# The Application of Memetics in Creating Effective Advertising Language Under the Context of Cross-Cultural Communication

ZHAO Jingkun[a],*

[a]Lecturer, School of Foreign Languages, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China.
*Corresponding author.

## Abstract

Memetics, first categorized by Richard Dawkins in 1976 in his best-selling book *The Selfish Gene*, is a new theory explaining the cultural evolution. The core of it is meme, which is a unit of cultural information, mutating and inheriting like a gene and spreads like a virus from one person to another. Memes have the characteristics of self-contagion and self-reproduction, thus bearing a natural similarity with advertising language in view of its propagating nature. This paper was intended to explore the application of Memetics in advertising language to figure out some effective suggestions for the creation of successful advertising language under the context of cross-culture communication.

**Key words:** Advertising language; Memetics; Cross-culture context

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, in this information society, advertising has evolved into a medium of transmission, and they exert a large and indispensable influence on the people's life. The ultimate purpose of advertising is to initially create an impressive image in the consumers and then to persuade them to make a purchase of the goods advertised. From the above consideration, it is of great value to give a detailed analysis of the advertising. Any advertising relies on the transmission of language and therefore this analysis focuses on the advertising language. Lots of linguists have conducted research on the advertising language itself, its structure as well as the relationships between advertising and culture. This paper tried to make a tentative attempt to deal with the issue from the angle of Memetics with the intention that it could offer some effective suggestions for the advertisers' creation of successful advertising language.

## 2. MEMETICS

A meme is a unit or element of cultural ideas, symbols, usages, or practices, and it is transmitted from one mind to another through speech, gestures, rituals, or other imitable phenomena. Whenever people write letters or sing songs or just simply make faces, they are proliferating memes. Advocates of memes hold a belief that memes are analogous to genes in that they can self-replicate themselves and undergo the natural selection. Genes can be passed down or inherited vertically from their parents but memes transmit themselves both vertically from one generation to another and horizontally from one person to another.

"Memetics", first coined by Richard Dawkins of the University of Oxford in1976 in his best-selling book *The Selfish Gene*, is a new theory explaining the cultural evolution. The word "meme" originally dates from the Greek language "mimeme" which means imitation, but Dawkins cut it short to be meme and made it sound like "gene". The core of it is meme, and a meme is a unit of cultural information, mutating and inheriting like a gene and spreading like a virus from one person to another (Dawkins,1976). In his book, Dawkins described memes

as "units of cultural transmission" which "propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation". He called the information duplicated replicator, and the gene is the most familiar replicator to most people. In his opinion, there is another replicator which is undergoing natural selection and changes in the field of cultural evolution just as genes do in the evolution of organism. The new replicator thus mentioned above is the meme, invented by Dawkins. As is know, genes as a kind of replicator drive the ongoing process of the biological evolution of the organism, accordingly, Dawkins pondered if there was any other kind of replicator besides genes, in the last but three chapter of his masterpiece, he said:

> "…...I think that a new kind of replicator has recently emerged on this very planet. It is staring us in the face. It is still in its infancy, still drifting clumsily about in its primeval soup (of human culture), but already it is achieving evolutionary change at a rate that leaves the old gene panting far behind……We need a name for the new replicator, a noun that conveys the idea of a unit of cultural transmission, or a unit of imitation. "Mimeme "comes from a suitable Greek root, but I want a monosyllable that sounds a bit like 'gene'. I hope my classicist friends will forgive me if I abbreviate mimeme to meme. If it is any consolation, it could alternatively be thought of as being related to 'memory', or to the French word meme.". (Dawkins,1976)

As a newly-rising science, meme booms in a rocketing way. Since the publication of the book *the Selfish Gene*, it has provoked great interest in some scientists from various disciplines.

## 2.1 Previous Studies of Memetics

After Charlie Dawkins, many scholars followed his steps and showed great passion towards this new concept both domestically and internationally.

