

ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS IN THE HEADLINES AND SLOGANS OF BEAUTY PRODUCT ADVERTISEMENTS

Written by : Meliana Mustofa
 First Supervisor : Susana Widyastuti, Ph.D
 Second Supervisor : Paulus Kurnianta, M.Hum

English Language and Literature Study Program
 Faculty of Languages and Arts
 Yogyakarta State University

mustofameliana@gmail.com

Abstract

This research employed pragmatics and discourse as its underpinning theories which become the basis of the data analysis. The objectives of the research are (1) to identify the types of illocutionary acts and (2) to examine the discursive context of illocutionary acts in the headlines and slogans of beauty product advertisements. This research was conducted by using a qualitative method. This research reveals some findings. First, there are four types of illocutionary acts employed in the headlines and slogans of beauty product advertisements, namely assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive. Second, the discursive context is examined and explained within eight categories, namely substance, picture, paralanguage, situation, co-text, inter-text, participants, and function. These aspects are interconnected and mutually informing. They construct the intended purpose of the production of the advertisement and determine the way customers perceive the intended illocutionary acts.

Keywords: *illocutionary acts, headlines and slogans, beauty product advertisements, discursive context*

INTRODUCTION

Advertising performs an increasingly important role these days since it introduces customers to its products and services. It is used as a means of communication between the sellers (manufacturers) and the buyers (consumers). Without advertising, customers would hardly know about or remember the

products and services available in the market. Nowadays, thousands of advertisement becomes a part of our daily lives since it possesses every single nook in society. Advertisement appears in various media such as visual, audio, and audio-visual. It is presented in the form of printed and digital media. We easily find many advertisements

of various brands in various media such as magazine, newspaper, pre-movie commercial, internet spam, billboard, and so forth.

Although the media of advertising vary greatly, the language of advertising itself is classified into spoken and written. Spoken language is used in broadcast advertising such as a narrative by radio announcer of a particular advertisement. Printed advertising employs written text such as words used in the headline of an advertisement. The language of advertising is quite different from everyday language as it is aimed more at attention-seeking device. Consequently, it should be clear, purposive, convincing, and persuasive as well.

One kind of product which has been advertised widely is beauty product. A lot of beauty product brands offer their items in various kinds and prices. Beauty product itself consists of cosmetics, hair and skin care, and any other items which are labelled as body care. These products are designed for women to improve their looks. The innovations

proposed by thousands of beauty products have attracted a lot of attention from women as their targeted consumers. Thus, advertisers should make advertisements more eye-catching and memorable as well. One way in making advertisements noticeable is by employing headline and slogan.

The term headline refers to the words in the leading position of advertisement. Headline is positioned to draw the most important attention from the potential consumers, it is usually written in bigger size rather than the others. Meanwhile, slogan aims at drawing consumer's attention and identifying a product or service from its competitors in a short, memorable, and catchy form. Both headline and slogan are made up of advertisers' intention to entice the customers into buying the products without obviously ordering in literal. Therefore, illocutionary acts are frequently employed in order to enhance the informative and persuasive function of advertising itself especially through its headline and slogan.

The issue of illocutionary acts is central to Searle's taxonomy. Illocutionary act is an effective means to serve a very useful purpose in order to attract people to purchase the products. It is often found in advertisements to convey ideas indirectly instead of declaring them directly. This research focuses on analyzing illocutionary acts found in beauty product advertising headline and slogan as these two elements are usually the first and the final element of an advertisement.

This research takes beauty product advertisements from the digital version of *Elle* magazine as its object of analysis because of some reasons. First of all, *Elle* is a popular worldwide fashion magazine which has 44 international editions around the world. *Elle* is claimed reaching 16 million women readers through printed and digital medium as well. Secondly, *Elle* as one of leading fashion magazines encourages women to explore their style by showing the updated trend with the utmost care since it concerns with women's need of fashion, beauty, and also pop culture that are

happening in that time. Thirdly, besides fashion photographs, the primary sort of advertisements that frequently appear is beauty product commercials. Various kinds of beauty products have been repeatedly advertised in *Elle*. It also serves various advertisements related to fashion, beauty and life style.

