The Persuasive Language Used in Advertisements in Magazine

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the results of the study on analyzing the persuasive language used in advertisements in magazines. The aim of this study is to identify the types of persuasive language used in advertisements in *Forbes* magazine and to analyze the dominant types of persuasive language found in the advertisements. Therefore, the qualitative data were collected from a recognized magazine entitled "Forbes". The data were analyzed based on the types of persuasive language found by Kannan & Tyagi (2013). The results show that there are 10 types of persuasive languages used in the advertisements in *Forbes* magazine: long noun phrases, short sentences, avoidance of negative, use of imperatives, weasel words and repetition, hyperbole, simple and colloquial language, alliteration, and syntactic parallelism. Among the 10 persuasive language types, the most dominant one is long noun phrases. The implication of the study may be used to EFL learning and teaching and translation persuasive languages.

Keywords: persuasive language, advertisements, long-noun phrases

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, advertisements have become an inseparable part of human life. They may be found in various media, such as newspapers or magazines. Advertisements are one of the important tools in raising funds for companies. According to Gilson (1986) in Permatasari & Yulia (2013), advertisements are media to help a company to achieve its marketing targets which means that the company's advertisements should be able to influence or persuade prospective customers to buy their services or products. Persuasive language is a tool that can be used in advertisements to influence or persuade customers to buy the products. As listed by Kannan and Tyagi (2013), persuasive language may be divided into 21 types. Hence, this study raised the issue of how many of those types could be found in advertisements in "Forbes" magazine.

Language of persuasion has been found in several papers (Ahangar & Dastuyi, 2017; Alkhawaldeh, 2021; Barnard, 2017; Luo et al., 2021; Miksa & Hodgson, 2021; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Walotek-Ściańska, 2017). It was investigated in emails

(Ahangar & Dastuyi, 2017), in advertisements (Barnard, 2017; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019: Walotek-Ściańska, 2017), in social e-commerce environment (Luo et al., 2021), in Instagram advertisements (Miksa & Hodgson, 2021). Whereas the study of persuasive language used in advertisement in magazine seems to be scarce. Thus, this study focused on persuasive language found in advertisement in magazine, especially in Forbes as a recognizable global magazine.

By studying the persuasive language used in the magazine, it is expected that the results of this study will be benefited theoretically and practically. It may enhance linguistic theories, especially concerning with language of persuasion and practically, it could be used to improve students' strategies in writing advertisements in EFL contexts. Based on the previous discussion, this study formulated two questions to answer.

1. What types of persuasive language are used in advertisements in *Forbes* Magazine?
2. What are the linguistic features of the persuasive language used in advertisements in *Forbes* Magazine?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Advertisement

An advertisement is a product of advertising which is characterized as a paid-for communication intended to inform and/or persuade one or more people (Fletcher, 2010). It may be viewed from linguistics as a persuasive communication which uses catchy language (Mohammed, 2022) or commonly known as persuasive language. Persuasive language may be found in advertisement in various texts, such as magazine, newspaper or other commercial media.

Persuasive Language Strategies

Persuasive language can be defined as a language that aims to persuade and/or succeed in persuading others to accept a point of view (Black, 2011). Listed by Kannan & Tyagi (2013), persuasive language possesses 21 strategies which are applied in conducting this study.

1. A hyperbole is an exaggeration to claims not meant to be taken literally. It frequently uses adjectives and adverbs as in *At this rate, the download is gonna be complete next year.*

2.   Neologism is creating a new word that brings novelty impact to the readers.

   For example, *Beanz Meanz, Heinz, Cookability, Schoweppervescence, Tangoed, Wonderfuel*

3.   Long noun phrases consist of a noun and a modifier. Long noun phrases in advertisement frequently use pre- and post-modifiers for descriptions in the advertisement.

   For example, *I love old house, the boy in the blue shirt*.

4.   Short sentences are used for giving an impact on the readers. This impact is especially clear at the beginning of a text, often using bold or large type for the "Headline" or "slogan" to capture the attention of the reader. It consists of at least one subject and one verb.

   For example, *I want this. Right now*.

5.   Ambiguity is very common in advertisements. It is an expression or statement that has more than one meaning because it can be understood in more than one way and it is not clear. Sometimes, ambiguity is used to make a phrase or statement memorable and re-readable.

   For example, this item is *OK (does 'OK' mean good or adequate)*

6.   Weasel words are often used and it suggests meaning without telling the specific. There are two types of weasel words; open comparative and bogus superlative. An example of open comparison is *"Meatloaf is better"* (better than what?). An example of bogus superlatives is *"Brown's Jacket are best"* (rated alongside what?).

