SYNTACTIC PATTERNS IN ADVERTISEMENT SLOGANS

Vindi Karsita and Aulia Apriana
State University of Malang
Email: vindikarsita@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This study aims at investigating the syntactic patterns of phrase used in advertisement slogans. The research design of this study is descriptive qualitative. The sources for this research are taken from 42 slogans from four different magazines and also the Internet as the media to download the magazines and find the selling data of all the products from the data. The results show that there are five kinds of phrases which used for advertisement slogans, they are: (1) verb phrases (47%), (2) noun phrases (39%), (3) prepositional phrases (39%), (4) adverb phrases (4%), and (5) adjective phrases (4%). The results also show that the most beneficial phrase for advertisement slogan is verb phrases because it is more effective to give orders or promise than just inform the benefits or the characters of the products to make the readers buy the products.

Keywords: syntactic patterns, advertisement language, slogan

Nowadays, almost all companies in the world employ advertisements to introduce their products. Most companies prefer to use some advertising agents since they can simply broadcast their products to enormous number of people at once. Advertisement is a form of communication between the creator of advertisement and the consumer (Lapanska, 2006:17), and since it is a form of communication, the concern about the language will be essential.

Furthermore, According to Wells (1989:11), “advertisement is a paid nonpersonal communication from an identified sponsor using mass media to persuade or influence an audience”. Since advertisement has power to persuade the reader, it must be a challenging job for the copywriter to create an effective advertisement. A copywriter should always have a fresh idea to conceive an enticing advertisement. To make an attractive and also remarkable advertisement of a product, copywriter cannot omit the use of slogan.

In advertisement, slogan is important to emphasize a phrase that the company wishes to be remembered by consumers. Moreover, slogans often have special language patterns to deliver message of a product. The advertisers cannot omit the importance of the sentence structure for slogans since without a good sentence structure the reader will not be able to understand the message of an advertisement. Moreover, Sari (2000:5) stated that “syntactic structure is the basic elements that are needed to decide the kind of pattern, which will be used in advertisement copy”. Therefore, conducting research concerning about syntactic structure will be essential.

There are three research problems for this research, they are: (1) What kinds of phrases are used in advertisement slogans, (2) Which phrases are mostly used, and (3) Which kinds of phrases are more beneficial in advertisement.

According to Carnie (2006) there are five types of phrases, they are: noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, prepositional phrase, and verb phrase. To identify what kind of phrases which used in advertisement slogans, researcher used tree structure. Tree structure was chosen in order to show the patterns of the phrases clearly.
METHODS

The data of this study were the slogans which were used for printed advertisements. The sources of the data were the magazines in form of e-Magazine. E-magazines were chosen because researcher considered it was more efficient since they were difficult to find in Indonesia. This study took data from the Cosmopolitan magazine, Reader’s Digest magazine, Good Housekeeping magazine, and Seventeen magazine since they had many advertisements which could be taken as the data. Researcher collected data from four different magazines in order to find varying sample of advertisement slogans on some products. Moreover, researcher used four magazines because from those magazines researcher found 42 slogans which were considered that those 42 slogans were already sufficient to be used as the data for this study. In addition, the source of this study was the web pages of the products found as well in order to find information of the selling reports.

In collecting the data for this study, the researcher took several steps. First was browsing data on the internet. Since the magazines needed were in form of e-magazine, researcher needed to browse them on the internet first before downloaded all the magazines. Secondly, the researcher picked all advertisement slogans from the magazines. As the researcher found advertisements which contain slogan, she immediately wrote it on the field note. Beside the slogans, researcher also wrote important information about the slogans which were found. Third was selecting the slogans. After the researcher done writing all the slogans from the magazines, the researcher started to select the slogans to avoid similar slogans used as the data. Last, after all the steps above done, all the slogans became the data to this research and were ready to be analyzed.

After all the data were collected, researcher used some steps to analyze the data. Firstly, the researcher identified the type of phrases on data by using tree structure. Researcher drew the tree structure of each slogan to support in identifying the type of phrase used in advertisement slogans. Second step was inputting the data to the table for answering the research problem number 2. Researcher counted the number of each type of phrase which occurred. Third, the researcher searched the selling data of products from each type of slogan. This step is expected to answer the research problem number 3. Fourth, the researcher discussed and summarized the findings. In this step, the researcher shows what kind of phrases were found, how many phrases were found in advertisement slogans, and which kind of phrase is more beneficial in detail. Last was drawing conclusion. The conclusions were the answer for all the research problems which presented on chapter I.