This research addresses two objectives: to identify the types of illocutionary acts and to examine the discursive context of illocutionary acts in headlines and slogans in beauty product advertisements.

To identify the types of illocutionary acts, this research uses the theory based on Searle's taxonomy (1979). He concludes that illocutionary acts are classified into five types, namely assertive, directive, expressive, commissive, and declaration.

To examine the discursive context, this research employs the theory proposed by Cook in 2001. He concludes that the discursive context in advertising consists of substance, picture, paralanguage, situation, co-text, inter-text, participants, and function.

Moreover, this research is under the analysis of pragmatics and discourse. The pragmatic approach is used to analyze the types of illocutionary acts. Besides, the researcher applies discourse analysis to examine the discursive context of illocutionary acts in headlines and slogans in beauty product advertisements.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used qualitative method since the data were analyzed descriptively. As stated by Patton (2002:162) says that qualitative research refers to a study based on descriptive data that do not (regularly) make use of statistical procedures. By using qualitative research, the language phenomenon in its context can be analyzed clearly and described deeply in a narrative way. Moreover, VanderStoep and Johnston (2009:310) state that qualitative research produces narrative or textual descriptions of phenomena under the study. Therefore, a qualitative method provided more in-depth

understanding of the language phenomena.

The primary data of this study were in the form of words, phrases, clauses and sentences denoting illocutionary acts in the headlines and slogans of beauty product advertisements. Besides, the context of the data was the whole text of each beauty product advertisement. The source of the data was beauty product advertisements taken from *Elle* magazines issued in March 2016. The researcher collected the data by observing beauty product advertisements in *Elle* and identifying the words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which were the headlines and slogans of each beauty product advertisement.

The primary instrument of this research was the researcher herself. Moleong (2001:121) states that the researcher in qualitative method plays as the designer, the collector, the analyst, the interpreter, and the reporter of the data finding. Furthermore, the secondary instrument of this research was the data sheet in order to obtain data accurately.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From all the analyzed utterances, the total data collected in this research are 20 data. There are three types of interruption found in the *Desperate Housewives Season 1* TV series. Those types are simple, overlap, and butting-in interruption. Not all types classified by Ferguson are found in this TV series. Silent interruption is the type which is not found in this research. It means, in the *Desperate Housewives Season 1* TV Series, there is no interruption which is happened in the pause of the current speaker's utterance.

Based on the data analysis, this research reveals 47 data of illocutionary acts in the headlines and slogans of 28 beauty product advertisements issued in *Elle* March 2016. In terms of the types, illocutionary acts can be divided into five categories. They are assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration. The findings of the types of illocutionary acts shows that there are four types of illocutionary acts found in the headlines and slogans of beauty product advertisements, namely assertive,

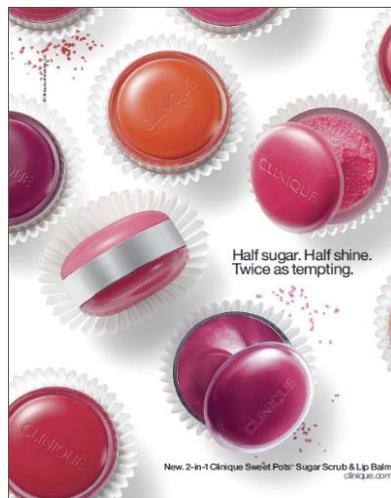
directive, commissive, and expressive. The most often occurring type is assertive. Directive is in the second rank. Commissive is in the third rank. Meanwhile, the least occurring type is expressive. Based on the findings, declaration is not found in the data.

