

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

In general, advertisement as a sample of discourse might be primarily divided into three major groups, namely, print (newspapers, magazines, and so forth), audio (radio), and audio-visual (internet websites and TV) ads. As the name reflected, advertisements were creatively designed to communicate meanings or messages to carry out promotion and, to some degree; to affect human's ways of life. Possibly, the meanings or messages could effectively persuade people to buy, consume or use the services and goods under promotion when they were communicated with a proper language, a relevant picture or image, and or with a piece of illustrative music.

Advertisements might shift economic condition due to a relatively high cost of producing a series of creative and persuasive advertisements. However, a good advertisement pampered people with persuasive images, language, and or music that could drive their passion to be more consumptive.

Neglecting the plus and minus of an advertisement, the production of an advertisement through which meanings were rooted from the inclusion of multi-modes of communication has attracted a hot discussion among scholars of persuasive discourse. The persuasive messages of advertisements could be presented in numerous ways, such as factual messages, scientific/technical evidence, demonstration, comparison, testimonial, slice of life, animation, personality symbol, imagery, dramatization, humor, and combination of these ways (Belch, 2012; Fill, 2009; Wells at al.,2006; Duncan, 2005). Thus, pictures, words, tone (general atmosphere or manner expression), and style (somewhat identical with the ways of building "consumer" identity) form multimodality which were then unified with message storytelling and consistency to create an attention-getting and memorable message with which pictures, language and music were elaborated to develop informational/rational appeals and specific attributes (ibid).

Dealing with advertisement features on TV ads, the ideal integrity of visual images, sound, motion, and color were necessarily developed to produce the most creative and imaginative appeals to present the advertising message (Belch, 2012; Fill, 2009; Wells et al., 2006; Duncan, 2005). The most creative and imaginative outlooks of message advertisement could be epically represented through the dialogue, narrative, lyrical, announcing, descriptive, no-word scripts; the realistic, stylized, fanciful development of the storyboards; the look of the commercial; the appropriate casting talent; the actual filming or taping (which includes the scene length, who did what, how lines were spoken, how characters were played, and the flow of action); the originality of music, its lyrics and the fitness of the various music instruments and voices which develop the scene or copy line; the ideal music lyric deliverances in words; and the fit assembly of the scenes or audio or dialogue/monologue and recording (ibid). Presumably, the well-managed combination indicated the representation of multimodality on TV commercials and, thus, might become the series of demanded requirements of the TV commercials. Consequently, we are nowadays much faced with “easy-listening” audio (verbal actions of spoken slogans or dialogues or monologues, or music), imaginative and persuasive visual images (written slogans,—dialogues, monologues, a series of non-verbal actions (gestures), states (backgrounds, settings) in a diversity of TV commercials.

Written and spoken language of advertisement as a communication needed further consideration when working on TV commercial production. The advertisement language has historically shifted in term of the terminology although the essence of its notion is somewhat static nowadays. Advertisement language was the representation of written (visual images in terms of slogans, dialogues, or monologues) and spoken (oral/audio) attributes to come along with the appearance of images and music (Kisielius & Sternthal, 1984).

Currently, the advertisement language is differently depicted through a number of more comprehensive tokens despite the similarity in terms of the substantial focuses. For example, Cameron (2001) suggested that the communicative function of an utterance (or word,-phrase, or sentence) could describe what it was “running” in the

particular setting, in order to allow a discourse label to the utterance (or word, phrase, or sentence) in the place of the whole discourse, for example, TV commercials. Word, phrase, or sentence is/are attached jointly to slogan, dialogue, or monologue that arises along with images and music to transform a message of advertisement (ibid). Advertisement language for a campaign theme should involve a strong idea because it shows the powerful message which will be conveyed in all the advertising slogan or tagline of few words or a concise statement (Belch, 2012; Fill, 2009; Wells at all, 2006). If slogan reflects a reminder of a brand, company image, or campaign theme which is manifested into appealing, memorable, persuading and powerful words, it is intentional to introduce the strategic idea (Fill, 2009; Wells at all, 2006; Duncan, 2005). Conclusively, language along with image had important roles to carry the advertisement message and, in turn, built a discourse theme for campaigning. To the researcher's opinion, a written or spoken persuasive text in its relation to multimodality issue was unavoidable to contribute to the production of good advertisements.

