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Rhetoric 101 Section C5

16 October 2017

Represent the Effect Sugar Has Precisely or Emotionally?

As is known to all, sugar is loved by hundreds of thousands of people around the world. However, sugar does have a really bad impact on people, for example, obesity. Given that sugar has negative effect, people still cannot help consuming a lot of it. It may have something to do with the effect caused by sugar on the brain. “This Scientist Is Trying To Unravel What Sugar Does To The Brain”, written by Joe Palca, and “Is Sugar Addiction Why So Many January Diets Fail?”, written by Eliza Barclay, both focus on the same topic about what sugar does to the brain. Though they have the same topic, these two articles represent it in different ways. Palca proceeds by indicating a research with precise language while Barclay develops her article by giving examples and suggestions emotionally. Comparing these two ways in writing, this essay will try to figure out how to represent a topic better.

On the one hand, Palca indicates the relationship between sugar and brain directly by describing the research concretely. According to Palca, a molecular biologist called Monica Dus is trying to find out the effect caused by sugar on the brain. As he indicates, Dus, who is inspired by the phenomenon that her two dogs eat much more food after consuming excess sugar, gives possible explanation that it has a lot to do with biochemistry by conducting two studies which are

highly thought of on cells and genes, respectively, in brain. When Palca develops his article, he uses very precise language; for instance, he writes “She wants to understand how excess sugar leads to obesity by understanding the effect of sugar on the brain.” (Palca). By glancing at this thesis statement, readers can easily understand the purpose of the research he indicates, which may help readers understand the following complex process of the research deeply. What’s more, with explicit language, Palca can hold readers’ attention to his topic, representing his topic better. In a word, by using precise and concrete language, a writer can make its article more easy and comfortable for people to read, because this kind of way in writing meets the requirement that writers are supposed to make readers comprehend their topics fully.

On the other hand, when it comes to the article written by Barclay, another way can be found to meet the same requirement not by indicating explicitly but by developing an article emotionally, which means that it can strike a chord. According to Barclay, she tries to resist the sugar, but she always fails due to the sugar cravings. After consulting a journalist called Michael Prager, she is determined to resist the sugar and compiles some useful suggestions deriving from the sources she finds. Different from Palca’s article, the exact relationship between sugar and brain is implied by Barclay in her article. For example, “When I eat sugar, I can feel something devilish turn on in my brain: a voice saying, ‘More, more, more.’” (Barclay) informs readers that sugar does do something to the brain. Instead of indicating it directly, Barclay expresses her own feeling to strike a chord, engaging readers to feel it themselves. In other words, Barclay tries to get her readers involved, which is quite different from Palca’s precisely-

indicating method. By putting readers on her side, Barclay can make her readers accept her suggestions more easily, which means that her words are more powerful. All in all, by developing articles emotionally, writers can make readers more likely to accept their arguments due to the emotional link among writers and readers, which helps represent the topic a lot.

In addition to the general ways of developing an article, the word choices also matter a lot in representing topics. To understand the importance of word choices, “But why are some people unable to resist that second cupcake or slice of pipe?” (Palca) can be taken as an example. In this sentence, Palca uses “resist”, defined as “to refuse to accept something and try to stop it from happening” or “to fight back when attacked” (*OED*), to describe the motion that people refuse the sugar. The word, “resist”, gives readers a sense that refusing the excess sugar is quite hard for people, which enhances the idea that sugar really does something bad to the brain. In other words, the word, “resist”, contributes a lot to the representation of the topic. An additional example comes from Prager’s words, “I have not had refined sugar or flour in about 15 years, and I do not feel deprived” (Prager), which is quoted by Barclay in her article. In her word, Prager uses “deprived”, defined as “without enough food, education, and all the things that are necessary for people to live a happy and comfortable life” (*OED*), to describe the feeling that people may have when they cannot eat sugar. By using “deprived”, Prager implies, in a humorous way, that she disagrees with the opinion that having sugar to eat is equal to a well-fare life. On the contrary, her words indicate that she is firmly convinced that sugar is not necessary for a happy life. From this perspective, Barclay successfully uses this quotation to tell readers

that sugar may not be necessary, which contributes to the representation of her topic. Though word choices vary a lot in different articles, all of them are supposed to suit the general way used in developing an article and help indicate the topic. “Resist” precisely describes the difficulty for people to refuse sugar while “deprived” reveals the emotion people will have when they cannot eat sugar. It is easy to see that choosing proper words in writing undoubtedly plays a great role in improving an article.

Developing an article precisely or emotionally is not a choice question. Though they are totally different ways, they can be combined to make a huge difference. Writing precisely to make readers fully understand as well as writing emotionally to touch readers can undoubtedly represent the topic well, which gives birth to a good article. What a good article does is to lead readers to consider the issue it talks about carefully. The two articles compared in this essay successfully make readers realize the bad effect sugar has by using different rhetoric strategies. After reading these two articles, readers may think about the amount of sugar they consume every day and relate it to their personal health condition. Furthermore, they may reconsider the effect sugar has critically, which may make a difference in the general usage of sugar.

Works Cited

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