### 2.1.1 Memetic Study Abroad

Since the publication of the book *The Selfish Gene*, it has stimulated an upsurge of memetic investigation from varied fields. Brodie (1996) Virus of the Mind. Chesterman (1996) Teaching Translation Theory: The Significance of Memes.Dennett (1990) Memes and the Exploitation of Imagination and Heylighen(1998) What Makes a Meme Successful?

The next famous memeticist worth mentioning in greater details is the psychologist Susan Blackmore. She is a faithful follower of his teacher Dawkins. In her paper The Power of Memes presented in the Scientific American Magazine, she explained the meme phenomenon in a more comprehensive and systemic way.

> Thinking memetically gives rise to a new vision of the world, one that, when you "get" it, transforms everything. From the meme's-eye view, every human is a machine for making more memes-a vehicle for propagation, an opportunity for replication and a resource to compete for. (Blackmore,1999)

> I believe that the idea of the meme as replicator is what has been missing from our theories of human evolution and that memetics will prove immensely useful for explaining our unique

attributes and the rise of our elaborate cultures and societies. (Blackmore,1999)

From the above selection, it can seen that meme permeates in every corner of society, and human beings are just the meme machine serving as the medium to help transmit meme and on the contrary, meme exerts great influence on people's societies and culture.

### 2.1.2 Memetic Study at Home

Memetics is relatively a newly-constructed theory in our academic field and is domestically not given due attention in the beginning. However, now more and more scholars are devoting themselves to the Memetic research. Linguistically, the first person to name is Professor Gui Shichun (2002), he pointed out in his preface for *Language and Culture* that meme bore a close relationship with culture and people's brain, claiming that Memetics can be applied to analyze the linguistic research, which is quite illuminating to Chinese scholars. Following his steps, many other scholars set their feet in the Memetic circle. Professor He Ziran (2005) is one of these scholars. In his article of Linguistic Memes and Their Rhetoric Effect, he claimed that Memetics could be used to interpret language phenomena, explore the origin of language, and serve as guidelines for learning. So far, there have emerged abundant books which are associated with memes, including *Translating Meme* (Xie Chaoxian, 2007), *Memetics and Social Usage of Language* (He Ziran, 2003), and also some Chinese versions of the originals, such as *The Selfish Gene*, and *The Meme Machine*, etc.

To sum up, the study of memes and Memetics in China has a long way to go; it needs our persistent efforts to conduct more research and contribute to the development of memes.

## 2.2 Categorization of Memes

### 2.2.1 Memotype and Memetic Phenotype

As is known to all, genes fall into two categories: genotype and phenotype. Genotype is defined as the genetic information coded in a gene while phenotype is the physical and behavioral effects of this coding on an organism in its environment (Baikin, 1998), as is the case with Meme. It also has two types: Memotype and Memetic Phenotype. The former refers to the information innately carried in memes. It is the information contained, such as a blueprint of a tall building. The latter refers to the effects the meme exerts on a person, especially the cognitive and behavioral effects. Let's make a comparison between Memotype and Memetic Phenotype: providing that Memotype is compared to a blueprint of a tall building, then Memetic Phenotype will be the tall building in the physical world under the guidance of this blueprint.

Mostly, the investigation about Meme is conducted through their Memetic Phenotype on the ground that people don't know much about Memotype and how they function or work in the brain.

### 2.2.2 Strong Memes and Weak Memes

Genes, as the common replicator, undergo the natural selection in the process of evolution ( the survival of the fittest), so strong genes survive and weak ones perishes. Meme is analogous to gene, and thus meme, another replicator in evolution, must operate under the natural selection.

