

MASTER'S THESIS

A study of the discourse of advertisements: the Cantonese advertisements on television in Hong Kong

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**A STUDY OF THE DISCOURSE OF ADVERTISEMENTS :
THE CANTONESE ADVERTISEMENTS ON TELEVISION IN HONG KONG**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a study of the discourse-structural characteristics of Cantonese advertisements on television in Hong Kong. It comprises a general introduction to the language of advertising and an analysis of the discourse of advertisements.

The study investigates three aspects of the discourse of advertisements. They are: the rhetorical components of the discourse of advertisements, the sequential organization of the discourse of advertisements and the linguistic techniques being employed in advertisements.

The analysis involves about 100 Cantonese advertisements screened on Hong Kong television across a period of 5 months. Examples are used to illustrate the features found in the corpus.

The analysis reveals that advertisements are made up of four rhetorical components, namely, need identification, product naming, justification and concluding remark. Their occurrence in the discourse of advertisements do not follow a uniform pattern in structural organization. As for the linguistic techniques, besides those features which are universal to discourse of advertisements of other languages, there are also characteristic features which are unique to the Cantonese spoken in Hong Kong.