

THE ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL FEATURES IN *THE JAKARTA POST'S* ADVERTISEMENT

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to find out the most dominant linguistic features of English advertising text in The Jakarta Post in lexical level. This study is qualitative in nature in the form of content analysis. The subject of the study was 110 advertising texts from The Jakarta Post newspaper collected from the edition of November 2015, February, March, April and May 2016. The advertisements were chosen purposively. Only commercial advertisements were analyzed in this study. The instrument used to collect the data was document review that was done through document analysis method. The collected data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. The results of the analysis show that verb (76 times) is the most dominant features in terms of lexical. The verb get and enjoy appear 8 times each. The primary reason for having the verb get, as the style of advertising is its readability since it is a familiar and simple colloquial vocabulary. In another side, enjoy is also popular verb due to its relation to the feeling of the customer.

Keywords: *Lexical feautres, English adversting text, The Jakarta Post*

INTRODUCTION

It is widely accepted that communication has become an important part in daily life. In business context, communication is done mostly to negotiate and to attract the customer. One of the ways to do that is through advertisement. The importance of advertisement has been discussed deeply from the part of the wording use in it. In an advertisement, not only picture segment is highlighted, the written text is also considered as the most crucial part, and belong to linguistic features.

Based on advertising form, Bakanauskas (2004) emphasizes, “the most important element of advertisement is its textual part. Text intends for describing some state, actions and feelings, thus affecting the audience to respond in one way or another.” Seeing from the importance of its textual part, there are many important aspects that can be related to linguistic aspect. The word and sentence complexity of the advertising text is created to catch the reader eyes. Therefore, it is commonly found that advertisement plays with the word as lexical aspect within the sentence. While, those sentences are more related to syntactic aspect of linguistic. Some words and sentences use literal meaning and some others have figurative meaning. The use of figurative language is referred to semantic aspect in linguistic. Van Kerckvoorde (2007) took the example, the word “hawk” that refers to bird in literal meaning. While, figuratively, it means the people in government and, specially, the military personnel who are generally in favor or armed or aggressive action are called ‘hawk’. Therefore, the aim of those relations with linguistic aspects contained in advertising text is to convey greatly the message to the readers.

In advertising, a number of linguistic features are foregrounded to create different styles in order to design the advertisements that have permanent impact on the reader (Chugh & Sharma, 2012). It is important to create a positive impact about the product. One of linguistic features used in analyzing text is lexical feature. Crossley (2020) stated that the most frequent linguistic element to assess the quality of texts is probably lexical items. According to (Christianto, 2020), lexical feature is a language characteristic that distinguishes one particular linguistic feature of a certain phenomenon. Lapsanska (2006) classifies lexical features of advertising into verb, pronoun, adjective, numerals, foreign words and formation of new words including compounding, shortening (clipping, acronym, and initialism), and blending.

It is easy to find the products and services that are being advertised. One of them is through the international, national or local newspapers. In Aceh, for example, *The Jakarta Post* is the well-known newspaper written in English. It is available daily and commonly found in public places or even in office affairs. *The Jakarta Post* is one of the national newspapers in Indonesia and considered as English newspaper that the most widely read by the people there. Yet, this newspaper has reached different levels of the readers such as businesspeople,

educators, learners, etc to whom English is not a native or even second language.

The study of language of advertising from a linguistic perspective has been attempted by several scholars (Aritonang & Ownie, 2013; Leech, 1966; Vestergaard & Schrøder, 1985). Aritonang and Ownie (2013) studied the figure of speech namely metaphor, simile, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, symbol, allegory, overstatement, apostrophe, understatement and verbal irony in Vogue's advertisement. Leech (1966) studied related to grammar, vocabulary, discourse and rhetoric of commercial in television with function of advertisement. While Vestergaard and Schrøder (1985) more focused on sentence aspects such as imperative and directive speech acts to encourage the reader to purchase the product.

However, the study focusing on the wording in advertising text of *The Jakarta Post*, as the local newspaper, has not been elucidated. It is not obvious which linguistic feature dominantly used in it. Therefore, the goal of this study is to capture linguistic aspects of English advertising text in *The Jakarta Post*. Hence, in this study, the researcher only focused on commercial advertisement. She intended to analyze English advertising text from lexical level aspects found in *The Jakarta Post*.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative descriptive method is employed in this research. The data of this research were the advertisement of *The Jakarta Post* published in November 2015, February, March, April and May 2016. The data was as the primary source obtained through document review. There were 110 advertisements to be the samples of this study that are taken purposively from *The Jakarta Post's* advertisements. Only commercial advertisements were analyzed in this research. The type of the data was qualitative data and in form of written document. It referred to English advertising texts in *The Jakarta Post*.

