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The persuasive language of online advertisements featuring social media influencers on Instagram: A multimodal analysis

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Abstract

The popularity of online advertising is increasing alongside the rising number of internet users, and one of the online platforms to advertise one's products or services is Instagram. On Instagram, many advertisers opt for one viable alternative way of advertising: social media influencers. They typically hire popular figures to endorse their products, and the influencers will then post an image and a caption, persuading their followers to buy the products. It is intriguing to investigate how they make use of images and texts in Instagram to strengthen their persuasive act. Therefore, this paper aims to present a multimodality analysis where both the linguistic features and the images of Instagram advertisements of influencers are explored in relation to their communicative intent. The sample was built up from 24 Instagram ads posted by 13 Indonesian influencers. Several salient lexicogrammatical features were pinpointed, and the images were analyzed following the social semiotic approach called visual grammar. The findings revealed that the Instagram ads demonstrated vast amount of colloquial and informal language use, which was intended to establish familiarity with the audience. The image analysis also showed that influencers had roles to display themselves in the image to build credibility and trust as credible reviewers. The study has contributed to explicating how diverse language use on the internet is vis-à-vis traditional media, particularly the discourse of influencer advertising.

Keywords: persuasive language, online advertisements, multimodality, Instagram

Introduction

It is a well-known notion that language use in different settings may demonstrate idiosyncratic features, and advertising is no exception. Advertising discourse has been of considerable interest to scholars in applied linguistics who attempt to uncover its specific linguistic characteristics (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001; Koteyko, 2015; Labrador et al.,

2014; Lirola & Chovanec, 2012; Zjakic et al., 2017). Many concur that advertising is generally aimed to persuade individuals to be attracted to certain products or services and eventually purchase them. To achieve this goal, advertisers can manipulate the language in a way that appeals to the consumers' interest—regardless of their actual needs for the promoted products (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2011).

Formerly, marketers tended to rely on conventional advertising forms, such as printed advertising in magazines or newspapers and television commercials. However, with more and more people worldwide connected to the web—hitting a total of approximately 4.66 billion internet users and 4.14 billion active accounts on social media (Hootsuite & We Are Social, 2020)—advertisers have to keep abreast with this development by opting for online marketing, notably social media advertising. Some have attested to the efficacy of advertisements posted on social media, notably concerning how they could captivate users' attention and eventually lead them to purchase the products (Dehghani & Turner, 2015; Gaber et al., 2019). Given its effectiveness, marketers should consider incorporating social media advertising into their marketing communication strategies (Lim et al., 2011), consequently necessitating effective use of persuasive language in their online advertisements.

Some studies have provided some guidelines on the linguistic features of advertisements. Koteyko (2015) presented detailed categories of linguistic features used in printed advertisements, and Labrador et al. (2014) enumerated common lexicogrammatical items found in online advertisements. Nonetheless, their findings cannot be generalized to advertisements found on Instagram because Instagram possesses one distinct feature in that it emphasizes much the integration of both visual items (e.g., images or videos) and texts (e.g., captions) (Newberry, 2020). Both studies from Koteyko (2015) and Labrador et al. (2014) did not consider the significance of images, so by integrating the analysis of both images and texts, the current study adopts a multimodal approach towards advertisement analysis, similar to the multimodal analysis employed by Lirola and Chovanec (2012) on cosmetic surgery leaflets and Zjakic et al. (2017) on gym ads on Facebook.

Furthermore, the current study focuses on Instagram ads that feature social media influencers. Normally viewed by thousands of followers, the posts of Instagram influencers have been found to boost brand image and result in more consumer engagement with the advertised product (Hermanda et al., 2019; Nam & Dân, 2018). At this juncture, it is intriguing to explore the appeals of these influencer-based ads. Nevertheless, there is barely any research scrutinizing both the lexicogrammatical features and images,

particularly concerning how the interplay between the two elements could persuade potential consumers.

