

Multimodality in Shopee Advertisement

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ABSTRACT

The research entitled, “Multimodality in Shopee Advertisement” aims to analyze the TV commercial, Shopee, endorsed by the famous Filipina actress and host, Anne Curtis-Smith. Specifically, it aims to analyze the meaning of the verbal and visual elements found in the Shopee advertisement. The researcher employed a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen together with Bateman and Schmidt’s Multimodal Aspects to assess the meaning of the verbal and visual elements found in both original and commercial parody.

Keywords: TV commercial, YouTube, multimodal aspects, function, multimodal critical discourse

INTRODUCTION

People nowadays employ technology, such as electronic communications, television, radio, newspaper, and magazine, in addition to language as a means of communication. Invitation, persuasion, exclamation, and argumentation are some of the most common uses of all of these. It must be visible on the company's internet or printed advertisement. Advertisement is one of the communication methods used to urge and persuade people to buy goods and services. Advertisers’ job is to persuade the reader, listener, and audience to purchase something.

Advertising is defined as a message that is published or disseminated in the mass media, according to Hall (1990). Its purpose is to give information that will persuade people to buy or accept goods, services, or ideas. Advertising is paid by a recognizable sponsor and is controlled, meaning that the sponsor who pays for it has control over when, where, and how the ads appear. Advertising has a cold, impersonal quality about it. Through the media, it reaches a wider audience (Sari, V. et.al., 2021).

Discourse analysis, also known as conversation analysis, is a method for determining the meaning or communication messages in a text, both textually and contextually. As a result, the meaning drawn from a text or communication message is more than just the explicitly written word.

Discourse analysis, according to Stubbs (n.d), is one of the studies that examines or analyzes natural language, both spoken and written. Moreover, it focuses on the investigation of language use in social contexts, particularly in speaker interactions and that, discourse analysis is a study of discourse, and discourse is the subject of the speech.

Talking about discourse in media, images are extremely significant in the media, particularly on television, movies, daily publications, and on the Internet. Images are frequently utilized to convey information that is difficult to express verbally. Texts will employ linguistic and visual tactics that appear normal or neutral on the surface but are ideological in nature, attempting to alter how events and people are represented for specific purposes. The goal of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis is to denaturalize representations of various modes of communication. Just like critical discourse, MCDA also claims that visual communication shapes and are shaped by society (Atalay, 2015).

There might have been studies imploring multimodal discourse on visual images, however, there is no sufficient attention to moving pictures (video) in multimodal discourse. To fully comprehend multimodal analysis, particularly advertising, it is necessary to undertake an integrated analysis of numerous modalities by merging existing analytic approaches. As a result, equal emphasis would be placed on verbal, visual, and audial analysis of the advertisement, to give a holistic comprehension of the ad. Thus, this study observes the Shopee advertisement which manifests verbal and visual elements. It uses the Multimodal Discourse Analysis to examine any multimodal aspects that make up the commercial and how these elements communicate meanings that support the producer's desired message to its audience.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in theories and approaches that supports the result and discussion of this paper. Specifically, the study is supported by Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen.

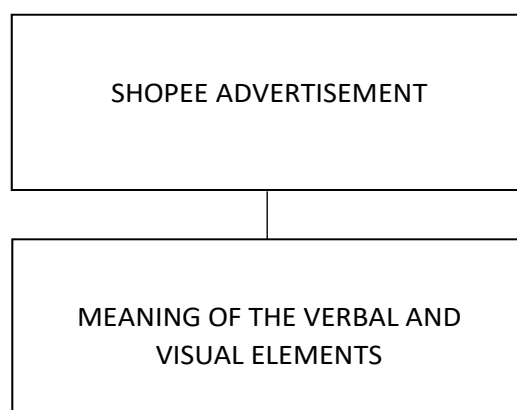


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram of the Variables of the Study

The study uses Kress and van Leeuwen's Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to determine the meaning of the elements found in the Shopee advertisement.

Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis emerged with the efforts of linguists namely, Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen. They began to look at how images and language in other forms of communication combine to make meaning. This type of discourse analysis deals with multiple semiotic resources like language, visual images, space, and architecture. It also aims to interpret the language used together with other semiotic resources, which are simultaneously used for the construction of meaning. In today's time, with the emergence of technology, images found online with the use of the internet becomes important. Images can be used as a tool to communicate unintentionally or non-verbally that cannot be expressed in words (Atalay, 2015). Subsequently, Gunther Kress stresses out the importance of multimodality through an example. He emphasized imagining a traffic sign showing the way to the car park of the supermarket. In this sense, the sign has 3 different modes: writing, image, and color. If the written texts would be used alone, the message becomes too complex to understand; if the image would be used alone, then it would be lacking, but when the written text and image are together, the 3 aspects would give a more open message (Kress, 2009).

In addition, multimodal critical discourse analysis finds out how linguistic and visual semiotic resources are correlated with each other. It can be effectively used to analyze quoting verbs, representation of the attitude of speakers through visual semiotic resources, gaze, poses, social media posts, and etc. (Machin

& Mayr, 2012). Therefore, Multimodal Analysis is considered the most effective way of analyzing various meanings interpreted by visual images.

Furthermore, the multimodal aspects by Bateman and Schimdt (2012), serves as a tool in determining the meaning of the elements found in the Shopee advertisement. Multimodal aspects or elements are also known as semiotic systems which include Linguistics, Visual, Audio, and Gestures. This is the basis in determining the meaning of the Shopee advertisement. However, this study is only limited to the linguistics and gesture elements found in the advertisement.

METHODOLOGY

This study made use of the multimodal discourse analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen, wherein valid inferences were made by interpreting and coding textual materials based on the semiotic perspective in the advertisement.

The study employed a random sampling procedure to select one Shopee advertisement featuring Anne Curtis-Smith, which was accessed through YouTube. Given the accessibility of Shopee advertisements online, the researcher searched for a recent commercial and conducted an analysis using multimodal aspects grounded in Multimodal Theory. Specifically, the study applied categories from Kress and van Leeuwen's Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the verbal and visual elements present in the advertisement.

The analysis focused on multimodal components such as linguistics, visuals, audio, and gestures; however, it was limited to the verbal and visual aspects to interpret how meaning is constructed within the advertisement's content.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Verbal Analysis

The Shopee advertisement endorsed by Anne Curtis-Smith with a duration of 0:29 seconds uses a combination of spoken and written language. The oral utterances in the Shopee advertisement were spoken by a famous beautiful Filipina actress and host, Anne Curtis-Smith.



Frame 1: 00:1 to 00:3 seconds

In this frame, the endorser, Anne Curtis-Smith states that she has nothing to wear (“Wala akong masuot”). This frame is shown in the earlier seconds of the advertisement. Basically, her verbal utterance here means that she has nothing to wear and the only solution for her to have something to wear is to purchase clothes from Shopee. Also, the word Shopee located at the upper left side of the frame serves as the main target

of the advertisement which is to advertise the online shopping – Shopee. Moreover, on the upper right side of the frame, it was written, (“9.9 Super Shopping Day Aug. 30 – Sept. 09”) which simply indicates that Shopee items are on sale from August 30 to September 9. It also serves as the catchphrase of the advertisement since it would appear to the audiences that there will be a huge sale on those specific dates and would probably attract customers to purchase products. According to Sinar (2013), an announcement in an advertisement usually happens at the first part of the ad, and this announcement is the only advertising message, the most important aspect interpersonally among other messages in the text and catchphrase.



Frame 2: 00:4 to 00:6 seconds

In this frame, it was obviously seen on the subtitle that Shopee has been introduced verbally, (“Sa Shopee pi pi pi pi”) in a form of a song, was clearly established after Anne said she has nothing to wear (refer to Frame 1). It simply means that Shopee is the solution for such problems. In this frame, a new picture appeared, and it was labeled as a “party dress” which is basically a product from Shopee. Still, the Shopee emblem and the sale mark are still there to indicate and give emphasis to Shopee. Also, on the lower right corner, there is a word, (Philippines) which indicates that the advertisement is originally from the Philippines.



