

A Pragmatic Analysis of Argumentation with Multimodal Metaphor:

A case study based on two advertisements for tobacco

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Abstract: Metaphors represented through different modes such as image, sound, sign and smell can have a powerful persuasive impact on the audience. Within the frameworks of conceptual metaphor theory and Toulmin's Model of Argumentation, this paper, based on two Chinese tobacco advertisements (*Liqun* and *Baisha*), attempts to investigate the integral functionality of multimodal metaphor argumentation from the Adaptability Theory of Pragmatics. The results show that both advertisements are able to convince their audience via an implicative persuasion because they are to avoid relevant legal regulations that forbid tobacco companies from directly advertising. According to Adaptability Theory of Pragmatics, the strategic selection involved is considered as an adaptive act. Given that the persuasion is so implicative, a question arises as to how the process realizes its argumentation and persuasion effectively. Through analyzing relevant contexts, we find that metaphorical expressions are able to convey persuasive information to the public indeed, though they are not directly connected with tobacco.

We then discuss the different roles of the information played in the argumentative structure by reconstructing the argumentations. As for *Liqun*, multimodal metaphors deliver such a value to us that the happiness enjoyed during the process largely outweighs its result. It is this value that helps the public out of smoking dilemma and guides them to make a decision to enjoy smoking. As for *Baisha*, multimodal metaphors, by way of using a metonymy and an orientational metaphor HAPPY IS UP, manage to communicate such a concept that smoking makes us happy. In other words, the advertisement which foregrounds so-called positive effects of smoking can also influence our decision. In addition, the former advertisement adopts a conceptual metaphor universally shared by Chinese in the culture context, namely LIFE IS A JOURNEY, which successfully supports the metaphorical argumentation and excludes some controversial propositions. After comparison, we find the first multimodal metaphorical advertising shows a more implicit but more powerful persuasive force than the second one.