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天津商业大学宝德学院毕业设计(论文)

商业广告中的多模态隐喻分析

Analysis of Multimodal Metaphors in Commercial Advertisements

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Abstract

In contemporary society, advertising has penetrated into every aspect of people's daily life as the increasingly fierce commercial competition. The rapid development of multimedia digital informatization promotes the application of multimode such as text, images and music into the advertising industry. Sensory experience is the main way for people to perceive the world and obtain external information, which can effectively affect consumer's behavior. Therefore, how to construct multimodal metaphor in an advertisement to activate the audience's sensory experience has already become a vital issue of every advertiser. At present, a great deal of researches on multimodal studies based on cognitive linguistics perspective has gradually enriched and contributes to the theoretical refinement of multimodal metaphors.

Based on the conceptual metaphor theory and multimodal metaphor theory, the thesis adopts the qualitative analysis and identifies multimodal metaphors in terms of the definition of multimodal metaphor in a broad sense. It selects those commercial advertisements containing multimodal metaphors and explores their application in commercial advertising from the perspective of five organ sensations.

The major findings of the thesis are as follows. Visual metaphor plays an irreplaceable foundational role in building the core symbols and narrative framework of a brand. Auditory metaphor is effective in strengthening emotional memory points and creating instant atmosphere. Olfactory metaphor enhances scene association. Gustatory metaphor directly activates purchasing impulses. Tactile metaphor conveys quality commitments. In the context of digital advertising, the realization of olfactory, gustatory and tactile metaphor highly relies on the synergistic reaction of visual and auditory modes. The effect of these metaphors depends on the clarity of cross-sensory associations and cultural consensus.

Overall, the thesis offers creative ideas of innovative and easily understandable

concepts and manifestation for advertisers to attract the target audience, propagate the cultural values of brands and enhance the competitiveness of brand market effectually. The thesis also aims to provide some feasible methods to help target audience appreciate the advertisements.

Key Words: commercial advertisements; conceptual metaphor theory; multimodal metaphor theory; mode

摘 要

在当今社会，商业竞争日益激烈，广告已渗透到人们日常生活的方方面面中。多媒体数字化信息的快速发展推动了文本，图像和音乐等多模态在广告行业的广泛应用。感官体验是人们感知世界和获取外部信息的主要方式，它能够有效影响消费者的购买行为。因此，如何在广告中构建多模态隐喻以激活受众的感官体验已成为每位广告人的重要课题。目前，基于认知语言学视角的研究硕果累累，多模态隐喻理论也正不断丰富完善。

基于概念隐喻理论和多模态隐喻理论，本文采用定性分析方法，借鉴广义上的多模态隐喻定义进行多模态隐喻的识别，选取包含多模态隐喻的广告，从五种交际模态的视角探讨其在具体商业广告实例的运用。

论文主要发现如下：视觉隐喻在构建品牌的核心符号和叙事框架上起着不可替代的奠基性作用。听觉隐喻则在强化情绪记忆点和营造即时氛围上效果显著。嗅觉隐喻增强场景联想。味觉隐喻直接激发购买冲动。触觉隐喻传达品质承诺。数字广告的背景下，嗅觉、味觉和触觉隐喻的实现高度依赖于视觉和听觉模态的协同作用。这些隐喻的效果取决于跨感官联想的清晰度和文化共识。

本文为广告从业者创作提供更多丰富的创作思路，从而高效吸引目标受众，传播品牌文化内涵，提升品牌市场竞争力。此外，本文也致力于提出为观众更深入地理解及欣赏广告提供方法。

关键词：商业广告；概念隐喻理论；多模态隐喻理论；模态

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Introduction

Advertising, at its core, can be regarded as an art of persuasion. It increasingly plays a pivotal role in the context of economic globalization and the digital age. In order to popularize products or services and attract more consumers, businesses spend a lot of effort on the design of commercial advertisement to enhance its readability and artistry. The application of metaphor enables the commercial advertisement to express its in-depth connotation and deftly leads consumers' perception and emotions. In ancient time, the research object of metaphor is limited to text. Aristotle (1932) regards metaphor as a figure of speech and rhetorical device. As the development of cognitive linguistics, people figured that metaphor is also rather a way of thinking and cognition. Forceville published *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising* in 1996. It became the start of multimodal metaphor study and laid solid foundation for the following non-verbal metaphor study. The quickly growing discipline of multimodality has hitherto been primarily refined.

This thesis aims to offer means for consumers to appreciate the commercial advertisements and affords advertisers lessons to create more fantastic advertisements. Based on the conceptual metaphor theory and multimodal metaphor theory, the author will analyze multimodal metaphors in the commercial advertisements which are collected from books on advertising, magazines and the Internet. This thesis analyzes how images, sounds and other multimodal elements work to construct multimodal metaphor meaning and influence consumer's cognitive and emotional responses.

The significance of this thesis are as follows. Theoretically, the thesis serves as an extension to the research on multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements mainly focused on single-brand advertisements or cross-brand advertisements comparisons, while the researches which take commercial advertisements as a unified type of multimodal discourse are few. The thesis proposes a multimodal metaphor classification based on the perspective of five organ sensations, revealing the sensory compensation. In a practical sense, the thesis can help advertisers design more

innovative, easily understandable concepts and manifestation by gaining a deeper understanding of the meaning construction and cognitive effects of multimodal metaphors in commercial advertisements.

The thesis includes three chapters in addition to Introduction and Conclusion. Chapter one is an overview of commercial advertisement. The first three parts are the definition, classification and development of advertisement. The definition and characteristics of commercial advertisement are introduced in succession. Chapter two offers the theoretical framework for the clarification of the following chapters, in which conceptual metaphor theory and multimodal metaphor theory will be presented. Chapter three is the main part of the thesis. In this chapter, a couple of commercial advertisements will be included to analyze the multimodal metaphors in them.

1 An Overview of Commercial Advertisement

As the technology advancing by leaps and bounds, there is an immense change in our daily lives and means of communication. The advertising industry is also increasingly booming. By being presented by a variety of forms, commercial advertisement has found its own way to seek publicity. The first part of this chapter mainly clarifies the definition, classification and development of advertisement. After that the definition and characteristics of commercial advertisement will be introduced.