In collecting the data, document review was designed to identify the advertising text in advertisement of *The Jakarta Post*. In this study, it involved identification of written documents containing information on issues to be explored (Lusthaus, 1999). Written document referred to the text in the commercial advertisements that were collected as data record. Researcher review documents and identify relevant information related to linguistic features contained in the text.

Document analysis was applied to find out about things as variable. In this research, the variable was related to linguistic features from lexical levels. To find the data needed, there were some procedures done by the researcher. Labuschagne (2003) stated that the procedure entailed finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesizing data contained in documents.

To analyze the data, the model proposed by (Miles & Huberman, 1994) Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2013) in this study. They used three concurrent flows of activity as

stages of data analysis; (1) data reduction; (2) data display and (3) conclusion drawing/verification.

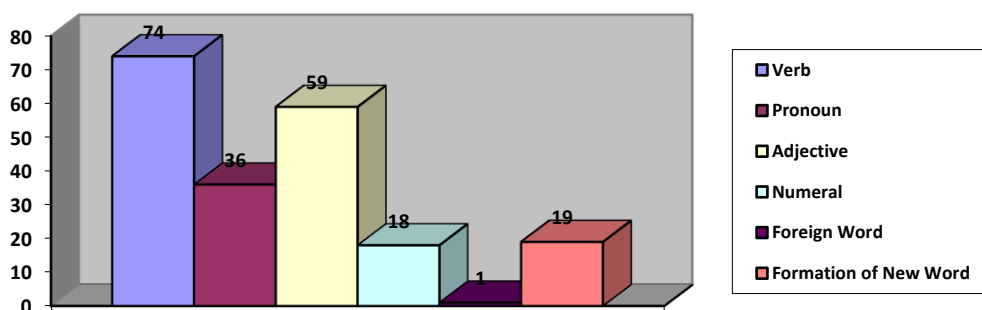
FINDINGS

The following elaborations are divided into three sections; they are lexical, syntactic and semantic features of advertising texts in *The Jakarta Post*. Later, the presented advertising texts will be bolded on specific words that related to the sample of the point that being explained.

Lexical Features of Advertising text in The Jakarta Post

The chart below demonstrates the distribution of the corpus of 110 advertising texts related to lexical features:

Figure 1: The distribution of lexical features in the analyzed samples



Verbs

They have general meaning and almost all slogans in advertising text use common, well known and monosyllabic words. There are 74 samples of advertising texts in *The Jakarta Post* that contain verb as lexical feature. The mostly used verbs in *The Jakarta Post* advertising texts are *get* and *enjoy*. *Get* and *enjoy* appear 8 times while *stay* does 6 times.

One example of advertising texts using the most common verb is *Optik Melawai* advertisement:

Lex01	Buy 1 Get 1 FREE* When you expect the very best	<i>OPTIK MELAWAI</i>
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The first category of the verb in the advertisements is aimed to set relationship between the product and customer. It also meets the objectives of advertisement where the word *get* is readability since it was placed in the beginning of the sentence. Another benefit of using *get* is that people have been accustomed to using it. Therefore, it will be easy to find the interest on what the *Optik Melawai* has offered.

The other category of the verb used in advertising text deals with the consumption. The verb *stay* appears more since the advertisements in *The Jakarta Post* are dominated by Hotel and resort advertisements. For example, the *Sheraton Hotel & Tower*'s advertisement:

Lex02	Stay 3 Pay 2 <i>Stay minimum 3 nights, pay only 2 nights.</i> <i>The third night is on us.</i>	<i>Sheraton Hotel & Tower</i>
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The verb *stay* is monosyllabic and familiar vocabulary. In this advertisement, the copywriter tries to attract the readers' interest by offering a kind of complimentary hidden in the message once they make a reservation for two nights staying at the hotel. Reservation in this context belongs to *consumption of the costumer*.

