

EXPOSING PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF CONSUMER IN ADVERTISEMENT TEXTS

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Abstract

Advertisement seems to play important roles in positioning certain products in consumers' mind. Mostly, advertisements consist of two; picture and text. The text contains specific discourse that can influence the readers from their psychological side. Usually, the advertisers suggest that the products can transfer the power, the qualities, the identity, the exclusivity, the lifestyle, and the capability as the problem solver. In this study, the writers reveal the psychological effect that found in the advertisement texts.

Keywords : advertiser, advertising, consumer, discourse

INTRODUCTION

Advertisements are the tools used in the process to inform and persuade the selected market (Bolen, 1984 cited in Cook, 1992:125). Advertisements appear in all media forms; radio, television, print (newspaper, magazines, billboards, etc), and on the internet. The development of all those media allowed advertising to persuade people. In the broad domain of advertising, the most basic function of advertisements is to communicate and in this case to inform, persuade or do both. The advertisement has main function to persuade the potential consumer (receiver) that she or he needs to buy a product or use a service.

Advertisements seem to play important roles in positioning certain products in consumers' mind. In the

broadest sense of advertisements either persuade or inform receivers, the main function is to persuade consumer to take a specific action, in other words the consumer is directly manipulated to change or modify his or her (consumer) behavior. Mostly, advertisements consist of two; picture and text. Text plays important role in communication process. Text can be defined as the visible evidence of a reasonable purposeful interaction among author, writer, and readers (Hoey, 2001:15). The author has a purpose in communicating to the audience and authorities the writer to produce a text which is supported by picture that will achieve that purpose. In order to increase consumption, the *text* must contain specific discourse that can influence the readers from their psychological side.

In order to make the consumers interested to buy the offered products, the advertisers have some strategies to expose the products. One of the strategies is by exposing the psychological effect on consumerism. Usually, the advertisers suggest that the text of advertisement can transfer the power of product and awaken the desire of customers to own the products. Advertiser can also expose the product as a problem solver or emphasize the qualities that the products have. Besides, advertisers can sometimes exploit the identity of consumers, so when they buy the products, it is because they want to have the same identity as represented by the products. Consumers may also choose certain products because the exclusivity, uniqueness and tradition that enable them to distinguish themselves. Lifestyle may be showed when the product represented.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Advertising

Advertising is a type of activity, which create fictional worlds in order to pursue a communication process. In communication process, there is a relation between sender (s) and addressee (s). There are 3 (three) important part which are included in communication process; materials, text, and people) Cook,2001:2). Materials, in advertising like wrapping paper,

magazines, electronic, etc are the first important parts in delivering message to receiver.

Text becomes the second part, which has an important role in carrying message. It is very important for the writers or advertisers to know how sentences combine by means of cohesiveness and coherence under communication function.

The third important part in communication process is people. This part focuses on the “speakers and hearers”. Speakers are represented by the narrative voices whose concept is explained in the form of advertisement, while hearers are considered in the way messages are perceived by academic or public.

2.2 Text Discourse in Advertising

Text plays important role in communication process. Text can be defined as the visible evidence of a reasonable self-contained purposeful interaction among author, writer, and readers (Hoey, 2001: 15). The interaction among author, writer, and audience are complex. The author purpose in communication to the audience and authorities and the writer produce a text that will achieve that purpose.

Discourse can be defined as written and spoken language used in social act (Stubb, 1983:1 in Bezuidenhout, 2001). Language and

situation are inseparable. The situation forms the basis of the context in text. Therefore, context and text (language) work together to constitute the discourse. The text takes place within a given situation or context and the information provided by the text must be related to the discourse as a whole, the quality of perceived purpose, meaning and connection.

2.3 Advertisements as Discourse

The type of advertisement is the most widely used by advertisers because its main function is to persuade receivers or consumers to change or modify their buying behavior in favor of the product or service advertised (Elizabeth, 2002:1).

Advertisement discourse has several characteristics which can be used as guidelines to determine whether the elements in advertisements convey the communication process (Cook, 1002:4 in Bezuidenhout, 2001). The characteristics are that advertisements change constantly, they use various substances for discourse (e.g. perfume strip in a magazine), they foreground connotational and use metaphorical meaning (e.g. Benneton advertisements), they sell a lifestyle, they get the new technology and media (e.g. in the internet), and they are a form of mass communication. Advertisements

are discourse could contain only one, or combination of these characteristics.