1.1 Advertisement

Advertising has undergone significant transformation throughout its rich history. The arena for advertising has expanded due to the appearance of electronic products, including radio, television, mobile phones, etc. Advertisement is a powerful tool for enterprises to explore the market and appeal for audiences. Advertisements are omnipresent in people's daily lives. They create customer awareness and name recognition. They educate consumers about products or service offering. They promote a timely message to a wide audience. They can boost company image and invite new customers to learn more about their companies, which leads to increased

sales and new business development.

1.1.1 Definition of the Advertising

As is implied by the name, advertising is to publicize widely, that is to say, to impart certain information to the public. The word “advertise” can be traced back to the Latin word “advertere”. Its original meaning is to shout loudly or arouse one’s attraction to something. Harris and Seldon describe advertising as “a kind of announcement, the information of which is to promote the selling of a certain famous product or service.” (Harris and Seldon, 1962: 40) The acts of facilitating the transition from production to consumption by means of communication are all advertising in terms of existence (Yao Xi and Ren Wenjiao, 2025: 132). Advertising is widely regarded as the bridge that connects consumers with products.

1.1.2 Classification of the Advertisement

Advertisement increases business turnover by creating consumer awareness, enhancing products’ persuasiveness, reinforcing the target audience’s attitude, developing brand loyalty, and building a good brand image (Ilyas and Nayan, 2020). Categorizing advertising reasonably and accurately plays a constructive role in grasping the characteristics of advertising further and deepening the understanding of concrete content in advertising research subjects. Based on the different standards of classification, advertisement could be separated into different categories. There are broad and narrow classification of advertisement. In broad sense, advertising includes non-commercial advertisement and commercial advertisement. Non-commercial advertisement refers to the advertisement which does not aimed at gaining profit through sales promotion. These advertisements are for the purpose of generalizing and disseminating information, such as the declarations, notices, announcements initiated by government administration and social institution. In narrow sense, advertising only refers to commercial advertisement.

1.1.3 Development of the Advertisement

The exponential advancement of multimedia technology has precipitated a profound transformation in advertising by way of acquiring and disseminating information. The age of exclusively relying on verbal communication is past. As the science and technology boomed, there are a multitude of media channels for advertisers to adopt kinds of promotion for the new products and prompt the evolution of advertising. In terms of the media that carry advertisement, advertising has roughly gone through the following three stages:

Ancient advertising period: it is featured by verbally shouting, physical demonstration, and trademark band. Among them, verbally shouting is the most primitive form. During this period, the barter system appeared. People shouted and cried aloud to show their products to attract the target audience's attention. The earliest text advertisement that has still preserved in the Museum of London emerged from Ancient Egypt. Although the forms are simple, the advertising during this period had possessed the function of commercial promotion. The spreading range is limited.

Early modern advertising period: it is featured by printing advertising. The invention of paper and printing spurred the development of early modern advertising. In the following decades, newspapers and magazines have been on the upgrade. All of these advance the spreading range and speed.

Modern advertising period: it is featured by electronic advertising media such as radio, television and the Internet. The application of telecommunication technology has vitalized the advertising industry by enabling efficient information transmission.

1.2 Commercial Advertisement

Muller, B. (1998) puts forward that “advertising is vital element in the international commercial market, and business people should acquire more knowledge of advertising cultures to achieve international business success”. Many scholars have contributed to the study of commercial advertisements. Leech analyzed the features of advertising language and summarized that commercial advertisement tends to employ

more nouns and function words (Leech, 1966: 88). Ogilvy (2003) pointed out that advertising was a part of business. By means of advertising, an enterprise is to obtain profits from the sales of products and services. Commercial advertisement refers to the advertisement of commodities or services for profit. It is usually a crucial means for exchanging information among commodity producers, operators and consumers. Furthermore, it serves as a vital strategy for enterprises to occupy the markets, promote products and provide services. Its ultimate goal is to achieve significant returns.

1.2.1 Definition of Commercial Advertisement

Commercial advertisement is a goal-directed activity that aims to promote specific commodities or services to spur the act of purchasing. Many scholars have conducted research and proposed their definitions of commercial advertisement. Cook defines it that “commercial advertising is a kind of promotion of products or services for sale by impersonal media.” (Cook, 1992: 6) It is a general definition. And the content of commercial advertisement is mainly about the function, standard, brand, style and quality of the product.

1.2.2 Characteristics of Commercial Advertisement

Modern commercial advertisement is the product of market economy. It is paid by advertiser aiming to persuade consumers to buy or enjoyed the advertised goods. The essence of commercial advertisement is to gain profit. The primary goal of advertising is to sell the advertised products or services by convincing consumers to buy those products. This is distinct from information dissemination activities such as news, and is also the fundamental difference between non-profit advertising such as commercial advertising, public service advertising and social advertising. Commercial advertisement has straightforward purposes: it makes positive claims about a product or service (Forceville, 1996: 104).

Commercial advertisement is persuasive. It is a crafty tactic of persuasion

through studying advertising psychology and advertising creativity.

Commercial advertisement is target-oriented. Advertisements are not for the purpose of displaying creativity and aesthetics, but to achieve the marketing objectives. There are target market and target audience.

Commercial advertisement is instrumental. It serves for advertisers to realize their benefits and effectively conveys the information.

2 Theoretical Framework

Multimodal metaphor is a crucial development of conceptual metaphor, which is the crystallization of bodily experience, and human cognition (Lakoff and Johnson, 1999: 468). As Forceville and Urios-Aparisi anticipate, multimodal metaphor theory will give a substantial boost to its further theorization (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009: 14). It applies conceptual metaphor to interpret symbolic system. Lakoff and Johnson's collaborating book *Metaphors We Live By* is considered as offering a new angle for the metaphor study from the cognitive perspective. They overturned the academic understanding of metaphor, drove a significant shift from traditional rhetorical study to cognitive research. As various communication media began to enter the horizon of scholars, they explore the meaning construction and concept expression through color, sound, spatial layout etc. Represented by Forceville, the analysis of multimodal metaphor in advertising has garnered increasingly scholarly interest. This study is based on the conceptual metaphor theory and multimodal metaphor theory to analyze the multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements. In this chapter, relevant concepts of these two theories concerning the research will be illustrated respectively.

2.1 Definition of Metaphor

According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary* (2018), metaphor is used to describe somebody or something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and

to make the description more powerful. Barcelona (2003: 3) clarifies metaphor as “the cognitive mechanism whereby one experiential domain is partially ‘mapped’ projected, onto a different experiential domain, so that the second domain is partially understood in terms of the first one. Both domains have to belong to different superordinate domains.” Metaphor is credited with the capacity to structure, transform, and create new knowledge, as well as evoke emotions, and influence evaluations.