FINDINGS

There are five types of phrases found in the advertisement slogans. Researcher found 49 phrases of 42 products from the advertisements taken. The findings of types of phrases on the advertisement slogans will be classified in the table 1.
Table 1. Types of Phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
VP = Verb Phrase
NP = Noun Phrase
AdvP = Adverb Phrase
AP = Adjective Phrase
PP = Prepositional Phrase

Table 1 shows that the most frequent phrase used in the advertisement slogans is verb phrases which are occurred 23 times (45%). On the second place there are noun phrases which are used 19 times (39%). Prepositional phrases are the third frequent phrase used in the advertisement slogan. It was found that prepositional phrases were used 3 times (6%). The least used phrases were adverb phrases and adjective phrases which were occurred only two times (4%).

Moreover, to find the most beneficial phrase, researcher needs the selling reports of products found from each phrase. However, not all companies are open to show their selling reports. As the result, not all the selling reports of products which were found can be presented as the data. Here is some of the selling reports which were found.

Table 2. Selling Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Type of products</th>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Slogan</th>
<th>Sales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Skin Care</td>
<td>Garnier</td>
<td>Take Care</td>
<td>$24,883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>Coca Cola</td>
<td>Open Happiness</td>
<td>$12,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Skin Care</td>
<td>Hawaiian Tropic</td>
<td>The beauty of sun protection</td>
<td>$2,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Orajel</td>
<td>Real relief in real time</td>
<td>$678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Personal care</td>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>More for your money ... always!</td>
<td>$410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>Skin Care</td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
<td>Never stop caring</td>
<td>$23,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Cosmetic</td>
<td>Covergirl</td>
<td>Easy breezy beautiful</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSIONS

Phrases Used on Advertisement Slogans

There are five types of phrases found in advertisement slogans, they are verb phrases, noun phrases, prepositional phrases, adverb phrases, and adjective phrases. Each type of phrase will be discussed below.
**Verb Phrase**

Verb phrase is the most frequently used phrase for advertisement slogans. In making verb phrases, the advertisers use varying modifiers to modify the verbs. Carnie (2006: 70-72) stated that a verb phrase can have adverbs, nouns, and also prepositional phrases as the modifiers. From the data taken, it was found that the copywriters used nouns, adverbs, adjectives, or prepositional phrases as the modifiers of some verb phrases in slogans.

Below are some of the data of advertisement slogans employing verb phrase.

1. Discover the power of active naturals (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
2. Invented for life (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
3. **Stay strong. Stay alive.** With Boost (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
4. Challenge what’s possible (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
5. Make it real. Make it different. (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
6. Safe money. Life better. (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)

Phrases on the slogans above have verb as the head, therefore they are identified as verb phrase. One of the patterns can be seen from the tree structure below.

```
  VP
   \   /
    NP  PP
     \ /
      NNP
         |
          AP
           |
            N

Discover the power of active naturals
```

The phrase on the example 1 has the word *discover* as the head which is a verb. The phrase modified by the noun phrase *the power of active naturals* which followed the word *discover*. Moreover, the noun phrase has prepositional phrase of *active naturals* as the modifier.

In general, verb phrases are used to give promise to the reader. There are various verbs used by the advertisement writer such as *make, get, take, etc.* For example on Wallmart slogan (example no.6), *save money. Live better*. The slogan promises to the reader that if they shop in Walmart they will save their money and get a better life. Moreover, verb phrases also use to give order. By using verb phrases, the slogan can give the readers order to do some acts related to the products. For instance, the *Aveeno slogan discover the power of active naturals.* That slogan orders the reader to discover the power on Aveeno products. By giving promises and orders, verb phrases have strong power to raises readers’ curiosity and make them want to prove the advertisement. As the result to confirm
the slogan, the readers will try or buy the products. Due to the advantages of verb phrases, many copywriters preferred to use verb phrase as slogan.

**Noun Phrase**

From the data taken, some advertisers employ determiners, adjectives, or prepositional phrases to form a noun phrase. Below are some of the data of advertisement slogans employing noun phrase.

(1) **The look. The lash.** The lore of Dior (Reader’s Digest, December, 2011)
(2) **Oversized brush over the top lashes** (Reader’s Digest, December, 2011)
(3) **Always a beautiful ending** (Good Housekeeping, June, 2011)
(4) **The beauty tool experts** (Seventeen, April, 2011)
(5) **#1 dermatologist recommended suncare** (Reader’s Digest, December, 2011)

To see the pattern here is the tree structure from one of example above.

```
NP
   PP
      NP
         NP
            AP
               A
               N
               P
            AP
               A
               N
oversized brush over the top lashes
```

It can be seen from the tree structure and the phrase structure rules above that the noun *brush* has two modifiers. The adjective *oversized* which added before the noun and also the prepositional phrase *over the top lashes* which followed the noun are the modifiers of the phrase above.