2.4 Consumerism in Advertisements

Current consumers' capitalist economic models of growth depend upon a system with the following mechanism and characteristics (Goatly, 2000: 185). He stated that in order to achieve economic and their industries' purpose, the manufacturing industries must persuade the people to buy their goods or services. In the process, the companies must meet the consumers' need and fulfill their requirements; they must remember that consumers have power to drop the products at any time if the products do not meet their needs. According to Faigley (1992: 12), the modern people have choice of lifestyle, identity, and position under their cultural circumstances.

2.5 The Psychological Effect of Consumer Advertising

2.5.1 Desire and Power

In order to increase consumption, advertisers have to encourage human greed and desire of power. Consumers have to be made to feel dissatisfied unless they buy a particular product, whether they need or not. For males usually is it stressed on the power to make money to win the competitive race. Very often, the power claimed for the product is the power to solve a particular problem.

2.5.2 Buying as Problem Solving

Consumerism encourages the idea that the way to solve problems is by buying a product. One of the consequences of seeing the product as the way to solve problems is to depersonalize or dis-empower the consumer, so, the product replaces the person. This effect is usually identified by the words problem and solution.

2.5.3 Acquiring Qualities

By conflating the product with the consumers, any positive attribute of the product is supported to transfer itself to the possessor, or to the possessor's relationships. In other words, the quality of the product might be transferred to the consumer. The qualities can be feelings or mental qualities. For example, if a person buys a reliable watch, it can turn him or her into a reliable person.

2.5.4 Choosing Identity

Because of the fragmentation of mass culture and the exploding numbers of lifestyle modern, people face an identity crisis. Many people are trying to find a person they can imitate. The celebrity appears in the advert becomes the person they wish to identify with. Product can also be a badge of membership, for example the fan of I-phone products.

2.5.5 Distinguishing yourself; Exclusively, uniqueness and Tradition

To define themselves as more successful than average people must distinguish themselves through the goods they consume. A more euphemistic word for snobbery as discrimination, meaning people can match themselves with the product, rather than simply deriving qualities from it. There is a deep paradox in pretending that products are exclusive, since they are mass produced and adverts are designed to increase the number of buyers, thereby making them less exclusive and to appeal to the individual's exceptionally good taste while locating it within a tradition of previous consumers.

2.5.6 Buying Lifestyle

The result of the technique is either to transfer the desirable connotations of the accompanying image of object or person to the product, meaning, to suggest that buying the product will bring them the desirable object too. So, lifestyle is not just a matter of the surroundings but also the behavior they can infer a little narrative from the visuals as well.

METHODOLOGY

It was a qualitative study; it analyzed the psychological effects of consumer found in advertisement texts.

The writers collected six different advertisements from newspaper and analyzed the texts to find out whether they could find the psychological effects of consumer in the text. Next, the writer used questionnaires, the writer asked 25 (twenty-five) respondents to see the advertisements. Then, the writers counted the results and compared them with the writers' analysis to find out whether the effects are well caught by the readers or not. Based on those results, the writers draw the conclusion.

DISCUSSION

4.1 Desire and Power

In order to increase consumption, advertisers have encouraged human's desire for power or needs (Goatly, 2000: 186). Consumers have to be made to feel dissatisfied unless they buy a particular product, whether they need or not, like in IM3 Smart slogan; "*Xtra semangat di awal tahun dengan Xtra pulsa*". This slogan tends to make the consumers feel that they must buy this product to get 'Xtra semangat di awal tahun' and Xtra pulsa' in order to meet their desire.

Another example of showing power also stated in this advert; "*ikuti MMS spot the fun berhadiah voucher jutaan rupiah*". The use of imperative is commonly used by advertisers to persuade the consumers to buy the product. This advert uses that kind of

technique to influence the consumers to buy their product by giving the extra reward.