In the case of multi-modes on TV commercials, audio (music), and visual images (written slogan or a series of non-verbal actions, gestures, or surroundings (backgrounds and settings) which were presented along with the advertisement language had to be creatively presented. For a long time, the importance of the creativity in the advertisement language had been recognized by means of a different illustration. Belch (2012) stated that pictures as the non-verbally visual elements of an advertisement are used in advertising to convey information to reinforce message (to some extent, the "what" to sell). It could be inferable that "hypnotizing" images and "inspiring" music in the TV commercials were affiliated uniquely to accompany the language to assemble persuasive media of promotion. Again, the presence of images, music, and language reflected the phenomenon of multimodality.

The dynamics of advertisement of a numerous range of media selection such as printing (newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets, leaflets, booklets, etc.) and audiovisual (TV or internet website or radio) was going to evolve conforming to the media advancement in which aspects of communication tokens or modes

were inclusive so that the advertisements functioned effectively and persuasively. Unavoidably, the use of language, image and music in advertisement (Thibault, 2000; Gee, 1999, 2011) led a diversity of discourse authorities to discuss multimodality (a set of modes) more comprehensively (Fairclough, 2010).

The use of multi modes in TV ads production attracted the researcher to conduct a study on the use of the multimodality introducing TV commercials. The use of writing, speech, images and sounds of TV commercials might show somewhat greater tendency of “interesting” realization of multimodality issues compared to printing and audio ads. The researcher as audience who sometimes spent much of her free-time sitting on couch in front of television programs was faced with a lot of TV commercials of goods and services. Among a diversity of TV ad channel selections of goods and services, a perfume product of “Axe” had drawn the researcher’s attention to conduct a critical discourse study because the feasibility of the “interesting” arrangement of multimodality showed a tendency to denote a possibility of discourse theme, that was, masculineness identity. Logically, the researcher was interested in the product “Axe” because these ads often appeared in TV commercial channels, and also had been uploaded in the website “YouTube” and seen by numerous internet visitors (see appendix 1). This was, to some extent, a signal that might be “interesting” modes of communication (multimodality) contributing to the interesting development of “Axe” TV ads. Specifically, the current study was going to understand in depth how multimodality was used to produce TV commercials of Axe in English version and, thus, AXE ads became the case of this study. Since Axe was specifically produced for adult, this study particularly aimed at understanding deeply how multimodality was used to communicate masculineness identity.

The researcher added preliminary assumption that masculineness identity might be associated with contextual situation of whole property of the backgrounds of (slogans, dialogs and monologues of) language, (settings, objects, physical appearance and interactions of the actors of) images, and (musical references to sound structures or motifs or themes and to the culture of a whole style, epoch and genre across diverse music) music, which indicated multimodality of social and cultural symbolic tokens

of masculinity, and the sign systems and knowledge building which were related to a “cultural tradition” of language performance and interpretation in communicating and describing the world in adult communicative encounters.

B. Research Questions

In line with the title of this thesis and the background of this study, a major research question and three sub-research questions were formulated as follows:

Major research question:

✚ How was multimodality used to communicate masculinity identity persuasively in “Axe” TV commercials?

✚ Sub-research questions:

- a) How was language (both spoken and written) as a component of modality used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads?
- b) How was visualization as a component of modality used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads?
- c) How was music as a component of modality used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads?

C. Research Objectives

In accordance with the above research questions, this study aimed to describe how multimodality was used to communicate masculinity identity persuasively in “Axe” TV commercials. Specifically, this study aimed at finding out:

1. How language (both spoken and written) as a component of modality was used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads,
2. How visualization as a component of modality was used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads.
3. How music as a component of modality was used to express the masculinity identity in the “Axe” TV ads.

D. Assumption

The researcher added assumption that Axe TV ad contains multimodality. The multimodality of Axe TV ads (language, image, and music) were analyzable and also presumably then could be associated with masculineness identity by its contextual situation of whole property of language background (both spoken and written of slogans, dialogs, or monologues), images (settings, objects, physical appearance and interactions of the actors and actresses), and music (musical references to sound structures or motifs or themes and to the culture of a whole style, epoch and genre across diverse music), which indicated multimodality of social and cultural symbolic tokens of masculineness, and the sign systems and knowledge building which were related to a “cultural tradition” of language performance and interpretation in communicating and describing the world in adult communicative encounters.

E. Theoretical Framework

Based on the objectives of the study, namely, to find out how oral and written language, visualization, and music as multimodal elements were used to illustrate the discourse of masculineness identity in the TV commercials of “Axe,” this study needed a relevant theoretical back-up.

