

THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF HYPERBOLIC EXPRESSION IN ONLINE PERFUME ADVERTISEMENTS

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SEMARANG
2014**

Abstract

Language in advertising has so many variations. One of them is hyperbolic style. Hyperbole is frequently used in beauty products, for example in perfume. From this case the writer is interested in the hyperbolic expression which occurs in perfume advertisement and she wants to do research which is concerned with the topic. There are two main research questions regarding hyperbolic expression in online perfume advertisement, which are what kind of hyperbolic forms that occur in online perfume advertisement and why the advertiser uses hyperbolic utterances in perfume advertisement. The data are language expressions in the form of words, phrases, and sentences in perfume advertisement. The writer used two main methods in analyzing data. The methods are identity and distributional method. The result of this study shows that perfume advertisements use hyperbolic style in delivering their message. The most common hyperbolic form in online perfume advertisements is single word form. The purpose of using hyperbolic style is to make the advertisement more attractive, therefore the customers will have high interest in buying the products.

Keywords: hyperbole, hyperbolic form, advertisement, perfume advertisement

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

The language of advertisement is a unique and effective language in conveying the message to the customers. Advertisement is spread through many media, for example internet. Many companies create their own websites to advertise their products, i.e. perfume product.

Perfume advertisement contains hyperbolic expressions which makes it unique. Hyperbolic expression itself is an utterance which exaggerates something with overstatement. Harris (2008) says that hyperbole explains an understatement which exaggerates condition and is purposed to emphasize the meaning. It is also effective to gain the others' attention by using hyperbole. Therefore it is used frequently in society to deliver message each other either in spoken or written language.

1.2. Scope of the Study

In this research the writer focuses on hyperbolic expressions. The data of the research are language expressions in perfume advertisements, but not all of perfume advertisements. Only hyperbolic perfume advertisements are used in this research.

The hyperbolic expression could be in the form of words, phrases, or sentences. The form and function of hyperbolic expressions are analyzed here. Hyperbole theories which are used in this study are from Claridge (2011), Harris (2008) and Wales (2001).

1.3. Purpose of the Study

- a. To identify and classify the forms of hyperbolic expression in online perfume advertisement
- b. To find out the reason why the advertiser uses hyperbolic utterances in online perfume advertisement

1.4. Research Method

The type of research is descriptive qualitative method. The data in this study are hyperbolic perfume advertisements in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. The writer collected the data from internet through the perfumes' official website.

The samples of this study are only perfume advertisements which contain hyperbolic expressions. The population of this study is all words, phrases, and sentences in perfume advertisement. The sample technique that is used is purposive sampling technique.

Observation and documentation methods are the method of collecting data. In analyzing data the writer used identity and distributional method.

1.5. Previous Study

There are some previous studies regarding hyperbole and advertisement found by the writer. The first study is "Hyperbole in Indonesian Love and Ballad Song Lyrics" by

Nova Regina Veranika in 2011. The second is ‘The Figurative Language Analysis of Airline Slogans in Mass Media’ by Atika Tyagiwati in 2012. There are also other researches discussed advertisement in terms of pragmatic presupposition, performative acts, and illocutionary forces.

1.6. Organization of the Writing

Chapter I : This chapter consists of the background of the study, scope of the study, purpose of the study, research method, and writing organization.

Chapter II : In this chapter, the writer explains the underlying theories used to analyze the data. The chapter describes meaning, denotative meaning, connotative meaning, hyperbolic expression, and the language of advertisement.

Chapter III : The chapter comprises type of the research, data and source, method of collecting data, and method of analyzing data.

Chapter IV : The writer is going to present the data analysis in this chapter. The chapter is divided into three sub chapters. They are Overstatement of numbers and quantities data analysis, impossible description data analysis, and identification and form analysis.

Chapter V : This chapter consists of the summary of the study and suggestions related to the topic.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Meaning

Palmer (1983:3) states that the word *mean* has many interpretations according to the context, for example the word *mean* in the sentence *I did not mean be rude*, *mean* means an intention. The other meaning of *mean* is the sentence \square *sign means Korean money currency*, the *mean* in the sentence means a sign for conventional use. There are also two kinds of meaning, denotative meaning and connotative meaning.