For the advertisers, it is necessary to transfer power from the product to the consumers and give promise that the performance of product will match with the consumers' need like the example of power in JVC MX-SK1 stereo advert slogan; "*Tak perlu Besar dan Mahal untuk MENGGELEGAR*" and the text; "*JVC MX_SK1 tampil dengan ukuran speaker lebih besar (15 cm Woofer) ditambah dengan SOUND TURBO menghasilkan tendangan yang begitu kuat .*" Under the Indonesia people' culture as consumers, they tend to own the product which is not expensive but has good conditions. This advert gives the power to prove the excess of "Menggelegar" by showing the performance of the product "*ukuran speaker lebih besar*" and the facility of "SOUND TURBO"

The power of "Jupiter Z" is shown by its slogan; "*cepat, lincah, irit*". This advertisement wants to transfer the power to the consumer. So, if a consumer buys a Jupiter Z, then he will turn to a "*cepat, lincah, irit*" person. It is supported by the reality that it is using a 110cc SOHC four-stroke new machine and a Rotary system transmission.

The poster in PEUGEOT 206's advertisement shows that PEUGEOT

has become the **world rally champion in 2000, 2001, and 2002**. The old car dreams to be like PEUGEOT. So, through the poster, the advertiser shows that consumers will have the power transferred from PEUGEOT to them.

4.2 Problem-Solution

Consumerism also encourages the idea that the way to solve problems is by buying a product. It is obvious in the advertisements that the products or services must be produced to solve the consumers' problems. The example of problem solution can be seen in this advert;

"Banyak extra di setiap Starter Pack IM3 seharga Rp. 50.000,-:"

" Xtra pulsa Rp. 15.000 (total pulsa Rp. 40.000)"

"Xtra masa aktif 60 hari"

"Xtra free roaming antar sesama pengguna IM3" (IM3 Smart advert)

This advert offers the solution of cost by giving *extra pulsa*, the longer active period, and the facility of free roaming. Another problem solution is also stated in JVC slogan; *" Tak Perlu Besar dan Mahal Untuk MENGGELEGAR"* and *" harganya terjangkau"*, the advert gives solution by giving the reached price which shows that this product can be bought by any level of society.

FORD's advertisement offers a problem solving towards "comfort

problem", which is commonly experienced by the users of seven-seat car. FORD offers a more comfortable room for seven passengers, equipped by seven seatbelts (*Ford Everest menawarkan ruang lebih lega untuk 7 penumpang dan dilengkapi dengan 7 seatbelts, dual airbags,...*). So when consumers face a "comfort problem", by buying FORD the problem will be solved.

PEUGEOT also offers comfortable way of driving in its advertisement, *"Serta tentu saja, sensasi kenyamanan berkendara khas PEUGEOT....."*.

"Lampu Mewah Nuansa Biru - Lampu baru Ganda Multi Reflector nuansa biru menjadikan cahaya lebih terang." From Jupiter-Z's

advertisement shows a problem solution for unclear and not bright light that a motorcycle usually has.

4.3 Acquiring Qualities

Ford's advertisement; *"Ford Everest menawarkan ruang lebih lega untuk 7 penumpang dan dilengkapi 7 seatbelts, dual airbags, serta tersedia dengan pilihan penggerak 4x2 dan 4x4"*. This advert shows the quality that Ford has and it means that if people buy Ford, they will have good qualities as offered by Ford.

Another qualities also mentioned in Jupiter-Z advertisement by describing new model; *" Piston*

Cooling System: Menggunakan "Piston Cooling System". Sistem pendinginan Piston yang diterapkan pada motor balap". "Performa Mesin Handal: Dengan mesin baru 4-Tak SOHC 110cc, bertenaga besar dipandu dengan rancangan keseimbangan total, Jupiter-Z CEPAT LINCAH IRIT. Transmisi System Rotary menjadikan pengendalian lembut dan nyaman.

The New PEUGEOT 206 shows its quality by mentioning the award it has been achieved. *"Bandingkan desain, gaya dan fitur keamanannya, apalagi dengan begitu banyak penghargaan yang diraihnya di Indonesia dan di tingkat dunia."* The advertisers want the owners of Peugeot will also win many awards as their car does.

Sony Ericsson's advertisement shows its quality by mentioning its facilities; *"Quickshare, Bluetooth, GPRS, Integrated Camera, 65,536 Color TFT, Email Client, WAP 2.0, JAVA, MAC, and PCSynchronization, Melody Composer/MIDI (Music DJ), Picture Phone Book, Downloadable Games, 32 Polyphonic Ringtones"* Most advertisers will expose the quality of the products to attract the consumers' attention.

