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## ADVERTISEMENT AS ONE OF MEDIA TO LEARN A LANGUAGE (A CASE STUDY ON 'MY TEA' TELEVISION COMMERCIAL ADVERTISEMENT AND 'CITRA GRAND CITY' BILLBOARD)

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### Abstract

Everyone does agree that language is a mean of communication. People communicate through language verbally and nonverbally. And language, as it does, has its rules to obey. Unfortunately, there are still things, which were seen publicly, educated people indirectly, which is later on called advertisement, do not obey the linguistics rules. Why this could happen? That was the question that would be elaborated in this research. By analyzing the three advertisements, the researcher would like to find out what the 'ungrammatical sentences' should be referring to the English grammatical theory and what are the advertisers' reasons putting the 'ungrammatical sentences' on their advertisements. The method that would be used in this research was qualitative and data would be achieved through observation, literature review and supported by statements from the interview with the advertisers. The data obtained would be analyzed descriptively referring to the grammatical rules in English and theory of advertisements' elements for outdoor and television. The result of this research was divided in two perspectives; they are from linguists and from advertisers as well. According to linguists referring to the grammatical theory, the sentences were ungrammatically correct. They should be re-corrected because public would imitate what they saw. Public would, indirectly, learn something wrong. But, different opinion came out from advertisers. They thought that the sentences were only a small part out of many parts in that advertisement. Their aim was to get the public got what it was about, the message was achieved. The sentences were only the complementary. Moreover, since the public was non native speaker, as long as they could understand the message, then everything would be fine. Yet, as the suggestion, the collaboration of the two should be made; the message of the advertisements must be achieved through a correct grammatical sentence, by the public, with a collaboration of advertisements elements in a good manner.

**Keywords:** Advertisements and language

### INTRODUCTION

Everyone does agree that language is a mean of communication. People communicate through language verbally and nonverbally. And the age of language is as old as the age of human himself. From the very first time human exists, language does exist.

Indonesia as one of a nation in this world has its own language named Indonesia. Some international people say it 'Bahasa'. Yet, as a part of international region which has its own language, international language, Indonesia must also have the ability to speak in that international language, English. Therefore, we are not going to be left behind with other countries especially facing this global environment where international countries could come to ours in any occasions likes in things related to business, tourism, culture, and so on.

This phenomenon is also believed by companies especially the commercial one. To be 'international' and 'global', companies use English as the language in their advertisements. We know that advertisement is one of the ways companies use to promote their products or organizations.



Unfortunately, the use of language, in this case English, is not followed with the correct rules applied in that language. It will lead to the negative effect that anyone sees the advertisements will lay on to the context. Since the learning process does not happen in class only, but also everywhere, then they will indirectly learn the language through the texts on the advertisements written by the copywriter without thinking whether it is true or not. The viewer thinks that once the advertisements are already broadcasted or displayed, then they are already correct in any terms. Because, the process of the advertisements' production would not be that very easy. It should follow the rules until it gets its permission to be published.

But, why does some advertisements, though they have already passed many editing process and finally they got their permission to be published still has few mistakes especially things related to the language, in this case the international language, English? Did not they pay attention on the language rules? Did not they know that once they make mistakes, the viewers would go with them? Those above questions lead the author to conduct a research entitled **Advertisement as One of Media to Learn A Language (A Case Study on 'My Tea' Television Commercial Advertisement and 'Citra Grand City' Billboard)**.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **Communication**

Communication is the effect of a social relationship among humans. According to Effendy (2008: 4), communication is a process of sending thoughts from communicator to communicant. Thoughts could be in forms of idea, information, opinion, etc. Those forms sent verbally or nonverbally or both to the communicant.

Verbal communication is communicating through a media which is always a language because it could represents people's mind to others (Pharm, 2010). It is divided into speaking and writing, and listening and reading. While, nonverbal communication is sending the message to the receiver with no verbal language but nonverbal likes gesture, facial expression, eye contact, distance, pictures, color, visual communication, etc (Mulyana, 2005).