2.2. Denotative meaning

The simplest definition of denotative meaning is literary meaning of words or dictionary definition. Some examples of denotative meaning in sentences are as follows.

- i. She is a *thin* girl. *Thin* means someone with less flesh in his/her body.
- ii. The weather is really *cold* these days. *Cold* literally means low temperature.

2.3. Connotative meaning

Connotative meaning is an additional meaning that is far from the literal meaning, and the meaning refers to a certain emotional meaning which is attached to the word.

Connotative word is what a word associates to us, what we feel about the word itself. There are two different types of connotation, namely positive and negative connotation.

2.4. Hyperbolic Expression

Wales (2001: 190) describes that *hyperbole* comes from Gk 'exceed', a common figure or trope in speech as well as literature and popularly known as exaggeration or over-statement expression and hyperbole is different from telling lies to the others. Claridge (2011:5) states that hyperbole is an expression which exceeds the literal expression and contains more semantic attributes of expression something.

From those definitions we can conclude that hyperbole is a figure of speech which emphasizes a meaning with exaggeration of statement. Hyperbole occurs in our everyday conversation. It holds the function of emphasizing an amusing effect in daily conversation.

2.4.1. Identifying Hyperbole

Maria Christodoulidou (2011) describes two types of hyperbole as follows.

- i. Overstatement of numbers and quantity

The speaker tends to overstate numbers of times, years, occurrences, etc.

- ii. Impossible description

Torode in Christodoulidou (2011: 147) explains that "impossible description" is like fantasies which are produced in a way that they are not possible to occur. Therefore, it must be taken figuratively or rhetorically. Impossible description can be stated with exceeding manner, reality, feeling, condition, etc.

2.4.2. The forms of hyperbole

There are seven forms of hyperbole according to Claridge (2011), namely single word hyperbole, phrasal hyperbole, causal hyperbole, numerical hyperbole, the role of superlative, comparison, and repetition.

- i. Single word hyperbole

This form only occurs when there is only one exaggerated content in an utterance or sentence. If the word is omitted, the hyperbolic meaning will completely

disappear. In advertisement, one word hyperbole is more effective and economic. There are also universal quantifiers referring for single word hyperbole referring to number. They are all, every, everybody, nothing

ii. Phrasal hyperbole

Phrasal hyperbole is a certain combination of words and senses that create hyperbolic meaning. Among the other forms, this form occurs frequently. Noun phrase is the most common, and adjective phrase is somewhat uncommon to occur. Verb phrase has more numbers than adjective phrase and preposition phrase is rare. One of the examples of phrasal hyperbole is “This home costs *my entire money*.” (Noun phrasal hyperbole). *My entire money* literally means all of the speaker’s money, until the debt remains 0. In fact, the speaker wants to emphasize that his house costs most of his money by saying *my entire money*.

iii. Clausal hyperbole

Clausal hyperbole is a hyperbolic style which occurs by combining two or more clausal constituents. This form hardly occurs compared to the others. The example of the form taken from Claridge (2011:6) is “Nobody ever learns anything”

iv. Numerical hyperbole

Number can be one of the hyperbolic sign and they occur frequently. Numerical hyperbole can be found in single word hyperbole, phrasal hyperbole or in clausal hyperbole. There are significant words to recognize numerical hyperbole, they are *hundreds, thousands, millions, billions*, etc. A sentence example for the significant word is “There are still *thousands of works* waiting for me tonight.” By saying *thousands of works* the speaker intends to say that he has so many works to do, but the number is not literally in thousand.

v. The role of superlative

If there is superlative, there must be comparison and superlative form can indicate hyperbole. Superlative makes something sound so excessive and extreme, therefore it leads to overstatement. Example of superlative hyperbole: “It is *the cheesiest thing* that I’ve ever heard.”

vi. Comparison

In comparison, there is something that is being compared, and it potentially contains hyperbole. However, not all comparative phrases make sense to reach the goal. An example for a comparison hyperbole is “She misses more words out than she gets in” (Claridge, 2011:65)

vii. Repetition

Repetition in hyperbole mostly occurs in conversation or we can call it as a phenomenon in spoken language. It appears from just saying ‘more X’ by repeating

'X' for several times. The repetition here is repeating at the same thing in a strict combination without interruption. Not all repetitions are hyperbole, many of them are just common repetition. An example for repetition is "Sexy today, sexy tomorrow, and sexy forever."