Most copywriters form noun phrases by inserting prepositional phrases or adjective phrases or both for the determiners. Adjective phrases as the determiners on noun phrases give effect on glorifying the products. The copywriters put adjectives to tell the readers the special characteristics on the products. They want to inform what the distinctive qualities of their products compared to the others products are. For example the phrase on example no.5 *#1 dermatologist recommended suncare*. That slogan is expected to raise reader’s confidence that the product is the number one suncare among the others.

In general, prepositional phrases put as the determiners to tell the readers the benefits of the products. The slogans use the words *for* or *to* to inform what advantage the readers will get. In addition, many copywriters combined adjective phrases and prepositional phrases as determiners in noun phrases to make the slogan stronger. The slogans are expected to ensure the readers that their products are the best.
Prepositional Phrase

From the data taken, prepositional phrases were found three times for the advertisement slogans. All the three phrases identified as noun phrase since they have prepositional as the head. The data will be presented and explained below.

(1) Stay strong. Stay alive. **With Boost.** (Good Housekeeping, October, 2011).

(2) For leg like pure silk. (Cosmopolitan, June, 2011)

(3) More for your money…always! (Cosmopolitan, June 2011)

Both phrases on example no.1 and no.2 have the same modifiers for the prepositional. Both of them have noun phrase as the modifiers. On the phrase no. 1 the word Boost which is a noun become the modifier of the word with which is a prepositional. Moreover, on the phrase no. 2 the word for which is a preposition as the head. It modified by a noun phrase leg like pure silk.

Carnie (2006: 69) stated that most prepositional phrases followed by noun phrase as the modifier. However, on the phrase no.3 it was found a prepositional phrase which has adverb phrases as the modifier of the prepositional. The patterns will be shown by tree structure below.

```
AdvP
  |
  Adv
  P
  D
  N
  AdvP

PP

PP

PP

more
for
your
money
always
```

The word for which is the head of the phrase on the example 2 is followed by the noun phrase your money, and then it formed a prepositional phrase for your money. Moreover, the word more which is an adverb was inserted before the prepositional for, and it becomes the modifier for the prepositional phrase for your money. In addition, there is the word always which is an adverb followed the prepositional phrase more for your money. Thus, the word always is also the modifier for the phrase on the example 2.

Mostly, prepositional phrases on slogans are aimed to inform the readers the function or the benefit of the products. Telling the benefit is one of some selling strategies as stated by Wells (1989: 260). Readers can be attracted if they are told what they will get from the products. For example, the phrase for leg like pure silk. This slogan tells the readers that from this product they will get smooth leg like pure silk. However, not many copywriters think that prepositional phrases are strong enough to fascinate the readers. This can be seen from the findings of prepositional phrases in slogans. There are only three slogans found which employ prepositional phrases.
Adverb Phrase

There are two adverb phrases found in the slogans with different structures. Both of the phrases will be presented below.

1. Never stop caring. (Good Housekeeping, October, 2011)
2. All together now. (Cosmopolitan, June, 2011)

Both of phrase above have adverb as the head, therefore they are identified as adverb phrase. Phrase no.1 has the word never as the head, then followed by a verb phrase stop caring as the modifier. Moreover, the phrase stop caring has a noun caring to modify the verb stop. All the words in the example no.2 are adverb. The head of the phrase is the word together. Both words all and now are the modifiers for the word together. For further explanations see the tree structure below.

```
     AdvP
    /  \
   AdvP  AdvP
  /  \      \
 Adv  Adv  Adv
 all  together  now
```

In general, adverbs are functioned as the modifiers in a sentence or to give further information about certain conditions. For example the word quickly which put after the verb run in the sentence I run quickly will explain about how I run. However, it was found that adverb phrases are not always become the modifiers to the other lexical categories. In slogan, adverb phrases can stand alone as the main phrase. Adverb phrases employed in order to give further explanation about the products.

Adjective Phrase

There are two adjective phrase found in advertisement slogans. Both of the adjective phrases have the same pattern in forming an adjective phrase. Below is the data for slogans employing adjective phrase.

