

## 国外英文书籍推荐广告的语言策略

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**摘要:** 国外英文书籍推荐广告传统上是印在书籍封套上,但现在也出现在网页上,目的是为读者提供书籍的信息。本文从称赞语策略、省略句型策略、祈使句和称谓语 you 策略、激起好奇心策略四方面分析国外四大出版社的英文书籍推荐广告的语言策略。

**关键词:** 书籍推荐广告; 语言策略

### 1. 引言

“广告”一词的原意是“商业上的告示”,是17世纪中叶英国开始进行大规模商品活动时逐渐流行起来的。如今,广告的发展日新月异,采用的宣传手段和媒介也越来越多,如利用报刊、广播等大众媒介或采用路牌等表现手法。然而,不管广告的发展如何千变万化,也不管广告的传播方式如何多种多样,其最有表现力的手段还是语言。因为当人们对某种商品产生好感而乐于购买和向他人推荐时,更多地是用语言表达。一则成功的广告留给人们的是人们乐于传诵的精练高雅的广告词。

韩礼德(Halliday)在《功能语法导论》一书所称的短篇章(little text)近来成为语言研究的焦点。他所说的短篇章包括新闻标题、电报、产品卷标、简短说明(如食谱)等,国内外对新闻标题等的研究可谓之多,简直不胜枚举,但还没有有关以英文书籍推荐广告为研究对象的。国外英文书籍推荐广告(blurbs)传统上是印在书籍封套上的,但随着最为强大最为人们广泛接受的因特网的出现,国外出版社纷纷使用网络将这部分内容放在网页上,目的是吸引更多的读者的兴趣。一般来说,它不但包括书的内容简介,还含有有影响的报纸、期刊、杂志的书评的摘录。因此,对此类广告的语言特征进行研究,有助于我们了解国外出版社的市场战略的语言特征,从而为我国的出版业走向世界奠定坚实的语言基础;也对专门用途英语(ESP)的发展有着不可估量的作用。本文探讨国外四大出版社(即Penguin, Ballantine, Routledge及Barnes & Noble)英文书籍推荐广告的语言策略。

广告的主要功能是劝说功能(黄国文,2002)。为此,国外英文书籍推荐广告使用大量的策略旨在通过强调和表扬书籍的特点来吸引潜在的顾客。

### 2. 称赞语策略

广告学家将广告称为一个“永远没有丑恶,没有苦难,没有野蛮的奇妙世界”。商家在广告中会常常用大量的褒义的、赞美的形容词来说明产品的性能、品质和优点。英国语言学家G. H. Leech在*English in Advertising* (1955, p. 151)一书中将广告英语中经常出现的形容词按其使用频率大小依次排列,前二十个是: new, good/better/best, free, fresh, delicious, full, sure, wonderful, clean, special, crisp, fine, big, great, real, easy, bright, extra, safe, rich. 国外英文书籍推荐广告大量使用强化的副词、正面的评价性形容词,有时出版

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商为了表明自己商品的优胜之处，标榜自己的商品是最好的，用形容词的比较级或最高级结构来评价书籍和作者，特别是在提供评论家的书评时。

对书籍的称赞语部分往往通过强调书籍对读者的效果来诉诸于情感，即当评论者阅读该书时他/她的感受是什么。譬如：

- (1) A beautiful, funny, wise book, full of understanding, gentle direction, brilliance, and heart.
  - (2) refreshing...essential... revealing...discerning...indispensable...witty...informative...insightful....
  - (3) This is not only the best book so far written on the six-day war, it is likely to remain the best.
  - (4) The most honest, observant and timely book written this year about the American generation.
- 有些摘选强调该书所获得的奖项来保证其质量。
- (5) Winner of the 2002 Whitbread Book of the Year Award.
  - (6) Nominated as one of the top 21 titles in the BBC Big Read.

