

## STYLISTIC FEATURES OF ENGLISH SOCIAL ADVERTISING TEXTS

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**Annotation:** This article explores the stylistic features of English social advertising texts, emphasizing their role in shaping public perception and encouraging behavioral change. The study highlights various expressive means and stylistic devices commonly employed in social advertisements, including personification, metaphor, hyperbole, simile and pun. These linguistic techniques serve to enhance message retention, evoke emotional responses, and strengthen the persuasive impact of social campaigns.

**Keywords:** advertising text, social advertising, stylistic features, personification, metaphor, hyperbole, simile, pun.

**Аннотация:** В статье рассматриваются стилистические особенности английских текстов социальной рекламы, акцентируя их значимость в формировании общественного мнения и стимулировании изменения поведения. Анализируются различные выразительные средства и стилистические приемы, широко используемые в социальной рекламе, такие как олицетворение, метафора, гипербола, сравнение и каламбур. Эти языковые средства применяются с целью повышения запоминаемости сообщений, пробуждения эмоционального отклика и усиления их убедительности в рамках социальных кампаний.

**Ключевые слова:** рекламный текст, социальная реклама, стилистические особенности, олицетворение, метафора, гипербола, сравнение, каламбур.

### INTRODUCTION

Social advertising is a unique form of communication designed to promote beneficial societal changes rather than generate financial gain. As a result, the audience typically does not hold any preconceived expectations or biases toward the message. It addresses critical issues such as environmental protection, public health, and education, aiming to inspire action or shift public attitudes.

Advertising serves not only as a source of information but also as a powerful tool for persuasion [1, 189]. The strategic use of language in social advertising directly influences how messages are perceived, processed, and retained by the audience. Advertisers carefully craft their messages to ensure they are not only persuasive but also easy to recall. The linguistic strategies employed in social advertising vary across languages, reflecting cultural values and communication norms. Social advertising not only provides information to the reader but also creates a vivid advertising image through a system of expressive stylistic means.

According to Wales dictionary, personification is defined as a figure of speech in which an inanimate object, animate non-human, or abstract quality given human attributes [2; 314]. This technique effectively captures the target audience's attention by creating an unusual and memorable effect. Ideas and abstract concepts can also be personified, bringing them to life, while objects can become more engaging through personification. The readers or listeners of advertisements usually do not register or realize that personification is used in the text. Indeed, it is used widely in expressions like: *"Smoking Kills"*, *"Drugs destroy your brain"*, *"Mother Earth is crying"*, *"The Ocean speaks"*, *"Give an hour for Earth doing something you love"*, *"Every cigarette is doing you damage"*.

Leech states that "metaphors are valuable in advertising because they can help to suggest the right kind of emotive associations for the product" [3; 182]. According to O. Selivanova "metaphor is the most productive creative means of enriching the language, a manifestation of linguistic economy, the semiotic regularity that demonstrates itself in using symbols of one conceptual sphere to designate another, likened to it in some respect" [4; 97]. A metaphor ensures an effective and expressive transmission of an idea, encouraging the consumer to actively and consciously perceive the advertising message. For instance, the advertisement stating, *"You would not stay in a relationship that lies to you. Why stay with tobacco?"* portrays cigarettes as a deceptive partner, drawing a parallel between addiction and an unhealthy romantic relationship. Similarly, in social advertising, forests are metaphorically represented as the Earth's lungs, emphasizing their vital role in maintaining ecological balance. This concept is exemplified by the slogan *"When forests burn, the planet can't breathe"*, which underscores the critical function of forests in sustaining life on Earth.

Hyperbole is a stylistic device characterized by deliberate exaggeration, where the extent of amplification renders the expressed idea unlikely or even impossible from a realistic perspective [5; 151]. An example of hyperbole in social advertising is the statement: *"Smoking kills one person every six seconds"*. This advertising used in

World Health Organization (WHO) campaigns is based on global smoking-related mortality statistics. However, its phrasing intensifies the immediacy of the issue, creating a heightened sense of urgency and alarm to persuade the audience to take action against smoking. Another example is *"Drive 5 mph over the limit and you could kill someone's child"*, it exaggerates the risk of minor speeding to emphasize its potentially fatal consequences and encourage safer driving.

Simile is a figure of speech whereby two concepts are imaginatively and descriptively compared [2; 383]. Simile used when two essentially unlike things are compared, often in a phrase introduced by "like" or "as". Examples of simile in social advertising: *"Driving tired is like driving drunk"*, *"Ignoring climate change is like ignoring a tornado warning"*, *"Littering is like throwing trash in your own backyard"*, *"Texting while driving is like closing your eyes for 5 seconds on the highway"*, *"Not wearing a mask is like driving without a seatbelt"*, *"Using drugs is like playing Russian roulette with your life"*, *"Plastic in the ocean is like a ticking time bomb for marine life"*.

According to Morner and Rausch, witty use of words which involve more than one meaning is called pun [6; 178]. Puns are one of the popular rhetorical figures in advertisements. Goddard argues that puns are deliberately employed in advertisements [7; 83]. They are pervasive in newspaper headlines as eye-catching/attention-getting devices [2; 349]. There are examples from environmental advertising social campaigns such as *"Don't be trashy - recycle"* and *"Don't be fossil-fueled - go green"*. Both examples employ two meaning of one word: *"trashy"* (referring to both littering and socially undesirable behavior) and *"fossil-fueled"* (denoting reliance on non-renewable energy and an antiquated mindset), to criticize environmentally detrimental practices through humor, while advocating for sustainable alternatives such as recycling and adopting green energy solutions. The social advertising campaign by AdoptUSKids, *"What to expect when you're expecting"* employs a pun by repurposing a well-known phrase, effectively shifting the focus from biological parenthood to adoption and creating a meaningful and engaging connection with its audience.

## CONCLUSION

The study of stylistic features of English social advertising texts highlights the crucial role of language in shaping public perception and influencing behavioral change. Through the strategic use of personification, metaphor, hyperbole, simile and puns, advertisers create impactful messages that resonate with audiences on an emotional and cognitive level.

These stylistic elements enhance the effectiveness, recall, and persuasiveness of social campaigns, reinforcing key ideas and prompting action. The integration of expressive stylistic means not only strengthens the persuasive appeal of advertisements but also fosters a deeper connection between the audience and the social issues being addressed.

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