

# FINDING MEANING OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE USE IN ADVERTISEMENTS FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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## Abstract

*The aim of this research was to give a teaching and learning media by using advertisements focused on English written magazine. Moreover, the research objective is to find the meaning of figurative language use in advertisements as it is important for foreign language education. This research was a discourse analysis study. The research data of this research were the the beauty product of advertisements in Her World Magazine of August 2008 Edition. This research applied Dijk's (1997) Model Analysis consisting Macro structure, Super structure and Micro structure. But then, this research was only focused on Macro structure or known as Macro Function Analysis to analyze the beauty product advertisements. Here, the researcher started to analyze the verbal language (language expressions) which includes words, phrases and sentences. Then, it was continued by analyzing the non verbal language covering the pictures, facial expressions, gestures and colors of beauty product advertisements to interpret the meaning or message. Afterward, the meaning or the message of the advertisements are investigated from connecting the relationship between verbal and non verbal languages comprised in the advertisements.*

**Keywords:** Discourse Analysis, Figurative Language, Macro Function Analysis and Beauty Product Advertisements

## Introduction

Language plays an important role as communication. Without language, we find difficulties to communicate. According to Jackson (in Mustofa, 2006:71), human beings have been given the capacity to talk, to communicate with each other, to make meaningful utterances so that they can share their thought and feelings to others.

As a main tool of communication, language has a very important role in human's life, because by using language, people can express their intentions, wants, messages and informations to other people whether it is spoken or written language. There are two kinds of language, literal language and non-literal language. According to Palmatier (2000), literal language means what is said and non literal language means something other than what is said. Literal language refers to facts without any exaggerations or alliterations of the subject. Besides, non-literal language has an implied meaning which is not stated directly in the text. Non-literal language is also known as figurative language. Non-literal language uses symbol as Hatch (1992:1) says that language is a system arbitrary symbol used for human communication.

Figurative language is a language which uses figure of speech as a way of saying something and another meaning. Perrine (1988:565) says that figurative language is a language that cannot be taken literally and say something other than the ordinary ways or says one thing and means another. It is used in imaginative sense rather than in literal sense. Figurative language is often used in daily communication, literary works (novel, poems, poetry, and short story) and also in advertisements.

Actually, there is no fixed classification about the types of figurative language. Each linguist has their own opinion of its classification. For example: McArthur (1996:72) categorizes the types of figurative language into thirteen types; antithesis, euphemism, hyperbole, idioms, irony, metaphor, metonymy, paradox, personification, pleonasm, simile, sarcasm and synecdoche.

Keraf (1998:129) divides figurative language into two classifications. The first is rhetoric figure of speech which consists of illiteracy, assonances, anastrophe, asyndeton, polycyndethon, chiasmus, ellipsis, euphemism, litotes, paradox, hyperbole and oxymoron. The second covers simile, metaphor, allegory, personification, allusion, metonymy, irony and synecdoche. Besides, Heitman (1995) divides the types of figurative language into ten types. They are imagery, simile, metaphor, adage, cliché,

personification, allusion, symbolism, hyperbole and also synecdoche. According to Kennedy (1991:587-595), the types of figurative languages were classified into eleven types namely metaphor, simile, metonymy, synecdoche, transferred epithet, personification, apostrophe, hyperbole, understatement, paradox, paronomasia.

Related to the usage of figurative language expression, advertisement makes use of it to sell products and services. Advertisements are known as media of communication where an advertiser delivers some messages to the consumers through both figurative language and literal language. Commonly, figurative language is a tool for selling ideas, goods, or services by using media to capture consumers' attention (Anwar, 2006:1). Meanwhile, an advertisement is also called ads or advert which is used for advertising things, such as a notice on a wall, or in a newspaper, or short film shown on television.

There were many kinds of advertisements, but the researcher only focused on beauty product advertisements. Incidentally reading *Her World* magazine, the researcher was interested in the language used in the advertisements. It used variety of words, phrases and sentences to attract the customers' attention to promote the product. The researcher chooses beauty product advertisements in *Her World* magazine because of the language expressions of the advertisements embodied figurative language. Thus, beauty product advertisements is used in this research as research data.

In delivering their ideas, the advertiser commonly used persuading expressions in a text including figurative language as the extended meanings, to promote their services and products. It usually raises difficulties for the consumers to interpret its messages. The consumers should know the context to get the right interpretation. Discourse analysis is useful instrument to analyze the language expressions of the advertisements because it supplies the contexts to help interpretation of the language expression of advertisements. So that, the consumers can catch and comprehend the messages which is sent through the advertisements.

By the definition, discourse analysis is the study of the language use in interpreting both written and spoken language. Furthermore, McCarthy (1991:10) states that discourse analysis is fundamentally concerned with relationships between language and the contexts of its use.

