

## THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN ADVERTISEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

Advertisement becomes an important part in human's life. It has formed culture maker in society. Advertisement becomes one of crucial things that should be done. It has a power to persuade consumer's desire to the product in society through image ideology association. Advertisement build image ideology of product then it also uses sign systems or language which has relationship with moral values. One of ideology which can be called sign system or ad language is gender ideology, especially is about women exploitation as a sign system. It can be said that many advertisement has used many words which has negative meanings, sensitive meanings, porn meanings, etc and all of them points to the woman exploitation, because many advertisements usually use women to be a target of a product and also to be an agent of change. So, in interpreting sign system or language, advertisement has multidimensional meaning not only to market a product but also to interpret sign system or language. Then, language system has a power because there is an ideology which always hide in it. Ideology is inherent within language, it means that there is higher significant relevance when the context is placed in the frame of modernity which is called the third wave. The power of language has affected dan hidden in advertisement then it has become social infrastructure which has a total power. This power of language can effect perception, attitude, behaviour, and point of view of society.

Keywords: the power of language, advertisement, and sign system

### INTRODUCTION

Language is a vital communication means which is used by human to interact with others. Through language, someone creates reality and arranges it. Language lift to surface of the hidden things therefore becomes reality. Language is also used to depict experience of someone. Experience talks about an event, processes, people, objects, abstractions, quality, situation, and social relations around. In language, we do not only talk about symbol system in culture of human whom in the form of written language and or oral language. But also it talks about social phenomena of broader culture in society, like clothes, food menu, ritual, and others.

Discourse in mass media is also meant as one of language phenomena. The discourse has bearing with effective and intensive communications system therefore the culture of human can be built and defended the existence. Language is also used to give information to others about a thing, assure others about a truth or a thing and affects others' behavior and others opinion. Language is also used to depict or tell how to form or to present a goods or objects, and to describe the taste of an object. Language is also able to be used to tell about the events which happened to others. So, language must be in its context and situation, as Firth (in Syamsuddin, 1992:2) said that "language as only meaningful in its context of situation."

In the world of advertisement, language also has an important role. Language is considered as mediation equipment in advertisement production process, as Tarigan (1993:23) said that there are four purposes of language usage, they are oneself expression, exposition, art, and persuasion.

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Language in advertisement uses transactional language which prioritizes the content of communication. Language also can be conceived as interactional language which has the priority in interrelationship between addresser and addressee.

In the simple paper, the writer wants to explain about the role of language in mass media's advertisement which is able to affect the readers, the listeners, and the audience. Language has a powerful role and it is sharper than knife. Language, if it is used by someone who does not have ethics mouth, represent an action which is difficult to be traced. Because, language is graphical sound aspect language and sign then it is capable to make someone falls and badly suicides. In language, there is a hidden strength which is called communications. Language is able to move the world with the supreme awful power and we can find the power of language in advertisement which is capable to affect the people.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. Concept of Meaning**

Meaning represents the concept of abstraction which have drawn the attention of philosophers and social science experts during 2000 years ago. Plato said that meaning concept is as ultrareality. Problem of meaning about language expression represents the most basic problem in language philosophy, which is meaningful and meaningless. The problem of meaning is, of course, represents an attractive problem. An advertisement which is set on the road, for example with the title '*sluuuuuuuupprt*'. In the beginning, people might not understand what is the meaning of the words which is made by advertisement maker. But finally, they understand about the meaning of '*sluuuuuuuupprt*' which is delicious, nice or delicate. If it is written with 'delicious', people will understand soon.

The term of meaning, of course, represents the term which bewilders. Based on the opinion, interpretation as disclosure method of meaning which is contained in a discourse, human behavior and action become very important in effort to know subjectivity and intersubjectivity. To be able to understand human action well, then we must also understand the basic motives by the way of placing ourselves in the position of the speaker. Beside pronunciation, interpretations still need to be paid attention o following the hidden meaning structural of a discourse.