In light of this phenomenon, the present study examines the common lexicogrammatical features found in the persuasive language of advertisements posted by Instagram influencers through a multi-modal perspective. In addition, the study examines the role of images in accentuating the persuasive message of the advertisements. In brief, this study is guided by two primary research questions:

1. What are the common lexicogrammatical features found in advertisements posted by Instagram influencers?
2. What are the roles of the images in complementing the persuasive message of the advertisements?

Literature Review

Online advertising on Instagram

With the growth of internet use over the decades, advertisers have now considered online advertising a potentially powerful marketing platform. Online advertising has been discovered to be perceived well by consumers (Lim et al., 2011), which positively influences the perceptions towards the advertised brands. In particular, one area of online advertising that has been mushrooming recently is social media advertising on networking platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Dehghani and Turner (2015) revealed how Facebook advertisements could improve brand image, resulting in higher purchasing intention. Similarly, a study by Gaber et al. (2019) demonstrated how ads on Instagram could enhance the relationship between the consumers and the brands, which likely motivated them to obtain the products.

Regarding Instagram advertisements, there has been one emerging trend among marketers, that is, the use of social media influencers. As defined by Uzunoğlu and Kip (2014), these influencers refer to the third parties acting to evaluate certain products through their social media posts, which can shape the audience's perception towards the brands and their intention to purchase the products. These influencers may range from mainstream celebrities, models or sports stars to internet bloggers or vloggers (Troesch, 2020). They have essential roles in shaping public perception, and with such influence, they inevitably play a significant role in determining what promotional activities companies should adopt to market their products (Wielki, 2020).

Considering their powerful influence and large numbers of followers, influencers on Instagram are often hired and paid to assist in

marketing programs, and this is not without reason. Hermanda et al. (2019) have pinpointed how social media influencers can enhance the brand image, which in turn has a positive impact on consumers' buying decisions. Furthermore, according to Nam and Dân (2018), consumers can be captivated by certain brands because they trust the influencers whom they view as credible reviewers. It is notable that followers are more likely to be interested if they establish an interpersonal connection with the influencers they follow. Nam and Dân also add that the quality of information presented by influencers may affect their credibility, implying that it becomes vital to identify what constitutes an excellent persuasive influencer advertisement— that is, the linguistic features.

Lexicogrammatical analysis of advertisements

To construct an effective online advertisement, one should be aware of the specific linguistic variations found in advertising texts. In response to such needs, earlier studies have provided insights into the items prevalently found in advertising language. Fuertes-Olivera et al. (2001), by means of metadiscourse analysis, revealed that marketers engaged their target audience by appealing to linguistic items which convey either textual or interpersonal functions of advertisement. With textual metadiscourse, the advertisers used endophoric markers (e.g., allusion to celebrities) and evidentials (e.g., reference to other genres) to ensure that readers interpreted the advertisements as expected in such genres. Meanwhile, to establish solidarity between the advertisers and addressees, the marketers utilized person markers (e.g., first-person or second-person pronouns), hedges (e.g., *just*, *maybe*, *kind of*), and emphatics (e.g., intensifying adjectives or adverbs).

Koteyko (2015) likewise built up a corpus of printed advertisements and purveyed an exhaustive list of the linguistic variations therein. She enumerated six dimensions subsuming all the lexicogrammatical features which were observed in the advertisements, and among the six, one prominent element that could be pertinent to online advertising posts on Instagram is the factor of narrative concerns. As argued by Kusyanti et al. (2019), Instagram has become a medium of self-representation, where users shared stories about their personal life or matters. Under this particular factor are some grammatical features such as singular first-person or third-person pronouns and past tense.
In the case of online advertisements, the study of Labrador et al. (2014) is worth some scrutiny. Concentrating on lexicogrammatical analysis of web-based advertisements, they pinpointed how the lexicogrammatical features possessed two primary characteristics: positive evaluation and informal

styles—which stem from the Hallidayan concepts of ideational and interpersonal linguistic functions respectively. While the former pertains to how advertisers attempted to showcase some positive description about the products through elements such as emphatic enumeratives and multiple modifications, the latter dimension is related to the needs for advertisers to personalize the advertisement messages and to establish a good rapport with the target audience with the use of second-person *you* and imperatives predominantly occurring in the ads. Given the similar genre of online advertising, the present study incorporated the approach used by Labrador et al. (2014) in its lexicogrammatical analysis.