对作者的称赞语部分往往强调作者的写作特点和风格；此外，往往通过使用最高级结构或近似于最高级结构来强调作者的名声和成就。如：

- (7) Uproarious and touching! Gervase Phinn writes with enormous warmth and wit.
- (8) Sean McConville graphically recounts both sides of this story-and does so with an even-handedness and objectivity that must command the respect of all his readers, whatever side of the Irish sea they may be on.
- (9) Ridpath has that read-on factor that sets best-sellers apart.
- (10) From the No.1 International Bestselling author of Stupid White Men...
- (11) From the author of the controversial bestseller Fast Food Nation. 1
- (12) national bestseller. A New York Times notable book.
- (13) Brave, learned, sassy, wildly funny, Terry Castle [is] not only our best Female Literary Critic and One Wise Babe. She's the most expressive, most enlightening literary critic at large today.

然而，有时出于谦虚和为了获得读者的信任会使用模糊限制语情态副词 probably 或者 one of + 最高级结构来减缓最高级的力量。

- (14) Probably the most important novelist of the past two decades.
- (15) Proof, once more, that Townsend is one of the funniest writers around.

### 3. 省略动词或主语的句型策略

这样的句型近似于广告口号和大字标题，文字简洁，缩短广告的篇幅，同时更直接的抓住读者的眼球。省略句型还可模仿真实的言语建立和读者的亲切感。正如 Goddard (1998, p. 107) 指出，熟练的说话者不需要表达清楚他们的所有的意图，因为由于拥有共同的背景知识，他们知道对方会填补这些信息鸿沟。省略句型作为作者和读者之间的一个纽带，作者和读者之间的联系的加强是通过读者必须要填补这些信息鸿沟的努力来实现的。广告中特别如此，广告的信息的有效性依赖于信息的接受者的译码。英文书籍推荐广告中的省略句型俯拾皆是。如：

- (16) A triumph.
- (17) A huge hit.
- (18) One of Britain's most prolific writers and a giant among historians.
- (19) Genuine chills and page-turning suspense.
- (20) Inspiring...Offers a real sense of what it's like to be at the beginning of Something Big.
- (21) Extraordinary depth and resonance. Will rank among the finest of Second World War memoirs.

### 4. 祈使句和称谓语 you 策略

Fairclough (1994) 评论说，祈使句和称谓语“you”的使用表明生产者和消费者的亲密关系。

廖七一 (2000, p. 253) 说, 祈使句可加强广告的“鼓动性”, 劝告或怂恿消费者立即行动, 购买所宣传的商品。祈使句是用来直接称呼潜在的消费者的, 通过使用祈使句, 国外英文书籍推荐广告的劝说功能就很明显。这里祈使句是邀请或推荐, 而非命令或强加人意 (del Saz, 2000)。如:

(22) Steel yourself for a gripping tale of obsession, madness and fear.

(23) Enter the world of Susan Lilian Townsend .sun-worshippers, work-shy writers, garden centre lovers and those in search of a good time are all welcome.

正如 del Saz (2000) 所说, 减轻祈使句的语内表现行为的力量的一种方法是使用礼貌策略, 譬如在祈使句前或后给出原因。下面的例子就显示读者阅读此书是因为作者的写作特点。

(24) Ali Smith has got style, ideas and punch. Read her.

(25) If everyone who wants to be a writer would read this book there would be many more good writers, many more happy writers, and editors would be so overwhelmed by sweetness they would accept many more good books. So what are you waiting for? Read it.

广告作为一种交际形式, 必然涉及到信息的传递者 (广告商) 和接受者 (消费者) 两方。第一和第二人称的使用有利于缩短双方的情感距离, 从而在商家与消费者之间建立亲切融洽的关系。商家借此表示对消费者的关心, 避免其产生逆反心理, 增加消费者的参与感, 从而达到宣传促销的目的。Goddard (1998) 指出英文书籍推荐广告中称谓语 “you” 的使用, 可使潜在的作者参与其中, 让他们对所做广告的书感兴趣。如:

(26) Gripping, harrowing. A true triumph over tragedy. You may start Kevin Lewis’s book in tears, but you finish it exultant. /The book that will get you marching mad.

