

# The Realization of Mood through Interpersonal Metaphor in English Public Service Advertising Texts

Yanqing Fang

College Foreign Language Dept, Xiamen University Tan Kah Kee College  
Xiamen, China

**Abstract**—The public service advertisement can indicate the relationship, interaction and negotiations between the advertiser and the audience. Based on the systemic functional grammar, this paper aims to investigate the interpersonal meaning of mood system through the interpersonal metaphor. The tagged declaratives, rather than the normal declaratives, make the statement more attractive and impressive. The modulate interrogative, rather than the normal imperative, makes the command more impressive and persuasive.

**Keywords**—Mood system; English public service advertising; Interpersonal metaphor

## I. INTRODUCTION

Advertisements can mainly be classified in to two types: commercial advertisement and non-commercial advertisement. Scholars have analyzed commercial advertisements discourse from different aspects. However, with the rapid growth of economy, some serious social problems, for instance, pollution, AIDS, poverty, drug abuse have great negative influences on the development of the society. Besides, natural disasters such as flood, hurricane also brings serious problems to the development of the society. However, solving these problems is not only the government's responsibility, if the individuals and community groups can take part in this event, these problems would be solved in a better and quicker way. Thus, one kind of the non-commercial advertisement is created, that is the public service advertisements.

Public service advertisements aim to inform the public of those important social issues and problems, to attract people's attention on these things and stimulate their positive action to take part in the campaign to solve these significant issues. Public service advertisement is the medium between the advertiser and the audience; it can indicate the relationship between the advertiser and the audience as well as the interaction and negotiation between them. Therefore, it is meaningful to do research on how the advertiser builds relationship with the audience and how the advertiser persuades the audience to take positive action through a variety of linguistic strategies.

The American public service advertising originated from the year 1941. In 1942, the War Advertising Council was set up and it became a major instrument of the information policy of the Government. After the war, it changed its name into Advertising Council, which developed into six organizations. It has been raising a lot of funds and help for the public service

issues since then and becomes an influential public service agency. In consideration of the fact that the United States is the pioneer in the development of public service advertising. We choose the English public service advertising text issued by the United States as the target research discourses. Based on the systemic functional grammar, this thesis aims to investigate the interpersonal meaning of mood system in English public service advertising texts. We will do research on how the advertiser builds the relationship with the audience and how the advertiser persuades the audience to take positive actions through the application of interpersonal metaphor of mood.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Studies on Mood System in Various Discourse Types

Mood system, as one way of expressing interpersonal meaning, is one of the important parts in Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). SFG considers language as a social semiotics, which is a resource people use to accomplish their purposes by expressing meaning in context. According to Halliday (1985:7), "The value of a theory, lies in the use that can be made of it, and I have always considered theory of language to be essentially consumer oriented". Halliday (1994) developed Functional Grammar for the people who study grammar for the purpose of text analysis. This kind of text analysis focuses on the study of various meanings realized by various language structures as well as the different functions of language.

In daily life, people use language to communicate with each other. People use language to exchange meanings; provide information and influence other's attitude, behavior. This function of language is called the interpersonal function. Halliday (1994) points out that interpersonal function can be realized by lexico-grammatical system and phonological system: mood, modality and key. Mood system plays an important role in the realization of interpersonal function and many scholars in and out of China do research on it.

Halliday (1985) studies the development of dialogue and the mood system in young children's language. Halliday (1994) and Martin (1992) have described the lexico-grammatical system of mood as three types of interaction. Martin especially studies the significance of mood and modality in a particular discourse.

Thompson and Thetela (1995) summarize three grammatical systems (mood, modality and evaluation) in

realizing interpersonal meaning. They especially exploit the interpersonal features of mood in written advertisements. They find that the function of interaction in written advertisements is to invite the reader to join the text and identify what the text is about.

Eggin and Slade (1997) focus on the mood of the clause in casual conversation occurred among mother, father and son. Moreover, they conclude that their interaction lacks of reciprocity. They suggest that the grammatical patterns of mood choices are a key resource for revealing tensions between equality and differences as well as the construction status differences.