Multimodal analysis of advertisements

It is evident that the linguistic features of advertisements have been extensively examined by the afore-mentioned studies. However, none of these studies scrutinized the presence of images in advertisements, and as suggested by Kress (2010), mere linguistic analysis contributes little to elaborating the complex nature of multimodal texts. As Instagram is noticeably a photo-based application (Newberry, 2020), an approach that can examine both images and texts should be adopted, that is, the multimodality approach.

Multimodality, according to Jewitt et al. (2016), is pertinent to how different semiotic modes of meaning making (e.g., images and texts) appear together to produce a new whole meaning. Through such approach, it is essential that the interplay between distinct modes be examined as they combine to impart a single communicative intent (Van Leeuwen, 2001). Jewitt et al. even asserted that the emergence of digital technologies has signified the need to explore meaning via different modes. This is where multimodality study becomes pertinent to the analysis of social media texts—namely Instagram—as they allow users to produce a mix of various modes to convey one communicative purpose. In fact, visual channels can augment the linguistic items, strengthening the persuasive message of the ads (Zjakic et al., 2017).

Multimodality studies can be conducted using three main approaches: systemic functional linguistics, social semiotic, and conversational analysis. To investigate how influencers "use the modes available (in this case, images and writing) to them to represent the world" (Jewitt et al., 2016, p. 9), the social semiotic approach is the most compatible as it acknowledges the sign makers (i.e., the influencers) to possess the agency when producing the signs (i.e., the advertisements). One major proponent of social semiotic multimodality is Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) with their seminal work of

visual grammar, which delves into the social functions of multimodal resources.

One exemplary study utilizing visual grammar is that of Lirola and Chovanec (2012), who investigated multimodality in cosmetic surgery leaflets. They specifically analyzed the leaflets, paying attention to the visual composition, including both texts and images. The researchers discovered how the interaction between the two elements was used to magnify women's beauty as an aesthetic object to promote cosmetic surgery. This shows how multimodal analysis is highly relevant to the persuasive goals of advertisements.

Drawing on these insights, the present study—in addition to conducting lexicogrammatical analysis—further attempts to analyze how the images in Instagram advertisements featuring influencers boost the persuasive nature and complement the textual modes of the ads.

Methodology

Textual data

The data comprises 24 advertisement posts uploaded in 2020 by 13 social media influencers on Instagram—all of which were collected from December 1 to December 7 in 2020. These 13 influencers consist of three males, ten females, and one group influencer. Their number of followers range from around 50.000 followers to more than 25 million followers on Instagram, implying that these influencers have a large audience who view their Instagram posts. To ensure the credibility of the selected Instagram accounts, only those with blue verification badges were chosen. Cooper and Newberry (2020) noted that the badges indicate the influencers' verified status as a notable public figure or celebrity. This was also vital to avoid privacy issues of the Instagram users because all verified Instagram accounts usually are for public view without any specific viewing restrictions.

The 24 advertisements endorse three major types of products: beauty products (8 posts), clothing items (8 posts), and food and beverages (8 posts). The first group of products is mostly concerned with facial beauty products, such as skin-care products and cosmetics. The second includes all clothing items from tops to shoes. The last group, as the name suggests, focuses on food products, be they the cooked food or the ingredients. What is noteworthy is that all advertisements have both images followed by captions below them—no ads with videos selected given the research scope (See Figure 1). All the influencers are Indonesian who can speak both English and Indonesian, and the captions may consist of either only English or a mix of English and Indonesian. In relation to this, the present study does

not analyze the Indonesian sentences because it specifically focuses on outlining the English linguistic features of the advertisements.