### **Verbal Communication**

As it is mentioned before that language is a media used in verbal communication in forms of spoken or written. Language is used to express ideas, thoughts, and information both in spoken and written forms as Robert (1962: 15) said that we used language in order to communicate one with another, to express our personal reactions to situation, to stimulate a response to someone else, and for the sake of thinking something out. Delivering the language in communication must go with the rules because a language basically likes a reference of grammar plus dictionary. It is a stock of items and a system of rules for combining those items into sentences in language (Kemenade, 2007: 70). As in English, we should master the grammar by which we could communicate well. Biber, et al., (2002: 2) said that every time we wrote or spoke, we were faced with a largely array of choices; not only on what to say, but how to say it. The vocabulary and grammar that we used to communicate were influenced by a number of factors such as reason for communication, the setting, the people we were addressing, and whether we were speaking or writing. Grammar is concerned with the formal properties of an item; discourse with the functional properties, with what the speaker is using the item for (Sinclair and Coulhard, 1975: 27).

### **Nonverbal Communication**

There are many forms of nonverbal communication like body language, paralanguage, visual communication, etc. In this paper, the writer will only focus on the visual communication, the one related to television and outdoor advertisement which will be discussed later.

According to Kusrianto (2007: 30), there are things that we need to create a visual performance, they are: dot, line, space, room, color, and texture. All the elements must be formed in a good composition paying attention on the composition guidance like unity, balance, rhyme, contrast, focus, and proportion.

### **METHOD**

The method that will be used in this research is qualitative and data would be achieved through observation, literature review and supported by statements from the interview with English lecturers, native speaker, and the advertisers. The data obtained would be analyzed descriptively referring to the grammatical rules in English and theory of advertisements' elements for outdoor and television.

### **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Learning process occurs not only in formal situation but also in informal one. People acquire any knowledge through many ways. Watching TV, reading magazines, looking at the outdoor advertisements could be the ways to get knowledge. But, one thing that should be considered is that whether the knowledge or information provided by those is correct or not. Once we imitate the wrong information, which we think is already correct without making any clarification upon, then we will be trapped in that wrong situation forever.

One of the examples is the usage of language, in this case English. In Indonesia, English is foreign language. This situation makes English is not so familiar for Indonesian especially regarding to the rules. There are people who are able to 'speak' English fluently but do not convey to the right rules. Unfortunately, this also happens to some advertisements in Indonesia, which is seen publicly, but still wrong in rules.

The first advertisement that will be discussed in this paper is the television commercial advertisement 'My Tea'. This advertisement is starred by Vino G. Bastian, a guy whose girlfriend celebrates any occasion of their relationship. There are few statements told by the girl (as we can see on the advertisement) but only the first statements will be analyzed.

The first statement saying by the girl is "Happy **one weekanniversary**, Sayang". Why does this sentence should be analyzed? Because few of my students asking me the reason why "week celebration" of something followed by the word "anniversary". While, we know that anniversary refers to the annual events celebration. Don't we have a special word in English that could refer to the week or month celebration?

In English, there is a term called 'semantic bleaching', the lessening of a word's force through generalization. This is what happens to the statement 'one week anniversary'. As the annual aspect has moved to the background of anniversary, the shift has opened the door for the use of the term to mark the passing of shorter units of time. The 11th edition of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, in its entry for the word, states that anniversary can refer more broadly to a date following a notable event (Zimmer, 2010). The bleaching of anniversary has been going on for quite a while, even if dictionaries are only now catching up. For more than a century, English speakers have been modifying anniversary with numbers of days, weeks or months.

Yet, if we would like to concern more on the usage of the word anniversary for monthly event celebration, at various times since the 19th century, the monthly equivalent of *anniversary* has been dubbed a *mensiversary*, using the Latin root *mensis* for "month," but this ad-hoc coinage has never caught on. A more recent suggestion is the clunky English-Latin hybrid *monthiversary* (Zimmer, 2010).

Next advertisements that will be analyzed are outdoor media promote Citra Grand City Housing (see picture 1). The first billboard, based on the data achieved from



**Picture 1** Citra Grand City Housing Billboard Kids Version

the observation and interview, tells the viewers that the housing organization could provide a city which is so convenient as it is reflected by the sentence written by the scriptwriter. A housing organization which promotes their product through a billboard with no single picture of house at all shows that they are quite confident on the 'big and good name' they have by only putting the name on the upper left side corner in small size but still can be read.