4.4 Choosing an Identity

Because of the fragmentation of mass culture and exploding numbers of lifestyle, modern people face an

identity crisis. Many people are trying to find a person they can imitate. The celebrity appears in the advert becomes the person they wish to identify with. Product can also be a badge of membership. Identity can be seen in Jupiter-Z slogan; *"Yang lain pasti ketinggalan"*. It means, if consumers do not ride Jupiter-Z, they will be left behind.

Peugeot's slogan, *"It's everyone idol"* also shows that if someone does not have Peugeot as their idol, they are not a part from the group. The new T630 Sony Ericsson promises its possessors with the new change of view if they have T630, an amazing camera and mobile phone, *"The New T630. Change your view. Berpalinglah pada the new T630-kamera sekaligus mobile phone mengagumkan."*

4.5 Distinguishing yourself: Exclusivity, Uniqueness, and Tradition

To define themselves as more successful than average, people must distinguish themselves through the goods they consume. People can match themselves with the product, rather than simply deriving qualities from it. There is a deep paradox in pretending that products are exclusive, since they are mass produced and adverts are designed to increase the number of buyers, thereby making them less exclusive and to appeal to the

individual's exceptionally good taste while locating it within a tradition of previous consumers.

The tradition and uniqueness are shown by PEUGEOT's advertisement *"Serta tentu saja, sensasi kenyamanan berkendara khas PEUGEOT."* The word 'khas' shows tradition, uniqueness, the trademark of PEUGEOT; implicitly, something that does not belong to other brands.

4.6 Buying Lifestyle

In the advertisements, the advertiser tends to transfer desirable connotations of the accompanying image of object to suggest that buying the product will bring the consumers the desirable object. This technique suggests that buying the product, they are adopting a certain lifestyle or a way of life, like the example of IM3 Smart logo; **"IM3 No Limits"**. It seems that IM3 Smart gives promise a lifestyle in which this card can be used wide coverage areas and by the people who are active and have high working time.

Another example also stated in JVC MX-SK1 Stereo; **"The Perfect Experience"**. An explicit promise of a lifestyle in this advert suggests that the consumers will get their perfect experience if they buy this product.

Sony Ericsson's advertisement, which says, *"Kamera T630 adalah handphone T630. Benar benar gaya*

hidup berhandphone!", This adverts shows a new lifestyle for its buyers.

2. Findings

2.1 Result of Questionnaire

From the writers' observations and based on the theory, it can be concluded in the table below;

Product	Desire & Power	Quality	Identity	Exclusivity, uniqueness, tradition	Problem solving	Lifestyle
IM3	16	10	12	6	15	15
P206	15	20	15	19	5	15
Jup-Z	12	9	9	4	18	9
T630	18	17	16	17	13	22
FORD	10	19	12	19	17	15
JVC	11	14	8	7	9	9

After comparing the result of questionnaire and the analysis above, it can be concluded that more than 50% of the respondents agree that IM3's advertisement shows desire and power, problem solving and lifestyle. More than 50% of the respondents agree that Peugeot 206 has all psychological effects except the problem solving. There are 75% of the respondents see Jupiter-Z advertisement see it as problem solver. More than half of respondents see that Sony Ericsson T630 has all psychological effects. More than 50 % of the respondents see the FORD's advert promises a problem solving, quality, uniqueness and exclusivity, and lifestyle. For JVC, more than 50% of respondents can see it promises quality.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis and the questionnaires, the writers concluded

that all the advertisements the writers took as examples, had psychological effects in certain degrees. When the writers compared the observations to the questionnaires, the writers found out that the result of observations and questionnaires are not always the same. Sometimes, the respondents or the readers have different opinions. They do not read the theory first, so it can be said that they are really pure interpreters.

Thus, the writers agree that people can have different opinions in interpreting advertisements, but the main result from this study is that the text of advertisements can influence the readers' mind from their psychological effects showed in the text. This is an important thing that copywriters should know. Therefore, the copywriters need to have more than one strategy to advertise their products, so when a message is failed to be delivered, then the other messages can still persuade consumers to buy.

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