According to Daniel Dennet (1990), Natural selection occurs whenever the following conditions exist

*A. Variation: a continuing abundance of different elements*

*B. Heredity or replication: the elements have the capacity to create copies or*

*replicas of themselves*

*C Differential "fitness": the number of copies of an element that are created in a time varies, depending on the interaction between the features (whatever it is that makes it different from other elements) of that element and features of environment in which it persists.*

Therefore, from the above, it is acknowledged that any meme must undergo the natural selection, and not all memes can successfully pass, because there exists a great selection pressure on them: natural selection favors those replicators who can faithfully reproduce themselves. Strong memes refer to those whose abilities of being replicated or competing with their counterparts for taking up people's brain are strong ones while those that are only replicated for only a few times or even fail to get replicated are weak memes.

The most obvious example (Blackwell,1999) of this phenomenon is "viral" memes. Chain letters (such as a kind of e-mail) consist of little bits of written information, including a "copy-me" instruction backed up with threats (if you do not copy me you will suffer bad luck) or promises (you'll receive money and if you can copy me to your friends). It does not matter whether the threats and promises are empty or not and your effort in copying the letters is wasted. These memes have an internal structure that ensures their own propagation.

Another perfect example for strong meme is the widespread disease: Swine Flu. It spread all over the world in 2009 which intrigued great panic among people and claimed many deaths during that year. Since its emergence, many related terms appeared with it, such as 猪流感，swine flu, A型流感or H1N1, etc. Those new terms competed with each other and tried to occupy the brain of the people, some research proves that H1N1 is most favored by people for the reason that it is easy to remember and communicate with. From meme's point of view, the term "H1N1" is a strong meme, while the others are comparatively weak.

Strong memes and weal memes are two relative concepts, there is no clear dividing line between them. Those two terms can be interchangeable:

For example: strong memes can change into weak ones as time changes, for memetic evolution is a process full of dynamism. So in the process of language development, certain conventions or sayings may get more popular at a certain period of time to be strong memes and they can also turn into weak and be no more competitive to the new ones as time goes by.

### 2.2.3 Single Meme and Memeplex

In biology, genes do not exist singly but exist and work together in the form of DNA; DNA is a cluster of genes, likewise, (Blackmore, 2003) a group of memes can also work together and get transferred together to reinforce each other. Such a set of memes that work together and help each other can be called a memeplex which is a cluster of related memes, shortened from "co-adapted meme complex".

Examples of memeplexes are languages, and subsystems of languages such as alphabets, dialects and regional accents or clusters of customs, such as Christmas celebrations, systems of thought, philosophies and religions.

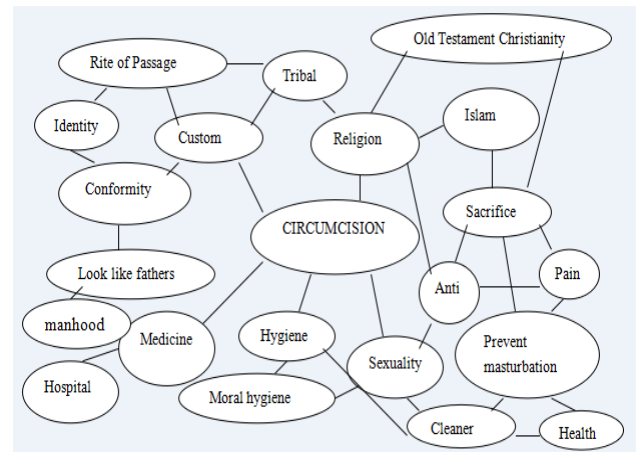Circumcision is an excellent example of a memeplex:



**Figure 1**
**The Memeplex of Circumcision**

Ritual circumcision and Routine Infant Circumcision might almost be counted as different memes that are bound together to form a memeplex:

This kind of circumcision is done in childhood; Muslim ritual circumcision has a close relationship with ideas of ritual cleanliness, conformity, and as a rite or symbol of passage to manhood, as well as the belief that it is requested by Islam. Customs in the huge Islamic world vary, but it often bears the relation with celebration, feasting and treating the boy as "Prince for a day"—all parts of the Muslim memeplex absorb it into their culture.

