

THE MEANING OF VERBAL AND NONVERBAL SIGNS IN MAYBELLINE ADVERTISEMENTS

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Abstract— Advertisements usually contain signs both verbal and non-verbal signs. Each of them is used to express the meaning intended by the advertisers. The signs used also can attract the attention of the audience. This study aims to find out of verbal and non-verbal signs in Maybelline Advertisements. This study used observation method to collect the data. The collected data were analyzed by qualitative method using the theory proposed by Saussure (1983) and Barthes (1967). By conducting of this study, it is found that verbal and non-verbal signs have important roles to make an attractive advertisement. These verbal and non-verbal signs contain denotation and connotation meaning. The advertiser tends to use brief sentences in order to attract reader's attention. The use of connotative meaning dominant in all advertisements because the advertiser used hidden meaning to convey the message and attract the attention of consumers so they are curious to try to use the product.

Keywords— advertisement, Maybelline cosmetic, verbal sign, non-verbal sign.

1. Introduction

Language is an important part of communication which is used by people to communicate each other. Communication has been variously defined as the passing information, the exchange of idea, or the process of establishing a commonness or oneness of thought between a sender and receiver. Communication is the activity of conveying information. Everybody needs to communicate with others because if we do not communicate we will not get any information about anything. There are many forms of media that used by the people to communicate, one of them is by using advertisement. Advertisement is a part of communication since naturally it is the way to deliver message from the producer to customers.

Advertisements usually persuade and influence the customers to buy or use particular products. The producers make some efforts to make a customers interested in their advertisement. It is not an easy job since the producer must have good strategies to promote their products. Therefore, most of companies use advertising agency which provides advertising spaces in particular media and create good advertisements (Brierley, 1995).

Almost all advertisement use verbal and non-verbal signs to deliver their purpose. By using both signs, advertisements will be more attractive and can successfully attract the audience to look at the advertisement and finally being persuaded of using or consuming the product. It is also obvious that these signs will have meaning to represent the idea in advertisement.

This article also supported by the previous research that can support the analysis that are associated with semiotic in the advertisements. Thesis was written by Solikhah (2017) entitled *A Semiotic Analaysis in 10 Magnum Advertisements*. In his study focused on verbal and non-verbal text in the advertisments also the theory used in his study was purposed by Saussure. The second thesis was presented by Pratiwi (2016) entitled *The Semiotic Analysis of Pantene Haircare Advertisements*. In her study focused on hidden meaning and verbal and visual signs and also she used observation method. The third review from Ardianto and Son (2019) entitled

Visual Semiotic Analysis on Television Ads UHT Ultra Milk Love Life, Love Milk. He focus to find out the deep meaning and visual sign in the advertisements then he used theory purposed by Barthes in his study.

Maybelline cosmetic is one of well-known cosmetic products in the world leading in quality and innovation with a modern New York identity and affordable price. This research tried to analyze verbal and non-verbal signs in Maybelline Advertisements to discover the hidden meaning in the advertisement. Advertisement is interesting to discuss, because it has so many messages which deliver to public besides selling the products.

2. Method

The researcher used four Maybelline advertisements as data source. The data were taken from Maybelline official website. This study used observation method to collect the data. Firstly the data were searched in the internet and Maybelline website, secondly the data were downloaded, the researcher read the advertisements carefully and note taking of the advertisements that were found in the internet and the last step the data were classified into verbal and nonverbal signs. Verbal sign is the written text on the advertisement while non-verbal sign is the color, background, picture or image on the advertisement. The collected data were analyzed by qualitative method. The research focused on analyzing the verbal and non-verbal signs in the advertisements based on theory of semiotic by Barthes (1998). The analysis was also supported by theory of color term by Wierzbicka (1996).

3. Discussion

This section presents the analysis of verbal and nonverbal signs found in four selected Maybelline advertisements. It specifically aims to uncover the meaning of verbal and nonverbal signs. Verbal sign is the text of the advertisement. It can be the name or slogan of the product or people, information about something, persuasion sentences, or anything else in text form. While nonverbal signs can be pictures, colors, symbols, etc. which appearances are aimed to support the verbal signs in order to be an interesting package of advertisement (Barthes, 1998). Signs have denotative and connotative meaning. Denotation occurs when a sign is defined literally, obviously or based on its common-sense definition (Chandler, 2007: 137). While connotation is used to refer to the socio-cultural and personal associations (ideological, emotional, etc.) of the sign” (Chandler, 2007: 138). The analysis of the meaning of verbal and nonverbal signs can be seen in the following discussion.