Figure 1

Sample Instagram Advertisement

Data collection and analysis procedures

To address the first research question, the current study examines the advertisements based on the persuasive language features found in the study conducted by Labrador et al. (2014). This earlier study is selected as it also examined advertisements of a similar subgenre, that is, online advertising—rendering the framework a relevant basis for the present study. However, the present study differs in that it focuses on online advertisements posted by social media influencers on Instagram, unlike Labrador et al. who built their corpus from online advertisements extracted from company websites. The current study will analyze the online advertisements from two points of analysis promulgated by Labrador et al.: positive evaluation and informal style. In Hallidayan terms, the former is part of the ideational function of language, whereas the latter conveys interpersonal function.

Using this framework, the advertisements are perused one by one, where the linguistic features in all the 24 advertisements are tagged and their total occurrences are counted. For instance, one excerpt saying "I love this product how it keeps my skin hydrated throughout the day!" is observed to contain two first-person pronouns (e.g., *I, my*), two present verbs (e.g., *love, keeps*), one reference markers (e.g., *this*) and one exclamation mark. Following the study of Labrador et al. (2014), those lexicogrammatical items with fewer than five occurrences are excluded as they are deemed to be unique cases of the influencers' language use. Additionally, in case there are frequently recurring features not found in both frameworks, I adopt the list of linguistic features of print advertising by Koteyko (2015) and group them in accordance with the category of positive evaluation or informal style.

As to the roles of images, the social semiotic framework of visual grammar proposed by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) is adopted to analyze the persuasive messages that the images attempt to deliver to the audience vis-à-vis the ensuing captions. The images are analyzed based on the image composition, further comprising three components: information value, salience/prominence, and framing. Information value refers to the visual placement of the objects in the images (top or bottom, left or right, center or margin), salience pertains to weights of all visual elements in the pictures, which are determined by size, foregrounding, contrasting colors, and sharpness, and framing is the presence (or absence) or frames to maximize the connection (or disconnection) between elements in the image.[1]

Results and discussion

Lexicogrammatical analysis

The lexicogrammatical analysis on the online advertisements has revealed several recurring persuasive language features. Following Labrador et al. (2014), the linguistic elements are classified into two groups based on the Hallidayan concepts of field and tenor. While the first group concerns the field of persuasion (i.e. ideational function), the second pertains to the tenor of persuasion—the relationship between the advertiser and the target audience (i.e. interpersonal function).

Positive evaluation

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[1] Refer to Appendix 1 on how the lexicogrammatical and image analyses were conducted on the data.

This section will elaborate some of the prevalent linguistic resources which enhance the positive evaluation of the products (143 cases). The details are enumerated in Table 1.

Table 1

Linguistic elements indicating positive evaluation

Positive Evaluation (Ideational Function)		Number of Cases
Discoursal elements	Emphatic enumeratives	31
	Reference words	22
Syntactic elements: noun phrases (NPs)	Multiple modifications	15
	Independent nominal phrases	9
Syntactic elements: clauses	Ed-clause	7
	To-infinitive clause	8
	Verbless clause	12
Semantic elements	References to external sources	13
	Hashtags	26
Total		143

As indicated above, one of the most commonly occurring elements in the Instagram advertisements is the use of emphatic enumeratives (31 cases), i.e., words or phrases used to add more positive details about the products such as *not only ... but*; *plus; also; then; last but not least*; *as well as*; *I again recommend*; and so on. Interestingly, unlike the findings of Labrador et al. (2014), there are also some colloquial enumeratives typically found in spoken discourse, such as *to be honest*, *oh*, and *btw (by the way)*. This finding resonates with the idea that language used on the internet—the so-called electronically mediated communication (EMC)—often resembles that of conversational discourse (Baron, 2012) and is largely influenced by texting languages (Cvjetkovic, 2010).

Another discoursal element that was not pinpointed by Labrador et al. is reference words (22 cases) like personal pronouns (e.g., *it, they*) or demonstratives (e.g., *this, these, that, those*). These words are widely used in Instagram ads to refer to the images of the products shown above the text.

Concerning the noun phrases, many of the influencers used independent nominal phrases (9 cases) as fragments e.g., *Food: Indonesian adaptation of pasta; new menu @sunnyfatday*. Rush (1998) has shed light on this unique structure, pinpointing that the independent noun phrases were commonly used in ads as titles or headlines to emphasize the products.

