

# สำนวนโวหารในคำโปรยโฆษณาตามการจัด ประเภทของแมคควารีและมิก

Rhetorical Figures in Taglines: McQuarrie and  
Mick's Classification

พวงเพชร โทณะวณิก\*

Phuangphet Tonawanik\*

---

\* ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์สาขาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และการจัดการการท่องเที่ยว มหาวิทยาลัยกรุงเทพ

\* Assistant Professor of English School of Humanities and Tourism Management, Bangkok University

\* Email: ptonawan@hotmail.com

## บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้นำเสนอผลการศึกษาเบื้องต้นของการวิจัยประยุกต์ที่มีวัตถุประสงค์สองประการ คือ ศึกษาการใช้สำนวนโวหารตามการจัดประเภทสำนวนโวหารของแมคควารีกับมิก (1996) และศึกษาปริมาณความถี่ของการใช้สำนวนแต่ละประเภทในโฆษณาสินค้าในสื่อสิ่งพิมพ์ที่เผยแพร่ในประเทศไทย คำโปรยโฆษณาทุกข้อความที่ปรากฏในนิตยสารสำหรับผู้หญิงสองฉบับที่มีการใช้สำนวนโวหารได้รับการจัดประเภทและตีความ จากนั้นจึงวิเคราะห์ความถี่ของการใช้แต่ละประเภท สถิติอย่างง่ายที่นำมาใช้ในการศึกษานี้คือ การแสดงร้อยละและความถี่

ผลการศึกษาแสดงว่าโฆษณาเหล่านี้มีการใช้สำนวนโวหาร 13 ประเภทเพื่อให้ผู้อ่านหรือผู้บริโภคสนใจและเข้าใจคุณลักษณะและคุณสมบัติที่โดดเด่นของผลิตภัณฑ์ได้ เทคนิคสำนวนที่ใช้ในการเขียนคำโปรยส่วนใหญ่จะใช้เทคนิคระดับ Substitution และ Destabilization ประเภทที่ใช้บ่อยมากที่สุดคือคำอุปมาอุปมัย (Metaphor) และสามลำดับถัดมาคือ คำพูดที่เกินความจริง (Hyperbole) คำที่มีสัมผัสอักษร (Alliteration) และคำที่มีความหมายสองนัยหรือการเล่นคำ (Pun) การตั้งคำถาม (Rhetorical Question) รวมถึงคำพ้องเสียง (Assonance) สำนวนที่ใช้บ่อยมากคือ การใช้คำแทน (Metonymy) การใช้คำปฏิทรรศน์ (Paradox) และการใช้คำหรือวลีที่มีโครงสร้างเหมือนต่อเนื่อง (Parison) ซึ่งมีการใช้เพียงประเภทละหนึ่งครั้งเท่านั้น

**คำสำคัญ:** สำนวนโวหาร ภาษาโฆษณา สำนวนเปรียบเทียบ ประเภทสำนวนโวหารของแมคควารี และมิก

## Abstract

The paper presents preliminary findings from an empirically-based investigation. Two main objectives of the study were to investigate how rhetorical figures are used in printed advertisements based on Classification of Rhetorical Figures by McQuarrie and Mick's (1996) and to examine the frequencies of occurrences of each type. Eighty Taglines in advertisements from selected woman Malaysian edition magazines were analyzed to determine categories. Simple statistics as frequency and percentage were employed to examine the most to the least types used.

The findings revealed that there are thirteen types of rhetorical figures under the four levels of operational figures that were used to attract readers or consumers and help them to understand the concept and qualification of the product. The writing of the taglines mostly employed Substitution level and Destabilization level of operational figures. The most frequently used was Destabilization-Metaphor, followed by the occurrence of other top three styles, namely, Substitution-Hyperbole, Repetition-Alliteration and Destabilization-Pun, Substitution-Rhetorical Question, as well as Repetition-Assonance. The least frequently used types of rhetorical figures were Substitution-Metonymy, Repetition-Parison, and Destabilization-Paradox which were employed only once for each type.