Wittgenstein (in Sobur, 2006;23) said that the meaning of word depends on its use in sentences, while the meaning of sentence depends on its use in language. It means that we can be trapped into language ambiguous when we explain the meaning of words by dissociating it from the situation in it. Therefore, the context of situation also partakes to build the meaning interpretation. There are 3 things about meaning, they are 1) explaining the meaning naturally; 2) describing sentences naturally; and 3) explaining the meaning in a communication process. (Kempson in Pateda, 2001:79).

In a meeting room, we often hear someone said "In my opinion, the meaning of communication is....this....this....this....and this...." It means that we make the detail of communication. After listening what we say, the listeners or the participants in a meeting room will understand about what we say. In a discourse context, the meaning of words can be limited as a relationship between form and a thing or its referent. The word 'house', for example is about the expression, while the thing which becomes referent of 'house' is roof, door, and window which become human residence. The relationship between expression and referent will generate meaning or reference. Meaning and reference of 'house' arises the effect of relation between its forms with the experiences of non-linguistics or the things which are existing in nature.

There are some opinions about type of meaning. Brodbeck (in Fisher, 1986:344-345) said that there are 3 concepts of meaning, they are 1) referential meaning, it means that there is relationship between symbol and referent; 2) meaning, it means that symbol or the term will be meaningful if it has relationship with other term 'legally'; and 3) intentional, it means that the meaning of a term or a symbol depends on what the speaker mean with that symbol. Then Shipley (in Sobur, 2006:26) said that there are 7 types of meaning, they are 1) emotive meaning; 2) cognitive meaning; 3) referential meaning; 4) pictorial meaning; 5) dictionary meaning; 6) fringe meaning; and 7) core meaning.

Meaning can change in certain time. There are some words which are so funny when it is said, for example the word '*gedang*' means papaya in West Java and banana in Central Java. The word '*gedang*' comes from the utterance of Dutch hunters when hunting in the forest of West Java and they say 'God Dank' which means 'thanks God' when they find papaya fruit. It was heard by their Sindanese assistant. Then, the utterance of God Dank which comes from Dutch hunters is considered as the name of fruits for Javanese man who followed the Dutchman (Mulyana in Sobur, 2006:28).

From the advertisement in television, we can get many examples. For example, when the television advertisement of 'Attack detergent soap' shows a woman who washes many clothes by the help of 10 hands. It means that she feels happy because there are 10 hands which help her work to wash more lighter than before. Through advertisement, then there is decoding process from the television audience toward the advertisement. If they use 'Attack detergent soap' then they will be able to wash clothes more enjoy and feel free because they are as if helped by 10 hands in washing clothes. Then, it is clear that a meaning which is decoded by the audience can be happened in different situations and places. It is based on the cognitive ability or affective ability of the audience. A meaning which is decoded by the audience is based on how the individual do the deconstruction toward that television advertisement because every people has a rights to decide about the interpretation method that they use, especially the interests in doing the deconstruction. Human language has a power to explain everything. A word gets the meaning because it is used correctly. So, a word can get the meaning through the usage in a cultural context.

## **B. MEDIA**

Media occupies the strategic position in society. Media becomes a space for various represented ideological. Media can become an equipment to build cultural and dominant ideology for the dominant class's interest, all it once it is also able to become the struggle instrument for the oppressed class to build cultural and ideology competition, as Gramsci (in Sobur, 2006:30) stated that media is the battle ground for competing ideologies.

As a means of communication in giving news, assessment, or general view about something, media has an important role as an institution which form public opinion because media also can develop into the group of pressure or imagery which is put into the life context more empirically. Media can give negative or positive influences. Of course, this normative attributes is very relative, depends on the represented interest dimension. Through a media, people can learn to adapt with their environment. Media has become a tool to send a message. As Marshall McLuhan (in Sobur, 2006:37) stated that the medium is the message. When language is used by mass media, then actually it has more responsibility toward the influence dissemination, certain prejudice and stereotype. Therefore, the choice of words which is used by journalists or advertisement makers need to be paid attention to because it is able to become people's choice in extending their knowledge.