These may be summarized as

1.identity (yet it is generally agreed that circumcision is not what makes a boy Muslim)

2.Supposed spiritual benefits and we can't deny the good feeling some Muslim men claim from being circumcised, of continuity with their age-old tradition.

Like single memes, memeplexes have their nature of transmission and replication and spread themselves

The Application of Memetics in Creating Effective
Advertising Language Under the Context of Cross-
Cultural Communication

on the condition that there are some reasons for them to be replicated. For memes, there is no good or bad memes, they are selfish, and they transmitted or replicated themselves for the sake of their own benefits. And some are useful, and others are not.

### 2.2.4 Host and Vector

The last pair to be mentioned is Host and Vector. These two terms play a crucial part in the transmission and replication of memes. If a meme intends to survive, it must first find a host, impress and then be remembered by the host. Furthermore, it must transmit themselves out to other hosts by means of a certain media. From the statements above, it can be concluded that the host just mentioned in the process of meme transmission is a kind of unity that possess at least the potential capacity to elaborate on the meme and to perform those cognitive tasks connected to the meme referred to as "understanding". Namely, only our human being can be the potential host for meme. Although some animals can be the appropriate candidates for the host of some simple memes however it is not the focus of this paper.

### 2.3 Stages of Meme Replication

According to Francis Heylighen (1998) A meme, to be replicated, must successfully go through the following four stages: Stage One: Assimilation. The meme firstly must be noticed and assimilated by a host; Stage Two: Retention. For this stage, a meme must be remembered by the host, that is in an individual's memory; Stage Three: Expression. A meme must also be expressed by the host or individual in language, behavior or other forms that can be perceived by another potential host; Stage Four: Transmission. If a meme wants to be passed on, it also need resort to a physical media to transmit itself. Then Stage One again followed the last stage thus completing the replication circle of a meme. Natural Selection occurs at each stage, which means that not all memes can succeed in passing the four stages and a large number of them will be excluded.

### 2.3.1 Assimilation

Dawkins compared meme to virus. Thus, in order to be transmitted, a successful meme must be able to "infect" a new host, namely, noticed and remembered by a host. Suppose a meme is presented to a potential new host. The word "Presented" includes two layers of meaning: either the host comes into a meme vehicle, or that the individual discovers it accidentally, by observing the outside phenomena or by thinking via existing cognitive elements. In order to be assimilated, the presented meme must be noticed, understood and accepted by the host. To be noticed demands the meme has some distinctive features or some good reasons to draw the attention of host's. Understanding requires the host makes out the meme and can connect it with his or her cognitive system that already exists. Because the hosts' mind is not a blank paper on which any idea can be impressed, they understand a new

idea or a new phenomenon on the condition that they are connected to the cognitive structures that already exist in the individual. Finally, as for acceptance, a host must have the willingness to believe it and accept them. If an idea is obviously noticeable and also understandable to the host, but the host is reluctantly to accept it, then the meme fails to infect the host.

### 2.3.2 Retention

After being assimilated by the brain, a meme needs to linger longer in the mind to be remembered by the host. Thus this stage is the retention of the meme in memory. In the view of Dawkins's (1976): if the meme can exist longer, then it will have more opportunities to spread further by means of infecting other hosts. Memes must exist in memory for some time, or they cannot fall into the category of memes. This conforms to the longevity feature for replicators.

Memes in this stage must also undergo the Natural Selection. That means that only a few memes will survive and pass on to the next stage. Every day, people encounter lots of things, whether new or not, people could only keep a small proportion in their mind not only because the volume of their brain is limited but also because the things they see and hear is not pertinent or important to them. Thus people are reluctant to spare some energy to memorize them. According to the above statements, it can be seen that retention will depend on the importance of the idea to the host, and the repeated frequency.

### 2.3.3 Expression

A successful meme will replicate itself ceaselessly, which requires it to change its state from the memory to the third stage that expresses it out to the physical world. This is called "expression". Memes just like genes are selfish themselves, and they express themselves for their own sake. A meme can be expressed out simply by the way people behave or make an eye contact, or by what he or she says.