Another point of nonverbal communication used by the advertisers in this billboard is the usage of color and elements composition. White color implies something that is pure, clean, specific, innocent, and sterile (Kusrianto, 2007: 47). That's the psychological response the advertiser expects from the viewers. They expect that the viewers will have a good perception towards the company. This also collaborates with the picture of little girl with white dress bowing her head, closing her eyes, and wishing for something. It adds the value to the meaning of that billboard. All that elements put in a such manner of a good composition by paying attention on the elements like unity, balance, rhyme, contrast, focus, and proportion. Moreover, the placing for this billboard on the very strategic place, on Charitas intersection, which can be seen from many directions really eye catchy.

Those are the perspectives from the advertisers related to the theory of visual communication. But, that is not the point the linguist sees from the billboard. The sentence saying "I wish I grow up where I live in a convenient city" attracts their attention including mine. Relating to the grammar theory about wish sentence, we have to understand that future form of wishing sentences imply impossibility. If we want to make a positive desire as, actually, it is expected by the advertisers, we



should use the infinity form by making it to be “I wish + to infinitive”. So, based on the rules, the sentence on that billboard should be “I wish to grow up in a convenient city”. Saying like the sentence attaches in the billboard will only make all the efforts from the advertisers to make a good image of that organization seems useless because the little girl’s wish to live in a convenient city as it is implied by the visual communication seems impossible.

Another billboard from the same company, again, attracts my attention. Still, this billboard put on the Charitas intersection, a strategic and expensive place to put a billboard on. And again I interviewed the advertisers and those who relates on the display of this advertisement. Yet, they still focus more on the layout and performance without taking care too much on the rules of language they use. They think that, as long as the viewers catch the message they would like to send, things are fine.



**Picture 2** Citra Grand City Housing Billboard Office Version

As the billboard inform through all the elements provided shows that the organization wish to attract the viewers with a fantastic and futuristic design of their product that could be a home and office as well. The blue color used as the base in that billboard implies safety, trust and clarity as the psychological response towards ((Kusrianto, 2007: 47). The company also give a chance to their prospective consumers to contact them by placing a phone number on the mid below side with a quite big font so that it could be seen clearly though it is from a quite long distance.

Yet, that is not the only point that I would like to discuss. The sentence attaches on the billboard attracts me more as the linguist feels. In English, we do know that there is thing called parallel structures which govern a sentence pattern should be made parallel based on the class of the words used. For example, a simple sentence saying ‘I buy a book and a pencil’ is parallel because after the subject and the verb, there are two objects from the same word class, noun, refers to the same meaning, parallel meaning. But, sentence on the billboard saying ‘this is where your home, this is where your business’ is not really parallel. If we see on the grammatical structure, the sentence consists of ‘pronoun + verb + relative pronoun showing place + possessive pronoun + noun, pronoun + verb + relative pronoun showing place + possessive pronoun + noun) are ‘quite’ similar. But the problem exists on the noun follows the possessive. The first noun is already correct because ‘home’ is



a noun that refers to a place where human live parallel to relative pronoun 'where'. But, the second noun does not parallel to the relative pronoun 'where' because the word 'business' is noun which does not refer to a place. So, to make the sentence structurally and meaningfully grammatical is by changing the word 'business' become a noun parallel to the relative pronoun 'where' that is 'business takes place' as a noun phrase refers to a place. The sentence attaches on the billboard then should be "this is where your home, this is where your business takes place".

### **CONCLUSION AND REMARKS**

As it has been already discussed in the previous part of this paper, there are things that must be consider by the organization especially the advertisers when they want to make a kind of advertisement to promote their products. Not only they should pay attention on the visual performance, but also on the text used. In this case, the advertisers better hire a linguist that sentences made will be grammatically correct. The purpose of this process is that, besides, the viewers will get the information the advertisers would like to sent, they will also learn, indirectly, English as a foreign language with the right rules of usage.

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