2.2 Introduction to Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Lakoff and Johnson, fathers of conceptual metaphor theory, advanced metaphor from language to the height of human thinking and formed the conceptual metaphor theory. They usefully describe the essence of metaphor as “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 5). That is, human beings use a plainer and more concrete domain of experience (source domain) to understand another more complex and abstract domain of things (target domain). For example, in the metaphorical concept TIME IS MONEY, “money” is an easy-to-understand source domain, which is used to map the hard-to-explain target domain of “time”. Target and source domains belong to semantic domains or categories that in the context in which the metaphor occurs are understood as different. Metaphor in the cognitive linguistics view means conceptual metaphor. It is stated in the book *Metaphor We Live By* that “metaphor is not just a matter of language, that is, of mere words. We shall argue that, on the contrary, human thought processes are largely metaphorical” (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 23). Conceptual metaphor theory argues that metaphor not only reflects the defining property of language, but also constructs human’s thinking.

According to Lakoff and Johnson, there are three subtypes of conceptual metaphor: structural metaphor, orientational metaphor and ontological metaphor. Structural metaphor is one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another. For example, ARGUMENT IS WAR. Ontological metaphor refers to the metaphor that turn strange into vivid, turn abstract into concrete. For instance, mental state,

thought and emotions. Orientational metaphor organizes a whole system of concepts with respect to one another. And most of them have to do with spatial orientation: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral. For example, HEALTH AND LIFE ARE UP; SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE DOWN.

2.3 Introduction to Multimodal Metaphor Theory

Originated within the framework of conceptual metaphor theory, Charles Forceville (1996) has extended studies on metaphor into the realm of multimodality. A series of studies on the multimodal presentation of conceptual metaphor within the cognitive linguistics paradigm began with his book *Pictorial Metaphors in Advertising* (1996). In this book, he conducts the first study on images from the perspective of cognitive linguistics and discusses the theory of multimodal metaphor. The multimodal metaphor view holds that metaphor exists not only in language, but also in other media, such as sound, music, color, etc. In 2006, Forceville formally started to advocate the research of “multimodal metaphor” in *Non-verbal and Multimodal metaphor in a Cognitivist framework: Agendas for Research*. And three years later, Forceville and Urios-Aparisi released *Multimodal Metaphor*, a collection of eighteen essays, including commercial advertisements, political cartoons, comic strips, lectures, animations, and other linguistic categories, which pushed the study of multimodal metaphor to a climax. The research on multimodal metaphor studies how metaphor construct meaning through multiple modes (such as image, sound, text, etc.). It pushes the research on conceptual metaphor to a new stage and promotes the development and perfection of the theoretical system of conceptual metaphor while broadening the research field. The study of multimodal metaphor theory is based on the premise that a matter of terminology needs to be clarified. In this section, the concept of mode and multimodality will be introduced firstly. Then, the core content, mechanism and features of multimodal metaphor will be involved.

2.3.1 Mode

It is essential to clarify the concept of “mode” before studying multimodal metaphor. Mode is defined by Forceville (2009:22) as “A symbolic system can be explained by the use of specific perceptual processes.” Therefore, connecting modes with people’s five different senses, the mode can be classified into the following kinds: (1) the pictorial or visual mode; (2) the aural or sonic mode; (3) the olfactory mode; (4) the gustatory mode; (5) the tactile mode. This is just a rough classification. In order to facilitate the research, Forceville (2009:23) distinguishes the modes again as the following: (1) pictorial signs; (2) written signs; (3) spoken signs; (4) gestures; (5) sounds; (6) music; (7) smells; (8) tastes; and (9) touch. This paper will adopt the concept of mode Forceville has defined, namely, an explicable sign system owing to a specific perception process.

2.3.2 Definition of Multimodality

Multimodality is an inherently intricate concept, which was first coined in the mid-1990s. The scholars realized that not only language but also gestures, pictures and so on are the ways to convey meaning. It is “a way of characterizing communicative situations (considered very broadly) which rely upon combinations of different ‘forms’ of communication to be effective” (Bateman et al., 2017: 7). The term ‘forms’ refers to pictures, spoken or written language and other patterns. Multimodality is derived from mode, which is different from multimodality (Hu Zhuanglin, 2007).

2.3.3 Core Content of Multimodal Metaphor

Following the conceptual metaphor theory, Forceville argued that verbal expression should not be the only external manifestations of conceptual metaphor, other non-verbal manifestations such as sounds, gestures, and smell can also convey metaphorical meanings (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009). Based on the

multimodality theory, Forceville (2009:23) classified the metaphor theory, namely, monomodal metaphor and multimodal metaphor. He describes monomodal metaphors are metaphors whose target or resource are exclusively or predominantly rendered in the same mode while multimodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes.” The limitation “exclusively or predominantly” is indispensable because non-verbal metaphors often have targets and/or sources that are cued in more than one mode simultaneously (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009: 24). Consequently, for a metaphor to be classed as multimodal, the source domain and target domain must be encoded in different modes.

Forceville (2008) proposes “A is B” format that “forces or invites an addressee to map one or more features, connotations from the source to target” (Forceville, 2008: 468).

Multimodal metaphor is based on the association of something new with concepts that already exist in the brain and rely on human metaphorical cognitive thinking. Multimodal metaphor does not differ from monomodal metaphors in terms of their basis and working mechanism, but only in the way they are presented. Multimodal metaphor is capable of convey strong, rich and direct information via tastes, smells, sounds, images, etc. Forceville and Urios-Aparisi (2009) put forward the A-ING IS B-ING formula to describe a multimodal metaphor.

Eggertsson and Forceville (2009:430) contends that the definition of multimodal metaphor was “distinguished for analytical purpose only” and was “strict” or “pure”. They further propose the definition of multimodal metaphor in the broad sense, since “the majority of multimodal metaphors in moving images cue target and/or source in more than one mode simultaneously.” For the convenience of discussion, this study adopts the definition of multimodal metaphor in a broad sense: any metaphor that involves two or more modes in its construction are called multimodal metaphor (Eggertsson and Forceville, 2009: 430).