3.1 The Analysis of Maybelline Lipstick



Figure 1. Maybelline Color Sensational the Reds

The first verbal sign is “Crisper color. Creamier feel. Revive your love for red”. Crisp means something sharp, bright, strong, and firm. Crisp is often used to describe colors in print and on various types of monitors/TVs. This is actually a reference to firm, sharp lines between colors, without any blurring or bleeding of tones. Creamy means soft and smooth. So these verbal signs implicitly deliver a message that this product has bright and strong color which in contrary gives creamy feel. It gives soft and smooth effect on lips but with sharp and bright look. It revives the love for red color.

The second verbal sign is “Color Sensational. The Reds”. Sensational means something which is designed to produce a startling effect, strong reaction, intense interest, especially by lurid elements. The red color is promoted in this advertisement as a color which can give sensational effect for everyone who use it. It makes the users feel sexy, attractive and confident. It has been tested on 50 women skin tones. It gives perfection for everyone which makes the lips look fresh and brings out a brave character.

The third verbal sign is “Radiant in red? It’s how I like it”. Radiant literally means sending out light; shining or glowing brightly. Implicitly it means that the women who use this red lipstick will be extraordinarily stand out among others. In addition, Maybelline offers six different sensational red color gradations which make the lips luminous. This is the reasons why women will like this product.

The first nonverbal sign is Black and red are the most dominant colors in the advertisement. Black is used as the background color. According to the theory of color term by Wierzbicka (1996), black is associated with elegance, power and strength. Black is a formal, elegant, and prestigious color. Black can also represent the mysterious, sexy, and sophisticated. It is used as the background to transmit those ideas. Meanwhile, red, the color of blood and fire, is associated with meanings of love, passion, desire, heat, sexuality, romance, joy, strength, leadership and courage. It can be seen that the model uses red lipstick which implicitly represents characteristics of a woman with passion, strength and courage. Red symbolizes self-confidence which means that only a woman with high self-confidence dares to use red lipstick to show her personality. There is also a red rose on the advertisement which symbolizes ultimate love, passion and longing. The color red is linked to self-love and self-preservation. The color red is a highly visible color that is able to focus attention quickly and get people to make quick decisions. So that it is typically used in the advertisement to attract attention.

Another nonverbal sign is the picture of a woman with a sharp gaze and sexy pose which represents a brave woman with high self-confidence. It implicitly shows the effect or result of using this red lipstick which is able to bring out your inner beauty and strength. It also makes you feel more confident and elegant and ready to show the world who you truly are. There is also the picture of the products on the advertisement to introduce and promote the product. It aims to give information for the readers about the product, the packaging and the variants.

3.2 The Analysis of Maybelline Blush

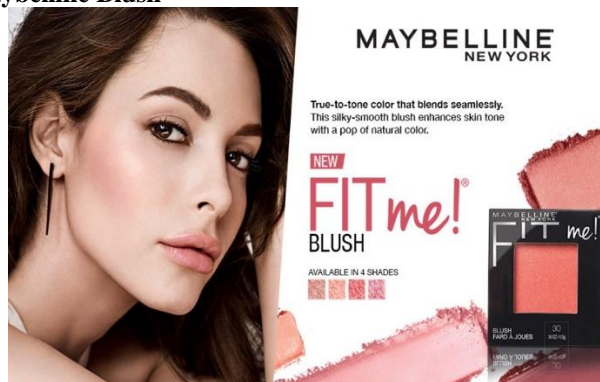


Figure 2. Maybelline Blush

The first verbal sign is the brand of the product “Maybelline New York”. It is followed by two sentences, “True to tone color that blend seamlessly. This silky smooth blush enhances skin tone with a pop natural color”. The word “true” means being in accordance with the actual state or conditions; conforming to reality or fact; real; genuine; authentic. The first sentence implicitly tells the readers that this product authentically fits your skin tone so it will look very natural and seamless on your face. While the second sentence emphasizes that this product is silky and smooth which magnify your skin tone and beauty.