Language is the most common and easy approach of expression. Other commonly-used means for meme expression are text, pictures, behavior, gestures, songs and so forth. People unconsciously transmit memes without any notice.

For memes in this period, some will be expressed out by the host, for example: if the host holds that the meme is fascinating enough to share it with other hosts, while other memes will never be expressed because the host does not think it is necessary for other individual to know, or just uses it unconsciously without showing it up in his or her behavior, or even wants to keep it secret.

### 2.3.4 Transmission

The last stage of meme replication is Transmission. To be replicated, a meme must emerge from the expression stage into the transmission stage, which means that a meme must find a physical vector to express the information encoded in memes out. Take our spoken language for

example: it will resort to the sound to transmit itself, and here the sound serves as the physical vector of the language meme.

Natural Selection will unavoidably influence this stage by excluding some memes if the vector is ruined or collapsed before being perceived by another host, or by multiplication if the vector reproduced into many copies. For example, if a song is sang by many a host, then its replication ability will dramatically rise and it will replicate more quickly. Especially since the advent of mass media, many new ways of expressing things arise and this new ways greatly facilitate and ease the transmission stage.

From the accounts of the four stages above, it can be seen that each stage has gone through Natural Selection. As a memetic phenomenon, the advertising language certainly shall undergo the selection process in which the fittest survives while the one that cannot adapt to this process will fail.

## 2.4 Selection Criteria for Successful Memes in Transmission

After the examination of the transmission stages of memes, then which memes will most successfully pass all these four stages? Are there some criteria that govern their successful transmission?

The reply is definitely positive. There exist three criteria functioning during the four stages of meme transmission. Like the gene, the meme is also subject to selection. Not all memes can survive in the fierce competition for the chances of getting replicated and then transmitted. Dawkins (1976) pointed out three characteristics for a successful memes: fidelity, fecundity, and longevity.

Copying-fidelity: the more faithful the copy is, the more initial pattern will remain after several rounds of copying. Here fidelity means the essence of the original is handed down.

Fecundity: the faster the copying goes, the more the replicator will spread. An industrial printing press can churn out many more copies of a text than an office copying machine.

Longevity: the longer any instance of the replicating pattern survives, the more copies it can produce. A drawing made by etching lines in the sand is likely to be erased before anybody could have photographed or otherwise reproduced.

## 3. THE APPLICATION OF MEMETICS IN CREATING EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING CROSS-CULTURALLY

Prior to the discussion of the key point, it would be better to clarify the relationships between culture and language. Traditionally, culture is defined as "a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by individuals as members of a society", given by E. B. Taylor. While advertising finds its origin in society and meantime serves as a mirror of the society. Thus, advertising boasts a close relationship with culture. It penetrates the society and reflects every aspects of the society people live in.

But from the perspective of Memetics, Blackmore (1999) holds the belief that in the theory of meme, culture is explained as an aggregate of many different memeplexes shared by majority of a population. And from the above, it can be seen that language is created by memes and for memes. It serves as a mechanism to ensure the transmission and replication of memes so culture is embodied by memes or memeplexes that are spread by language. Advertising language as a variety of language can also spread memes or memeplexes characterized by culture of a specific group.

## 3.1 How to Create Advertising in the Context of Cross-Culture Communication

People within the same culture share the same meme pool of knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by individuals as members of a society. So people can communicate with advertisements at ease without causing the cultural barriers.

But what if local people communicate with the advertising from another culture? Do they understand what the advertising conveys without acknowledging the culture barriers? The replies to these two questions is negative because local people share the different meme pools with the advertisements from another culture, in that case, culture barriers will arise, causing the obstacles to people's understanding of the advertisements.