2.5. Language in Advertisement

Monle Lee and Carla Johnson (1986: 10-11) explain that there are three main functions of advertisement, they are informative, persuasive and reminder function. Informative function communicates information relating to product, characteristics, and the sales location.

In written advertisement, the text tends to use linguistic and rhetorical devices such as hyperbole, personification and repetition to gain public's attention.

Zhu Linghong (2006) describes six characteristics of advertising.

- i. The use of monosyllabic verbs
- ii. Weasel words
- iii. The use of favorable words
- iv. The use of personal pronoun
- v. The use of compounds
- vi. The use of neologism

3. Research Method

3.1. Type of the Research

The research is categorized as descriptive qualitative study.

3.2. Data, Population, Sample, and Source

The data are language expressions in perfume advertisements. The population of the research is all words, phrases, and sentences in perfume advertisements. The data source is the perfume's official website.

3.3. Method of Collecting Data

The writer uses non-participant observation method in collecting the data. Documentation technique is also used to file the data. The data are collected from the

perfume's official website. Then the writer will take notes of the words, phrases, and sentences in the advertisement, and identifies the hyperbolic expressions.

3.4. Method of Analyzing Data

The writer used identity and distributional method and the sub method of identity and distributional method in analyzing data. The sub method in identity method used by the writer is referential identity method. Referential identity method itself is a method which analyzes the data with the referent tool of the world.

The second method is from distributional method, the parameter of this method is the language which is studied. The sub methods used are inductive method and deletion method.

4. Data Analysis

4.1. Overstatement of numbers and quantities

Hyperbolic expression can be identified by the using of overstatement of numbers and quantities in the description. There are eight advertisements using this kind of hyperbolic expression to deliver the intended message. The examples are explained as follow.

- (1) *Monsieur Balmain* embodies *all* the subtle male elegance in a fresh fragrance, memorable and timeless. (Balmain)
- (2) It's modern, yet timeless, capturing the essence of man who is witty, intelligent, chivalrous and exceeds effortlessly in *all* aspect of life. (Givenchy)
- (3) We've got the fragrance *every* man needs to make *all* the right moves. (Oriflame)

In examples (1), (2) and (3), the three sentences use *all* as the hyperbolic marker. *All* is used to exaggerate the number of things described in the advertisements.

- (4) *Every* aspect of the lily, a flower of pure femininity, is explored for the first time. (Cartier)
- (5) Gucci Premiere celebrates the star in *every* woman. (Gucci)

Examples (3),(4) and (5) represent the hyperbolic sign of the word *every*. *Every* is used to emphasize the quantity of aspect and customers in the perfume.

- (6) The Gucci Guilty Woman holds *everyone* in her thrall. (Gucci)

Example (6) has *everyone* as its hyperbolic signal. The using of *everyone* is purposed to stress the number of customers affected by the perfume.

(7) A promise to make *anything* possible... (Nina Ricci)

Anything occurs in example (7) as the hyperbolic word. The aim of using anything is to stress that the perfume encourages the customers to do things easily.

(8) N° 5 has cast a spell on *millions* of women -and men- around the world. (Calvin Klein)

The word *millions* is aimed to tell that many people are already using the perfume.

All, every, everyone, anything, and millions are classified into single word hyperbole. *Millions* is also grouped in numerical hyperbole because *millions* is one of numerical words.

4.2. Impossible Description

Identifying hyperbole also can be done by analyzing the impossible description. Impossible description is stating something with an overstatement, exceeding manner, reality, feeling, condition, etc. The examples of hyperbolic advertisement with impossible description are analyzed below.