**Keywords:** Figurative Language, Advertisement Language, Figure of Speech, McQuarrie and Mick's Classification of Rhetorical Figures

## Introduction

There is voluminous research on advertising language, which is of particular interest to the advertising industry (Langrehr, 2003); yet the focus there tends to be on the products and on consumers' feedback, with research findings applied to improve marketing strategies for commercial ends. This study, by contrast, is oriented to advertising discourse, more specifically, rhetorical figures in advertisements from a language learning perspective. This is because appreciation of a text will not be actualized unless the language learner can comprehend the text. Yet figurative language can erect barriers to such comprehension. Nippold (as cited in Palmer & Brooks, 2004, p.370) states that the "inability to interpret figurative language leads to a breakdown in text comprehension, which in turn can frustrate readers and discourage them from continuing the reading task". These barriers of figurative language interpretation are compounded today by the high level of exposure of many of us as 'consumers' to the discourses of advertising in all the media. Therefore, studying and understanding advertisement writing, particularly its headlines or taglines is important for involving both advertisers and consumers. While the former are responsible for creating persuasive language presented in advertisements, the latter are the target of the advertisements that will read, interpret and hopefully comprehend the ads in order to decide whether to buy or not to buy the products.

A tagline is one of the most important parts in print advertisements and therefore advertisers attempt to use many styles of writing to beautify their advertisements, attract readers' interest and in turn help advertisers achieve their goals. In addition, if a headline is captivating and memorable, it can create product awareness in the reader's mind. For this reason, figurative language is often applied to clarify expressions in advertisements to be more interesting and attractive.

Wiehardt (2009) defines figurative language or figure of speech as a word or phrase that departs from everyday literal language for the sake of comparison, emphasis, clarity, or freshness. On the other hand, Nordquist (2009) states that since ancient times, figures of speech, or figurative language, have served three main purposes: 1) to instruct and entertain people through the play of language, 2) to persuade people of the truth or value of the message that a figure conveys, and 3) to help people remember both the meaning of the message and its figurative expression. The classical figures, thus, have been adopted by advertisers to sell everything from soap and cigarettes to political causes and candidates.

Numerous researchers have analyzed figures of speech and metaphor in advertisements, including Leigh (1994); McGuire (2000); Toncar and Munch (2001); Mulken, Dijk and Hoeken (2005); Philips (2000, 2009); Supasamout (2006); Lagerwerf

and Meijers (2008). All point to the interconnectedness of figurative meanings found in advertisements. To understand an ad's message in fact partly depends on understanding a rhetorical figure or a play on words. Thus, it is interesting to investigate how figurative language is used in printed media in a widely English speaking country like Malaysia.

### **Research objectives**

This study aimed to a) explore what classes of rhetorical figures are used in advertisements for women by analysing taglines b) examine the frequency of occurrence of each type.

### **Significance of the Study**

Since language is part and parcel of our lives, we need to use it in our work, studies and socializing with people. In addition, advertisements can be used as sources of authentic material for language learners to expose them to certain types of language patterns. Different writing styles in gathered advertisements can be used as examples for language students as well as people interested in copywriting not only for advertisements but also for their own reports or articles in many related fields. Additionally, the academic community, writers, product manufacturers or advertisers will benefit from learning how to write an advertisement more persuasively and efficiently by using several writing styles to create appealing taglines to build brand awareness and make the reader remember the products or services. Likewise, consumers will increase their knowledge about writing styles used by advertisers in taglines to attract their attention.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Rhetorical Figures**