Each type of illocutionary acts is figured out and explained on the basis of not only the linguistic forms (the locutionary acts) but also the discourse or discursive context of headlines and slogans of the written advertisements. The discursive context is identified and explained within eight categories, namely substance, picture, paralanguage, situation, co-text, inter-text, participants, and function. In this research, all advertisements share the same substance and participants. The substance is *Elle* digital version which is in the form of PDF. Meanwhile, the participants include the sender (the cosmetic brand), addresser (the advertiser), receiver (the readers), and addressee (a specific group of women targeted by the advertised product). Thus, the substance and participants are not

discussed further in this section. They are also not considered to give less significant contribution to the construction of the illocutionary acts.

a. Assertive

Example: Half sugar. Half shine.
Twice as tempting (Clinique
Sweet Pots' Headline)



The assertive in this headline has a point that is to give statements of facts about the product. The utterance “half sugar. half shine” is related to the notion of a claim that Clinique provides a lip product which is made from sugar and oil. Moreover, the advertiser promotes a 2-in-1 product through the headline. It is a sheer and tinted moisturizing balm on one side and a sugar-smoothing scrub on the other side.

Meanwhile, the phrase “twice as tempting” is related to asserting a positive statement about the product. The positive statement is shown in the headline through contradicting the word “half” and “twice”. Thus, the illocutionary acts of this headline is used by the advertiser in order to persuade the readers through contradicting how the half different ingredients can offer the customers twice temptation.

Besides, the illocutionary act of the headline is also supported by the discursive context, namely picture, paralanguage, situation, co-text, inter-text, and function. The first is picture. Picture in advertisement helps consumers to figure out how the product looks like. The second is situation. This advertisement is situated in a simple design with a white background that will not distract readers' focus from the picture and advertising texts. The third is paralanguage. This advertisement employs one typeface with different sizes to differentiate each element. The fourth is co-text. This advertisement only has a headline and body copy as its co-

text. The fifth is inter-text which tells readers that usually lip balm and lip scrub are different products. The last is function. The function of the advertisement is to support the marketing activity of Clinique Sweet Pots Sugar Scrub and Lip Balm and also to persuade women to use one lip product that serves two benefits, scrubbing and moisturizing, instead of using two separated products.

b. Directive

Example: rethink everything you know about washing your hair (L'oréal's Headline)



The headline is a verbal phrase which is started by the imperative word “rethink”. This word means to think again about something. In this context, the advertiser directs customers to think again about the

idea of washing their hair. The word “rethink” is used as a trigger for customers’ recognition that there must be something wrong in washing their hair, especially in their daily shampoo. Probably their ordinary shampoos can cause some problems since they contain any dangerous ingredients such as sulfate and paraben. Therefore, the advertiser commands customers to think again what they know about washing their hair. Through the directive illocutionary act in this headline, the advertiser attracts customers to read the whole information in the advertisement.

Moreover, the illocutionary act is supported by the discursive context of this advertisement, namely picture, situation, paralanguage, co-text, inter-text, and function. The first is picture. This advertisement shows a picture of the content of the product in detailed view without showing its bottle. The second is situation. Situation refers to the design of advertisement such as background color. The advertiser employs basic white color for the background, whereas the texts are

mostly colored in black that drags the readers' focus on the message conveyed in the advertisement. The third is paralanguage. The paralanguage of advertisement includes in the choice of typefaces and letter sizes in writing. The fourth is co-text. Besides the headline, this advertisement has a body copy, brand name, and product name as its co-text. The fifth is inter-text. This advertisement tells that ordinary shampoos is used only for cleaning hair. They are not specifically designed for color treated, curly, and dry/damaged hair. The last is function. From the analysis above, the function of this advertisement is to warn customers that there is something wrong in washing their hair and to persuade them to change their shampoos into L'oréal Ever Cleansing Blams.

c. Commissive

Example: Perfectly sculpted contours in 30 seconds (L'oréal's Headline)



PERFECTLY SCULPTED CONTOURS IN 30 SECONDS
THE NEW PRO LOOK OF CONTOUR

GET THE NEW PRO LOOK OF CONTOUR WITH OUR NEW PRO-CONTOUR MAKEUP PALETTE. THE SPECIALLY DESIGNED PRO-CONTOUR MAKEUP PALETTE MAKES IT EASY TO BLENDABLE HIGHLIGHT AND CONTOUR TO INSTANTLY CREATES LIGHT AND SHADOW FOR A BEAUTIFULLY DEFINED FACE ALL DAY.
BEHOLD THE NEW PRO-CONTOUR



L'ORÉAL
MAKEUP DESIGNER/PARIS

This headline saying “perfectly sculpted contours in 30 seconds” indicates a commissive illocutionary act. The indicator of a commissive lies in the phrase “in 30 seconds”. This adverbial phrase shows the advertiser’s promise about the product’s capability to do contouring easily only in 30 seconds. Promise is used in an advertisement in order to show the advertiser’s commitment that something will happen in future. In this context, the advertiser commits that the product can perfectly do sculpted contour in 30 seconds.

