THE USE OF FIGURATIVE EXPRESSION IN EBAY.COM ONLINE SHOP DEALS’ DESCRIPTION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is entitled The Use of Figurative Expression in eBay.com Online Shop Deals’ Description. This study directs to find the types of figurative expressions, to describe the meaning and the differences in using figurative expression in each category.

The researcher used a descriptive qualitative method in analyzing the data, since it is displayed in the form of words. The researcher found the figurative expression in October deals’ description of eBay.com based on Dyer’s framework (1982:152), they are: Anaphora 96 expressions (35%), Hyperbole 87 expressions (32%), Personification 54 expressions (20%), Litotes 16 expression (6%), Repetition 12 expressions (4%), Alliteration 4 expressions (1.4%), Parallelism 3 expressions (1.1%), Metonymy 2 expressions (0.7%), Simile 1 expression (0.4%) and Metaphor 1 expression (0.4%). The rest are Synecdoche and Paradox. Anaphora is the expression that the most used by seller on eBay.com. It is used since the seller wants to make the description simpler. In addition, Hyperbole also shows high percentage. Hyperbole is used to persuade people since this expression show exaggerate.

The researcher also found that electronics is the category that provides most expression, since electronics developed in this era rather than other category. Moreover, Home and Garden category provides more complete figures, which show 8 figures from 10 figures that found. Any other category, Health & Beauty shows the least expression and Jewelry & Watches shows the least figure since the seller focuses on the features of the products. The last two category show that Toys, Baby & Kids is more expressive rather than Sports and Fitness.

Keywords: Ebay, Description, Figurative Expression, October’s Deals, Products

INTRODUCTION

Communication plays an important role in life to make social life, which can be in written or spoken form through a language. Language functions as a tool to interact with each other because of communicative competence that people have. Communicative competence is realized when people transfer and exchange the idea and information, in order to get and to give a feedback as the result. Furthermore, communicative competence is able to persuade people, which implemented in advertisement and promotions of marketing. Marketing expresses language through visual and audio to deliver the messages for making people consider something new. As the result, both of communicative competence and language make marketing improved.

Nowadays, marketing depends not only on the way it communicates, but also on technology roles. The improvement of technology makes the media to promote the products, services, or brands changed. In the past, advertisement and promotion are promoted through television, radio, and magazine. Lately, it is promoted on Internet or known as E-commerce.
E-commerce, short for electronic commerce is the buying, selling, and marketing goods and services through electronic systems by networks or the Internet (Wong, 2010: 33). Since 1998, e-commerce becomes new method to sell products, services, or brands. In order to promote it on internet, the seller needs to use attractive language to get more attention. As Wells (1997:11) said that the language of advertisement should be simple, well-arranged, effective, and communicative, so that the advertisements are easy to be understood.

The role of persuasive language and figurative expression are used to catch an attention for who watch, read, or hear promotions. Amstel (1989:7) explained that the most important purpose of advertisement is to deliver message or information to audience for one reason or another in order to influence and persuade them to believe or get interested in what being advertised or offered.

Figurative expression is included in the field of stylistics, which is divided into literature stylistics and linguistic stylistics. There are mainly five figures of speech: simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, and synecdoche. It often provides emphasis, freshness of expression, or clarity.

This research discusses figurative expression on e-commerce since everyone mostly influenced by technology in doing anything. As Snider & Ziporyn’s (2008:3) said that new technologies would change what we buy, the description of the product plays an important role in the way it gained attention.

Online shops ebay.com is also used as the data of analysis for many reasons. It can make the buyer who wanted to buy does not need to ask the seller about the details. Furthermore, it can help the seller in online shops to create a description on their products. Ebay is a global phenomenon, the world’s largest garage sale, online shopping center, car dealer, and auction site with 147 million registered users in 30 countries as of March 2005. It is the first, an online auction site. We can find through categories like Antiques, Boats, Clothing & Accessories, Computers & Networking, Jewelry & Watches, and Video Games and so on. It also provides the details, including pictures, descriptions, payment options, and shipping information (Laytoon, 2015:1-2).

There are many sellers with different characteristics in order to promote their products, services, or brands. It also provides many categories details that can be analyzed of each category to make a comparison.