This study employed the theoretical framework suggested by McQuarrie and Mick (1996, p. 424) in classifying different types of rhetorical figures in printed advertisements. They describe a rhetorical figure "as an artful deviation in the form taken by a statement". In other words, a rhetorical figure deviates its arrangement of sounds or words in an artful way from an ordinary sentence. McQuarrie and Mick present a taxonomy of the figures used in advertising in which they consider that the distinctive trait of the figuration is the presentation of a message in a manner different from that usually encountered by the recipient. It represents a way to legitimize the violation of certain standards and conventions. Even though rhetorical figures are prevalent in print advertisements, little research has been carried out to incorporate them into advertising theory. Thus, McQuarrie and Mick

developed a framework to classify the rhetorical figures that differentiate between figurative and nonfigurative text, and between two types of figures (schemes and tropes). In their framework, “individual rhetorical figures are not causal loci for explaining advertising effects but rather names that distinguish different applications of a rhetorical operation. Instead, it is artful deviation, irregularity, and complexity that explain the effects of the headline” (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 429).

The following are McQuarrie and Mick’s (1996) four rhetorical operations under their framework, namely Repetition, Reversal, Substitution, and Destabilization.

**1. Repetition.** It “combines multiple instances of some element of the expression without changing the meaning of that element” and it covers three aspects: sounds (rhyme, chime, assonance, and alliteration), words (anaphora, epistrophe, epanalepsis and anadiplosis) and also phrase structure (parison) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 429). Some of the examples provided are quoted as follows:

#### 1.1 Sounds:

(a) Rhyme: Performax protects to the max. [Pennzoil motor oil] (Repetition of syllabi at the end of word)

(b) Chime: A tradition of trust. [Merrill Lynch brokerage] (Key words in a phrase begin with identical sounds and letters)

(c) Assonance and Alliteration: No one knows the land like the Navajo [Mazda four-wheel drive] (Three of more repetitions of a vowel or consonant)

#### 1.2 Words:

(d) Anaphora: Early treatment. Early cure. [Gyne Lotrimin medicine] (Repetition of words at the beginning of phrases)

(e) Epistrophe: Choose to be your most beautiful. Salon beautiful. [Salon Selectives hair products] (Repetition of words at the end of phrases)

(f) Epanalepsis: Smart phone smarts. [AT & T telecommunications] (Repetition of a word toward the beginning and end of a phrase)

(g) Anadiplosis: Kleenex Ultra. Ultra softness is all you feel. [Kleenex facial tissue] (Repetition of a word toward the end of one phrase and the beginning of the text)

#### 1.3 Phrase Structures:

(h) Parison: The quality you need. The price you want. [Kmart Stores] (Marked parallelism between successive phrases: often involves the use of one or more embedded repeated words)” (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 430)

**2. Reversal.** It “combines elements that are mirror images of one another in an expression” it is like “a mirror image that repeats the original, but in reverse”. A reversal rhetoric figure can be either syntax (antimetabole) or semantic in nature (antithesis) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 432). Examples are:

**2.1 Syntax:**

(a) Antimetabole: Stops static before static stops you. [Bounce fabric softener] (Repetition of a pair of words in a phrase in reverse order)

**2.2 Semantic:**

(b) Antithesis: We got hot prices on cool stuff. [Musicland stores] (Incorporation of binary opposites in a phrase)” (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 430)

**3. Substitution.** It “selects an expression that requires an adjustment by the message recipient in order to grasp the intended content” which “always takes place along a dimension or in some kind of pre-established relationship”. Claim of extremity (hyperbole), assertive force (rhetoric question and epanorthosis) presence of absence (ellipsis) and center of periphery (metonym) are all under the substitution operation (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 432). The quoted instances are:

**3.1 Claim Extremity:**

(a) Hyperbole: Experience color so rich you can feel it. [Cover Girl lipstick] (Exaggerated or extreme claim)

**3.2 Assertive Force:**

(b) Rhetorical question: Are you protecting only half your dog from worms? [Interceptor pet medicine] (Asking a question so as to make an assertion)

