

Media Studies By Stefan Codrington

The two advertisements I have chosen to compare are taken from the *Daily Mirror*, and are both advertising car finance loans. The advertisements promote two companies - **Yes Car Credit** and **Approved Car Finance**. Both advertisements are aimed at drivers who require car credit and both use different techniques to attract the reader's attention.

The first and foremost connotation used in the advertisements is in the company names the words 'yes' and 'approved' immediately imply that the reader is assured car finance before he has even applied. It is this positive outlook that sets the scene for the rest of the advertisement; the reader reads the advertisement in light of this suggestion and so the reader is conditioned to believe that there is no way that he can be refused car credit, although this is a possible reality.

Upon looking at the general layout of the advertisements, the advertisement for **Approved Car Finance** appears to be much more loosely arranged on the page, as the space surrounding the text and images has been effectively used to make the text seem less taxing on the reader's eyes and give the impression that there is little text to read. This interests the reader and makes him think that it will not take long to read it all and as though the company needs to do little persuasion as its reputation precedes it. Although the advertisement for **Yes Car Credit** has more text in it, the text is made to seem less as it is organised into blocks, the advertisement is also largely image-based and so this gives the same impression. **Approved Car Finance** lacks variety in colour and uses a rather uniform red, blue and black colour scheme for its advertisement that gives the advertisement a rather plain look and makes it seem quite ordinary. This creates a simplistic approach that complements the simplicity of the text within the advertisement. The **Yes Car Credit** advertisement maintains a green tone throughout. The colour green has connotations to money and feelings of jealousy; the overall effect of this colour usage causes the reader to identify with a longing for a newer and better car, while the link with money makes the company appear to be a means of financial investment, a good investment, rather than a bad one.

The advertisement for **Approved Car Finance** then goes on to adopt a conversational style, in using the pronoun 'you', that makes the reader feel more involved in the advertisement and makes it appear as though the company understands the reader's personal needs. **Yes Car Credit** also

Both advertisements begin with rhetorical questions, the advertisement for **Yes Car Credit** begins with the question 'Need Car Credit?', while the advertisement for **Approved Car Finance** begins in reference to the main picture (of a gleaming, new car) 'Want it?' in this context, these questions are used for effect in engaging the reader into the advertisement and to encourage readers who are interested in car credit to continue reading. It seems that these questions are also used to tempt the reader into obtaining car credit, as each question begins with 'need' and 'want', the connotations of these words imply necessity and make it seem as though the reader must have car credit. The rhetorical questions are asked to make customers think about the question, to create a need and to instantly give consumers the answer to the question, which makes the company seem as though it is the most natural and convenient choice for car credit. The questions are also answered in the advertisements in different ways; in the advertisement for **Yes Car Credit**, the question is answered in the main picture, which shows a car with a number plate showing the word 'yes'. Apart from having a rhetorical effect, the picture also provides a glimpse of the kind of contemporary car that could be purchased with assistance from the company. The effect of this is to further tempt the reader into custom with the company by showing one of the benefits that could be enjoyed by

the reader if he decides to trade with the company. The rhetorical question used in the **Approved Car Finance** advert is used for a similar effect, the question (‘*Want it?*’) is asked in reference to the picture of a car and is answered below the picture with the imperative phrase ‘*Have it*’. This use of an imperative phrase instructs the reader with a command that gives the impression that it is definitely possible for the reader to obtain credit from the company and to purchase a car like the one shown in the main image. The imperatives in these phrases are emphasised and strengthened by the fact that they are used in short sentences.

The **Yes Car Credit** uses a group of three criteria that must be met in order to be accepted for car credit. This makes the criteria seem easy to meet although there may be many more, it also broadens the scope reader who may be eligible for car credit. It also allowed the advertisement to take on an informal tone by including the well-known phrase ‘*It’s as easy as 1 – 2 – 3*’. The word ‘easy’ stresses the simplicity of service provided by **Yes Car Credit**. Underneath these criteria is the phrase ‘*we can say YES*’, this not only reinforces the positive stance taken by the advertisement but it also serves to call attention to the company’s name. The advertisement then goes on to give special (potentially difficult) circumstances under which the company will still offer its services, in particular, the reader is told that ‘[the company will] *take your old car as full deposit*’, this shows the convenience of the business as the reader will not have to search for other sources of finance; this is a point that the reader is to focus on and is more important than other circumstances, this can be seen as the phrase is highlighted in bold text. **Approved Car Finance**, by contrast, does not specify any special conditions but rather claims to be able to provide service to anyone “*whatever [their] financial problems*”. Both advertisements use this to make the companies seem as though they care for their customers and can relate to them and their problems. Both advertisements end with details of contacting the businesses, but only the **Yes Car Credit** advert uses the imperative phrase ‘*Call now*’ to coerce the reader into telephoning the company for enquiry. This imperative makes it seem as though the reader has no alternative source of car credit and so must telephone the company.

I think that both advertisements could be improved by adding facts and figures as this would further show the superiority of the companies over their competitors, these would also allow potential customers to see the similarities and differences in the companies and decide which is best. In both advertisements, I would also include more images, especially ones showing smiling, happy people as this would accent the optimistic tone in the advertisements and provide a more human and personal touch that would encourage the reader to enlist these companies’ services. To obtain maximum effect, I would include an image that shows a nuclear family. Such an image would be effective as it appeals to the target audience while it helps to portray the image that the company has a family’s best interests at heart; the family would be seen smiling in a cheerful mood. The use of a nuclear family (a popular advertisement ploy) shows the companies as ‘family companies’, and as institutions that everyone can relate to and understand, thus making the companies seem as though they are ones for ‘the people’, down to earth and not too complicated for the average person.

I also believe that the advertisement for **Approved Car Credit** could be improved by introducing a wider range of colours. Vibrant colours such as reds, yellows and blues would stress the relaxed tone that the text sets. I also believe that the advertisement could have used more persuasive language, for example using repetition – “If you’ve got a poor credit history, you’ve been approved; if you’ve got no credit history at all, you’ve been approved; whatever your financial problems are, you’ve been approved”. This use of repetition would not only emphasise how easy it is to obtain car credit from the company, but would also be repeating the company’s name, embedding it in the reader’s memory.

Overall, I think that the advert for **Yes Car Credit** is more persuasive and I would be more inclined to take credit from them as their advertisement focuses much more on the simplicity of service from the company and seems more appealing to an average person. Its range and use of colour keep the reader interested in the content. **The Approved Car Finance** advert is not as appealing as its lack of colour and images fail to hold the reader's interest and the advert relies too heavily on text. While the text does have some good examples of linguistic devices, I do not think they are used to their greatest effect, as is demonstrated in much better fashion by the **Yes Car Credit** advertisement.