(27) You are on the verge of entering the wise, provoking, benevolent, hilarious, and addictive world of Douglas Adams. .Stephen Fry, author of *The Liar and Making History: A Novel*.

(28) It’s huge, fascinating, funny and rude. You can dip into it and it would keep you howling with laughter for months.

(29) If you’re in the mood for mind games, *Shutter Island* is an engrossing read.

(30) If your job is more stressful that it is satisfying and you fantasize about leaving it for a career you truly love, here is the book for you! (...). The choice is yours to make. (...) this extraordinary book will help you find the courage to succeed in the ways that really make a difference. It’s true: You can at last *Do What You Love for the Rest of Your Life!* 称谓语 you 另外一个作用是用来概括出评论者对此书的感受、情绪与反应。如:

(31) Richly detailed, ingeniously constructed ... you will revel in Jane Smiley’s *Horse Heaven*./Carolyn See doesn’t just tell you to sharpen your pencils, she shows you how to sharpen your wits.

(32) It has the headlong suspense and whopper of a story you would expect in any well-made thriller.

## 5. 激起好奇心策略

英文书籍推荐广告中常常包括书的内容摘录, 特别是摘录一些内涵丰富的句子来吸引读者的注意力, 激起兴趣。如:

(33) I always thought you knew what you were. now—I know different. The world’s slippery. All it takes is for one thing to shift and everything can slide away. It’s like falling off the edge of the world.

(34) We have no future because our present is too volatile...We have only risk management. The spinning of the given moment’s scenarios.

(35) Kadi read with outrage the American newspaper description of her son as “an unarmed West African street vendor” “Nothing”, she writes, “could be more distant from the truth.” Now, with great pride and searing love, Kadi Diallo finally tells the truth about her self and her son.

(36) It happens that I am going through a period of great unhappiness and loss just now, she admits.

激起好奇心的手法有时以修辞疑问句即反问句的形式出现, 这些修辞疑问句包含着情节或争论的主要

成分，扣人心弦。Brierley (1995) 说，提问去激起好奇心让读者参与是广告的常用技巧。下面的例子说明了这一点。

(37) Are the differences between the sexes really just down to our upbringing or is there another, more fundamental explanation?

(38) How do social and economic characteristics affect political behaviour and preference? What are the local and national determinants of voting patterns? How strong are regional factors, or the personal votes of MPs and candidates? What makes each parliamentary seat tick?

(39) What is a woman's price? From the bestselling author of *The Last Time They Met* comes a brilliant new novel about love, jealousy, and loss.

(40) At 29, Julie Barenson is too young to give up on love. Four years after her husband's tragic death, she is finally ready to risk giving her heart to someone again. But to whom? Should it be Richard Franklin, who is handsome and sophisticated and treats her like a queen, or Mike Harris, who is Julie's best friend in the world, though not as debonair?

## 6. 结 语

本文用详实的例证说明国外英文书籍推荐广告这一文本类型为了打动读者，完成其劝说的功能所使用的语言策略。然而，还需要进一步的研究来揭开国外英文书籍推荐广告的许多有趣的方面，比如，从历时的角度研究其的历史演变；探讨它和书评的联系等等其它方面，从而更好地为社会以及教学服务，使中国的图书在世界的舞台上扮演一个重要的角色。

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## Linguistic strategies of blurbs

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**Abstract:** Blurbs are brief texts traditionally displayed on book covers, and nowadays also on the Internet, which provide information about a book to potential readers. This paper analyses linguistic strategies of blurbs displayed on their website by four book companies in terms of complimenting, elliptical syntactic patterns, the imperative, the address form “you” and curiosity arousers.

**Key words:** blurbs; linguistic strategies

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