(c) Epanorthosis: Take away his writing, his philosophy and his music, and he was nothing but a country doctor. In his case, a whole country. [BellSouth telecommunications] (Making an assertion so as to call it into question)

**3.3 Presence or Absence:**

(a) Ellipsis: Everyday vehicles that aren't. [Michelin tires] (A gap or omission that has to be completed)

**3.4 Center or Periphery:**

(b) Metonym: You're looking at 2 slumber parties, 3 midnight raids, 5 unexpected guests, 1 late snooze and 1 Super Bowl. [Hormel frozen foods] (Use of a portion, or any associated element, to represent the whole) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, pp. 432-433)

**4. Destablization.** It “selects an expression such that the initial context renders its meaning indeterminate (whereby multiple coexisting meanings are made available, no one of which offers a final resolution)”. The relationships involved could either

be of similarity (metaphor and pun, whereby pun is a term encompasses homonym, antanaciasis, syllepsis and resonance) or opposition (paradox and irony) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 433). The examples given are:

#### 4.1 Similarity:

(a) Metaphor: Say hello to your child's new bodyguards. [Johnson & Johnson Band-Aids] (Substitution based on underlying resemblance)

(b) Homonym: Make fun of the road. [Ford automobile] (One word can be taken in two senses)

(c) Antanaciasis: Today's Slims at a very slim price. [Misty ultralight cigarettes] (Repeating a word in two different senses)

(d) Syllepsis: It's too bad other brands don't pad their shoes as much as their prices. [Keds shoes] (A verb takes on a different sense as clauses it modifies unfold)

(e) Resonance: Will bite when cornered (with a picture of car splashing up water as it makes a turn. [Goodyear tires] (A phrase is given a different meaning by its juxtaposition with a picture)

#### 4.2 Opposition:

(a) Paradox: This picture was taken by someone who didn't bring a camera. [Kodak film] (A self-contradictory, false or impossible statement)

(b) Irony: Just another wholesome family sitcom [HBO cable TV] (with a picture of the male lead licking cream off things). (A statement that means the opposite of what is said) (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, pp. 433-434)

### Methodology

All advertisements that used figurative language were selected from the November and December 2010 Malaysian edition of the CLEO magazine and were analyzed based on the levels of rhetorical operation by McQuarrie and Mick (1996) as discussed above. It is convincing for the researcher to select this magazine as the sample in the study because the findings can be used for the researcher's TESL university students who are mostly women who represent the typical CLEO readership. CLEO magazine is at the top slot as Malaysia's best-selling, English-language women's title and its target is "young, fun-loving, spirited Malaysian women with 17-29 years of age who are always looking for ideas, ready to discover and wanting to learn". (CLEO Magazine, 2010) Hence, the advertisers' use of language is believed to be artistic and rhetorical.

To examine the taglines, first, the advertisements of various products were collected. The researcher then selected only the ones that used rhetorical figures. In case of duplicate advertisements - the same



product and the same version of advertisement - only one was retained. However, when different advertisement versions of the same products were found, one ad of each version was selected. Only the advertisements that had identifiable rhetorical figures in the taglines were collected and the total number was 80. The other ads were then discarded.

Taglines were then classified according to the Classification of Rhetorical Figures by McQuarrie and Mick (1996). Once the analysis was done, a senior linguistics lecturer at the Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, holistically re-checked the researcher's justification in classifying the rhetorical figures and considered if she agreed upon the interpretation. As a visual rhetoric has two-dimensional classification of rhetorical figures – literal image and symbolic image (Durand 1970, as cited in Mzoughi & Abdelhak, 2011), some figures can possibly be identified as more than one classification. Therefore, the researcher classified such ads according to what were perceived as the stronger rhetorical device.

After types of rhetorical figures employed in the 80 advertisement taglines were examined, the frequency of occurrence was calculated and presented in descending order from the most to the least frequently employed.