These noun phrases are further described using modifications (15 cases)—either pre-modifiers or post-modifiers (Quirk et al., 1985). The former includes the use of adjectives (e.g., *this **inspiring** limited edition hand-made jacket; these **pretty** boots*), while the latter is manifested in the form of prepositions (e.g., *this vegan brand **from Korea***), adjective clauses (e.g., *this brand **that's cruelty free***), or adjective phrases (e.g. bold Indonesian flavour of Ayam Kalasan **full with all the components**).

Clauses are also quite abundant in the advertisements, particularly clauses that contain positive comments towards the products, with three major types: ed-clauses (7 cases), to-infinitive clauses (8), and verbless clauses (12 clauses).

- *Fresh lobster, brioche bun, beurre blanc, **served with a side of fries***; *Oh, this is a 4-ingredient banana tart with @romasarigandum_id **made with 1 pan and a spoon.***
- *I've been working closely with @cosrx to make this cream **to not only tone up but also benefit our skin at the same time***.
- ***Super stylish yet comfortable**, plus I feel like about to run the world with these pretty boots*.

One notable semantic feature is the insertion of external references, such as quotes from famous figures, biblical verses, or metaphors. This is inextricable to the images that correlate well with the content of the references. For instance, one fashion ad refers to the one biblical verse of Isaiah (43:2) about being strong and resilient, which is related to the image of the clothes with the big font 'UNBROKEN' and the face of the influencer which is serious with aggressive gaze, indicating strength and power. It is noticeable how both the texts and images combine to convey the message of strength while promoting the fashionable look of the attire.

Lastly, hashtags (26 cases) are unique elements of Instagram, e.g. the hashtags *#agiloeolio, #pasta*, and *#indonesianflavor* in one ad about Indonesian pasta. In advertisements, they serve as relevant keywords related to the products which help the audience recall and search the products after seeing the ads. As stated by Lim et al. (2011), the ability to recall the products can substantially influence consumers' purchase decision eventually.

Informal style

More widespread than positive evaluation is the informal style of discourse in the online advertisements (348 cases), which is listed in Table 2. Overall, the use of informal style indicates how the influencers intend to bring the audience close to them and the products, hence the interpersonal relationship. Advertisements are made relevant to the audience's life as if they were to use the products themselves. It is relevant to allude to Baron's

(2012) suggestion about EMC that the tendency to disregard linguistic prescriptive rules is getting more prevalent due to increasing social informality among language users, particularly on the internet.

Table 2

Linguistic elements indicating informal style

Informal Style (Interpersonal Function)		Number of Cases
Narrative stories	Present tense	72
	Past tense	13
	First-person pronoun (singular)	47
	First-person pronoun (plural)	8
	Third-person pronouns	15
Direct forms of address	2nd person pronouns	38
	Imperatives	20
Hedges	Predictive and possibility modal verbs	8
	Hedging adverbs	5
Punctuation	Contractions	14
	Exclamation marks	23
Language play	Puns, catchphrases	6
	Alliteration	6
Reductions	Clipping	14
	Subject omission	15
Symbols	Emojis	44
Total		348

Of all the linguistic resources, one striking element is the use of narrative stories in the ads, especially the use of present tense (72 cases) and first-person pronoun *I* (47 cases), as shown in the following examples:

- *I've been using this @hadolaboid Gokujyun Premium Moisturizing Lotion for 2 weeks now.*
- *I feel like about to run the world with these pretty boots!*
- *As someone who have* [sic] *always enjoyed Cognac, I am very excited to be a part of the Hennessy family.*

Narrative stories therein include not only the influencers' testimonies about the product but also their personal values, experience or even

reflection which is not directly relevant to the products. The pervasive use of narration in the ads can be attributed to two primary reasons. First, influencers shared personal stories to convince the audience they indeed used the products in their daily lives This is relevant to the nature of Instagram, where users use their Instagram accounts as a personal window of their lives, that is, their self-representations (Kusyanti et al., 2019). Another reason is that because the brand image is subject to trust in the influencers (Nam & Dân, 2018), they have to convince their followers by demonstrating the benefits of the products after using them.