One example of advertisement that used figurative expression is:

1. Capture all your special moments with the Canon EOS Rebel T3i/600D DSLR camera and cherish the memories over and over again. With an 18.0 MP CMOS sensor and DIGIC 4 image processor; this DSLR camera lets you take smooth, detailed, and high-quality images. The 3-inch monitor on this Canon 18.0 MP camera makes it easy to view photos, read menu, and compose shots. With a high ISO sensitivity (up to 6,400), the Canon EOS Rebel T3i/600D captures clear photos even in low-light conditions. What’s more, you can connect this Canon 18.0 MP camera to the USB port of a PC or a printer, thanks to its dedicated interface cable. All things considered, this Canon 18.0 MP camera, with an EF-S IS II 18-55 mm lens, aims to be a great travel companion.

In the example, the seller used figurative expression to promote the product. He said that the camera can capture all of our special moments. The figurative expression...
plays as the tool to attract more buyers. It used hyperbole in the first clause capture all special moments, personification in the next clauses view, read, and compose and the other expression until the last description.

From the short example above, the researcher is possible to find out the type of figurative expression, which is mostly used by seller on ebay.com online shop.

RESEARCH METHOD

Data and subject
The data of this study were October deals’ description from ebay.com online shop. The researcher took the data from www.ebay.com, one of online shopping, which provides deals via Internet. The data were taken on October’s deals, which is offered in the websites. The October’s deals were taken randomly as there are many deals are offered every month. There are 51 deals from 17 categories. The researcher took 3 samples on each category which provide at least 1 paragraph.

Unit Analysis
The researcher analyzed the figurative expression and the meaning that can be found in the clause. Every clause will be analyzed based on Dyer’s framework (1982:152).

Technique of data Collection and Analysis
The researcher applied following procedures in collecting the data. The first the researcher open the websites and looking for the deals, which are offered. (www.ebay.com  >  www.deals.ebay.com). There are many categories that is offered, the researcher deciding the category of the product, and selecting the product that contains figurative expression. The last step is choosing the description, which reflects the unit of analysis in the product.

After found the description of the product, the researcher follows the steps to analyze the data. The first step is segmenting the description of the product into clauses. After that, the researcher identifying the figurative expression in the selected product. The third step belongs to categorizing the figurative expression for each product. The fourth, the researcher explaining, comparing, and interpreting the data. The last the researcher drawing a conclusion based on the finding of the analysis.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding
The researcher found 10 types of figurative expression that is used by the seller of ebay.com. Therefore, there are only 2 types of figurative expression that cannot be found in this data.
Table 4.1 shows the 10 figures that found in the data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>The kinds of figurative expression based on Dyer's framework</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>f%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Anaphora</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hyperbole</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Personification</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Litotes</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alliteration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Parallelism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Metonymy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Simile</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Metaphor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are 276 expressions, which are found in the October’s deals. The most used expression is Anaphora, which has 96 expressions. Anaphora is found in all seven main categories. It is used since the seller wants to make the description simpler. Furthermore, the repetition would make the description too long and bored to read, watch, and listen. The fewer categories are Simile and Metaphor. It only has 1 expression in each type. The researcher cannot found Synecdoche and Paradox expressions in this research.
The researcher also found the differences of the using figurative expression in October deals’s description of ebay.com. The total of expression is 284 based on 51 deals from 7 main categories.

Table 4.12 The differences in using figurative expression in each category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Anaphora</th>
<th>Hyperbole</th>
<th>Personification</th>
<th>Litotes</th>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>Alliteration</th>
<th>Parallelism</th>
<th>Metonymy</th>
<th>Simile</th>
<th>Metaphor</th>
<th>SUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Electronics</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Fashion</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jewelry &amp; Watches</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health &amp; Beauty</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Home &amp; Garden</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sports &amp; Fitness</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Toys, Baby Kids</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>276</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

According to the finding, the discussion shows the figures that included in October deals’ description. It also shows the use and the differences in each category.

Anaphora

There are 96 expressions that can be found in the data. Anaphora is used to make the description simple. It is also used to make the buyers who read, watch, and listen not too bored by repetition of words.

Excerpt 1:
The LG G Flex 2 is bent and curved to different degrees alongside its length (LG G Flex2LS996 - 32GB 5.5” Sprint + GSM Unlocked Android Phone)

The first anaphora is found in Electronics product’s description. Its belongs to the The LG G Flex 2. Its is used by seller to show anaphora in this description. Its is a possessive pronoun, belonging to or relating to something that has already been mentioned. Possessive pronoun is attributes ownership to someone or something. It included my, mine, our, ours, its, his, her, hers, their, theirs, your and yours.