## Findings

The findings below present the types of rhetorical figures used and their frequencies of occurrence calculated as a percentage for each type of tagline.

### Figurative Language Used in advertisements

The result of the analysis reveals that there were thirteen types of rhetorical figures under the four levels of rhetorical operations proposed by McQuarrie and Mick (1996). However, in some taglines more than one rhetorical devices were employed.

The following selected examples show the justification and interpretation of the taglines in the four levels of rhetorical figures. Ads have been identified according to the issue they appear in.

#### 1. Repetition

Repetition “combines multiple instances of some element of the expression without changing the meaning of that element” which covers three aspects: sounds, words and phrase structure” (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996, p. 429). There were twenty two taglines that operate at this level, namely Alliteration, Assonance, Repetition, and Parison.

## Alliteration

Example 1 November: Face treatment: Bio-Essence

**“Keep Eye Contours, Face & Neck Finer & Firmer”**

The advertiser uses alliteration with the letters “F” from face, finer and firmer, and also makes use of assonance ‘-ner and -mer’ in the tagline. In addition to telling the readers to take care of the face and neck and always make them look good and look young, the advertiser use the technique of presenting the ideas of comparison for the better in “finer and firmer” which are desirable qualities for women in order to appear young.

Example 2 December: Facial care: The Body Shop

**“Sizzling Shimmer, Dazzling Diva”**

In this tagline, alliteration is employed by repeating the letter “D” in dazzling and diva, and the sound ‘-zzling in sizzling and -zzling in dazzling.

## Assonance/Rhyme

Example 1 November: Perfume: Lancôme

**You are unique, you are MAGNIFIQUE**

The advertiser uses assonance/rhyme for the sound in ‘unique’ and ‘magnifique’ in this tagline. The meaning of the word unique also has an impact on the readers as it is assumed that a woman wants to be different from others.

Example 2 December: Facial power: Maybeline

**THE BEST WAY TO BEAT THE HEAT**

The advertiser employs assonance in this tagline for the sound in ‘beat’ and ‘heat as well as alliteration with the “b” sound in “best” and “beat”. The rhyme also has a strong effect.

## Repetition

Example 1 November: Body wash: Dove

**“Look Fresh, Feel Fresh, Smell Fresh”**

The advertiser uses the repetition of the word “fresh” in order to stress the advantages of the product which will keep the readers fresh for the senses – look, feel, smell.

Example 2 December: Healing Gel: AOBRUZZY

**No Fuss. No Pain**

In this tagline the advertiser employed repetition by using the word ‘No’ to suggest that the readers can be assured that they will not encounter any difficulties or pain after using the product.

### Parison/Repetition

Example 1 November: Facial treatment: Clarins

**Clear up, Boost up**

**Shaped, Revitalized, Moisturized**

As the use of parallel structure and the repetition of the word “up” in the first line, the tagline can be classified as Parison and Repetition. With the parallelism in these short lines a reader gets all the desirable qualities of the product for facial treatment.

### 2. Reversal

There are only four taglines that rhetorically operate at this level which is the least. All the four are sub-categorized as Antithesis.

### Antithesis

Example 1 December: Facial care: simple

**Choose your tool for a blackhead attack or simple**

This ad addresses those who have acne; particularly blackheads which can be removed by using an extraction tool normally sold in a drugstore. However, with this advertising product, there is an easier way. The advertiser employs antithesis to express two opposite ideas by using an obvious contrast in the words ‘tool’ which signify something difficult, complicated and the word ‘simple’ which directly represent the product itself and the idea of easy and simple way to take care of one’s face.

Example 2 December: Skin care: Clinique

**‘Say yes to great skin. Even if you thought nature said no.’**

The advertiser employs antithesis by using the words “say yes” and “said no”, to bring out a contrast in the ideas. “Great skin” is wanted and one should agree to accept it though your thought says no to what you are thinking now.