Palmer (2001) in *Mood and Modality* points out three closely related typological patterns: tense, aspect and modality (TAM). M stands for modality, not mood. Mood is the subsystem of modality. Mood system and modal system constitute modality.

Joanna Thornborrow invests the mood in media dialogue. The programs with interaction of audience and schemed beforehand by experts and authorities, the whole process is controlled in the institutional format. (Li Zhanzi, 2002)

Thibault (2004) analyzes the mood system of dialogue to describe the interpersonal function of subject and mood structures.

Just as the investigation done by the foreign scholars, many Chinese scholars have also done research on the theory of mood.

Li Zhanzi (2002) exploits the realization of interpersonal meaning in academic discourses and autobiographies. In 2005, she studies the discussions between Martin and Lemke on appraisal types and constructs the continuum from mood, modality to appraisal, and she emphasizes the importance of the view of continuum in semantics and discourse analysis.

In studies of news in terms of mood system, the realization of interpersonal functions of mood is also widely used in the analysis of advertisement discourse in China. Wang Lei, Cai Cuihong (2008) focuses on the interpersonal meanings of mood system in English advertising to demonstrate how interpersonal meanings are realized by the mood system and show the importance of interpersonal meaning in achieving success for advertisements.

Scholars have done a lot of researches on mood system in different discourses, including some advertisements, but rarely for public service advertisements. However, the language study of public service advertisement is popular.

### *B. Studies on Public Service Advertisement Texts*

Advertising, as a special discourse, has always attracted a lot of attention from linguistic scholars in and out of China. Many scholars have explored advertising discourse, such as Cook (2003) and Huang Guowen (2001). Their researches have great extent and profundity, so they are very useful to the other researchers. Since the research target of these works are the general types of advertisement, and they pay comparatively fewer attention to the public service advertising texts, so there

is wide space for the research on the characteristics of public service advertising texts.

Public service advertisement, also called public advertisement or service advertisement, is the advertisement that aims at serving for the public interest rather than personal profit. Its purpose is to promote public interest and arouse people's attention on the various problems of the whole society. Furthermore, it appeals to the people to take practical actions to improve the situation or to solve the problems and make the social life safer and more harmonious. Most of these advertisements aim to publicize the notion, spirit or philosophy that is in accord with the public interests. In sum, the purpose of public service advertising is releasing government policies, promoting desirable lifestyle and high moral standard and appealing to the public to offer help to victims in disasters. In general, it is a discourse with persuasive intent, aiming at instilling thoughts in the public.

Up to now, commercial advertising discourse has been extensively explored in and out of China, while comparatively fewer scholars have paid attention to the public service advertising texts. Moreover, researches on public service advertising texts in China are mainly from the perspectives of sociology and aesthetics. Few studies have focused on the interaction and negotiation between the advertiser and the audience.

Sun Ran (2004) tentatively analyzes an English public service advertising text published on *Fortune*. She examines the text pattern and speech roles of the advertisement and finds that public service advertising texts can share the similar text pattern or linguistic structure with commercial advertising texts. However, in order to persuade the reader to take positive action in a more effective way, they adopt much more means than commercial advertising texts to strengthen the persuasive power, such as narrating ads from the angle of ordinary people, using the second person pronoun you frequently to enable the interaction between the advertiser and the reader, or associating ads with celebrities or authorities. Sun's study mainly rests on the text pattern of public service advertising texts and touches little upon the interpersonal aspect of the advertising texts.

Yang Shu (2006) analyzes the interpersonal meaning of public service advertising text through a systemic functional approach. Yang examines the speech roles, person system, modality and modal assessment of the public service advertising text to uncover how interpersonal meaning is realized through various lexical- grammatical patterns. The author finds that various lexico-grammatical patterns have been skillfully used by the advertiser to manipulate the interaction and negotiation with the reader in public service advertising texts.