Hyperbole

There are 87 expressions that can be found in the data. Hyperbole is used to emphasize the products’ features.

Excerpt 2:
It is also the first Android smartphone (LG G Flex2LS996 - 32GB 5.5” Sprint + GSM Unlocked Android Phone)

Another hyperbole is found in the next clause of LG G Flex2LS996 - 32GB 5.5” Sprint + GSM Unlocked Android Phone product’s description. It states that this product is the first Android smartphone, which means the pioneer. The pioneer is categorized as hyperbole, because this product declares that this is a trendsetter.
**Personification**

There are 54 expressions that can be found in the data. Personification is used to make the product acts as human being or having human sense. It means that the products has ability as well as human.

**Excerpt 3:**

*It is also the first Android smartphone*

(*LG G Flex2LS996 - 32GB 5.5” Sprint + GSM Unlocked Android Phone*)

The first personification is found in electronic categories. The seller used *smart* which represent human ability. *Smart* as Merriam-Webster dictionary is very good at learning or thinking about things, which shows intelligence or good judgment. It means that this phone has intelligence and can thinking such as operate more than one application, taking photo and video and so on.

**Litotes**

There are 16 expression can be found in the data. Litotes is used to make positive statements by using double negative statement.

**Excerpt 4:**

*It not only has an elegant appearance with the white color*

(*Thunderbolt Mini Display Port DP to HDMI Adapter for Apple Macbook Pro Air iMac*)

This product’s description used figure of understatement, named litotes to emphasize by giving negation on the features of the product. It emphasizes that the product has something more than elegant appearances.

**Repetition**

There are 12 expressions that can be found in the data. Repetition is an expression, which is repeating the same word or phrase. It used to make strong point in repeating of the word.

**Excerpt 5:**

*The smartwatch displays both analog and digital clock faces, that easily charges the smartwatch from your desktop/laptop computer. Included with your purchase is a micro USB cable to charge the smartwatch from your standard wall outlet.*

(*Orbo Kids Touchscreen Bluetooth Smartwatch w/ Tiltable Camera, Game & Activities*)

The seller clearly explained the features along with the function. Furthermore, the seller repeated the subject *The smartwatch* in several clauses. They are at least 3 repetition in this product’s description. The seller used repetition to give more detail related to the product.

**Alliteration**

There are only 4 expression that can be found in the data. Alliteration is an expression, which shows appearances of same consonant. It is used to make people consider something in the product’s description.

**Excerpt 6:**

*With 3 games that sharpen memory, reflex and musicality, and other fun features*

(*Orbo Kids Touchscreen Bluetooth Smartwatch w/ Tiltable Camera, Game & Activities*)
It seems that the seller less creative in using figurative expression. It proved that only 3 expression in Alliteration. The first is \( F \) that shows in Orbo product’s description. Alliteration is used to emphasize the features of the product. It said that it has fun. 

**Parallelism**

There are 4 expression can be found in the data. Parallelism is an expression, which shows parallel statement.

Excerpt 7: 
*Easy-on, easy-off slip-on style.*

(Crocs Walu Mens Loafer)

The only one fashion’s product that has parallelism is Crocs Walu Mens Loafer. The seller said that it is easy-on, easy off. It used to emphasize the word *easy.*

**Metonymy**

There are 2 expression that can be found in the data. Metonymy is an expression, which shows closely associated.

Excerpt 8: 
*Keeping little Suzie and Johnny’s hands warm and comfortable during the cold winter months is essential.*

(Insulated Waterproof Junior Ski Gloves - in 4 colors)

Metonymy is also used even rare in the product’s description. It found in the last category of ebay’s deals. Suzy and Johnny’s hand here is indicates Metonymy. The seller used these names, which refer to children. There is no specific names that can used the product.

**Simile**

There are 1 expression can be found in the data. Simile is an expression, which shows comparison.

Excerpt 9: 
*These gorgeous sheets--as fine as they are--are also easy to care for.*

(100% Cotton Sateen Ultra-Soft Dobby Striped Sheets)

The first simile that found is in 100% Cotton Sateen Ultra-Soft Dobby Striped Sheets product’s description. It clearly explained that the seller used as to show simile. It means that these sheets as fine as the laundry services that the seller offered.