2.3.4 Mechanism of Multimodal Metaphor

Based on the conceptual metaphor, the multimodal metaphor has the similar mapping process “A IS B”, mapping salient properties (and where possible: relations between those properties) from source domain to target domain. Importantly, the mapping is to be understood as including salient connotations adhering to the resource, as well as typical emotional responses to it. The source domain and target domain of multimodal metaphor are represented in various modes, such as sound, images and others. Secondly, the identification of the two domains can be triggered in many ways. Forceville (2007) has outlined three mechanisms that administer to the identification of metaphor and the features transferred from the source domain to the target domain. The first mechanism is physical resemblance. Source domain and target domain have similarity in physical appearance. The second mechanism is an unexpected filling of a schematic slot. This will promptly make viewers aware of the relationships between the two domains. The third mechanism is concurrent cuing which means that metaphorical identification is visually identified. It needs to consider various contextual factors into account, including the type of genres, when interpret multimodal metaphor.

2.3.5 Features of Multimodal Metaphor

Compared to the static nature of linguistic textual metaphors, multimodal metaphors involve the collaborative participation of various modal symbols, exhibiting characteristics such as dynamic, vividness, and narrativity. (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009: 11-13)

Dynamic and narrativity. Forceville and Urios-Aparisi (2009) put forward A-ING IS B-ING to replace the NOUN A IS NOUNB formula that covers the dynamic nature of metaphor. Owing to nonverbal modes are apt to have the features of high space and time sequence or to create a scenario. Forceville (2009: 29) proposes that “pictures speak louder than a great number of linguistic expressions”, the narrative feature of the metaphorical scenario enables an open-ended interpretation of

metaphorical meaning.

The universality of “concrete is concrete”. In conceptual metaphor theory, it is believed that the source domain which is concrete is used to understand the target domain which is abstract. But Forceville (2009) proposes the new formula that “concrete is concrete” (Forceville and Urios-Aparisi, 2009). That is, multimodal metaphor could use a specific thing to understand another specific thing. In many genres, such as advertisement and comics, most target domains are concrete and describable, namely, the products being advertised, characters in movies, and so on. Even when the target domain is indeed an abstract concept, multimodal metaphors frequently often resort to tangible entities to serve as the source domain for metonymy.

Vividness. Human is multi-sensory creature. Multimodal metaphor presents a vivid scenario with a combination of different modes to catch individuals’ sensory experience. Vividness cannot be achieved solely through the verbal mode. Visual images are more likely to infect recipients efficiently and effectively than mere language, triggering emotional responses and leading to consumption (Zhao Xiufeng, 2011). Abstract concepts or thoughts are difficult to perceive or imperceptible in real life. With the application of different modes, multimodal metaphor can convey the idea that could not be expressed by language metaphor and generates strong sensory experiences for audiences.

The diversity of representational approach is manifested in two aspects—the variety of representational carriers and the richness of modal configuration types. As Forceville (2007: 27) puts it, “metaphors whose targets and sources are cued wholly or partly via visual, sonic, or music cues, may be understood, maybe in rudimentary fashion only, by an audience unfamiliar with the language of the country from which the metaphorical representation originates. Apart from their greater degree of comprehensibility, metaphors drawing on images, sounds, and music also, I submit, have a more intense, immediate emotional impact than verbal ones.” On the other hand, the modal configuration types of source domain and target domain in multimodal metaphors are also extremely rich. This richness is not only reflected in the modal configuration patterns having distinct genre differences, but also within the

same genre, there are a variety of configuration types. In *pictorial metaphor in Advertising*, Forceville (1996) proposed four types of multimodal metaphor in advertisements and billboards: hybrid metaphor, contextual metaphor, pictorial simile and integrated metaphor.

3 Case Study of Multimodal Metaphors in Commercial Advertisements and Discussion

This chapter includes five sections. Advertisement, as a representative form of modern discourse, makes full use of various multimodal resources to fulfill the goals of promoting products and spreading ideas. The analysis theory of multimodal metaphor can draw on the theoretical basis of linguistic metaphor. Moreover, the characteristics of advertisements offer an ideal discourse for the research on multimodal metaphor (Forceville, 1996).

In the multimodal text, the expression of metaphor meaning is richer than that contained in monomodal text, especially the use of digital multimedia could enhance the dynamic construction and expression connotation of metaphor meaning. It should be known that commercial advertisement belongs to the evocative text. That means commercial advertisement is able to mobilize consumers' emotions and stimulate their desire to buy. Businesses pay a lot and put great effort into advertising design to promote a product, brand, or idea and attract more consumers. Aiming to enhance readability and aesthetic, various modes are skillfully combined into the commercial advertisements. In the following section, the study will focus on the to analyze the multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements.

3.1 Visual Metaphor

Visual metaphor is an artistic technique that uses visual elements to convey and express certain concepts, emotions, or ideas (Su Chang, Wang Xingyue, Liu Shupin and Chen Yijiang, 2024). It uses pictorial or otherwise visual devices that suggest identity in order to encourage metaphorical insight in viewers (Carroll, 1994: 190).

Visual metaphors are of paramount importance among the five senses of human beings. They are commonly used to deliver advertising and marketing communication messages (Boozer et al., 1991). Humans recognize the world through vision that is a vital channel to acquire information. Far from being separate, vision and thinking form an indivisible whole (Fang Na, 2018). Visual perception should be used fully to capture target audience's attention and stimulate the purchasing desire. Visual metaphor is the most frequently used metaphor for human rational cognition of the external world. It usually exists in artificial media using visual images (Zheng Xinli, 2019).

3.1.1 Image Metaphor

The purpose of advertising is to promote certain products or services in very limited time and space. Hence, a few images are employed to draw audiences. Images are vivid, intuitive and attention-grabbing. Image metaphor takes advantage of the feature to effectively and fully express the characteristics of various things. In terms of universality, it can also overcome the barriers of language and culture.

Case 1: Rise & Shine (McDonald's)—Commercial Advertising Posters of McDonald's



Figure 3-1 Posters of McDonald's

In Case 1, there are four posters of McDonald's which themed as "Golden morning with McCafé". People who walk on the sunlit roads are student for school, salaried employees crossing the crossroads, construction workers and couples going for a stroll. From the visual mode, it is easy for audience to find that the golden light corresponds to part of the McDonald's logo "M". The idea that using its logo to construct roads besprinkled with gold sunshine was inspired by McCafé's new

package.