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### C. LANGUAGE'S ROLE IN ADVERTISEMENT

Language is a symbol system in human culture. As Levi-Strauss (in Kasiyan, 2008:133) stated that language symptom is not only limited to the meaning of written language or oral language, but also all social phenomena of broader culture in society, such as clothes, food menu, ritual and others. In this case advertisement discourse in mass media is also seen as one of language phenomena.

In the beginning, the function of language is as a tool of communication naturally, to build collective social understanding in society. Then, the existence of language is known as cultural text and will give a description of socio-cultural reality. Language is no longer limited about meaning as a reflection of social reality, but having ability (power) to form or to construct social reality. As Jessica Murray (in Kasiyan, 2008:134) stated that there is few people who observes that language has a big impact to our perception and point of view about something.

In its development, language is not solely as a means of communication or a code system toward values which refer to one of monolithic reality meaning. Socially, language continuously is constructed in a certain social setting. As the representation of certain social relations, language always forms subjects, strategies, and certain discourse themes. Language is visual which is in the form of visual picture or symbol and has a power to construct certain ideology which will also affect and form subjectivity and our awareness. Visual language is as also very effective as written language and oral language.

In advertisement, language has a role to reflect the naturalness of use value toward product commodity or service which are advertised. Here, language is also as a media to spread capitalistic consumerism ideology to society. The power of language which has brought the colonization of human cultural symbolic in advertisement, actually, is one of prove that the friction of language represent of one potency which can poison the existence of civilization at the present and the future. As Stanley Baldwin (in Kasiyan, 2008: 144) stated that although the use of words may be abused and the fight for their honour may at times seem hopeless, we must never give up the struggle to use them solely in the service of truth. Let us aim at meaning what we say and saying what we mean.

It is true that advertisement aims to persuade to buy. But we have to remember that in persuading people to buy a product, we need to choose the diction well. Don't let the choice of words which we have chosen exactly become boomerang or problems when the audience watches or reads the display advertisement, for example when Tukul Arwana (the comedian) introduced one product, he always said '*ndeso*'. The word '*ndeso*' has made most of people who watched this advertisement dislike it. Then, this advertisement is disappeared from television. Another example is the advertisement of 'kiko'. The artist said that '*beli kiko untuk simpenan*'. It has connotation meaning that make audience think what 'simpenan' means. We also can see the visual advertisement entitled '*Lebih hot dari pasangan anda.*' This words are also added by the phrases '*Jelas, se-hot-hot-nya pasangan Anda, tapi Top Electrolux jauh lebih hot. Api cyclonnya bisa berputar 180 derajat, panas lebih rata, masakan anda jauh lebih cepat matang. Jadi jangan kaget jika anda jadi lebih bergairah pada 'selingkuhan' yang lebih hot ini*' (taken from Kasiyan, 2008:293). We can see that those choice of words are not appropriate enough. It is better if the advertisement maker considers it in order that it can be accepted by audience and hinder from problems. So, in making advertisement people should pay attention to the choice of words. It is very important. Language has a huge power that can change social phenomena.

## D. CONCLUSION

These days, the existence of advertisement in Indonesia has very fast development. Aesthetic representation of advertisement has been very fast growth by using esthetics values. But, sometimes the usage of language in advertisement tends to increasingly badly with a reason to increase profit or product sale. The choice of words are not selected appropriately and it will give boomerang for advertisement itself so that it will be slandered by many people. Language represents communication means and it is so effective in every human activity especially in advertisement. Language has magical energy which if it is stringed up well it will be able to hypnotize audience. So, the role of language in advertisement is so important and it cannot be seen into one side only.

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