Chen Linlin (2007) studies the interpersonal meanings in the discourse of public service advertising. The author aims to explore how interpersonal meanings are realized in Chinese public service advertising texts. The author studies the lexico-grammatical resources that realize interpersonal meanings in the Chinese public service advertising texts. This thesis focuses on mood, modality and person to see how interpersonal meanings are realized and explore further the

advertiser-audience relationship as is reflected in these resources.

As we can see on the above researches, the authors seldom pay special attention to the mood system and its interpersonal meanings in public service advertising texts. Therefore, there is the space for us to do some detailed investigation on different aspects of mood system in the realization of interpersonal meaning in English public service advertising texts. Thus, the present research attempts to explore the interpersonal meaning of public service advertising texts and hopefully it may enrich studies on this particular area. While, before we carry out this analysis, it is necessary to introduce the theoretical framework of this study. In what follows, theoretical framework of the present research is surveyed.

*C. Interpersonal metaphor of mood*

The choice of the mood structures is not always typically in compliance with the speech functions as we present above. Besides the typical mood structures as illustrated above, some other non-typical grammatical mood structures can also realize these speech functions. Hence, the same mood can be realized by different speech functions; and the same speech function can be realized by various mood structures. The phenomena that transform one mood field into another mood field is called “grammatical metaphor” by Halliday.

Offers are most usually expressed by modulated interrogative mood, e.g. “Would you like to have a piece of cake?” However, they can also be realized by imperatives, “Have a cup of tea!”, or declaratives, “There is an apple on the table.”

Commands are typically realized by imperative mood, e.g. “Pass me the sugar!”, but this kind of command can also be expressed by declarative mood, e.g., “I hope you will pass me the sugar.” Or by modulated interrogative mood, e.g. “Would you please pass me the sugar?”

Statements are most frequently realized by declarative mood, e.g., “John likes rock music very much.” They can also be realized by tagged declarative mood, e.g., “John likes rock music very much, doesn’t he?”

Questions are often collected to interrogative mood, e.g. “Will he go for a holiday with his family?” However, we can also ask questions with a declarative mood choice, e.g., “He will go for a holiday with his family?” “Yes.” Questions can also be realized by modulated declarative mood, e.g., “I was wondering whether it will be sunny tomorrow.”

We can see what the meaning of the interpersonal metaphor of mood is from the above discussion. Moreover, we can show these in the following table:

TABLE I. TYPICAL AND NON-TYPICAL MOOD STRUCTURES OF FOUR BASIC SPEECH FUNCTIONS

Speech functions	Typical mood structures	Non-typical mood structures
Offer	Modulated interrogative mood	Imperative & declarative mood
Command	Imperative mood	Modulated interrogative & declarative mood
Statement	Declarative mood	Tagged declarative mood
Question	Interrogative mood	Modulated declarative mood

The speaker can realize different speeches functions by tossing back and forth one particular component of the clause. Meanwhile the remainder is not changed. The component being changed is called the MOOD. Mood is the fundamental theory of this thesis.

III. INTERPERSONAL METAPHOR OF MOOD IN PSA

Generally speaking, in mood system, statements are most frequently realized by declarative mood; questions by interrogative mood; commands by imperative mood; and offers by modulated interrogative mood. However, in the practical language use, the speech function and mood structure are not in a one-to-one relationship. Hence, the same mood can be realized by different speech functions; and the same speech function can be realized by various mood structures. The phenomena that transform one mood field into another mood field is called “grammatical metaphor” by Halliday.

As we mentioned before, offer can be realized by imperative and declarative mood; command by modulated interrogative and declarative mood; statement by tagged declarative mood; and question by modulated declarative mood. In public service advertising texts, the advertiser also applies these non-typical mood structures to realize different speech functions. In the following part, we will analyze the interpersonal metaphor of mood applied in public service advertising texts.

Commands are usually realized by imperative mood, but in public service advertising texts, commands can also be realized by modulated interrogative mood see Example 1:

Example (1):

My name is Heidi Klum and I’m an American Red Cross volunteer.

Will you join me?

We all have to look out for each other.

When you help the American Red Cross, you help America.