In most cultural backgrounds, the success of memes to reproduce themselves depends on the previously internalized existing memes in part. These internalized memes form susceptibilities in the brain to new memes. If new memes wants to occupy the brain, they must firstly accustom themselves to the ecological environment, and make themselves almost the same as or similar with other already existing memes. According to Dawkins' statements in the preface of The Meme Machine (Blackmore, 1999), "Memes, like genes, are selected against the background of other memes in the meme pool. The result is that gangs of mutually compatible co-adapted meme complexes or memeplexes are found cohabiting in individual brains". Just as what Blackmore said "If new memes are inconsistent with the old memes, they will be mutated or even excluded" (Blackmore, 1999).

Advertising aims to spread the commercial information to their target customers, but also at the same time they convey consumer's culture enjoyments. A culture means different for people from another culture, thus culture including national culture, regional culture .etc should be

The Application of Memetics in Creating Effective
Advertising Language Under the Context of Cross-
Cultural Communication

fully considered when they set out to create advertising especially in the cross-cultural context. Advertising functions as one of the powerful sale tools to promote trades both domestically and internationally. But owing to the different cultural backgrounds, such as a cross-cultural context, customs and social conventions, functions and effects of the advertising can be weakened.

Then our key question comes: How can an advertisement succeed cross-culturally without any loss of its original efficiency?

In order to solve this problem, the paper constructed a conceptual framework of cross-culture communication from the perspective of Memetics that cross-cultural communication can be regarded as the Memetics transmission across different meme pools, and advertising language in the context of cross-culture can be seen as the products of Memetics transmission in the form of language memes.

Therefore, if the advertisers intend to promote their products to the international market, their advertising language must transverse different meme pools, that is it must go cross-culturally. To avoid the loss of efficiency and to gain the desired effects in the process of cross-cultural transmission, the advertisers must think out some strategies to curb the cultural barriers. As aforementioned, some selection criteria for successful advertising language memes are: Briefness, Uniqueness and Attractiveness. If an advertising language meme is given the above three criteria, it will have more chance to be transmitted, but these three selection criteria are not enough to guarantee the eventual success of the advertising language memes. There are some other issues deserving our attention, esp. that of the advertisers' in their process of creating advertising.

### 3.1.1 Collectivism Conception vs. Individualism Conception

Generally speaking, collectivism and individualism is the first pair to be considered and examined when it comes to the advertising creation process. Because of the culture difference, people in the west often attached much attention to individuals. People in the west consider individualism positively and think the attention focused on personal freedom and personal rights as the positive representation to realize the personal-worth. Personal struggle, personal growth or development, or personal freedoms are highly advocated by the west which is also reflected in the English advertising. In order to encourage the personal development, the English advertisements usually introduce the specialty and uniqueness of the products to their customers, making them feeling that their personalities are exceptionally and fully exhibited. So some examples are listed below to make an illustration of the individualism in the west.

Our personal service will appeal to your individual taste. (Lufthansa Airline)

From the man who makes his own rules. Premier. From Johnnie Walker. Rare old

Scotch whiskey, aged to perfection. The result of over 170 years of expertise.  (Premier Whiskey)

What sort of man read Playboy? He's his own man. An individualist. And he can

afford to express himpersonal? With style-in every from the girls he dates to the way he dresses. (Playboy Magazine)

From the above advertisements, being extremely conceited and to the best of "my benefits" have been repeatedly advocated. The advertiser of Lufthansa airlines does not state the quality and good points of their service, instead, exhibits to their customers the peculiarities of their service by applying the use of the phrase "your individual taste". And likewise, the second advertisement also applies the same device. The phrases "the man who makes his own rules" has been employed to arouse the readers' personalities. "He's his own man" and "an individualist" in the last advertisement cater for the westerners and express the utmost of the customers.

On the contrary, different from the western culture, the eastern culture put more weight on personal-giving dedication. Sacrificing personal-benefits for the masses are highly valued in the east. And to the Chinese culture individualism goes beyond collectivism and the personal happiness and welfare should be in accord with that of the public. So accordingly the above features of the Chinese culture can also be reflected in the advertisements.