There is a tool in Discourse Analysis called Macro Function Analysis by Van Dijk (1997:145) which can be used to analyze the language expressions in the advertisements. Macro Function Analysis was used to analyze the whole meaning of the texts which consists of verbal and non verbal language. The form of verbal language concerns with words or text. While, the form of non-verbal language includes pictures, facial expressions, the tone and pitch of the voice, gestures display through body language (kinesics), behavior and colors. In this research, the researcher analyzes the language expressions of figurative language use in advertisements which includes English text (verbal language) and context (non-verbal language).

In foreign language education, learning figurative language of the advertisements is beneficial such as the one used in advertisements. The students can learn language in a real life via advertisements as the authentic material.

## Research Design

The data of this research were beauty product advertisements which were in the form of verbal (words, phrases and sentences) and non verbal languages (pictures, colors). Therefore, this research belongs to qualitative data. McMillan (1992:9) states that qualitative data focuses on understanding meanings through verbal narratives and observations rather than through numbers.

The method of collecting data of this research was documentation because the form of the data was documentation which was taken from *Her World* magazine. In order to get the data, there are three steps in conducting data analysis adapted from Milles and Huberman (1994:10): (1) Data reduction includes selecting, focusing, simplifying, and classifying the data. The data reduction of this research started with selecting English magazines that is *Her World* Magazine and focusing in product advertisements. Then, the data was simplified in beauty product advertisements only. Furthermore, the data were classified based on values in education. (2) Data display, in the display step, the data were presented based on figurative language category of figurative language used. The found data used eleven kinds of figurative languages apostrophe, hyperbole, metonymy, metaphor, paradox, paronomasia, personification, simile, synecdoche, transferred epithet, understatement. (3) Verification and conclusion drawing. The last step was verification and conclusions, in this step, the data were verified by analyzing them into verbal and non-verbal languages used in the advertisements.

In analyzing the advertisements, the advertiser used Van Dijk's (1997:145) model analysis which is focused on macro structure or known as macro function analysis to analyze the advertisements. Researcher started to analyze the verbal language (language expressions) which includes words, phrases and sentences. Then, researcher analyzed the non verbal language to interpret the pictures, facial expressions, gestures and colors of beauty product advertisements. To get the meaning or the message of the advertisements, it was done by interpreting the verbal and non verbal languages.

## Research Finding and Discussion

The finding of the research are five types of figurative language covering hyperbole, metonymy, personification, simile and transferred epithet. Hyperbole is the dominant figurative language found in *Her World* Magazine, August 2008 because of the selling point which uses the exaggeration statement. By using the exaggeration statement, it will persuade and convince the consumers about the quality of the product. Thus, they tend to buy the

product. Therefore, it would influence the consumers' attention, arouse their interest and finally buy the products. According to Kennedy (1991: 594) defines hyperbole is a figurative language that emphasizes the point with a statement containing exaggeration. Here is the example of hyperbole expression: "Instantly, hair regains the incredibly smooth touch of virgin hair (Asience hair care treatment)". The language expression of Asience product is considered as hyperbole expressions. It is because the advertiser uses the exaggeration statement. The advertiser exaggerates the product by using the word *instantly*. This product makes the hair smoothly only in a short time. In fact, having smooth and beautiful hair needs time not only in few days or weeks. But then, it needs a process in it. It takes at least one or two months to get beautiful hair. It will influence the consumers' mind and attract their attention. Lastly, it will arouse their interest to buy the product.

To make the advertisement more interesting, the advertiser uses two components of the advertisement, verbal (text) and non verbal language (context). Cook (1992) views print advertisements as discourse; text and context together. The verbal language is the language expressions which say, "Refreshing light yet so hydrating. All new ASIENCE Moisture Balance restores optimum hydration your hair. Instantly, hair regains the incredibly smooth touch of virgin hair. Day by day after every use, it becomes bouncier, suppler and shinier".

While the non verbal languages of Asience advertisement are pictures, facial expressions, gestures and colors. It will make the advertisements look interesting. Besides, the usage of non verbal language in this advertisement is to describe the product which will be sold. Kilyeni (2009:2) states that advertising pictures have increased considerably in importance. So, the consumers will be influenced and persuaded to buy the products. Thus, from the result of the research above, it can be concluded that not all of the figurative language is used in the beauty product advertisements of *Her World magazine*, August 2008 edition.

## Conclusion

To persuade the consumers to buy the product, the advertiser used two different languages namely verbal and non verbal language. The functions of verbal language are to convince and make the consumers believe in the product. While the function of non verbal language is to support the meaning of verbal language by using pictures, facial expressions, gestures and colors. To understand the verbal and non verbal language, meanings are interpreted through the relationship between verbal and non verbal languages by using macro function analysis method.

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