Through her involvement with the American Red Cross, Heidi Klum helps to save lives every day.

To learn how Heidi Klum is helping, or to find out what you can do to help, visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org). (NO.23)

This public service advertisement is published by the American Red Cross. It is about the American Red Cross volunteers. At the beginning of this advertisement text, “Heidi Klum” gives a self-introduction and tells the audience he is an American Red Cross volunteer. The following clause “Will you join me?” is a combination of modulated interrogative

mood and imperative mood. Although it is formally a modulated interrogative, in fact, it aims to express the imperative mood. The advertiser wants to persuade the audience to join the American Red Cross and become a Red Cross volunteer. Then the advertiser uses the following clauses to tell the audience what volunteers do and what have volunteers contributed to the others. This would further persuade the audience to join the Red Cross.

As compared to the normal imperatives, which simply tell the audience what to do, use the modulated interrogative to express command is much better. Because the use of interpersonal metaphor of mood can leave deep impression to the audience and the audience will not feel that they are force to do these things. Thus, the advertisement can gain better effect.

Statement is typically realized by declarative mood. In public service advertising texts, statement can also expressed by tagged declarative mood. The following example will clearly illustrate this:

Example (2):

With the Right Weapons, Fighting hunger Can be Quite Enjoyable.

Just imagine- a night of entertainment, drink and fine cuisine from 30 of Jackson's finest chefs. All under the stars.

Sounds more like the social event of the year than a fight, doesn't it?

But last year's Taste of the Nation event brought in over \$27,000 which went straight to statewide and national hunger relief organization. And, like last year, 70% of the proceeds will stay right here in Jackson, benefiting Stewpot Community Services.

So don't feel too bad if you partake of one too many hot d'oeuvres, because this is one time when self-indulgence is a good thing. So go ahead, help your self-while you help others. It promises to be a right, your taste buds won't soon forget. (NO. 35)

This public service advertisement is published by the American Red Cross to tell the audience something about the international service. The international service here refers to the hunger-fight in the United State especially in Mississippi. The audience can help the hunger people just by eating at certain restaurant.

In this public service advertising text, the advertiser first describes the fight against hunger as a war with weapons. Then he portrays the beautiful picture of dining in a wonderful place. "Sounds more like the social event of the year than a fight, doesn't it?" This sentence makes the statement that this campaign is like a social problem rather than a real fight because the weapons we use here is such a beautiful thing. Instead of using the usual declarative, the advertiser use the tagged declarative to express this statement. The use of interpersonal metaphor of mood here makes this sentence more attractive and gives the audience an impression that helping the hunger people is an easy thing. Therefore, the audience is more

likely to take part in this event and the fight against hunger is more likely to be successful.

In some public service advertising texts, there is not only one kind of interpersonal metaphor of mood. The combination of different interpersonal metaphor of mood can greatly help the advertiser to carry his point. See Example 3:

Example (3):

Hunger Relief Starts here.

Or, if you'd prefer, you could dine in or take out. Either way, on Friday, April 12, a percentage of your bill will be donated to Mississippi hunger relief organization.

Not only will you be funding yourself, you'll also be helping to feed others.

Pretty cool, hah?

So, as long as you're grabbing a bite to eat, why not do it at a participating restaurant?

Your stomach may not notice the difference, but your heart sure will.

Fight hunger. Go eat.

Dine Out. Help Out. (NO.33)

Just like the above Example 2 , this public service advertisement is also published by the American Red Cross to tell the audience something about hunger problem in the United State especially in Mississippi. The audience can help the hunger people just by eating at certain restaurant.

This text applied the interpersonal metaphor of mood twice. One is the expression of statement through tagged declarative; and the other is the expression of imperative through interrogative.

The fist three sentences describe the way the audience can enjoy the dinner and how they can help the others—"a percentage of your bill will be donated to Mississippi hunger relief organization." Then the advertiser uses the clause "Pretty cool, hah?" which is the tagged declarative mood, to make the statement that this is pretty cool. Compared with the normal declarative, tagged declarative is more attractive since most of the clauses in the text are declaratives. The audience may pay special attention to this. Therefore, the application of interpersonal counts a lot in give the leaving impression to the audience.