The sunlit roads metaphorically symbolize light and warm in life. McCafé brings light and warm to change people's life. It adds color and vitalizes to people from different careers. And it has become a common and indispensable part of life. McCafé is the beginning of a day as morning is the beginning of a day. The image expresses that McCafé brings people happiness and vitality to the daily life of coffee lovers. McCafé should be a top priority for the beginning of a day. The central metaphor of these four posters can be presented as MCCAFFÉ IS SHINE. The shine is shown as source domain through the sunlit road on the poster. The identity of the advertiser (in the lower right corner) licenses the characterization of the McCafé as the metaphorical target domain, onto which the attributes associated to shine are mapped. Through making full use of images, image metaphor effectively stimulates imagination and creativity of audience, vividly highlighting the selling points of a product or service. All people in the posters are enjoying McCafé. It metaphorically shows McCafé closely connected with various life scenes. Image metaphor employed in this advertisement enhances consumers' identification and loyalty to the brand. It caters to the contemporary society's pursuit of the value of warmth and hope.

The application of image metaphor has a strong effect than simple verbal description. It breaks through the information barrier and reduces the information loss caused by translation. Image metaphor can instantly catch the eye and transmit the complex information rapidly. By associating products with specific emotional experiences, the image metaphor establishes emotional bonds and shapes a unique brand image.

3.1.2 Color Metaphor

Clare Painter, J.R Martin, and Len Unsworth hold the view that color, being a visual symbolic resource, is capable of actualizing the three metafunction: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Regarding the ideational function, color reflects the external manifestation of worldly substances. As for the textual function, it serves for

connection purposes. In relation to the interpersonal function, color is utilized to affect the emotions of the viewers. (Painter, 2013) In daily life, the color category of color words is linked to numerous cognitive domains via external manifestations or inherent features. When individuals project their comprehension and perception of colors onto other cognitive domains, like mental states, emotions, and personality characteristics, a certain degree of resemblance emerges between colors and these abstract domains, thereby resulting in analogous associations. This is the process by which color metaphors come into being (Huang Haijun and Ma Keyun, 2009: 66). For example, red is often associated with passion, energy and danger. Blue often represents professionalism and serenity.

Case 2: Sprite Chill (Sprite)—Commercial Advertising Poster of Sprite



Figure 3-2 Poster of Sprite

In Case 2, the poster shows a can of Sprite, with the specific flavor Cherry Lime. Green and blue are typical of its palette. The ice-blue patterns surge up like a wave.

The green color of the can's body is the iconic color of the Sprite brand, metaphorically representing nature, freshness, and vitality. It conveys that the Sprite Chill can provide a refreshing sensation to consumers. The first color metaphor here is that REFRESHMENT IS GREEN. The source domain is green and the target domain is refreshment. The blue ice cubes in the background and the blue elements on the can's body metaphorically suggest coolness and iciness, resonating with the product's "Chill" feature, implying that drinking this beverage can have a cool experience even in the heat. The second color metaphor is that COOLNESS IS BLUE. The source domain is blue and the target domain is coolness. Mapping the coolness onto the target domain indicate audience that drinking Sprite Chill makes you refresh and cool. A spot of pink in the background creates a visual contrast that attracts consumer

attention. It also suggests that the beverage has a unique flavor “Cherry Lime”. The third color metaphor is that CHERRY LIME IS PINK.

Color words belong to the perceptual category of people’s visual system. People’s perception of the objective world is colorful owing to colors. The mapping of color metaphor makes our cognition more distinct and vivid. Different colors can quickly evoke specific emotions and convey information. The color metaphor conveys cultural or emotional meanings through various color attributes, including hue, brightness, and saturation. It also triggers psychological reactions through color association, such as red is metaphorically as passion and danger. In this way, it directly guiding the audience’s emotions. When conveying product information, the employment of color metaphor can mobilize the audience’s subconscious.

3.1.3 Space Metaphor

Space metaphor constructs through spatial distribution among objects. It is a metaphor that maps the spatial position onto abstract, non-spatial concepts. In the picture of an advertisement, the product is placed in the center of the picture and at a high position, surrounded by various pleasing elements, to metaphorically represent the core status and high quality of the product.

Case 3: 困了就靠你 (NESCAFÉ)—Commercial Advertising Poster of NESCAFÉ



Figure 3-3 Poster of NESCAFÉ

In Case 3, the poster creatively combines the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa with NESCAFÉ products. There is the real Leaning Tower of Pisa, a landmark building in Italy, renowned for its noticeable tilt. On the right side of the poster is a scaled-up

Nestle 1+2 original coffee package.

According to the spatial relations and arrangement of visual component, juxtaposing the NESCAFE with the Leaning Tower of Pisa represents that NESCAFE is also a symbolic existence. The world-famous building is leaned against NESCAFE, which shows that person who drinks will not fall asleep no matter how sleepy he is. The metaphor is that LEANING TOWER OF PISA IS A SLEEPY PERSON. The source domain is Leaning Tower of Pisa and the target domain is a sleepy person who needs NESCAFE to stay clearheaded. This will give the brand, without doubt, individuality and style. The central metaphor it serves is that NESCAFE IS SUPPORT.

The space metaphor in this advertisement skillfully making use of the position relation to make audiences deeply interpret the content of the commercial and reflect the characteristics of coffee. In this way, the implication that NESCAFE can refresh the mind and bring vigor to people has lodged itself in the public mind. The employment of the space metaphor effectively achieves the desired visual effect and advertising effect.

The employment of the space metaphor in commercial advertisement uses spatial layout, orientation, distance, size and other elements to visualize effectively achieves the desired visualize abstract band concepts, brand advantages or consumer psychology, thereby enhancing the appeal and persuasiveness of an advertisement.

3.2 Auditory Metaphor

Auditory mode includes sound and music, which could create a certain atmosphere in a short time, trigger the audience's memory, cultivate the audience's emotions, and improve the viewing performance of advertisements more efficiently. Auditory metaphor employs auditory elements to express metaphor meaning. Music in the advertisement not only can enhance the expression of language, but also influence the feelings and emotions (Liu Jia, 2013).

3.2.1 Music Metaphor

The issue of music metaphor has been discussed since Aristotle. He defines the metaphor of music that “A metaphor may be amiss because the very syllables of the words conveying it fail to indicate sweetness of vocal utterance.” Therefore, metaphors must be drawn from objects which have a beauty either in sound or sense, or which give pleasure to the sight or some other sense. (Aristotle, 1932) Music metaphor is the practice of metaphorical thinking in the field of music and is a form of artistic thinking. It is the mapping of one or more emotional experiences in music, which is an image representation constructed in music based on human life experiences.