(9) A true magical formula, Poison is an *irresistibly* seductive fragrance, characterized by spectacular appeal. (Dior)

(10) Gucci Envy Me is sweetly feminine, *irresistibly* seductive, and full of magnetic appeal. (Gucci)

(11) Spray on eau de perfume for *irresistibly* fresh fabulous scent that lingers. (Victoria's Secret)

(12) A sparkling, juicy, *irresistible*, absolutely feminine and assertive fragrance is born. (Victoria's Secret)

Examples (9), (10), and (11) have the same hyperbolic word that is *irresistibly*. Meanwhile, example (12) has the word *irresistible* which is the adjective form of *irresistibly*. *Irresistible* and *irresistibly* in the advertisement function to emphasize that the perfumes are alluring and hard to refuse by the customers. Both *irresistible* and *irresistibly* are grouped in single word hyperbolic form.

(13) The bright crystal bottle captures the *absolute* luxury of Versace. (Versace)

The hyperbolic word in the example (13) is *absolute*. *Absolute* is purposed to explain the luxury of the brand, and it tells the customers that the perfume's bottle already has the glamorous luxury of Versace. *Absolute* belongs to single word hyperbolic form

(14) Refined elegance and cultivated ease allow him to *effortlessly* master any given situation. (Dolce and Gabbana)

(15) It is modern, yet *timeless*, capturing the essence of a man who is witty, intelligent, chivalrous, and exceeds *effortlessly* in all aspect of live. (Givenchy)

(16) A seductive masculine fragrance that is at once *timeless* and contemporary. (Gucci)

Effortlessly is used in both example (14) and (15). In example (14), *effortlessly* is the only impossible description, while example (15) has two impossible description words, which are *effortlessly* and *timeless*.

Effortless and *effortlessly* explain how the customers feel after using the perfume. The words emphasize that the customers can do things with less effort. In example (15), there are three hyperbolic signals, *all*, *effortlessly*, and *timeless*. *Timeless* is used in example (15) and (16). It is used to explain the fragrance's quality which can last for a long period of time. Example (14), (15), and (16) are single hyperbolic word. Although example (15) has three markers, the markers are still in the form of single word.

(17) Gucci Guilty is the *ultimate* style statement. (Gucci)

(18) CK free is about the *ultimate* ideal of *living free without boundaries*. (Calvin Klein)

Examples (17) and (18) have the word *ultimate* to express its hyperbolic signal, and example (17) has an addition hyperbolic phrase which is *living free without boundaries*. In example (17), ultimate is used to assure the customers about the perfume's design, meanwhile in example (18), it describes the important principal of life. The using of hyperbolic expression *living free without boundaries* means that after we put the fragrance we will be more encouraged to live freely. The word *ultimate* in example (17) and (18) belongs to single word hyperbole, and *living free without boundaries* is grouped as phrasal hyperbole.

(19) Rose the one is a breath-taking realization a contemporary feminine floral, and a deftly sensual paean to the *eternal* romance of the rose. (Dolce and Gabbana)

The hyperbolic word in example (19) is *eternal*. *Eternal* conveys an intention meaning that the fragrance can last for many hours. The word *eternal* is categorized as single word hyperbole.

(20) Sport celebrates *the deepest and the most genuine values* of sport and life. (Dolce and Gabbana)

Example (20) has the phrase *the deepest and the most genuine values* as its hyperbolic signal to describe the fragrance's philosophy and the phrase tells that the perfume is inspired from a good value of life. The advertisement in example (20) is considered as phrasal hyperbolic form and superlative form. It is superlative because the using of *-est* and *most* as the comparative degree.

(21) Euphoria Men is about living your *most intense desires*, free at limits. (Calvin Klein)

Example (21) has two phrases of hyperbolic expressions, *most intense desires* and *free at limits*. Both phrases carry the intention meaning that the perfume motivates the customers to achieve their strong will passionately. The advertisement is grouped as phrasal hyperbolic form and superlative form. Both phrase are phrasal hyperbolic and categorized as noun phrase. Besides its noun phrase hyperbolic form, the superlative hyperbolic form is the result from using *most* in the sentence.