Frame 3: 00:8 to 00:10 seconds

In these two seconds, Anne Curtis-Smith is now indicating to buy or purchase products from Shopee. The subtitle, (“Bumili li li li li”) clearly persuades the audiences to buy products on Shopee. Still, the Shopee emblem and the 9.9 super shopping day is still visible to indicate that Shopee products are on sale on those

specific dates, and it somehow adds a connection to the subtitle which means that audiences should buy products on Shopee especially that there will be a huge sale from the store.



Frame 4: 00:14 to 00:16 seconds

In this frame, the line, (“Ang dali li li li li”) pertains to how easy it is to order on Shopee. Since Shopee is an online shopping app, it makes it easy to order kinds of stuff without going out to the city. According to Napitupulu et. al., (n.d), Shopee is a mobile-first online shopping container software that makes it easier for individuals to find, shop, and sell directly from their phones. And so, this advertisement simply shows how this application is convenient to use and user-friendly since it’s easy to purchase products online.



Frame 5: 00:20 to 00:22 seconds

The fifth frame shows that Shopee has free shipping. It simply means that products from Shopee don’t have a delivery fee. However, according to Nugraheni, A. et.al., (2020), Shopee’s free shipping was one of the ways undergone by Shopee in promoting its products to persuade consumers to choose Shopee over other marketplaces. It is somewhat a clickbait for the consumers to purchase the products found on Shopee. Still, the 9.9 super shopping day is still there to persuade the consumers to purchase products from Shopee given that they have free shipping.



Frame 6: 00:25 to 00:27 seconds

In this frame, it was clearly indicated that Shopee has free shipping only with a minimum purchase of Php500 and a cash-on-delivery nationwide. In connection with the previous frame, it doesn't really mean that free shipping is applicable to all items on Shopee. Here, it was emphasized that there is free shipping if a customer would purchase products with a minimum worth of 500 pesos. Moreover, the word ("Philippines") is still there, and it gives a strong claim that the advertisement is originally from the Philippines given that the image of the Philippine archipelago is shown in this frame.



Frame 7: 00:27 to 00:29 seconds

The last frame ended with Anne saying, ("Basta shopping, sa Shopee") which means that Shopee is the best fit for online shopping. Based on the previous analysis on different frames, it was clearly shown how Shopee appears to be convenient and user-friendly since it can be accessed online, of course, with the use of gadgets—cellular phones. Also, as based on this frame, on the lower-left corner, the DTI permit number was plastered on the screen. It basically means that Shopee is legit and is licensed to operate. The addition of writing strengthens and accentuates the emphasis on meaning expressed verbally in this commercial. Visual emblems, such as advertisement logos and trademarks, are used to convey this message.

Visual Analysis

The display or visual found in this advertisement is a combination of (1) the image of the advertisement star is portrayed by Anne Curtis-Smith; (2) the visual image of the Shopee online app, and (3) emblem visuals.



Frame 1: 00:1 to 00:3 seconds

The figures or images that can be seen in this frame are the following: (1) image of Anne Curtis as the endorser of Shopee holding an apparel, (2) Shopee emblem, and (3) the sale mark (9.9 Super Shopping Day). The background on this frame seems dull and empty. White color is the dominant color found in this frame, with Anne wearing plain white clothes and holding white apparel which simply indicates that she has nothing to wear. However, the Shopee emblem and the sale mark are in orange which gives emphasis and appears to be catchy in the eyes of the viewers. The sale mark here is bigger than the Shopee emblem which gives emphasis to the upcoming sale on all items in Shopee. It would also help promote the online app by showing the audiences that there will be a shopping sale on Shopee on those exclusive dates. With its light color, it can be easily noticed given that the whole background is white and dull. Also, the orange color is the color trademark of Shopee.



Frame 2: 00:4 to 00:6 seconds

In the second frame, images found are the following: (1) Anne Curtis-Smith holding a phone and still, wearing all-white clothes which indicates that she needs something to wear by ordering on Shopee, (2) two people at the back wearing formal clothes which also compliments to the color of the whole background, (3) image from the Shopee app revealing the item which is a party dress and ordered by Anne. This image simply shows that Anne has found something she wanted to wear for a party and that's because of Shopee, (4) Shopee emblem which is the trademark of the app, and (5) the Super Sale mark that still gives emphasis to the upcoming sale on all items in Shopee. As observed, only three images were in color orange and these images are all about Shopee. This gives a highlight to the viewers on what Shopee could

offer.