The second verbal sign is “New. Fit Me! Blush”. The word “fit” literally means to be appropriate or suitable for or to be of the correct size or shape or color for. The word “blush” means become redder on the face, usually from embarrassment. It also refers to a substance, often a powder, put on the face to add a slightly red color. So that the nonverbal signs, “New. Fit Me! Blush”, means that this is one of Maybelline new products which is a blusher which fit all skin tones. This product is able to add color to the face, to glow the face, to add shape to the face and to soften the cheek bones which can enhance your beauty naturally. “Fit Me Blush” is a lightweight powder that delivers natural all day color.

The last verbal sign is “Available in 4 shades”. It shows that the product has four different color shades of blush. This blendable and natural yet noticeable blush wears evenly and enhances skin tone with radiant glow. It is long lasting and ideal for dark skin, pale skin and every tone in between. It persuades the readers to try all variants so they can mix them to create the perfect blend for their skin tone.

Visually the advertisement shows two main pictures, the model and the product. It can be seen that there is a beautiful woman as the model of the advertisement. There is a picture of a woman with shining and fresh blush on her cheek. It shows that the blush has a light texture and natural color which blends easily and gives radiance and fresh impression on the cheek. The beautiful woman is used as the model to show the real effect of the product and to convince the readers about the benefit of the product. It implicitly persuades the readers to buy and use the product immediately after seeing the result of the application of the product on the model.

Another nonverbal sign is the picture of the product. The advertisement shows the package of the product. It also shows four different colors which are blendable. It aims to give information about the product and to show that this product is available in four different colors. It gives opportunity for the readers to choose their favorite color which fit their skin tone.

White color is used as the background of the advertisement. White can be a very comforting color because it symbolizes cleanliness and purity. White is an effective background color for an advertisement with dark or bold text. Colors speak a language words just can't replicate. That is, they communicate with us on an emotional level and are thus more effective at persuasion.

3.3 The Analysis of Maybelline Liquid Foundation



Figure 3. Maybelline Liquid Foundation

The first verbal sign is “Fit Me Matte+Poreless Liquid Foundation”. This verbal sign is the name of foundation product. Liquid textured foundation with a light formula can be used in daily make up, with light to medium coverage so that it looks natural on face. This foundation does not clog pores on the face and contains micro powder which makes skin is shine-free all day long. This verbal sign is categorized as denotative meaning because it shows the benefit of the product with matte and pore less finishing.

The second verbal sign is “Beyond matching skin tone, fit skin's texture, our most deserve shades”. This sentence has hidden messages. It implicitly convinces people that this product gives benefit beyond people can ask for. It does not only match with all skin tones, but also fit skin texture. It shows the excellence of the product and informs that this product has a variety of different colors which easy to blend.

The third verbal sign is “40 diverse shades”. Which describes that this foundation has 40 color choices to fit the needs and skin tone of every woman, this product can be applied in normal to oily skin. This verbal signs categorized as denotative meaning because it shows the different shades of each foundation.

The fourth verbal sign is “We believe in a fit for all”. This statement describes that the product will fit with every woman skin tone because the product gives the natural look, easy to blend and light formula for daily use. This verbal sign is categorized as connotative meaning because the statement persuades the readers to trust that the product can be for all women skin tone.

The fifth verbal sign is “Maybelline New York”. It is the most famous cosmetic product in the world. Maybelline New York is a large famous cosmetics company from New York that was established in 1915. Maybelline is a combination of the word maybel and Vaseline where Maybel is the name of T.L Williams’s sister, while Vaseline is an ingredient that is often used in the product. This statement is categorized as denotative meaning because there is a literal meaning of the brand.

The last verbal sign in this advertisement is “Make It Happen”. This statement is the tagline of Maybelline cosmetic which means to instill confidence among women and also encourage women to define her own beauty in her own terms, eventually transforming beauty to an action to make whatever matters to her to happen. Essentially this expresses how Maybelline New York empowers women to define her beauty to live her life and to make her dreams happen. This tagline is categorized as connotative meaning because there is a purpose to increase women self-confidence.

