CASE STUDY OF PUN IN ADVERTISING

1.1 Case Study of Phonetic Pun

Phonetic pun can be divided into homophones pun and paronomasias. It is established according to the pronunciation contact. This kind of pun is in great number and easy to distinguish.

Example 1: “真正的橙色”

This is an advertisement of Huiyuan orange juice, which leaves consumer a good impression. This advertisement language used paronomasias properly, emphasizing that huiyuan product has original “真正的橙色” and the love given to consumer is “真诚” without any adulteration of “fake”. Love is blessing and care, which is consistent with the ideas that juice is the guardians of health. This kind of advertisement which is created on the basis of the emotional appeal not only is easy to make consumers accept this product from inner side but also can let consumers have an enjoyment in the process of appreciating AD language skills.

Example 2: Everybody kneads (needs) it.

Similar spelling and the same pronunciation can also be taken advantage of to constitute pun in other language. The advertisement employing pun listed above is written in English. It is an advertisement language from Pillsbury Flour Company. “Kneads” in the sentence meaning “to rub flour” is homonymous with the word “needs” meaning “to want”, which
makes this advertisement extremely impressing and persuasive.

Advertisement makes use of the existing condition of paronomasia to weeds through the old to bring forth the new, creating showy new language form to attract audiences’ attention. This kind of advertisement also has the characteristic of one word with double meanings. In essence, it is a phonetic pun. The only difference is that people employ the idiom or proverb in a fresh way, making customers greatly impressed by this brand. This method attracts a large population in the field of advertisement.

**Example 3: 不打不相识**

A German manufacturer of typewriter launched an excellent slogan “不打不相识”. the meaning of “打” in the proverb of “不打不相识” refers to the fight, particularly to many heroes first fighting with each other because of misunderstanding but later become good friends when the misunderstanding is removed. “打” in this advertisement means typewriting, which implies that the typewriter will be your good friend. To advertise friendly feelings the advertisement first tries to shorten the psychological distance with the consumer through making friends with people, then the character “打” has pointed out the usage of the commodity. Similar examples are “‘切心’心‘意’”、“‘默默无蚊’的奉献”、“‘咳不容缓’”、“六神有主, 一家无忧” etc.

In English advertisement there are the phenomena of making the transformation to the existing idiom or the proverb to create the pun, but they have obvious difference with Chinese situation, they use the polysemy instead of the paronomasia to constitute the semantic pun.

**Example 4:** Better late than the late.
This is a piece of public service advertising about safe driving, whose form reminds people of the idiom “Better late than never”. The highlight of the advertisement lies not only in the idiom structure quoted in it, but also in the employment of the semantic pun of “late”. Those who use English as their mother language know that “the late” has the meaning of “the dead” and “the late” here just refers to “the dead”. The idea of the advertisement is marvelous for that the tactful advice has the deterrent function compared to the stiff rigid theorizing.

1.2 Case Study of Semantic Pun

The semantic pun makes use of the polysemy of the words or sentences in specific context to constitute pun. The appropriate employment of semantic pun will enhance the effect of advertising.

Example 5: 人类失去联想, 世界将会怎样?

Lenovo’s AD use hypothesis to lift the brand“联想” and people’s psychological phenomenon “联想” to the same level. As a psychological mechanism, if people have no “联想”, there will be no innovations and the world will become a pool of dead water; if people have “联想”, the world will become rich and colorful. As a modern information tool, if people lack the “联想” computer,

Their lives will be boring, while their lives will be interesting and colorful. This AD emphasize that if human lost “联想” computer, the world will also lack imagination, creativity and the world will be unimaginable.

Example 6: The Unique Spirit of Canada: We Bottled It.

This is an advertisement of Lord Calvert Canadian whiskey. The advertisement engineer intended to use “spirit” and “bottle” to form two
semantic puns. “Spirit” can refer not only to “the hard liquor” but also to “the mind”. The “Bottle” means to bottle (liquor and so on), and we can also understand it as “seals the Canadian unique national spirit”. The utilization of pun makes the advertisement interesting and imaginable.

1.3 Case Study of Grammatical Pun

Grammatical pun differs from the semantic pun. The starting point of the grammatical pun is the difference on grammatical function of the word or phrase.

Example 7: 美的, 美的

This is the advertisement launched by Mei Di Company for promoting its flagship product of air-conditions. It creates the feeling of advertisement by altering the mood of terms to reach the purpose of pun. “美的空调” 的 “美的 (dì)” is the brand name. It is a noun, meaning “美的” brand air conditioners; “美的享受” becomes an adjective phrase, meaning “美好的”. Literally the same, but the moods of the two characters are totally different.

Example 8: Which larger can claim to be truly German? This can.

This is an advertisement for larger beer. The “can” in the first sentence is a modal verb and the “can” in the second sentence serves not only for modal verbs, but also as a noun. This structure makes the advertising full of humor and interest.