Moreover, the illocutionary act is supported by the discursive context of this advertisement, namely picture, situation, paralanguage, co-text, inter-text, and function. The

first is picture. To convince customers that contour can be done in 30 seconds, the advertisers put a picture of the model when she applies contour and also a picture of the product which consists of contour and highlight. The picture is taken from a close-up angle. This angle makes the claim of a product powerful since it gives a very detail picture of Barbara's face, especially where she does contour and highlight. The second is situation. This advertisement is divided into two parts. The upper part is used for showing the picture of a model on a red background. The red color is associated with being sexy and glamorous. The other part of this advertisement is the white area used by the text of the advertisement. This color helps customers easier to read all the advertising texts. The third is paralanguage. It includes in the choice of typeface and letter sizes in writing. There is only one typeface used in this advertisement which is capital letters. To differentiate one element from others, the advertiser designs each advertising text in different sizes. The fourth is co-text.

Besides the headline, this advertisement has a subhead, body copy, and slogan as the co-text. The fifth is inter-text. The inter-text suggests that contouring has two steps, contouring and highlighting. The last is function. From the analysis above, it can be concluded that the functions of the advertisement is to promote and to persuade customers that now contouring can be done in 30 seconds by using L'oréal's product.

d. Expressive

Example: Bye-bye lash curler
(Rimmel's Headline)



The headline saying “bye-bye lash curler” belongs to an expressive which represents the speaker's feeling. The word “bye-bye” is an

informal form of goodbye and it is usually used when somebody wants to leave. In this context, the expression bye-bye is followed by a noun phrase saying “lash curler”. This phrase gives additional information to what is being left by the previous word “bye-bye”. A lash curler is usually used to give the lashes a curl and a mascara is used to maintain that curl. Thus, a lash curler is an essential tool needed. However, the headline performing an expressive illocutionary act is used by the advertiser to express the model’s feeling about a lash curler.

The discursive context of this advertisement are picture, situation, paralanguage, co-text, inter-text, and function. The first is picture. The picture of this advertisement is Kate Moss taken from medium angle. From this angle, viewers can explore the model’s face clearly. There is also a picture of product together with its brush. The second is situation. This advertisement is situated on a colorful background whose colors are associated with the product’s signature colors. The third is paralanguage. The paralanguage of

this advertisement uses various font styles and sizes in each element. The fourth is co-text. Rimmel advertisement has many elements such as headline, subhead, body copy, product name, brand name, and slogan as the co-text. The fifth is inter-text. It associated with the idea that a lash curler is no longer needed before applying mascara. The last is function. From the analysis above, this advertisement persuades the readers to experience the difference feeling of using mascara and to step into the next evolution in mascara.

CONCLUSION

To summarize the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that there are four types of illocutionary acts found in the headlines and slogans of beauty product advertisements, namely assertive, directive, commissive, and expressive. Of the four types, assertive is the most often occurring type. Assertive is intended to tell customers the actual state of the products. It is used by the advertiser to give a description of the products. Moreover, assertive also performs

claims about the products. Therefore, assertive becomes an effective way in promoting messages of advertisements to consumers.

In relation to the second objective, the discursive context is examined within eight categories, namely substance, picture, paralanguage, situation, co-text, inter-text, participants, and function. These aspects are interconnected and mutually important. They construct the intended purpose of the production of the advertisement and determine the way customers perceive such intended the illocutionary acts. It implies that the discursive context takes an important role in making the advertisements successful in gaining customers' positive response as expected by the advertiser.

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