For the non-verbal signs, it can be seen that the poster is divided into two different main pictures. The first one shows the product which aims to introduce the product to public so it will be familiar and easy to find at stores. It uses white color as the background. According to the theory of color term by Wierzbicka (1996), white is associated with the purity and cleanliness. **White**, an inherently positive color, is also associated with goodness, safety, brilliance, sterility, possibility, simplicity, protection, softness, and perfection. **The color white** can represent a successful beginning. It implicitly tells the readers that using this product can be the perfect beginning to the ultimate beauty.

The second non-verbal sign is the picture of six women as the model. The models have different skin tone and different hair and fashion style. It shows that everybody is special and beautiful in their own way. These verbal signs implicitly tell the readers that the product fits to all skin tones. This product is dedicated for all women from all over the world.

1.4 The Analysis of Maybelline Baby Skin



Figure 4. Maybelline Baby Skin

The first verbal sign is “New Baby Skin. Pore Eraser”. The statement tells about the name of the variant product by Maybelline. Baby skin pore eraser is makeup primer to cover skin pore which makes the face become flawless and smooth like a baby skin. It is categorized as denotative meaning because it shows the title of the product which shows the strength of the product.

The second verbal sign is “Bye-bye pores. One swipe away from pore less, baby smooth skin guaranteed”. It shows the advantage of the product that can conceal the skin pore and make the skin smooth with only one swipe. One of the ingredients of this product is bitter cherry extract which acts as an antioxidant to moisturize the skin. This verbal sign is categorized as denotative meaning because it explicitly tells the readers that they will give satisfying result after using the product.

The third verbal sign is “Use alone or use under the make-up”. This verbal sign shows that the product can be used without makeup or as a primer to make the makeup long lasting and flawless. It contains gel formula which has been tested to make the skin pore skin smaller and the skin smoother. This verbal sign is considered as denotative meaning because the statement clearly mentioned about how to apply this product.

The first non-verbal sign there is a picture of woman with shining face and baby picture with magnifying glass in front of her. The woman in this advertisement is very good looking with shining face and

grey eyes. The brand presents the beauty of shining face without skin pore. Furthermore, the picture of baby in front of the woman shows that after using the product, it makes the skin smooth and moist like a baby skin. This picture of the advertisement is categorized as connotative meaning because there is hidden meaning within the picture. It is used to attract the readers' attention and also make the readers believe that they will look like the model if they used the product. Having shining and smooth face like a baby skin will build women's confidence.

The second non-verbal sign is white color as the background which make the model stand out more also make the statement in the advertisement easy to read by the readers. According to theory from Wierzbicka (1996), white means purity and cleanliness it is also a representative of light.

The last non-verbal sign is small size of the product, with simple and small size of the product that makes it easier to be carried and with uses crew cap of the product that won't make it spilled easily.

5. Conclusion

Verbally, Maybelline advertisements use declarative sentences which generally aims to introduce the name of the products, the benefit of the products and how to use the products. Most of the sentences have denotative meaning since the messages are delivered explicitly. The explicit message is the most obvious and least sophisticated aspect of the advertisement. The consumer is expected to take advantage of the offer based on the facts presented in the advertisement and nothing else. However, there are also some sentences which have connotative meaning in which the messages are delivered implicitly or the messages are not clearly stated. Implicit advertising allows the readers to draw their own conclusions. At the implicit level, the advertisement sends a complex yet subtle message based on emotional associations. When advertisers work with implicit messaging, they are trying to create subtle effects that will influence the customer to make a buying decision. Visually, Maybelline advertisements typically consist of two main pictures, the picture of the product and the female model. It aims to introduce the product and make it familiar in the public eyes. Meanwhile the model also plays a crucial role in the advertisements. Female advertising models are highly physically attractive as well as ultra-thin, digitally-edited, and portrayed in a sexually provocative manner, for example, with pouting lips. The beautiful models show the result after using particular products from Maybelline which persuades people to buy and use the products to get the same result and be as beautiful as the models. Both verbal and visual signs play important role in advertisement. The nonverbal signs are used to deliver the unspoken ideas which hard to express in words. So that verbal and nonverbal signs are inseparable in creating attractive and efficient advertisements.

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