Frame 3: 00:8 to 00:10 seconds

In the third frame, all the participants in the advertisement are already standing and dancing to the rhythm of the Shopee jingle. From simple all-white clothes worn by Anne, (refer to Frame 2) to a beautiful orange dress she ordered from Shopee (refer to Frame 3). At this point in time, Anne here stands out because of the color of the dress she wears. It simply gives emphasis on the Shopee app since the color trademark of Shopee is orange. As per observation, all images in orange appear to be attractive and can be easily noticed by the viewers. This color basically promotes Shopee. Moreover, the Shopee emblem and the sale mark are still there to put emphasis on the advertisement–Shopee.



Frame 4: 00:14 to 00:16 seconds

In this frame, the background has changed. Here, the background is in the office and all the participants in the advertisement wear office attire. On the left corner, products or items from Shopee are plastered on the screen. The items are gadgets and make-up products which are basically used especially at work. So, this simply means that even products or kinds of stuff that can be used in the office are found on Shopee. Moreover, Anne here is still dressed in orange emphasizing the color trademark of Shopee together with the emblem and sale mark.



Frame 5: 00:20 to 00:22 seconds

In the fifth frame, the background has changed to a public place where there are numerous participants in frame. This simply means that Shopee is for all, or what we call (“pang-masa”). More images shown in the frame were items that are available on Shopee. There’s a flat-screen TV, bags, etc. All the items plastered on the screen have a Shopee emblem attached to them to indicate that those items are from Shopee. Still, Anne is wearing an orange-colored dress to stand out among the other participants and to emphasize the color trademark of Shopee.



Frame 6: 00:25 to 00:27 seconds

In the sixth frame, no images of people even Anne were found. The visuals were only the Shopee emblem and the Philippine archipelago, even the sale mark was removed. This frame focuses on Shopee, the features of purchasing products on Shopee as it was stated, free shipping with a minimum purchase of Php500 and cash on delivery nationwide. The Philippine archipelago here stands as visual support on the tagline, (“Cash on Delivery Nationwide”). Furthermore, the font color is orange which symbolizes Shopee, and there were two emblems of Shopee on this frame, first is the one found on the upper left side of the frame which is the smaller one while the other is the bigger one beside the Philippine archipelago. The biggest one here serves as an emphasis on Shopee followed by its taglines.



Frame 7: 00:27 to 00:29 seconds

In the last frame, Anne Curtis returns on the screen wearing the dress she ordered on Shopee (refer to Frame 2) and holding a cellular phone. The emblem of Shopee is still there and the sale mark is back on the screen with better emphasis since the image was bigger than in the previous frames. Also, beside Anne is a large image of a cellular phone with an emblem of Shopee plastered on its screen. It basically means that the cellular phone has a Shopee app and that it could be downloaded by the audiences or consumers on their respective phones. As what is being found below the phone image, there were two phone applications where Shopee can be downloaded. One is through Apple Store especially to those iPhone users and the other is through Google Play, for Android users. With these pictures, it was clearly established how Shopee can be available and accessible online. Overall, the color was still orange to give emphasis on the advertised marketplace—Shopee.

CONCLUSION

In general, the purpose of this study has been to analyze the meaning of the verbal and visual elements found in the Shopee advertisement. The data were analyzed by using the Multimodal aspects which include the verbal and visual elements. Also, in analyzing such context, this paper has been grounded with theory on Multimodal Discourse Analysis by Kress and van Leeuwen.

Based on the results of the study, it shows that people can buy anything they want by using the Shopee app. It was clearly seen in the advertisement that anything can be ordered on Shopee and the items can be shipped nationwide. This advertisement displays sufficient information about how people can access or purchase products online. The advertisement makes it simple for viewers to grasp what is being promoted. This study concluded that, (1) there is a multimodal aspect of the Shopee advertisement; (2) each multimodal aspect, the verbal and visual is interconnected in generating the meaning of the advertisement and; (3) the overall message is very comprehensive and easy for the viewers to understand. These conclusions were drawn based on the verbal and visual analysis of the data gathered from the Shopee advertisement.

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