### 3. Substitution

There were twenty five taglines that operate at this level – Hyperbole, Rhetorical Question, Ellipsis, and Metonymy.

### Hyperbole

Example 2 November : Scar serum: Assata

**“Lighten Acne Scars in 3 Days”**

The advertiser employs hyperbole in this tagline because lightening acne scars in 3 days is dubious. The claim is hardly believable.

Example 1 November: Eye makeup: Extreme

**“THE MYTH OF BEDAZZLING EYES”**

The use of hyperbole is presented in this tagline because the word ‘myth’ is an overstatement. This product can make your eyes incredibly, fascinatingly beautiful. The advertiser also convinced the audience that the product users will share the common belief of great beautiful eyes.

Example 3 December: Eye shadow: Chanel

**“No saint can resist these come-hither, smouldering eyes”**

The overstatement presented in this advertisement is that if you want to have the beautiful, inviting, seductive eyes that cannot be denied by anyone even a saint who is believed to be a holy figure.

### Ellipsis

Example 1 December: Internet: Maxis broadband

**Something for Everyone**

This headline is elliptical as the full one would read “(This product represents/has) something for everyone”. The advertiser uses the word “something” to imply the product’s outstanding qualification. A reader will receive a message that this multi-purposed product is important, beneficial and suitable for everyone.

### Metonymy

Example 1 December: Wristwatch: ellesse

**“Perform with Style”**

The idea presented here is that the wristwatch “Ellesse” is implied by the word “style” which is a general term. The style is something that is wanted by everybody and it can be referred to many things regarding a person physically and spiritually, including the clothes style, the ornaments, and the decoration. Wearing an “Ellesse” makes a person look fashionable and appear with certain “style”, thus the advertiser communicates to the reader that “Ellesse” wristwatch can represent “style” when one wears it.

### Rhetorical question

Example 1 November: Butter: SNOW

**What Makes a Good Spread?**

In this tagline, the advertiser uses rhetorical question in the format of a title by using a capital letter to begin every word to arouse the readers to think what is considered a good spread (for bread or sandwich). Then the advertiser intends to inform the readers that whatever their answer is, it is there, in this SNOW product.

Example 2 December: Hair care: re:nu

**Is your hair defining your age?**

The advertiser uses rhetorical question in this tagline to ask and at the same time remind the readers if their hair can tell their age, that is to say, if their hair is damaged or does not look nice and healthy, this product could be the answer for that problem.

#### **4. Destabilization**

There were twenty-nine taglines that operate at this level and are sub-categorized into Irony, Metaphor, Pun, and Paradox.

##### **Irony**

Example 1 December: Chocolate: Network Foods

**“Unzip my Dark Secret”**

This tagline is an Irony and it can also be considered slightly metaphorical. A secret is normally meant to be kept; however, the ad is inviting the reader to “open” (unzip) it. Moreover, my dark secret is a pun meaning: my secret and my chocolate. In this advertisement the advertiser used an actress to advertise a dark chocolate packed in container closed by a zipper. The actress acts as if her secret was being revealed. By using the word “unzip”, some can possibly think it is sexual innuendo. Whatever it is, now it’s the time to unzip it and share it with the readers. The secret can also be a covered story or a hidden negative side of a person called “a dark side” which people want to know naturally. Since the product is dark chocolate so the advertiser plays with the word “dark”

##### **Metaphor**

Example 1 November: Skincare: HadaLabo

**“One drop locks up an ocean”**

Metaphor is employed in this tagline as the word “one drop” represents the product which is in liquid substance and that “one drop” of the product is able to “locks up” an ocean which is supposed to be very large - much larger than a drop when literally comparing the sizes. However, considering the tremendous effect of the claim, this tagline can also be identified as hyperbole.