The underpinning theories for this study were the theories of multimodality and advertisement. The theory of multimodality was required to guide the researcher to understand comprehensively the process of using in combination the sequential events of multimodal elements (of language, moving images, and music) to produce an effective advertisement. Meanwhile, the theory of advertisement helped the researcher understand comprehensively the nature of advertisement, the characteristics of a good or an effective advertisement, the process of producing an effective advertisement, and the procedure of issuing an advertisement.

F. Significance of the Study

It was expected that the results of this study would be theoretical contribution to the studies of multimodality, particularly the multimodality of advertisement. The researcher would be well-informed with the effective process of making advertisement in which modes-language, image and music as communication carriers were organized creatively to embody masculineness identity as generally anticipated meaning reflection of the “Axe” TV ads.

Besides, the results of this study were also expected to be informative knowledge for those who run advertisement agencies in Indonesia so that they could possibly manage their own creative production of TV commercials that were more Indonesian in nature and culture than the western one.

More importantly, this study was expected to be a resourceful discourse sample for the students who learn about persuasive texts, particularly about persuasive discourse in televisual advertisement, especially with multimodality because advertisement belonged to one of functional texts that junior school students in Indonesia had to learn as demanded in the national curriculum (the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, number 68, Year 2013).

For teachers of English, this study was also important as alternative of informative discourse instance of televisual advertisement which enriched with multimodality instead of written advertisement only. So, they were able to equip their students with televisual advertisement of TV commercial channel with multimodality and, later, encourage them to create their own model of televisual advertisement with multimodality as a new knowledge and skill.

G. Scope and Limitation

As the title of this thesis reflects, this study focused on investigating the use of multimodality of “Axe” TV ads in English version downloaded from “YouTube”. The “Axe” TV commercials in English version were particularly designed for western consumers which were uploaded to YouTube, which could be freely viewed by millions of internet users.

Among the accessible “Axe” TV commercials available in YouTube, the researcher decided to investigate those Axe TV commercials already viewed by at least one million internet visitors. This denoted the scope of the current study for critical discourse investigation.

The effectiveness of the “Axe” TV commercials was not the focus of this study. The researcher found the challenge of collecting the complete details of the whole data source such as who, when, and where the video were produced and this becomes the weakness for the comprehensive information of the data source details. Clearly, this forms delimitation of the current study.

H. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, some key terms used in this study are defined as follow:

Multimodality : A set of written and spoken language, image, music and other semiotic signs that constructed together a text and they served as modes for communication (Kress,2010); the text was the semiotic entity which was “covered” by the modes of images or speech or writing or gesture, and were recognized – from the maker’s as much as from the viewer’s – by a sense of its “completeness” in meaning, in the social and communicational environment in which it was made, in which it occurred and in which it was active (ibid).

Masculineness : a state developed by four components of biological, psychological, sociocultural and integrative development (Clark & Caffarella, 1999) and becomes a particularly substantive concern of the various critical discourse analysis interests of topics or themes reformulated from the linguistic, social and cultural attribution (Wood, & Kroger, 2000).

TV Commercials : A channel or medium to market a particular product/service to persuade other people through written or spoken language use (Belch, 2012; Fill, 2009; Wells at all, 2006; Duncan, 2005).

“Axe” : A perfume product by Unilever of which a number of its TV commercials used “creative” multimodality.

I. Organization of the Thesis Report Writing

The thesis report writing displayed the whole thesis organization, and a set of research chapter ensembles. Chapter 1 provided the contextual aspects of the current study and the rationale. Entirely, it included background of the study, research questions and objectives, assumptions, theoretical framework, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of the key terms. Chapter 2 contained theoretical insights of the origin of persuasive discourse, the nature of advertisement, the nature of multimodality which also “enriched” with autonomy and semantics of the musical sign, and music as elements of multimodality, the meaning creation on the advertisement using multimodality, the discourse analysis tools of the reflexive property of the context, and the sign systems and knowledge building on multimodality to claim masculineness identity and then review of related studies on multimodality in various media. Next, Chapter 3 showed an overview of the research method for data collection which the researcher had employed. Then, Chapter 4 was an analytical embodiment of the research analysis, findings and the discussion of the findings. Chapter 5 was ending chapter of the findings, contributions, implications and suggestions for diversity of “user” groups putting interests in multimodality on advertisement.