7.   The use of Imperatives is used to order the reader to do something. Generally starts with a verb.

    For example, *"Buy Brown boots now*!"

8.   Euphemism is a sentence that is used to make a word being "smooth" rather than the original words.

   For example, clean round the bend or B.O *"Body Odour"*

9.   Avoidance of negatives: advertising normally emphasizes the positive effect of the product.

   For example, *feel the happiness from drinking the soda.*

10. Simple and Colloquial language: A sentence that uses a colloquial language (conversation language).

   For example: *"It ain't half good".* It is used by ordinary people, although it is ambiguous.

11. Familiar language is a sentence that uses second-person pronouns to address an audience and suggest a friendly attitude. It is used to make the conversation friendly.

   For example, a healthy life is the only way to get your family happy.

12. The present tense is the most commonly used in advertisements. The present tense is used to show the emotion of the topic and the writer's point of view.

   For example, *The future is now*.

13. Simple vocabulary: a sentence that mixes the vocabulary being simple and often comes as a complex noun phrase.

   For example, *My mate fluorite, the new four-wheel servo-assisted disc brakes*

14. Repetition of the brand name and the slogan.

   For example, *bye-bye fever.*

15. Alliteration is the repetition of an initial consonant sound.

   For example, *the best four by four by far.*

16. Rhyme is the identity or close similarity of sound between accented syllables. For example, *mean machine.*

17. Rhythm is the sense of movement in speech, marked by the stress, timing, and quantity of syllables.

   For example, *The curfew tolls the knell of parting day.*

18. Syntactic parallelism is a similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses. Also called parallel structure.

   For example, *stay dry, stay happy*.

19. Humor is a word or sentence that can make something funny and to show the product positively.

   For example*, this milk is so good, the cat wants it.*

20. Association is a type of persuasive language that links a product or service with something already liked by the readers to create an emotional transfer.

   For example, *all good babies use Johnson's baby products.*

21. Glamorization is a sentence that makes something being "glamour", "luxurious" than the original of it. It is used in most advertisements because it can make the reader interested in their product.

   For example, *small houses become compact houses*.

The strategies above are used to analyze the data in this study.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method. The data were in the form of texts taken from the advertisements found in 10 editions of *Forbes* magazines; four editions published in 2018 and six editions in 2019. There are 40 data found in the advertisements. The analysis of the data was conducted in several stages, as seen in Figure 1.
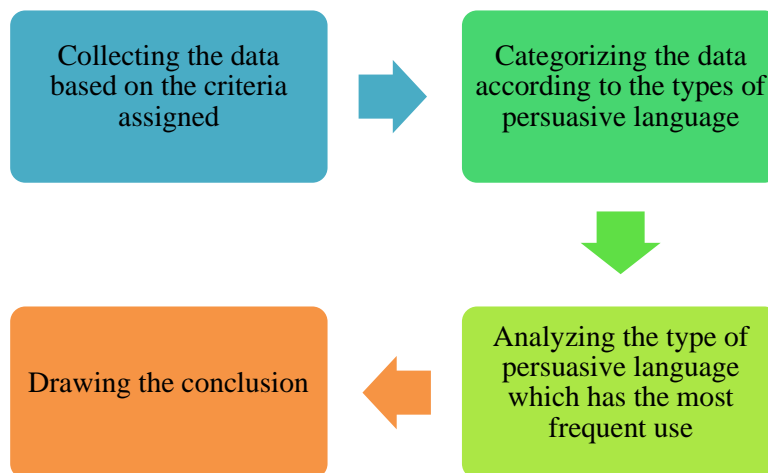

Figure 1. The Stages of Analysis

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Figure 2. shows the types of persuasive language found in advertisements in Forbes magazine which are only 10 types. The persuasive languages are hyperbole, long noun phrase, short sentence, weasel words, avoidance of negatives, simple and colloquial language, repetition, alliteration, syntactic parallelism, and imperatives. In other words,

