook overwhelms and confuses the audience. A confused audience is unlikely to protest because they do not really know what the speaker is really saying, not to mention building disagreement and argumentation. Jargon is the type of doublespeak that is the least found in the data. However, its effect of creating confusion to the audience should not be underestimated. When a speech is delivered to an audience consisting of many people with a great diversity in social, educational, and economic backgrounds, the use of jargon can confuse some, if not all parts, of that audience. Misleading some of the audience serves half the purpose of doublespeak.

In a speech, not necessarily all four kinds of doublespeak appear. Meanwhile, intersection of two or more kinds of doublespeak at the same time is possible.

Doublespeak in advertisement takes slightly different forms than those in governmental speeches. The basic purpose of advertisement is to make audience or readers think more of the product, to make everything the advertiser is trying to sell outstanding. However, during this process advertisers are bound by some laws and this is where doublespeak comes very handy. The most common doublespeak in advertisement is the use of weasel words. Weasel words are basically words that appear to say and promise something, but when thoroughly inspected, the promise is hollow; it is an empty promise. Empty promises are typically generated from empty verbs, for example: “help”, “provide”, and “challenge”. In the doublespeak found in advertisements, there is also the rule of parity. According to the rules of parity, a product that belongs to a parity group is fundamentally the same as the rest of the group. Because one is similar to the rest, when one product is the best, so is every single product within the group. There are many other forms of doublespeak in advertisement like the use of unfinished sentences and unfinished comparison, which lead the readers to come up with their own interpretations. The red line that connects those different forms of doublespeak is their goal. The goal is to make the readers take their minds off the advertisement and wander away building images of the product advertised that the advertisement itself could not deliver.

As an overall comment, I conclude that doublespeak is a significant part of mass-communication. Doublespeak gives mass communication more colors and flares. In governmental speeches, doublespeak makes the often-boring political talks more interesting and impressive; on the other hand, it softens the edges of too sensitive or unpleasant facts. In the advertising world, where advertisements are in abundance, doublespeak gives outstanding appeals. With the competitiveness of the advertising world, doublespeak becomes the tool for the advertiser or the product maker to be more creative and at the same time still abide by the laws.

Generally speaking, the purpose of doublespeak whether in the governmental speeches or in advertisement, is to generate an impact, by twisting the truth that can either be negative or positive depending on what that doublespeak user desires. A successful doublespeak leads people to resort to an understanding that has been intended by the doublespeak user himself. In a way, doublespeak leads people to a mind-trap.

In this ever-growing world, technology becomes more sophisticated by the minute. With advanced technology, rampant mass-communication bombards us through various media. A world of mass-communication without doublespeak would be plain and boring, and probably chaotic.

I am of the opinion that it is impossible to completely filter doublespeak out of our lives. However, it is possible to minimize the impact of doublespeak. Being skeptical is a good start. Usually, being skeptical is the most effective way to spot doublespeak, when something sounds too good to be true, it usually is. Once we

know that doublespeak is present, we can try to figure out what the speaker or the advertisement is really saying. Furthermore, putting ourselves in the speakers' or the advertisement makers' position will allow us to get a glimpse of what is probably left unsaid by them and what advantages they get by using doublespeak. The reason is that for these doublespeak users, honesty might still be the best policy but doublespeak's twist of the truth gives them a lot more benefits. Above all, the one thing I believe is effective to minimize the effects of doublespeak is language awareness. The more aware we are of the real meanings of the words thrown in our direction on a daily basis, the more tolerant with doublespeak we become.