1. Easy breezy beautiful. (Reader’s Digest, December, 2011)
2. Professional affordable. (Seventeen, April, 2011)

The phrase on the example 1 has three adjectives which form one phrase. The head is the word beautiful which is modified by the word easy and breezy. Furthermore, the head of the phrase on the example 2 is the word affordable which is an adjective. The word professional which is also an adjective becomes the modifier for the word affordable for forming an adjective phrase. Below is the tree structure of one phrase above.

```
     AP
    /  \
   AP  \
     A  A
```

professional  affordable
In general, adjectives appear inside noun phrases (Carnie, 2006: 42). Carnie also stated that in grammar, the function of adjective is to attribute properties to the item they modify. Moreover, since advertisements are not always about the perfect grammar, copywriters can make adjectives stand without nouns. In the data, it was found that all the adjective phrases consist of more than one adjectives and one adjective modify the other adjectives. Adjective phrases have almost the same function as adverb phrases. Adjective phrases in advertisement slogan give information of the characteristics of the products. The readers are expected to know the quality of the products and what make them special. Furthermore, adjective phrases on slogan only can inform the readers about the products like the adverb phrases do.

**Beneficial Phrases for Advertisement**

Slogans in advertisements were made to create good impression of certain products toward consumers and also to make consumers remember the products (Whittier, 1958: 403). The final purpose of companies made slogans in advertisement is to make people buy their products. Therefore, to know whether their slogan is effective to gain consumers or not, researcher collected some selling data of the products that were found.

After finding the selling data, researcher compared the selling data of a product to the others. Since not all selling data can be found, researcher only compared the brands which have selling products. Moreover, researcher also compared brands from the same category of product and different type of phrase. The comparisons are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Type of product</th>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Phrase used</th>
<th>Selling data ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Skin care</td>
<td>Garnier</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>$ 24,182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Vaseline</td>
<td>AdvP</td>
<td>$ 18,158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hawaiian Tropic</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>$ 2,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Health care</td>
<td>Miralax</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>$ 45,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orajel</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>$ 678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jewelry</td>
<td>Dillards</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>$ 2,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Silpada</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>$ 2,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Personal care</td>
<td>Gillete Venus</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>$ 2,016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BIC</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>$ 410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Best Food</td>
<td>VP</td>
<td>$ 18,158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>California pizza kitchen</td>
<td>NP</td>
<td>$ 630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are five types of products which consist of 11 brands were compared. Researcher found that the brands which can be compared use verb phrases, noun phrases, adverb phrases, prepositional phrases as the slogan. From the five types of products, most brands which used verb phrase as their slogan have the best selling compared to the other brands. This data shows that using verbs are more effective to gain the readers’ real actions toward the slogans.

Verb phrases have strong intensity to persuade the readers. As stated before that verb phrases in slogan implied orders and also promises to the readers
which effectively encourage the readers to buy the products. By given orders or promises, the readers will be more curious to prove the truth about the slogans. Moreover, verb phrase comply the requirement of the good slogan by increasing public confidence of the products.

Moreover, the results also show that the other phrases like noun, prepositional or adverb phrases have less power to persuade the readers. Those kinds of phrase can only inform the advantages or the quality of the products. It seems that information about the products is not enough to make the readers confidence to buy the products. The readers need to be provided by the real actions that the products can do. Those answer why the products with noun phrases, prepositional phrases, or adverb phrase has less selling compared to the products with verb phrases as the slogans.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

The findings have shown that the type of phrases which the most frequently used for advertisement slogans are verb phrases. It happens since most copywriters or advertisers chose verb phrases to attract the readers. Most of them made slogan with invitation or promised to the readers. By inserting invitation or promise, the slogans are expected to have strong effect towards the readers’ behavior at the products. In additions, copywriters or advertisers often made slogan by praising the products.

Moreover, the slogans were made as simple as possible to make the readers easily understand and keep it in their mind for a long times. It was found that the copywriters or advertisers never made long sentence for slogan. They formed it with simple patterns in order to make the slogan memorable.

The findings also shown that the verb phrases are the most easily accepted phrase by the readers. Most products which employed verb phrases for their slogans have the best selling compared to the others products. This shows that it is more effective to change people behavior toward products by inviting or promising them.

Suggestions

Based on the results, the suggestions are addressed to the linguistics teachers or lecturers, for linguistics students, for future researchers, and for advertisement writers. For linguistics teachers or lecturers it is suggested that they may use this study as a reference to teach their students about the application of syntax in daily used, especially for advertising purpose.

The Suggestion for linguistics students is that they may use this study as reference to underst and the importance of application of syntax for daily use especially on the works of advertisement. Moreover the linguistics students are also expected for be able to analyze the patterns of language from their surrounding deeper.

For future researchers who want to conduct study which related to advertisement language is suggested to use this study as reference. Moreover, the future researchers are suggested to do deeper analysis on advertisement language from other aspects to complete the findings of this research.

It is obvious that this study is important for the advertisement writers since it found the beneficial phrase for slogan. Therefore, advertisement writers are
suggested to apply the patterns of beneficial phrases which found in this study to make their advertisement effective.

REFERENCES