the types of persuasive language found in the advertisements in Forbes magazines were not as many as identified (Kannan & Tyagi, 2013). Furthermore, long noun phrase is the most frequent type found in the data followed by short sentence, avoidance of negatives, use of imperatives, repetition, weasel words, hyperbole, simple and colloquial language, alliteration and syntactic parallelism. This finding has answered the research question 1 previously mentioned.
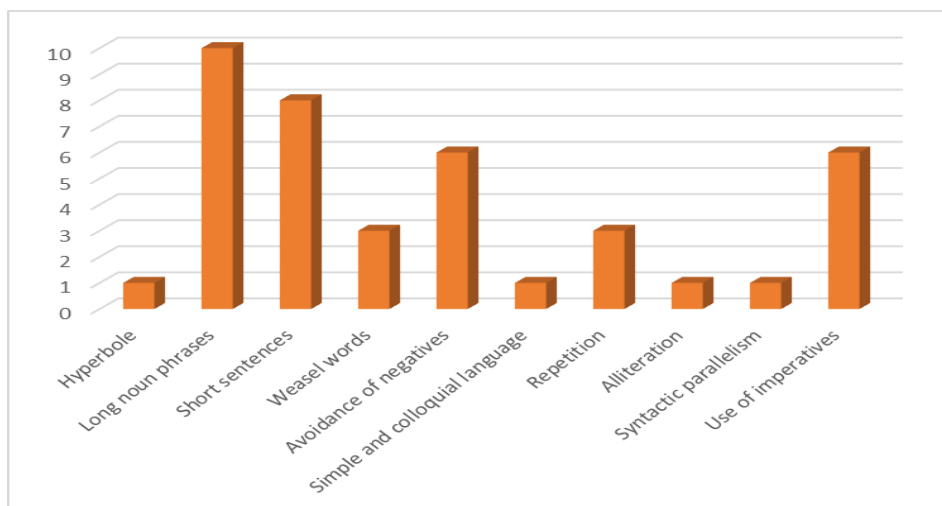

Figure 2. Type of Persuasive Language Found

DISCUSSION

Referring to research question 2, there are 10 types of persuasives found in the data. Therefore, the discussion below is concerned with the types of the persuasive language found in the data.

Long noun phrase

A long noun phrase is a group of words consisting of a noun and a modifier and the function of this type of persuasive language is to give descriptions in the advertisements. From the collected data, 10 advertisements were using long noun phrases to advertise their products.

"Supercharge your drive" as in the data No. 2 was identified using a long noun phrase. The word "Your drive" is a noun phrase because "your" is a possessive determiner combined with "drive" as a noun.

"A racing machine on the wrist" in the data No. 15 was considered as long noun phrase from "a racing machine" word identified as a noun phrase.

Furthermore, other data that were identified using long noun phrase in the advertisements are "Adrenaline as an art form", "Rebirth of an icon", "The mark of a captain", "Know you're on the right path" and "Unleash the power of location intelligence", "The luxury of the quiet time" and "Perhaps the most desirable waterfront location in Charleston- And the last and very best of Daniel Island." To conclude, the long noun phrase function in advertisements is to give a clear description of the products.

Short sentence

A short sentence in the persuasive language is described as a word that consists of at least one subject and one verb. The function of the short sentence is to create an impact on the readers.

In the data analysis, there are eight advertisements identified using a short sentence. For example, "Cash is best" and "Now I have a chance" in the data No. 35 were considered using short sentences because these two sentences consist of subject and verb. For example, "Cash is best" consists of a subject which is cash, verb as be and best as adjective. Also, these sentences in the advertisements were printed large so the readers can read and memorize them easily.

Moreover, other data that were identified using short sentences are "Your old flame just turned into a five-alarm fire", "Ready or not here we come", "The new tambour horizon. Our journey connected", "beyond fast is technology that makes business boom.", "Let's recycle right!" and "A New Day Dawns were". To conclude, the function of short sentences in advertisements is to create an impact on the readers who read the advertisements to buy the products.

Avoidance of negatives

Avoidance of negatives is a type of persuasive language that emphasizes only the positive effect of the product. The result showed there were six advertisements found using avoidance of negatives. The example is "The only thing more impressive than our aircraft are the pilots who fly them" from data No. 4 and "Have another nice save by switching to GEICO" in data No. 31. Those words were considered to be an avoidance of negatives because two of them are showing the positive side of their product. First is in "The only thing more impressive than our aircraft are the pilots who fly them", the advertiser tries to show off the positive side of their product which is the aircraft and the

pilot. In this case, the advertiser only wants to show that the aircraft and the pilots are good but the services or the facility remain unknown by the readers. Then, in "Have another nice save by switching to GEICO", the advertiser wants to show that GEICO can assure the reader to have another money safe without mentioning the risk the reader will get when switching to GEICO. Furthermore, there are four others data that were identified using avoidance of negatives. They are "Fly the number one business tool.", "Legacy 500: you feel at home", "IWC PILOT'S. Engineered for new horizon" and "Provoking a New Sense of Aesthetic". In conclusion, the function of avoidance of negatives in a persuasive language is to give a clear vision about the benefit that the readers will get without mentioning the risk they will get.