Television advertising music pertains to the music utilized in the promotion through television, primarily to complement language and images for conveying information. It could be divided into vocal and instrumental music. Vocal music means advertising songs with lyrics. Instrumental music is played on instruments without lyrics and often serves as background music in advertisements. As the television advertising leaps and bounds, music not only enhances the atmosphere and sets the scene, but also plays a crucial role in constructing multimodal metaphor. (Yang Xu and Wang Shaohua, 2013: 161)

Case 4: Piano (KFC) —Commercial Advertising Video of KFC



Figure 3-4 Screenshots of KFC

In Case 4, it is a 60-second commercial. The scene is composed of a series of close-up shots, showcasing people of different races, ages, and genders licking their fingers during eating KFC. Accompanied by the rhythm and melody of the music, the action of licking fingers continuously changes. With the slow-motion scenes, the theme slogan “It’s (Finger Lickin’) Good” gradually appears. The background music of the advertisement is nice soothing. How could sucking fingers is considered as a

decent acting? What is it that makes the elegant British put aside their table manners and lick their fingers? It is hard to imagine how delicious does KFC taste. Chopin is a renowned classical music master. His works are generally regarded as representatives of high art, possessing profound cultural depth and exquisite artistic value. Choosing his “Nocturne E Flat Major Op.9 No.2” as background music will make consumers associate the high quality and elegance with the KFC brand.

In the advertisement, it metaphorically represents the emotional experience consumers could acquire. The core metaphor it represents is that “THE QUALITY AND STYLE OF KFC IS NOCTURNE E FLAT MAHOR Op.9 No.2”. It suggests that enjoying the food of KFC is a good way to find a moment of tranquility and comfort in their busy lives. A continuous flowing soothing melody played through the advertisement creates a tranquil, romantic, and cozy atmosphere and adds to the spectator’s sensing of desire for KFC. Savoring KFC’s food brings relaxation and pleasure, as if you were immersed in the gentle melody of a nocturne.

Serving as a metaphor for people’s inner world, or as an externalization of human emotions, music has the capability to metaphorically express various forms of human emotions. The music metaphor constructed in the advertisement, not only implicates the source domain, but also enhances the inflection of the whole advertisement so as to impress the audience and realize the appeal of the product.

3.2.2 Non-verbal Sound Metaphor

Non-verbal sound metaphor refers to the use of various properties of sound (such as pitch, timbre, rhythm) to convey metaphorical information without verbal language. In this way, people can understand other concepts, emotions, or situations implied by the perception and association of sound.

Case 5: Rejoice Perfume Smooth Shampoo (Rejoice)—Commercial Adverting Video of Rejoice



Figure 3-5 Screenshots of Rejoice

Case 5 is a television advertisement for Rejoice. The brand invites the famous Chinese actress Dilraba, a beloved and dedicated celebrity, to endorse its shampoo. In the opening scene, a shimmer of golden glitter emerges, evoking the enchanting magic of fairy tales. The female protagonist, donning a beautiful gown, is engaged in a dance with the male protagonist. The gentle, dreamy background music, commonly found in fairy tales, hints that the narrative is as enchanting as a fairy tale. The combination of Rejoice products with elements from the Cinderella fairy tale allows the audience to immerse themselves in a romantic atmosphere, thereby creating beautiful associations with the product.

When the large clock is nearly twelve o'clock, the female protagonist departs in a hurry. From 0:07-0:15, the bells tick. Subsequently, her gown turned into a plain dress as the bells tolling. With the scene of ball, magical power and the ticking bell nearly twelve o'clock, it's not hard to associate the advertisement with the story of Cinderella before the bell rang. Thus, the sound of bell makes the audience feel nervous as it signals that the magic is about to end. This use of sound implies the story setting, efflux of time, spatial transition, or a character's inner thoughts. The central metaphor in the advertisement can be analyzed as REJOICE IS MAGIC. The source domain is magic and the target domain is Rejoice.

Sound can fill the blank outside the vision, create an atmosphere, and guide emotions. When the female protagonist dances with the prince at the ball, the upbeat musical rhythm can enhance romantic and joyful emotional atmosphere, allowing the audience to feel the happiness and confidence of the female protagonist. It metaphorically suggests that using Rejoice shampoo can help women exude confidence and charm in their lives, thereby triggering an emotional resonance with consumers. It implies that the product has a certain magic and brings the user a monumental shift.

Sound itself or specific sound patterns form relatively fixed symbolic meanings or emotional associations in a specific culture or personal experience. The non-verbal sound metaphor uses the shared “sound symbol library” to evoke symbolic association of sound.

3.3 Olfactory Metaphor

Olfactory metaphor refers to use metaphor to associate a certain odor with a special concept, feeling, identity by means of people’s perception and association of odor. An olfactory metaphor could be this: Two researchers in the lab of a perfume factory have been ordered to create a new perfume, preferably one that will prove as successfully sold as Chanel 5. One of them thinks she has developed an excellent essence. She first lets her colleague smell Chanel 5, and then the experimental essence. We could then say that the first researcher offers an olfactory metaphor, NEW PERFUME IS (LIKE) CHANEL5.

Case 6: Rejoice Perfume Smooth Shampoo—Commercial Adverting Video of Rejoice

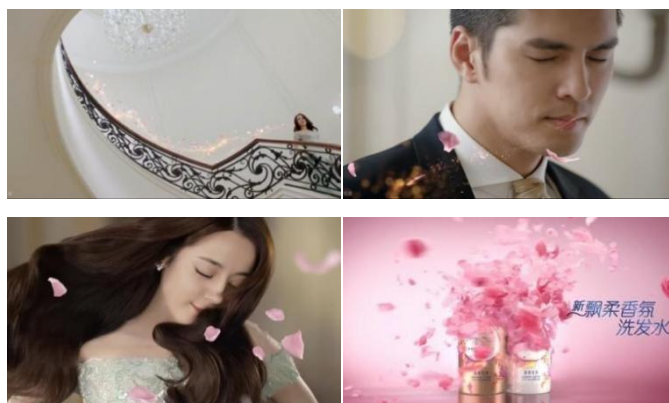


Figure 3-6 Screenshots of Rejoice

In Case 6, the female protagonist’s silk ribbon remains in the male protagonist’s hands. While he sniffs it, a floral fragrance is presented with floating petals. With the visual mode, magical golden light and petals flutter over the areas she has passed. This illustrates the conceptual metaphor that REJOICE PERFUME SMOOTH SHAMPOO IS FLOWER. The male protagonist follows the scent to search for her. His intoxicating expression as he smells the silk ribbon metaphorically conveys that

THE SMELL OF REJOICE PERFUME SMOOTH SHAMPOO IS THE GLASS SLIPPER. Finally, a female voice-over states that “忘不掉的柔顺发香 自信时刻再现(The unforgettable smooth hair fragrance, moments of confidence reemerge)”. The advertisement also wants to pass on the idea that Rejoice perfume smooth shampoo pumps the users up for projecting themselves.