Another notable way to engage the followers is by addressing them with second-person pronouns (38 cases) and imperatives (20 cases), with some instances as follows:

- *What **you** wear is important, it plays a role on how **you** present yourself, how people perceive **you**, and how it makes **you** feel.*
- *Protect **your** face daily with sunblock use [flower emoji]. **You** won't regret when **you're** 50 and glowing.*
- *Get extra IDR 100.000 off using code #JDsassy2020 while chatting with their sales assistant.*
- *Please come and grab some happiness for yourself!*

These elements indicate how the target consumers are integral parts of the stories presented in the ads. As Myers (1994) affirmed, the use of *you* builds up familiarity with the audience, implying the nuance that their needs are directly addressed. The use of imperatives, though originally used as commands, serve more as information sharing and cordial invitations to the viewers to try out the products. This is reflected in the study of Zjakic et al. (2017) who maintained that imperatives can be used as "a powerful device to strengthen personal relationships between advertisers and receivers despite the fact that they may appear face-threatening at surface level" (p. 20). Correspondingly, in order to reduce the force on the audience, the influencers also utilize some hedging expressions by means of modal verbs (8 cases) and possibility adverbs (5 cases) as in "*We **really hope** that you will love Ancient Aztec …*".

More informal styles can be found in regards to the punctuations, reductions of words, and symbols. In particular, many of the ads are swamped with contractions (e.g. *I'm, it's, won't, can't*) (14 cases), clipping (e.g. *fav* from *favorite*, *collab* from *collaborate*, *u* from *you*) (14 cases), subject omission (e.g. *been using Japanese skincare products, in love with the limited edition of @makeoverid¸ cooked this few times*) (15 cases), and replacement of words with symbols or emojis (e.g. shoes and dress replaced with respective emojis) (44 cases). It is argued that this language use stems from the texting language that can be found in personal chat rooms (Cvjetkovic, 2010). Additionally, the exclamation marks and smiling emojis

can represent the emotions of the influencers, which can be detected from non-verbal signs in spoken interaction. This is a way to display friendliness towards the audience, complementing the influencers' facial expressions in the pictures.

A smaller number of cases of language play are noticeable in the ads to attract the followers, such as catchphrases and alliterations (e.g., *Light, Camera, Action!*, *Another day, another craving for @dough.lab cookies, Love the sun but also love your skin!*).

Image analysis

Given that images are the highlight of Instagram posts, one cannot simply disregard the role of images in enhancing the persuasive message of the ads. Thus, further scrutiny of the images is carried out in regards to three aspects of visual composition proposed in the visual grammar approach (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006): information value, salience, and framing. Distinctive features are also delineated based on the three types of ads: beauty, fashion, and food products. Overall, each ad type has a general pattern where influencers—rather than the products—occupy most of the visual frames, particularly in beauty and fashion advertisements. This positioning can be attributed to consumers' tendency to make their purchasing decision based on their degree of trust in the influencers (Nam and Dân, 2018).

Beauty Advertisements

Regarding the positioning of the visual elements, there is a clear distinction between the three ad types. In ads promoting skin-care or beauty products, there is almost always a close-up of the influencers' flawless facial skin, mostly occupying the left, top, or center space. Correspondingly, the influencers' face becomes the prominent element of the image with its close-up size and positioning in the foreground of the image. In addition, the color and texture of the face are sharpened through light exposure, meaning that the products tend to be secondary in weight in the image. Lastly, there is a maximum connection between the color tone of the influencer's facial skin and cosmetics with the background, with soft colors like soft pink or beige being dominant.

Fashion advertisements

Fashion ads typically illustrate an equal spatial proportion of both influencers and the clothing items. In this case, the influencer's gaze or look occupies the top frame, but the clothes occupy the rest of the frame—notably the central frame—leading viewers to also pay heed to the clothing style. Unlike beauty ads, there is no close-up on the facial expression,

indicating the salience of the clothing items in the image. Concerning framing, there is a moderate connection between the colors of the clothes and the background, wherein dark-colored clothes are matched with a dark background and soft-colored ones with a light background.