妈妈，我又梦见了村边的小溪，梦见了奶奶，梦见了您。妈妈，我给您捎去一样好东西。威力洗衣机，献给妈妈的爱。(威力洗衣机) (Weili Washing Machiae)

让妻子从繁重的家务中解脱出来，这是每个丈夫的责任。(金鱼牌洗衣机) (Golden Fish Washing Machine)

朋友情谊，贵乎至诚相处，互相支持帮助，互相激励。啊，滴滴香浓，意犹未尽！麦氏咖啡，情浓味更浓。（麦氏咖啡）(Maxwell Coffee)

有朋自远方来，喜乘三菱牌(三菱汽车) (Mitsubishi far)

The above four advertisements have something in common, that is, they all take great notice of the usage of the family members and friendship to make the products more amicable and sound more persuasive. This kind of advertisement can succeed in echoing with the readers who advocate collectivism. When reading these advertisements, the readers are so impressed that they are warm in their hearts because the sense of kinship and friendship have been raised completely. In the eastern culture, looking after the others, caring for the old and the young, maintaining the society and the family in harmony are all the virtues that have been spoken highly of and valued. The above advertisements have made full use of these virtues to design the advertising with the purpose that the products advertised can impress the consumers with amicability and trust.

### 3.1.2 Emphasizing Facts vs. Emphasizing Authority

Owing to the difference in visualizing the world, the western people put more weight on the facts description while the Chinese people are more inclined to the authority.

In the west, people intend to pursue personal benefits and the authority has been a common thing. So under these self-canonizing circumstances, they pay more attention to the personal value and self interests. Although the official title may appear in the foreign advertising, they aims to stress the factual authority, such as testing data, investigation results and so on.

Standard dual air bags. Steel safety cell construction. Side door guard beams. 24-hour Road-side assistance. Available anti-lock brakes. Available all-speed traction control. Air conditioning. Electronic AMlFM stereo cassette. Air filtration system. Dual remote beaten mirrors. Rear defroster and more. (Ford Cars)

Selected by James Bond. The sign of Excellence. (Omega Watch)

The above two advertisements usually exhibit the features of the products in a limited space and express out to the readers that they will be outstanding, successful once they have a purchase of the products or services advertised.

But different from the west, the Chinese people tend to believe in the products with the authoritative credits. The authority has a great influence on the purchasing decision of the consumers in China because Chinese culture advocates the unity and great importance has been attached to the authority. So it is oftentimes noticed that it is one key feature of Chinese advertisements to list out the honors and certificates conferred to convince their consumers in advertisements. Adding these non-product elements to the advertisements makes their products more persuasive.

舒肤佳香皂，中华医学会推荐。(舒肤佳香皂) (Safeguard Soap)

好迪洗发水，国家免检产品。大家好才是真的好。(好迪洗发水) (Haodi Shampoo)

From the above two advertisements, it can be seen that there are honors or certificates used in each of them. Applying the words as "中华医学会" and "国家免检产品" can make the products more persuasive to the consumers and more importantly, the advertisers aim to express to the consumers that this kind of product is superior in quality or service, and can be guaranteed by the government.

Summary: the Chinese advertisers often like employing "获得国内, 国际大奖"，or "由某位专家或名人推荐" as the proof or promise of the products to attract the attention of the will-be consumers, so many honors or certificates may arise in the creation of advertisements to persuade the will-be customers to purchase their products. While in the west, people are more inclined to believe in the advertisements with testing statistics, investigations and clinical experiments and so on.

### 3.1.3 Dynamic Preference vs. Static Concepts Preference

China is a piece of land full of abundant resources and people here are leading a happy and satisfied life. They live together in communities and they give top priorities to their homes, asserting that their homes are the shelter for them no matter what happens and the abandoning of their hometown is the last thing to do. The relationship between people is closely knitted because they have lived on this land for generations since they settled down. They will never leave unless natural disasters or misfortunes befall them. They love the quiet, peaceful and domestic lifestyle. This kind of feature of the Chinese can also be embodied in the Chinese advertisements.