The unique fragrance that is repeatedly appear in the advertisements becomes the olfactory identifier of the brand, symbolizing the uniqueness and high quality of the Rejoice brand. The olfactory metaphor in the advertisement reflects that Rejoice is not just a shampoo, but a high-end image of catalyst for personal charm.

3.4 Gustatory Metaphor

Gustatory metaphor is metaphor that enriches expression and makes something catching by comparing taste experiences with other concepts, emotions, things. The sense of taste is one of the basic perception modalities, and its main function is that of guiding our dietary choices not only in terms of palatability, but also what is potentially toxic, or poisonous. The domain of taste may serve alternatively as the source domain (e.g. PLEASURE IS SWEET), also could as the target domain (TASTE THE QUALITY OF A PERSON). In advertising, gustatory metaphor is frequently used to attract consumers. For instance, the slogan, “This juice tastes like sunshine with every sip”, employs this technique. The concept of “sunshine taste” suggests that the juice is fresh and natural, which stimulates the desire to purchase.

Taste is not simply a simple physical and chemical sensation; it also extends its related metaphors to potentially influence human emotions, intuition, and even cognitive judgement. For example, sweetness is often associated with positive emotions while bitterness is commonly linked to hardship and misfortune.

Case 7: Master Kong Jasmine honey tea (Master Kong)—Commercial Advertising Video of Master Kong)



Figure 3-7 Screenshots of Master Kong

In Case 7, at the beginning the female protagonist is unscrewing the lid. Suddenly, the male protagonist sits beside her. “Are we well acquainted each other?” she asks. “Familiar enough to be sharing tea”, he replies. In the advertisement, it employs taste metaphor to represent the savor of Jasmine honey tea and the beauty feeling of love. This establishes the metaphor that JASMINE HONEY TEA IS LOVE. The mapping relationship of conceptual metaphor is that SWEET OF MEETING LOVE IS SWEET OF JASMINE HONEY TEA. The target domain represents the sweet, relaxing gustatory experience. When the male protagonist enjoys the tea, he smiles. There, Master Kong Jasmine honey tea is just like the feeling of love; it is sweet and full of love.

The narration that “花和茶本该在一起 就像我和你 (Flower and tea should be together, just like you and me)” (sound mode) and the protagonists’ sweet and satisfied expression (visual mode) together create a multi-sensory experience of “enjoying the sweetness of love”. This reinforces the product’s selling points of natural ingredients and sweet romance. Jasmine is the direct visual symbol of the core flavor of the product (jasmine fragrance). Its whiteness symbolizes purity and no additives. The visual image of “jasmine” is directly mapped to the taste characteristics of the product’s jasmine fragrance to establish the basic taste association. By showing the crystal tea, floating petals, the satisfaction of the male protagonist drinking the tea, and text of “fragrant” and “sweet”, it strongly induces consumers’ sensory associations with the scent of jasmine and mild sweetness. The close-up of the slow flow of crystal honey. Honey is a symbol of natural sweetness. The taste metaphor

links the drinking experience with the beautiful emotion of love to establish a deeper emotional connection between a brand and its consumers.

3.5 Tactile Metaphor

Tactile metaphor cannot provide direct physical contact, but they can implicitly evoke related tactile sensations through other sensory elements. Consider a scenario that can be regarded as a tactile metaphor. There is an elderly and blind woman who has developed excessive hair-growth on her arms. Her daughter wants her little son to stroke his grandmother because the grandmother likes physical intimacy with her grandchild. However, the boy considers the hairy grandmother repellent. To help her son overcome his repugnance, the mother lets him stroke his fluffy pet bear, and then encourages him to stroke his grandmother. There is a metaphor that GRANDMOTHER'S HAPPINESS IS PET BEAR'S FLUFFINESS. (Forceville, 2007: 19)

3.5.1 Texture Metaphor

Texture metaphor could construct based on the relations between the tactile experience of different materials and the property of products. It can stimulate the audience's tactile perception and evoke emotional resonance through making abstract concepts tangible.

Case 8: Dove. Silky smooth. (Dove)—Commercial Advertising Video of Dove

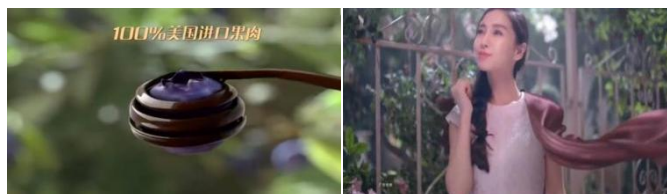


Figure 3-8 Screenshots of Dove

The advertisement skillfully incorporates the tactile mode. The deep purple hue of the blueberry contrasts with the mirror-like gloss of the chocolate, suggesting a melting touch through the fluidity of the liquid. To enable consumers to visually perceive the essence of chocolate's taste, the advertiser cleverly projected images of

flowing silk onto the female protagonist, mirroring the luxurious texture of Dove chocolate. Upon sampling the chocolate, its sleek consistency mirrored the sensation of silk gracefully gliding around her, offering a gentle and rejuvenating experience. The female says “丝滑巧克力 包裹蓝莓真果肉 (Silky chocolate wrapped in real blueberry flesh)”, which directly uses tactile words, forming a multimodal confirmation through images (visual mode) and character speech (auditory mode), avoiding abstraction. This also activates the audiences' subconscious association with the touch of silk through the visual mode and auditory mode.

The tactile mode brings to life the silky texture of Dove chocolate, etching a profound impression on the audience. Complementing this, the visual mode underscores this representation, simultaneously showcasing both the target and source domains, thereby establishing the multimodal metaphor DOVE CHOCOLATE IS SILK. Through the use of imagery, the advertisement transforms abstract sensation of taste and touch into tangible and visible experiences, highlighting the dynamism of multimodal metaphor, enriching consumers' sensory engagement, and whetting their appetite for the latest product.

The employment of texture metaphor directly stimulates the audience's expectation and craving for a smooth taste, which greatly enhances the sensory appeal of the product. This is one of the most effective ways to reveal the delectation of eating it.