After the audience getting some impression about this public service event, the advertiser gives the command to the audience. That is to invite the audience to take part in this activity. The advertiser uses this interrogative to give the command--"So, as long as you're grabbing a bite to eat, why not do it at a participating restaurant?" That is because imperatives may make the audience feel illusion: the advertiser regards himself as superior and force the audience to help the hunger people. However, an interrogative might help to make the audience feel this is a sincere invitation to ask them to participate in this event. In this way, the audience would be happy to give a hand to the hunger people.

In sum, in public service advertising texts, the application of interpersonal metaphor of mood can make expression more changeable. The tagged declaratives, rather than the normal declaratives, make the statement more attractive and impressive. The modulate interrogative, rather than the normal imperative; make the command more impressive and persuasive. Moreover, the audience may not feel that they are force to help the others. Therefore, the audience would take positive actions to do as the advertiser wishes them to do. And the purposes of the public service advertisement are realized in a better and easier way. English mood system can produce a variety of interpersonal metaphor expressions. Therefore, interpersonal metaphor of mood can greatly expand the potential of English conversation. These abundant interpersonal metaphor expressions can be more attractive to the audience and thus achieve the aim of the public service advertisement.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

With the rapid development of the society, many social problems need to be solved with the efforts of the government, the individual as well as the community groups. In order to realize this purpose, public service advertisement is a good way to build the relationship between the advertiser and the audience and therefore attract the audience's attention on these social issues as well as stimulate the audience to take positive action and take part in the campaign to solve these social problems. Since there are comparatively few researches on the different perspectives of interpersonal metaphor of mood in the realization of interpersonal meaning in public service advertising texts, this study fills this gap.

The application of interpersonal metaphor of mood in public service advertisement can make expression more changeable. The tagged declaratives, rather than the normal declaratives, make the statement more attractive and impressive. The modulate interrogative, rather than the normal imperative; make the command more impressive and persuasive. Moreover, the audience may not feel that they are force to help the others. Therefore, the audience would take positive actions to do as the advertiser wishes them to do. These abundant interpersonal metaphor expressions can be more attractive to the audience and thus achieve the aim of the public service advertisement.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Cook, G. The discourse of advertising [M]. 221, London: Routledge, 2003.
- [2] Chen Linlin. Interpersonal Meanings in the Discourse of Public Service Advertising [J]. Qingdao: Shandong University Press, 2007.
- [3] Eggins, S. & Slade, D. Analyzing Causal Conversation [M]. London: Cassell, 1997.
- [4] Halliday, M. A. K. An Introduction to Functional Grammar [M]. London: Edward Arnold, 1985.
- [5] Halliday, M.A.K. An Introduction to Functional Grammar [M]. London: Edward Arnold, 1994.
- [6] Huang Guowen. Theory and Practice of Discourse Analysis—A Study on Advertisement Discourse [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2001.
- [7] Li Zhanzi. Interpersonal Meaning in Discourse [M]. Beijing: Yi Wen Publishing Military, 2002.
- [8] Martin, J.R. English Text: system and structures [M]. Philadelphia: Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992.
- [9] Palmer, F.R. Mood & Modality [M]. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- [10] Sun Ran. A Tentative Analysis of Public Service Advertising Discourse [J]. Shandong Foreign Language Teaching Journal, 2004, (6).
- [11] Thibault. The Interpersonal Enactment of Agency: Towards a social Motivated Account of the Interpersonal Grammar of Mood in English [J]. Semiotically NENU, 2004.
- [12] Thompson, G., & P. Thetela. The Sound of One Hand Clapping: the management of interaction in written discourse. [J]. text 15 (1), 103-127, 1995.
- [13] L. Wang, C.H. Cai: Journal of Zhejiang Gongshang University, Vol. 91(2008) NO. 4, p.42-46, An Analysis of the Interpersonal Meaning of the Mood System in English Advertisements.