The verb can also be categorized as the description of the customers' sensation or feeling. Verb *feel* in *The LUXTON Hotel* below is for example:

Lex03	The Luxton Meeting Xpert Feel the Xcitement of our warmth service and Xtensive menus	<i>The LUXTON Hotel</i>
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The advertising text above uses the word *feel* to grab the readers' interest through imagination of sensation of *warmth service*. The verb *feel* is also chosen since it is familiar in conversation rather than formal context. The more easily the information of an advertisement is understood, the more readily the readers take an action.

The copywriter more often uses action verb rather than auxiliary verb. Here are some other simple, monosyllabic, and familiar verbs used in advertising text in *The Jakarta Post*: *bring, plan, try, save, start, buy, send, change, take, need, download, spend* and *open*. In term of form, finite verbs are dominant as they present 83 times compared to non-finite ones that present 22 times.

To sum up, In terms of the form, it is found that action verbs are more dominant than auxiliary verbs, monosyllabic is used often than polysyllabic, and finite verbs appear more than infinite verbs.

Pronoun

Most slogans in advertisements of *The Jakarta Post* use pronouns *your, you, we, our and us*. Possessive pronoun *your* presents approximately 50% or in 18 of 36 examples. The second mostly used pronoun is *you* that appears 9 times or 25% from the total pronouns. Then, it is *our* with 17% followed by *we* and *us* equally in 8%. One example that uses *your*, the most dominant pronoun, appears in *Korea Tourism Organization*'s advertising text as follows:

Lex04	To enrich Your Holiday, Fly to Jeju Enjoy the winter event!	<i>Korea Tourism Organization</i>
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The copywriter creates a good selling power in the possessive pronoun *your* above. The readers indirectly feel addressed even when they have no plan for holiday. The word *your holiday* makes them think to rearrange a plan. Therefore, linguistic means contained in the message make the reader to take an action as the objective of the advertisement itself. It can emotionally give imaginative feeling to the reader as if they owned the product. Yet, sometimes they also include pronoun *we* in which they indirectly show the benefit of the products or services.

Adjective

An adjective placed in a sentence of advertising text is quite related to the information of the product. The reader will imagine, for example, the degree, quality, or quantity of some products. There are 59 samples out of 110 total advertising texts found in *The Jakarta Post*. The most dominant adjective is *best* that has appeared 12 times in different advertising texts. *Best* is the superlative adjective that indicates the highest degree of having everything that the readers expect from the product. For example:

Lex05	The Best Internet to Watch Movie Online	<i>Biznet Home</i>
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Besides, there is also *special* as absolute adjective that presented 5 times or in the second rank after *best*. Next, it is followed by *new* that presents 4 times. Linguistically, *new* can be combined with some words that might produce different classification regarding to advertisement rules. The other adjectives found in the advertising text in *The Jakarta Post* are related to gradable adjectives and non-gradable adjectives.

To summarize, the adjectives used in advertising texts have some categories that are absolute, gradable and non-gradable adjectives. The adjective *new* also has three categories; come with abstract noun, combined with advertising product, and followed by attributes of the product. Above all these categories, *best* is the most commonly used in advertising texts in this research because it represents the highest degree of the product being advertised.

Numeral

In advertisements of *The Jakarta Post*, numeral can be obtained to present the percentage, price, number of production achievement, year, general numbering instead of spelled out, and size in number. The total is 21 words in number in 18 advertising texts in this research.

Lex06	Nyepi Package at HARRIS Tuban 3D2N Stay only Rp. 1.590. ⁰⁰⁰ net	<i>HARRIS Hotel</i>
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In the sample, the copywriter does not write the price in the same font size. It can impress that the price is not too high since the last three zero is in small. In a word, the numeral found in this research involves percentage, price, number of achievement, year, size and unspecified numbering. The most one is price in which the copywriter plays with digit to grab the readers' attention and raise their interest to buy or try the product.

Foreign Word

In *The Jakarta Post*, one of English Newspaper in Indonesia, only one out of 110 advertising texts contains foreign word, as below:

Lex07	Astra's unified Spirit <u>For Indonesia</u> Semangat Astra Terpadu Indonesia (SATU Indonesia) <i>To Nourish the Future Generation</i>	<i>Astra – Automotive company</i>
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The foreign words in this research is a noun phrase that is being acronymed and formed a word that also has a meaning in Bahasa Indonesia, *SATU* means *one*. To make it clear to the reader, the copywriter makes an English version as the translation of the phrase. At this point, *SATU (Semangat Astra Terpadu Indonesia)* evokes the impression of the originality of the product since Astra is made and based in Indonesia.