(22) There is *flawless* craftsmanship in the bottle's marriage of high-tech and high style. (Gucci)

Example (22) has *flawless* as its hyperbolic word. The word is used to describe the fragrance's bottle design which is a really good perfume's bottle. *Flawless* is grouped as single word hyperbole.

(23) BOSS BOTLED. NIGHT. is the seductive and *supremely* masculine scent from Boss that prepare the Boss man *to conquer the night*. (Boss)

Advertisement in example (23) has two hyperbolic markers, *supremely* and *to conquer the night*. The purpose of using these two hyperbolic expressions is to tell the excellence of the perfume's scent, and it is aimed to make the customers feel more confident after using it. Example (23) is grouped as single word hyperbole and clausal hyperbole. The single word hyperbole refers to the word *supremely* and the clausal form is to infinitive clause *to conquer the night*.

(24) At the core of intense heart is a trio of *ultra* feminine floral. (Dolce and Gabbana)

The exaggeration signal in example (24) is the word *ultra*. It is used to stress the femininity of the ingredient. *Ultra* in the sentence belongs to the single word hyperbole.

(25) A *perfectly* tailored new fragrance. (Dunhill)

(26) Escada Born in Paradise is the *perfect* summer fragrance *to transport you to paradise, beneath the stars*. (Escada)

Example (25) uses *perfect* and example (26) has *perfectly* and *to transport you to paradise, beneath the stars*. as their hyperbolic signals. In example (25) *perfectly* is aimed to convey a meaning that the perfume is crafted in an ideal way. The two hyperbolic markers in example (26) explain the perfume's quality and tell the customers that the perfume is a suitable summer perfume. *Perfect* and *perfectly* are grouped into single word hyperbolic form and *to transport you to paradise, beneath the stars* is a phrasal hyperbole in form of infinitive phrase.

(27) Its strong and elegant expression leaves an *unforgettable*, lasting imprint. (Armani)

Unforgettable is the hyperbolic signal in example (27). It explains the scent's effect which is not easily forgettable by the customers. The word *unforgettable* is categorized as single word.

(28) Hivernal underlines these contrasts and prolongs the dialogue between icy crispiness and sensual breath, giving the fragrance *an almost unlimited life*. (Armani)

Example (28) has *an almost unlimited life* as its hyperbolic signal. It emphasizes that the perfume has a good quality of long-lasting scent. The sentence is grouped as phrasal hyperbole and the phrase is included as noun phrase.

(29) Bombshells in Bloom is the fresh new version of our award-winning fragrance with crisp, floral notes that are bound to keep you *sexy today, sexy tomorrow and sexy forever*. (Victoria's Secret)

The hyperbolic sign in the example (29) is the phrases *sexy today, sexy tomorrow and sexy forever*. The repetition in the sentence means to emphasize that the perfume can make the customers feel sexier than before using the perfume. Example (29) is categorized as repetition hyperbolic form because of the sexy word repetition.

(30) Inspired by a supermodel's night out, this provocative warm fragrance is *the sexiest way* to own the night. (Victoria's Secret)

Advertisement in example (30) has *the sexiest way* as its hyperbolic marker. It is used to describe that the fragrance can make the customers feel confident in living their night life with a sexy way from Victoria's Secret.

Example (30) is grouped as superlative hyperbolic and phrasal hyperbolic form. It is a superlative due to its use of superlative comparison *-est*. The phrasal hyperbolic form belongs to noun phrase.

(31) These fragrances are developed from natural and exceptional ingredients, and offer a delicious sensation in which *time seems stand still*. (Dior)

Example (31) has the clause *time seems stand still as the hyperbolic signal*. It describes the effect after using the perfume. The customers will stop for a moment just to enjoy the delicious sensation of the perfume. *Time seems stand still* is categorized as clausal hyperbole.

