

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Advertising is one of the ways for a company to promote its products. It is also a form of communication for marketing. It is used to persuade people (viewers, readers, listeners or customers) to buy the products being promoted.

Advertising means the business or occupation of preparing and issuing advertisements (“Advertising”). The act of advertising is called advertisement. Advertisement means a public notice or announcement usually paid for, as of things for sale, needs, etc (“Advertisement”).

The main purpose of advertisement is to attract the attention of readers, viewers or customers. There are a number of strategies that can be used to achieve that purpose. Sometimes the advertisers need to exaggerate and sometimes give misleading information in the advertisements to attract people to buy the product.

From that fact, we can see that the advertisers try to mislead the customers indirectly by making some false claims. In Pragmatics, this strategy is called doublespeak. The advertiser usually uses doublespeak “to mask their commercial intent from users, as users’ defences against advertising become more well

entrenched” (Gibson 64). According to William Lutz, “doublespeak is a deliberate, calculated misuse of language.” He also states that doublespeak is misleading information. It also “pretends to communicate, makes the bad thing seem good, and avoids responsibility.” (Lutz)

I am interested in studying doublespeak because it is interesting to see how doublespeak can mislead or deceive the customers. We can see how doublespeak can make bad thing(s) look good and negative thing(s) look positive. The purpose of using doublespeak is to mislead the customers. The advertisers try to mislead the customers by applying doublespeak in their advertisement language. In advertisement, there are three components that can be applied by doublespeak. There are taglines, slogans, and descriptions of the product.

When the customers are misled, they cannot complain because advertisement language contains doublespeak. Doublespeak is also a kind of business strategy through advertisement taglines, slogans even pictures. Doublespeak is applied in many aspects, such as speech (example: President’s speech), food and drink advertisements, healthy products advertisements, and also commercials on television.

Most advertisements have taglines to introduce the product. Sometimes differences between tagline and slogan can be confusing. Tagline is “a short phrase that communicates the highest priority message about your brand identity, in an evocative manner” (Bekhor). One example of a tagline is an LG advertisement which says “the better LG’s technology gets, the smarter life becomes”. Meanwhile, slogan is “a word or a phrase that is easy to remember, used for example by a political party or in advertising to attract people’s attention

or to suggest an idea quickly” (“Slogan”). For instance, the slogan of LG is “life is good”.

In this thesis, I will analyze some food and drink advertisements that contain doublespeak. The data is taken from one brand to make it more specific. I am going to analyze all the words in the advertisement from the slogan till the taglines and also the description that is considered to have doublespeak.

From the analysis, we can know what type of doublespeak is often used by the company itself to promote its product. I choose one of the most famous burger restaurants in America, Burger King. I will analyze Burger King’s advertisements. Through advertisements, Burger King offers their variant fast food menu, such as burgers, sandwiches, snacks, desserts, beverages, and many more.

The reason why I choose Burger King’s advertisements is because Burger King often applies doublespeak in their advertisements. In their advertisements, Burger King uses some taglines and slogans to promote their products. By using doublespeak, their advertising team uses attractive and promising words in making the advertisements attractive as well as making the products worth buying.

Burger King was founded in 1954 by James McLamore and David Edgerton (“Our History”). Now, it has become the second largest fast food hamburger in the world (“Great Food Comes First”). Their advertisements provide pictures of their products and some taglines which contain doublespeak.

The significance of my topic is to warn the readers so that they can be more aware in reading some taglines, slogans, and descriptions of product in advertisements. The reason is because sometimes the customers are trapped by the flowery words in those advertisements that sound nice and good, however

sometimes it can be misleading. Thus, understanding doublespeak from my thesis can help the readers or consumers to prevent themselves from being misled. Moreover, the readers are expected to be smart buyers and not easily be cheated by misleading information implied in a number of advertisements.

(753 words)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

1. What expressions in the advertisement which are identified as doublespeak?
1. What types of doublespeak do the expressions in the advertisement belongs to?
2. How does the use of doublespeak mislead the customers and readers?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

1. To identify the expressions in the advertisement considered to be doublespeak.
2. To classify the identified doublespeak expressions into different types.
3. To explain how the use of doublespeak misleads the customers and readers.

1.4 Method of the Research

In this thesis, I took the following steps: The first step is collecting food advertisements and choosing a brand to make it specific. I decided to focus on Burger King's advertisements only and investigating the taglines to observe if they contained doublespeak. The sources of Burger King's advertisements come

from various websites. The second step is selecting any expressions in all aspects (taglines, slogans, descriptions) of the advertisement that contain doublespeak and classify them into several types of doublespeak. The third step is explaining how doublespeak can mislead the readers. The fourth step is finding out the purpose of the advertisers in using doublespeak. Finally, I wrote my thesis.

1.5 Organization of the Thesis

My thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter One is Introduction, which contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research, and Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is Theoretical Framework, in which I explain doublespeak theory. Chapter Three is the data analysis. The last chapter, Chapter Four contains the Conclusion. My thesis ends with Bibliography and Appendix.