Example 2 November: Contacts lenses: CIBA VISION

**My eyes, the voice of my heart.**

Metaphor is used in this tagline as a comparison between “eyes” and “voices of the heart.” In reality, though, it is said that people can communicate with each

other or understand each other by looking at the eyes, the eyes definitely cannot be the voices of the heart. In this advertisement the product is contact lenses which are available in various colors. The persons who wear particular colored contact lenses partly express themselves through the choice of color.

Example 3 December: Lipstick: Lip Ice

**Turn on the spotlight with a touch**

This tagline is metaphorical. It symbolizes the simplicity of using the product (just a simple one touch) and the attraction the product can bring (spotlight is turned on and shines on the user). The advertiser implied that after using the product that enhances your natural beauty, an excellent effect will certainly make the spotlight focus on you.

**Pun**

Example 1 November: Hair removal: Veet

**“For skin to be touchably smooth and beautiful, it’s got to be Veet”.**

In this tagline, the advertiser uses pun to play with the word “Veet” which is the name of product. Upon reading it, a reader recognizes that the product name rhymes with the word “weed” which refers to “a wild plant growing where it is not wanted.” The reader is suggested that if one wants her/his skin to be touchably smooth and beautiful, they should use Veet. Other than that the advertiser uses the name of the product “Veet” as a verb for an action to remove hair from the body.

Example 2 December: Skin care: Beauty Talk

**“On Time” daily skin care for all ages**

The advertiser employs pun in this tagline to play with the word “time”. As the name of the product is “On Time” which associates with a person’s age, it implies that if a person treats the skin well and “on time”, she will have no problem with the age. Furthermore, it is never late for anybody. Because it is “on time”.

Table 1 summarized the types of rhetorical figures and the frequencies of their occurrences.

**Table 1** Types of rhetorical figures and the frequencies of their occurrences.

Types of Rhetorical Figures	Frequency			Percentages
	November	December	Total	
Destabilization-Metaphor	3	16	19	23.75%
Substitution-Hyperbole	5	10	15	18.75%
Repetition-Alliteration	6	4	10	12.50%
Destabilization-Pun	5	2	7	8.75%
Substitution-Rhetorical question	5	2	7	8.75%
Repetition-Assonance	2	5	7	8.75%
Reversal-Antithesis	1	3	4	5%
Repetition-Repetition	2	2	4	5%
Destabilization-Irony	0	2	2	2.5 %
Substitution-Ellipsis	0	2	2	2.5%
Substitution-Metonymy	0	1	1	1.25%
Repetition-Parison	1	0	1	1.25%
Destabilization-Paradox	1	0	1	1.25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Types of Rhetorical Figure and Frequency of Occurrence

### Frequency of Use of Rhetorical Figures

The results in Table 1 summarizes the two issues of CLEO, the frequency of rhetorical figures use in the taglines of advertisements in descending order from the most to the least frequently employed types. The most frequently used was Destabilization-Metaphor which occurred in 23.75 % of the 80 ads. This was followed by the occurrence of other top three styles; namely, Substitution-Hyperbole 18.75%, Repetition-Alliteration 12.50% and Destabilization-Pun, Substitution-Rhetorical Question as well as Repetition-Assonance are used 8.75% each. The least frequently used types of figurative figures were Substitution-Metonymy, Repetition-Parison, and Destabilization-Paradox which were employed by advertisers only once for each type.

## Conclusion and recommendation

This study examines the use of rhetorical figures in printed advertisements for women. Taglines in eighty advertisements in two issues of Malaysia edition of 'CLEO' magazine, in 2010 were analyzed using McQuarrie and Mick's classification of rhetorical figures. The results of the study reveal that the writing of the taglines mostly employed Substitution level and Destabilization level operational figures. There were thirteen types that fell under the four operational figures employed to make advertisements effective, attractive and memorable. Among them, Destabilization-Metaphor was the most frequently used type of rhetorical figure, followed by the other top three types: Substitution-Hyperbole, Repetition-Alliteration and Destabilization-Pun, Substitution-Rhetorical question, as well as Repetition-Assonance. The least frequently used types were Substitution-Metonymy, Repetition-Parison, and Destabilization-Paradox.