(32) This fragrance will enchant your senses and take you to *a place of paradise and mysterious elegance*. (Oriflame)

Example (32) uses *a place of paradise and mysterious elegance* as its hyperbolic expression. The figurative meaning of the phrase is to assure the costumers that after using the perfume they will feel more happy and beautiful. The advertisement is grouped as phrasal hyperbole in a form of noun phrase.

(33) Only the red pomander is vibrant and full of energy, just *like the soul of the Dolce&Gabbana The One Sport Man*. (Dolce and Gabbana)

In example (33) the hyperbolic marker is *like the soul of the Dolce&Gabbana The One Sport man*. The phrase is used to compare the red pomander (the color of the bottle's cap) and the soul of Dolce&Gabbana The One Sport. By the hyperbolic comparison, the advertiser wants to emphasize that the red cap design is inspired by the man's energetic soul. Example (33) is categorized as comparison and phrasal hyperbolic form.

(34) The *legendary* fragrance (Channel)

(35) *Totally irresistible* (Victoria's Secret)

Example (34) and (35) are considered as slogan in perfume advertisement. They only contain simple words to describe the perfume.

We can find the hyperbolic signal in example (33) in the word *legendary*. The advertisement uses this slogan to reassure the readers and consumers that this is a high quality and popular perfume among the others. *Legendary* is grouped as single word hyperbole.

The slogan *totally irresistible* in example (35) has a full hyperbolic meaning. The advertisement has a figurative meaning as a perfume that will make the customers fall in love with it easily. Example (35) is categorized as phrasal hyperbole in a form of adjective phrase.

4.3. Identification and Form Analysis

Many of the advertisements are identified through the impossible description. This is due to that most of them are explaining the quality of the products. The overstatement of numbers and quantities is used to explain how many people are affected by the perfume.

After the hyperbolic expressions are identified, the writer continues to identify the hyperbolic form of the advertisements. Below is the table of hyperbolic form listed from example (1) until (35).

Hyperbolic Form	Data	Total
Single Word	(1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (19), (22), (24), (25), (27), (34)	24
Phrasal	(18), (20), (21), (23), (26) (28), (30), (32), (33), (35)	10
Clausal	(31)	1
Numerical	(8)	1
Superlative	(20), (21), (30)	3
Comparison	(33)	1

In analyzing hyperbolic form, one example can be classified into more than one hyperbolic form. There are two main reasons leading to this case. First, in one example there are two or more hyperbolic markers, and the second is that one hyperbolic expression can be grouped into two forms.

Although there are thirty five examples, the amount of hyperbolic expressions is only thirty. There are also some words and phrases that share the same meaning. *All, every, everyone* mean as the entire or complete amount of something. *Irresistible* and *irresistibly* have the same meaning but in different syntactic category. *Absolute, supremely, ultimate, and ultra* has nearly the same meaning as the most or the greatest of something. *Timeless, an almost unlimited life, and eternal* have the literal meaning as forever. *Flawless, perfect, and perfectly* also share the meaning as something that has no fault or the best.

The same word such as *all, every, irresistible, and perfect* are used by many different companies. It indicates that the more the word is used by many companies, the stronger the effect of the hyperbolic word to the customers.

The most common form happens in the advertisements is single word hyperbolic form. This is caused that single word hyperbolic form is more economic rather than the other forms. The second common form is phrasal form. Clausal and superlative only happen in a few of the examples. Numerical, comparison, and repetition only happen once.

5. Conclusion

In this study, most of the advertisements use impossible description to explain the actual words to the readers. Impossible description has more effect in explaining the product's quality to the customers. Overstatement of numbers and quantities is used only 23% of the advertisements. This is purposed to explain how many people are affected by the perfume.

In conclusion, the advertisements mostly contain single word hyperbolic form because single word is more economic than the other forms. Single word hyperbolic expression can briefly deliver the intended message of the advertisement. The using of hyperbolic expression is purposed to attract more attention from the readers, because an advertisement must be persuasive, noticeable and eye catching. Hyperbolic expression is also used to remind the customers of the perfume, and to give more detailed explanation of the perfume.

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