Use of imperatives

This type of persuasive language is used to order the reader to do something. Generally, the use of imperative starts with a verb. In the analysis, there were six advertisements using the use of imperatives. For example, "Help grow the employees that are helping grow your business" from data No. 23 and "Begin your own tradition" as in data No. 20. Those advertisements are using the imperative because the advertisements start with a verb which are "help" and "begin". Other data that were identified using use of imperatives are "Build the network of the future now with VMware.", "Get a clearer picture of the 401k fees you might be paying" and "Don't let your cloud be a blind spot" and "Spend forever and a day on this award-winning yacht". To conclude, the use of imperatives in persuasive language can be recognized easily because they start with a verb and order the reader to do something.

Weasel words

Weasel words are often used and suggest meaning without telling specific. There are two types of weasel words; open comparative and bogus superlative. In the analysis, there are three advertisements using weasel words to sell their products. For example, as in the data No. 37 "Best in the world. Once again." And in the data No. 11 "Entrust us to help you look your best, fit you properly and save you time". "Best in the world. Once again." Was considered to be a bogus superlative weasel word because "Best in the world" posing a question to the reader 'rated alongside what?' Then, "Entrust us to help you look your best, fit you properly and save you time." was considered to become weasel

words because "save you time" in the sentence is not telling about specific "save you time from what?". Furthermore, other example of weasel word that can be found in the advertisements is "Were there to be only one" as in data No. 17. In conclusion, a weasel word is used to suggest meaning without telling specific.

Repetition

Repetition is used to repeat the brand or the catchphrase in the advertisements. In the analysis, there were found three advertisements using repetition. Some of the examples are in data No. 29 "Bigger the insight, smaller our impact" and data No. 34 "More than investing. Invested.". Those words were considered to become repetition because they have their own catchy words such as "bigger and smaller" and "investing and invested". Other data that were identified using repetition in the advertisements is "Anticipate tomorrow. Deliver today." As in the data No. 28. In conclusion, repetition is defined as repeated words, brands, or catchphrases.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is an exaggeration to claim but does not mean to be taken literally. It frequently uses adjectives and adverbs. There was found one of the advertisements using hyperbole, "More than Swiss made" as in the data No. 19. The reason why this is considered hyperbole is because these words are claimed to be the best more than Swiss made. In this case, "more than Swiss made" affects the reader to believe that they will get better than a Swiss made. In conclusion, hyperbole can be used to affect the reader to emphasize the meaning in the advertisement.

Simple and colloquial language

Simple and Colloquial language is a sentence that uses a colloquial language (conversation language). In the analysis data, there was found one advertisement that uses simple and colloquial language. "Small business isn't small to us" from data No. 24 was identified as a simple and colloquial language because the word "isn't" is considered to be one of the conversational languages. To conclude, simple and colloquial language can be recognized easily if there are word cutting such as you're, we'll, and others.

Alliteration

Alliteration means the repetition of an initial consonant sound. "Different by design. Disruptive by choice." from the data No. 6 was identified as alliteration because there is repetition in consonant words "Different by design. Disruptive by choice" which can be considered as a consonant sound. To conclude, alliteration can be identified easily with its consonant words.

Syntactic parallelism

Syntactic parallelism is a similarity of structure in a pair or series of related words, phrases, or clauses. Also called parallel structure. "It soothes the five senses. It drives with a sixth." as in the data No. 9 is the example of syntactic parallelism because there is a series of related words from "it soothes to it drives" and this can be one of the reasons why this is identified as syntactic parallelism. In conclusion, in syntactic parallelism, some words are related to each other.

For answering research question 2, the most frequently used type of persuasive language in advertisements in *Forbes* Magazine is long noun phrase with the percentage of 25% as shown in Table 2.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, among 21 types of persuasive language listed by (Kannan & Tyagi, 2013), there are only 10 types which are employed in the advertisement in Forbes magazine. They are long noun phrases which the most dominant, short sentences, avoidance of negative, use of imperatives, weasel words, repetition, hyperbole, simple and colloquial language, alliteration, and syntactic parallelism. This indicates that the use of long noun phrases in advertisements is to give clear descriptions of the products or services, and the use of short sentences in advertisements is to give impact for the reader by giving memorable sentences or slogans to persuade the readers to buy the products or services advertised in the magazine.

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