Food advertisements

A distinct observation is apparent in the analysis of food ads. Some of the food ads still show the influencers in the frame, yet a majority of the ads situate the food per se as the spotlight of the image in the central frame. As to the weights of elements, the image is intentionally focused on the food with the food colors sharpened and the background blurred. Accordingly, there is a maximum disconnection between the background and the food. The frame is marked by the edge of the plate or bowl or through the contrast between the sharp foreground and blurry background.

The interaction between texts and images

In addition to examining the texts and images as discrete entities in online advertisements, it is essential that the interaction between both elements be scrutinized. Using the visual grammar approach, the analysis evinces one major observation: images are always situated in the top frame as the 'ideal' proposition and the texts below them as the 'real' message. In other words, the function of the images is to provide some ideas of the optimal results of using certain products (e.g., beauty or fashion products) or the delicious presentation (e.g., food), whereas the captions elaborate on the actual products being advertised. In line with Kress and Van Leeuwen's (2006) statement, elements put in the top frame typically describe 'the promise of the product,' while the lower frame supplies informative details. Noteworthy to notice is how the two elements interact with each other to enhance the communicative act of the advertisement, i.e., the persuasive goals.

The interaction between the images and captions in the persuasive discourse can be classified into two primary functions: assertion and complementation (Lahiani, 2004). In the former function, it can be argued that the images have a role as visual proof of the positive evaluation shared in the captions. In other words, the images alone are sufficient to demonstrate to the viewers that the products are indeed worth purchasing, whereas the texts further assert the benefits. Such interaction is observable, especially in beauty advertisements where the images show the influencers' flawless facial skin as a result of using the advertised products. The captions, furthermore, list some informative details that underlie the effectiveness of the products, such as testimonies, the descriptive benefits, and the product ingredients or composition. By either viewing the images or

reading the captions, the viewers are expected to construe a positive perception towards the product and eventually purchase it.

Meanwhile, complementation refers to how both images and texts complement each other's roles by supplying two different details. The audience may have to rely on both modes to grasp the actual message conveyed by the influencers. At this point, the influencers insert endophoric markers (Fuertes-Olivera et al., 2001) to relate what is in the caption with the elements portrayed in the pictures. The influencers, while indeed mentioning the brand's name in the captions, mostly wrote stories or even quotes that did not promote the products directly but instead magnified the influencers' personal traits. For instance, in one fashion ad by a male influencer, he cited a biblical verse about resilience to show how 'unbroken' he was after failures or hardships. These endophoric markers (i.e., the external references) were illustrated by how the attire with the word 'unbroken' looked great on him, not to mention his good-looking appearance and his sharp gaze indicating the trait of being resilient. The followers, inspired by their idols, are likely to be persuaded to purchase the products to emulate the influencer's stylish look. If one of the two elements were missing, the message perceived by the target audience would possibly deviate from the advertiser's persuasive goals. They might view the caption as a mere story or the image as a personal portrait.

Conclusion

The current study was conducted to investigate both lexicogrammatical and visual elements in Instagram advertisements with influencers enhance the persuasive act of the ads. The lexicogrammatical analysis reveals that many of the linguistic items in the ads are emblematic of colloquial language styles and social informality. This is inextricable to the nature of Instagram as an application for influencers to share stories about the products and represent their personal lives or values (Kusyanti et al., 2019) and the tendency of influencers to establish a rapport with their followers (Nam & Dân, 2018). On the other hand, the images—located above the captions— serve to convince the viewers of the efficacy of the products by mostly showcasing the influencers rather than the brands, especially in beauty and fashion ads. Followers are more likely to be attracted to the advertised products when they have trust in the influencers, and they are aware that the influencers that they follow use the advertised brands.