As one might expect from this kind of publication, most of the products advertised are cosmetics, skin care products or nutritious food for women, language used all refer to pleasant and positive effect, such as, desirable, magic, fresh, passion, youth, happiness, and many more to make women feel satisfied and hopeful for the best. Using the advertisements to investigate the use of rhetorical figures can benefit ESL teaching and learning in understanding more figurative and persuasive language use. However, this study only focuses on the examination of rhetorical devices but not on other aspects of discourse. Therefore, it is hoped that future research may include the other scopes; for instance, to examine connotations, to investigate the comprehension process of the students or consumers, or research on using authentic materials in ESL classrooms.



## References

- CLEO, Malaysia Edition. (November, 2010). Kuala Lumpur: Blu Inc Media Sdn Bhd.
- CLEO, Malaysia Edition. (December, 2010). Kuala Lumpur: Blu Inc Media Sdn Bhd.
- CLEO Magazine. (2010). Retrieved November 10, 2010, from [www.acpmagazines.com.my](http://www.acpmagazines.com.my).
- Lagerwerf, L., & Meijers, A. (2008). Openness in metaphorical and straightforward advertisements: Appreciation effects. *Journal of Advertising*, 37(2), 19-30.
- Langrehr, D. (2003). From a semiotic perspective: inference formation and the critical comprehension of television advertising. *Reading Online*. Retrieved October 17, 2009, from <http://www.readingonline.org/articles/langrehr/>
- Leigh, J. H. (1994). The use of figures of speech in print ad headlines. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(2), 17-33.
- McGuire, W. J. (2000). Standing on the shoulders of ancients: Consumer research, persuasion, and figurative language. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 27(1), 109-114.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (1996). Figures of rhetoric in advertising language. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(4), 424-438.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (2003). Visual and verbal rhetorical figures under directed processing versus incidental exposure to advertising. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 29(4), 579-587.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (2009). A laboratory study of the effect of verbal rhetoric versus repetition when consumers are not directed to process advertising. *International Journal of Advertising*, 28(2), 287-312. Retrieved September 25, 2009, from <http://gates.comm.virginia.edu/DGM9T/McQuarrie%20and%20Mick,%202009%20A%20Laboratory%20Study%20of%20Verbal%20Rhetoric%20and%20Message%20Repetition.pdf>
- Mulken, M., Dijk, R. E., & Hoeken, H. (2005). Puns, relevance and appreciation in advertisements. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 37, 707-721.
- Mzoughi, N., & Abdelhak, S. (2011). The Impact of Visual and Verbal Rhetoric in Advertising on Mental Imagery and Recall. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 2(9), 257.
- Nordquist, R. (2009). Figures of Speech in Advertising Slogans. Retrieved September 25, 2009, From <http://grammar.about.com/od/rhetoricstyle/a/quizfigslogans.htm>.
- Palmer, B. C., & Brooks, M. A. (2004). Reading until the cows come home: Figurative language and reading comprehension. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 47(5), 370-379.

- Philips, B. J. (2000). The impact of verbal anchoring on consumer response to image ads. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(1), 15-24.
- Philips, B. J., & McQuarrie, E.F. (2009). Impact of advertising metaphor on consumer beliefs: Delineating the contribution of comparison versus deviation factors. *Journal of Advertising*, 38(1), 49-61.
- Supasamut, P. (2006). *A Classification of Figurative Language Used in Lipstick Advertisements in Women Magazines*. (Master's thesis, Srinakarinwirot University, Bangkok).
- Toncar, M., & Munch, J. (2001). Consumer responses to tropes in print advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), 55-65.
- Wiehardt, Ginny. (2009). Figure of Speech. Retrieved September 20, 2009. From <http://fictionwriting.about.com/od/glossary/g/FigureSpeech.htm>.