浙江丝绸服装与台湾同胞情相连，意相随。年华如水涓涓流，故土情思日日深；穿上一款家乡衣，以慰一片思乡情。(浙江丝绸时装) (Zhejiang Silk Fashion)

千万里，千万里，我一定要回家。孔府家酒叫人想家。(孔府家酒) (Confucian Family Liquor)

The sentences "故土情思日日深；穿上一款家乡衣，以慰一片思乡情" and "千万里，千万里，我一定要回家." The above two advertisements express out the nostalgia of the Chinese people, which highly accords with the static lifestyle the Chinese people cherish, thus, these advertisements can echo with the people who dwell overseas. If the advertisers use this rule properly in the process of their advertising creation, their advertising will be a great success and consequently achieve the desired effects.

In contrast to the eastern culture, the western people tend to have a liking to the dynamic life styles. They are full of energy and prefer a life concerning conquering, challenging, and adventuring something that are difficult to accomplish. It can be noticed that this characteristic is also reflected in the advertising language.

The age of discovery in an ever-changing world. Seiko finds boundless opportunities for adventurers. Expressing the changing world with a spirit of adventure. (Seiko Watch)

This is an advertisement for Seiko Watch, and by applying some dynamic words such as "ever-changing" "find", "boundless" and "adventure", it encourages people to achieve more in life to create a better world. This advertisement is characterized by an enterprising spirits that attract western people to have a try of the products advertised. Thus if it were put in the courtiers whose people prefer the adventures, risks, and ceaseless passion, it would be an excellent watch to attract the consumers.

It can be concluded that an advertisement not only conveys the product information to the consumers but also it must resort to some means to make the message

The Application of Memetics in Creating Effective
Advertising Language Under the Context of Cross-
Cultural Communication

receptor accept its persuasion, identify with its value and eventually it can manage to arouse consumption desire of the receptor. It is crystal clear that the skillful use of advertising language play a great role in attracting the customers, but more importantly understanding and following the cultural memes are of great significance in creating a successful advertisement cross-culturally.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This paper examined the advertising language creation in the cross-cultural context from the memetic perspective. It is found that cross-cultural advertising language propagation is regarded as the transmission of memes between different meme pools. Thus, overcoming the cultural barriers in cross-culture communication is no easy job but the advertisers can overcome the obstacles encountered in the creation of effective advertising language if they acknowledge the different features of advertising: the westerners tend to prefer the concept of Collectivism, put more weight on Fact emphasis and canonize Dynamic conception during their design of the advertising while the Chinese are more inclined to favor Individualism, Authority emphasis and Static conception respectively.

## REFERENCES

Baikin, J. M. (1998). *Culture software: A theory of ideology* (p.45). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Blackmore, S. (1999). *The meme machine* (pp.15, 62-64). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blackmore, S. (2003). Consciousness in meme machines. *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, *4*(5), 19-30.

Brodie, R. (1996). *Virus of the mind: The new science of the meme* (pp.1-25). Seattle: WA, Integral Press.

Chesterman, A. (1996). Teaching translation theory: The significance of memes. *Teaching Translation and Interpreting* (pp.63-71). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Dennett, D. C. (1990). Memes and the exploitation of imagination. *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 35-127.

Gui S.C. (2002). *Language and culture*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

He Z.Z. & He X.Q. (2003). Memetics and social usage of language. *Modern Foreign Language*, *23*(2), 200-209.

He Z.Z. (2005). Memes in language. *Language Sciences*, *4*(6), 56-64.

Heylighen, F. (1998).*What makes a meme successful? Selection criteria for cultural evolution*. Paper presented at 15th International Congress on Cybernetics, 418-423.

Xie, C. X., & He, Z .R. (2007). Some notes on language memes. *Modern Foreign Languages*, *30*(1), 30-39.