**Metaphor**

There are only 1 expression found in this data. Metaphor is an expression to compare two things.

Excerpt 10: 
*‘the eyes are the window to the soul’*

NEW Electric Mutiny Dave Rastovich Pro Model Mens Sunglasses Msrp$120

The only one Metaphor is found in Fashion product description. It said in the glasses product. The seller compares the eyes and the window. It means that the eyes like window to see anything.

The researcher found the differences of the using figurative expression in October deals’s description of ebay.com. The total of expression is 284 based on 51 deals from 7 main categories.
**Electronics provide the most expression**

Electronic is the first category, which is offered by ebay.com on their October’s deals. It consists of four sub-categories that have been analyzed by the researcher. There are 12 samples based on Cell Phones, Tablet and Computer, Storage and Networks, and Audio and Home Teather.

The sellers provide more than 80 clauses, which show figurative expression. It can be seen on the table 11 that Electronic provides 6 figurative expressions as much as Fashion. Moreover, the seller of Electronics’ product provides more expression. It means Electronics product is more develop.

Nowadays, Electronics developed because of new technology. It plays as important role in society life, which means the sellers need to provide more expression to gain more attention. Since Electronic is become the one most popular products that bought by buyer.

**Fashion provides less expression rather than electronics**

Fashion is the second category that offered by ebay.com on their deals. It is consist of Sunglasses, Man’s Footwear-Clothing-Accessories, Woman’s Footwear-Clothing-Accessories, and Unisex Clothing and Accessories. There are also 12 samples based on Fashion category, which provides more than 50 clauses.

 Starts from the clauses itself, Fashion provides less description even though it has same samples as Electronic category. Furthermore, Fashion category provides more hyperbole than other figurative expression. It means that Fashion category is focused on future expectation.

**Health and beauty provides the least expression**

The fourth category, Health and Beauty only provides one sub-category. This is what makes this category has limited expression. It consists of 3 samples that provides by ebay.com. There are at least 10 clauses, which show 14 expressions. The sellers also focused on the specification of the product rather than give any explanation like other categories.

**Home and Garden provides more complete figures**

The fifth category in the October deals’ description is Home and Garden. This category contains 48 expression based on 8 figures. It shows that this category provides figures that are more complete rather than other category. Even though it only has 9 samples which provides by the seller, Home and Garden category shows that the seller realized figurative expression is a need to gain more buyer.

**Jewelry and Watches provides the least figures as well as Health and Beauty**

Jewelry and watches as well as Health and Beauty show the least figures. It only provides 4 figures from 10 categories that found in the October deals’ description. Jewelry and Watches consists of 6 samples meanwhile Health and Beauty contains 9 examples. The seller do not really realized that figurative expression is a need in this category. It shows that the categories are not included into most bought product by the buyer.
Toys, Baby & Kids more expressive rather than Sports & Fitness

The last two categories that offered by ebay show the same total expression. Both of them has 30 expression even though Sports and Fitness contains 9 examples meanwhile Toys, Baby & Kids only contains 6 examples. The seller of Toys, Baby and Kids show more their though and idea rather than the Sport & Fitness. These category more concern to the features of the product rather than giving seller’s opinion about the product since the product has features that need to show to the buyers.

CONCLUSION

Ebay is one online shopping that provides many categories, which show a figurative expression in their description. The researcher found figurative expression in ebay.com October’s 2015 deals based on Dyer’s framework. They are Anaphora 96 expressions (35%), Hyperbole 87 expressions (32%), Personification 54 expressions (20%), Litotes 16 expression (6%), Repetition 12 expressions (4%), Alliteration 4 expressions (1.4%), Parallelism 3 expressions (1.1%), Metonymy 2 expressions (0.7%), Simile 1 expression (0.4%), and Metaphor 1 expression (0.4%). The rest are Synecdoche and Paradox.

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The researcher also found that electronics is the category that provides most expression, since electronics developed in this era rather than other category. Moreover, Home and Garden category provides more complete figures, which show 8 figures from 10 figures that found. Any other category, Health & Beauty shows the least expression and Jewely & Watches shows the least figure since the seller focuses on the features of the products. The last two-category show that Toys, Baby & Kids is more expressive rather than Sports and Fitness.

It proves that sellers on ebay.com used figurative expression to make the description of the product more interesting and gain more buyers.

REFERENCES