Formation of New Word

Three ways of creating a new word exist in advertising text of *The Jakarta Post*; compounding, shortening, and blending. In detail, compounding has seven samples; shortening has eleven samples; and blending only has one sample.

Compounding can be recognized as familiar words commonly used daily as can be seen in the samples below:

Lex08	Weekend that had Getaways Take some time out	<i>Sheraton – Hotel</i>
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A new word can also be formed through shortening process. Initialism is one of the ways in shortening. In this paper, there are 8 initialism samples found. One example is presented below:

Lex09	Boston joins our U.S. network	<i>Qatar airways</i>
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U.S. from *United State* that is definitely recognized by most people. In fact, they almost

never use the word *Unites State* in daily speaking.

The last process of forming the new word is blending. It appears once in research samples, *Pre-K*, as can be seen in the sentence of advertising texts:

Lex10	Open Enrollment 2016-2017 Pre-K . Kindergarten. Lower School. Middle school. High School	<i>NJIS (North Jakarta Intercultural School)</i>
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In the sample, *Pre-K*, is a blending from *pre* and *kindergarten*. This word uses hyphen in the word. The message should be interesting and readable. The more unique and interesting the word, the more eye-catching the advertising text after got blending.

On the top of all the ways in forming a new word, initialism and compounding take the biggest portion compared to other. Both are often used in daily speaking so that they are quite familiar for the readers when they found them in newspaper advertising texts.

Based on findings of this research, the most dominant linguistic features of English advertising text in terms of lexical features are *verb*. Visually, it can be seen from the figure (see figure 2) that verb takes the highest number compared to other linguistic aspects of lexical feature.

The copywriter has linguistic reason why they commonly use the verb, especially finite verb instead of non-finite one in English advertising text. Finite verb presents 83 times out of 105 verbs or approximately 80% of the total verbs used. The rest 22 are non-finite verbs that represent 20% of the total verbs. It is confirmed by the same result in (Lapsanska, 2006) in which the majority of verbs are also finite. The verb *get* in *Lex01*, *stay* in *Lex02* and *feel* in *Lex03* is finite verb. Finite verbs are in simple present form, they are frequently used in advertisement (Chugh & Sharma, 2012; Katsiashvili, 2014; Lapsanska, 2006; Pilatova, 2015). Lapsanska (2006) adds that it aims to “satisfy the customer’s desire for the present state of the product and its implication of universality and timelessness”.

The other crucial point in the existence of the verb in advertising text is its simplicity. There are 35 monosyllabic verbs compared to 22 verbs that identified as polysyllabic verb. This result is in line with the result of Pilatova study (2015) in which monosyllabic is the more dominant verb used in advertising text. Yet, she has significantly different number; 73 for monosyllabic and 9 for polysyllabic verbs. Above it, the correctness of Lecch theory has been certified in this research. He states that verbal groups are mostly of maximum simplicity when consisting of only one word.

Monosyllabic verb is closely related to colloquialism and readability objectives explained in the characteristic of advertising (Romanenko, 2014; Vasiloaia, 2009). This point

explains that the use of the verb *get* as in *Lex01* is to make the reader feel easy to read the message since the word is used in familiar conversation and they will find the interest on it. This literature review is confirmed by the findings of this research that the verb *get* is the most used verb in advertising text in *The Jakarta Post*. The copywriter oftentimes uses it because the reader searches the simple information and does it quickly.

Above all, there are three highlighted aspects as the further explanation in verb point; they are infinite form of the verb, monosyllabic verb, and the verb *get* as colloquialism. These aspects are quite related to the objective of advertising named AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action). It supports the reason why the verb becomes the dominant aspect of lexical feature in advertising text of *The Jakarta Post*.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There are some points that can be concluded in this study. It is about the dominant linguistic features of English advertising text in *The Jakarta Post* by analyzing the amount of lexical features aspects of the samples from English advertising text in *The Jakarta Post*.

Based on the Jakarta Post's 110 advertising texts, there were the following lexical aspects found: verb 74, pronoun 36, adjective 59, number 18, foreign word 1, and new word formation 19. The dominant lexical item presented in the advertising text is verb. The verb *get* and *enjoy* appear 8 times each. The primary reason for having the verb *get*, as the style of advertising is its readability since it is a familiar and simple colloquial vocabulary. In another side, *enjoy* is also popular verb due to its relation to the feeling of the customer.

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