The persuasive nature of the advertisements is also noticeable from the interaction between the visual and the textual modes. The quality of products mentioned in the written captions is evidenced by the images

which illustrate the 'promise' of the products. The use of both images and texts then hold equally pivotal roles in persuading the viewers to purchase the products, with the former as the 'ideal' benefits of the products and the latter as the informative details. In particular, some genres of advertisements like skin-care ads mostly utilize the images as an assertion of the positive textual description of the products, whereas others including fashion ads demonstrate how both images and texts have complementary functions where both add persuasive details which are distinct from each other. The interaction between the two elements, as Fuertes-Olivera et al. (2001) affirmed, "is never simply one of illustration, but one of persuasion" (p. 1303).

Nevertheless, as this study only analyses three types of ads, each of which has a relatively small number of samples, future studies should focus on larger numbers of ads with more varieties of ads on Instagram. In this study, the analysis of advertisements is based on only the theory without considering the direct insights from the influencers as the social actors who choose what sentences or images to display in the ads. As Jewitt et al. (2016) note, a social semiotic approach in multimodality studies emphasizes sign makers with their power and agency. Therefore, interviews can also be done with the influencers in future research to gain more insights into their choice of images and texts.

The widespread utilization of online advertising with influencers is inevitable with the increasing use of social media, and advertisers should be aware of how to create effective advertisements. This study has contributed by providing multimodal guidelines on how influencers create their Instagram advertisements, and it has been shown how they differ from traditional printed advertisements or even web advertising. It is hoped that marketers find them useful to successfully convey persuasion in advertisements, while researchers interested in multimodality can gain insights into how this approach can be implemented to investigate social media communication.

The author

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Appendix 1 – Sample Instagram Advertisements and Analysis

Beauty Advertisement

Fashion Advertisement

Food Advertisement

INDONESIAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (INDONESIAN JELT) SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

AIMS AND SCOPE

Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching (Indonesian JELT) is a peer-reviewed journal in which submitted articles will go through a blind review process. IJELT is published twice a year in May and in October every year. It is devoted to the teaching and learning of English. It also invites articles related to language evaluation. Committed to finding the solution to problems associated with the study of English Language Teaching (ELT), Indonesian JELT strongly encourages submission of unpublished articles on topics that are highly relevant and contribute significantly to issues in ELT. The journal particularly welcomes manuscripts that are drawn from research related to other cross-disciplines (e.g. linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, education, culture as well as first and second language acquisition), the application of theories, critical analysis of theories or studies.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES

General

- Articles must be written in English and should be related to the areas of English language teaching, learning or testing. Articles in the area of applied linguistics are welcome, provided that they are relevant to ELT.
- The Indonesian JELT also invites *review articles,* which provide a descriptive and evaluative comparison of the materials and discuss the relative significance of the works in the context of current theory and practice. Submissions should generally be between 700 and 1,500 words.
- Articles must be typewritten on A4-sized white paper (8.27" x 11.69"), double-spaced with 1" margins with a 12-pt Times New Roman font.
- The Editors require that articles be submitted as e-mail attachment that exactly matches the hardcopy and are formatted as a Microsoft Word document. Identify your document with your own name and affiliation, e.g. Yassir_ATMAJAYA.doc. Do not send your text in the body of e-mail.
- The Editors reserve the rights to adjust the format to certain standards of uniformity.
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Paper Length

Texts should be between 6,000 and 7,000 words in length. A word-count should be given at the end of the article. The word-count should include abstract, tables and appendices.

Abstracts

All articles should have an abstract comprising 100-250 words in length. A word-count and keywords are required at the end of the abstract.

Criteria for Acceptance

A manuscript will be accepted for publication if it meets the following requirements:

- Its topic and contents reflect the aims and scope of the Indonesian JELT.
- It is likely to arouse readers' interest and is accessible to a broad readership.
- It offers novel and original insights as well as makes significant contribution to the body of knowledge related to this journal.
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- It has clarity of presentation, is well written and organized, and conforms to the format of this journal.

Articles and a brief bio-data (max. 150 words) should be sent to: ijelt@atmajaya.ac.id