3.5.2 Temperature Metaphor

Temperature is a natural phenomenon which affects the lives of human being and an important concept in everyday life. It is constructed by four categories: cold, cool, warm and hot. Temperature metaphor uses the concepts related to temperature (such as hot, cold, warm) as the source domain to map abstract emotions, interpersonal relationships and atmosphere as the target domain. In the advertising, temperature can link the characteristics more tangible and perceptible, enhancing consumers' cognition and affection towards the product.

Case 9: Nike Winter Solutions 2023 (NIKE)—Commercial Advertising Video of NIKE

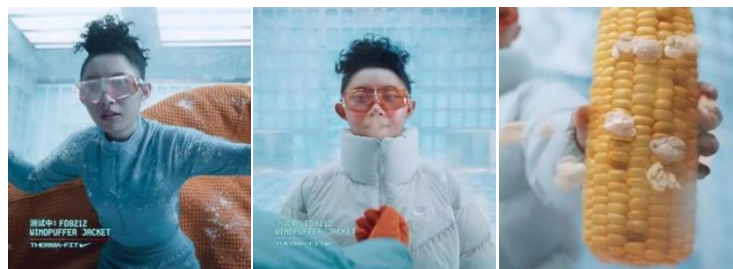


Figure 3-9 Screenshots of NIKE

In Case 9, it is an advertisement of Nike's jacket. At the beginning of scene, a female is in a freezing room with many ice blocks. The female inside is frozen off, even her eyebrows are frosted up. As soon as she put on the WINDPUFFER JACKET, her face turns red instantly and she exhales hot air. In the visual mode, the contrast between the cold of ice and the red complexion reflects the heat generated by wearing the sportswear. The corn bursts into popcorn when the female grasp it. It demonstrates the sportswear's excellent warmth. At that moment, the screen displays the words “劲爆的暖(Powerful Warmth)”. Moreover, the flowers that had withered come back to life when wrapped in the sportswear. This further demonstrates its superior warmth, since the sportswear effectively keeps the chill at bay. Apart from providing an effective embodied experience of active contents to the audience, driving them to vividly feel as if bundling them up in the windpuffer sportswear.

The temperature metaphor in this advertisement is not to say explicitly that the sportswear is warm, but to display the sports performance, technology fabrics and athletes' state. It also fits the sports spirit of “challenge the limit”, which regards cold as an opponent to be overcome rather than a threat to be avoided. This metaphor successfully positions Nike as a provider of winter sports solutions, rather than just a warm brand, in line with its core value of empowering athletes.

3.6 Discussion

The initial five sections in chapter 3 present analysis of multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements. The thesis reveals the compensatory and reinforcing

relationships among sensory modes based on the five organ sensations. For example, the visual water flow is used to stimulate tactile coolness. Visual metaphor transforms the product features that are difficult to describe directly into intuitive and easy to understand visual forms. Well-crafted visual metaphors based on common human experience can trigger similar understandings and emotional responses in audiences from different cultural backgrounds. They help brands avoid homogenized expression and improve the recognition of brands and products. Therefore, visual metaphor is dominant in multimodal metaphor.

Auditory metaphor can deepen emotional resonance and atmosphere. Because sound directly acts in the subconscious, triggering emotional responses. Auditory metaphor can also transform intangible qualities into perceptible sound experiences. For example, the sound of “tssst-crkk” metaphorically symbolizes the refreshment of carbonated drinks. The ambient sound instantly constructs the story scene, leading the audiences into a captivating imagination.

Olfactory, gustatory and tactile metaphor are highly depending on induction rather than direct presentation. They rely on symbolic translation in digital advertising. Digital advertising is limited by technology and cannot convey real smell and touch, which can be compensated for through sensory translation. Olfactory metaphor enhances scene association and activates the episodic memory. Gustatory metaphor directly stimulates people’s instinctive desires and purchasing impulses. Tactile metaphor transforms abstract qualities into perceptible tactile experiences and conveys quality commitments of the brands.

Conclusion

The thesis adopts the conceptual metaphor theory and multimodal metaphor theory to analyze printed and video advertisements. According to the five organ sensations of human beings, the author selects some advertisements from the internet. Major findings are concluded as follows.

The thesis demonstrates that multimodal metaphors exhibit a systematic sensory

function division in commercial advertisements. Visual metaphor leads brand positioning. Auditory metaphor manages emotional rhythms. Olfactory metaphor enhances scene association. Gustatory metaphor activates directly purchasing impulses. Tactile metaphor conveys quality commitments. The sensory specialization mechanism achieves the maximum efficiency of metaphor communication by precisely allocating cognitive load to reveal the deep sensory division logic of advertising persuasion.

By identifying and analyzing multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements, the research finds that multimodal metaphor is an indispensable creative language and persuasive tool for modern commercial advertisement. Different types of commercial advertisements tend to choose the type of multimodal metaphor that can most effectively achieve their goals based on their product characteristics, advantages, target audiences, and core appeals.

With the research of multimodal metaphor, it is showed that different metaphor functions differently. The application of multimodal metaphor in commercial advertisements enhance their readability and artistic. The diverse source domains that advertisers seek to represent the properties and features of the products could offer advertisers inspiration. From the above cases, advertisers show their wits to use many source domains to distinguish themselves from their competitors and to convey a specific feature in each case.

There are also some limitations. Owing to the lack of instruments and the limited knowledge of the author, the cases used to analyze the theory are typical. Taking the maneuverability into consideration, the author does not give a whole list of modes which some advertisements contain.

This research attempts to explore the multimodal metaphor from a more effective perspective, aiming to enhance their application in commercial advertisements. It is believed that this research is constructive to make modes applied in multimodal metaphors and to understand multimodal metaphor better.

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Appendix

Figure 3-1 <https://www.digitaling.com/projects/287916.html>

Figure 3-2 <https://reurl.cc/2Yox69>

Figure 3-3 <https://www.digitaling.com/articles/1235800.html>

Figure 3-4 <https://api.socialbeta.com/article/105434>

Figure 3-5 <https://b23.tv/isxYFIO>

Figure 3-6 <https://b23.tv/isxYFIO>

Figure 3-7 <https://b23.tv/46FePVI>

Figure 3-8 https://v.qq.com/x/page/h0317cv06cx.html?url_from=share

Figure 3-9 <https://www.digitaling.com/projects/270759.html>

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