

The Use of Informing Speech Act as Advertising Strategy in *Malang Kuliner* Facebook Group

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Abstract

Facebook is one of social media ranked as the fifth most accessed website in Indonesia. There is a way of using *Facebook* as a marketing means which is creating groups designed exclusively for selling products. This article discusses advertisement taken from Malang culinary group in *Facebook* called 'Malang Kuliner'. The researcher focuses on the direct informing speech act (in other words, 'pure' informing) found in the study. Although there are indirect speech acts found in the data, the researcher does not address them. The research design of this study uses a case study. It is a document analysis employing qualitative approach. The result shows that the direct speech act of informing is the most used by the popular vendors in 'Malang Kuliner' (43.7% from 293 utterances). According to this study, a successful advertisement is not always about telling people to buy the product or making promises related to the product. In some cases, giving 'pure' information can actually be the most preferable strategy chosen by the advertisers to achieve their marketing goal in online advertisement.

Keywords: *Facebook, speech act, advertising, translation*

I. Introduction

This article discusses the use of informing speech act as a part of strategies in advertising employed by the vendors in *Malang Kuliner*, which is a Facebook culinary group. Accordingly, Facebook is a part of new media which Socha and Eber-Schmid (2009) identified it as a term used in the 21st century to define all that is related to the internet and the interplay between technology, images and sound. There are internet mass media that have been massively used by people of all age around the globe, such as *Facebook, Whatsapp,*

Twitter, Skype, online newspapers, *Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube* and many more. Nevertheless, this article concerns only with *Facebook*, which entered Indonesian internet in around 2008 and was ranked as the fifth most accessed website in the country. The *Facebook* fever has made Indonesia as the fastest growing country on *Facebook* in Southeast Asia (Gunawan, 2010). Related to this article, there is a way of using *Facebook* as a marketing means which is creating groups designed exclusively for selling products. By using this feature, the user will not fill unfamiliar users

or friends' timeline with his advertisement. If people want to buy or take a look at the product, they can ask the user to be permitted and join the group. By joining the group, they will be able to see and check each of the products or give comments and buy the desired item later.

As an example of a *Facebook* group designed to help its users to sell their products is the *Malang Kuliner* (which is also the group being studied in this article). This group is one of the most popular closed groups in Malang culinary advertisement. It has more than one hundred thousand users and is still growing. A lot of Malang culinary vendors have been successfully growing their business owing to this particular group. A lot of advertisers utilize this social media to promote their products. Related to this marketing function, Vilanilam and Varghis (2004) defines an advertisement as an organized method of communicating information about a product or service which a company or individual wants to sell to the people. When the Internet emerged, numerous search options became available.

Because of this, advertisement texts have gone through so many changes and challenges over time. As Goddard (1998) stated, an advert appears to be the factor of conscious intention behind the text, with the aim of benefiting the originator materially or through some other less tangible gain, such as enhancement of status or image. The growing competition makes companies use their brain to win the battle. The point of creating a good advertisement is to convince the audience that their product will benefit them and that the competitor's does not have this quality. For the past few years, there have been a number of studies in linguistics that relate their topic to advertisement, particularly speech acts used in advertisement texts.

In regards to speech act theory, Searle (1976) suggested taxonomy of illocutionary acts namely representative

(asserting, informing), directive (commanding, requesting), commissive (offering, promising), expressive (thanking, apologizing), and declaration (firing an employee, declaring a war). Nevertheless, this article's main concern is on informing, which is included in representative category. Even though there might be indirect speech acts found in the data, the researcher only focuses on and discuss the direct speech act of informing (without addressing the indirect speech act of informing that actually indicates other speech act, or we should say 'pure' informing).

As defined by www.boundless.com (2015), informative advertisement works on informing the customers related to the products, provide the pricelist or any product information. It should be able to create awareness related to the product and the company as well. The point is there should be adequate information to motivate the customers to take an action; in this case, purchasing the product. Although there are many persuasive or even directive types of advertisement employed by advertisers, there are also those that have proved informative advertising to be quite effective.

Accordingly, based on the speech act theory, informing is included in the representative category (the purpose of this speech act is to commit the speaker to something's being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition); it is a speech act conveying information. Generally, informing means giving information or supplying knowledge (about something) to another party. Thus, this article discusses only the 'pure' informing speech act shown in the advertisement texts of 'Malang Kuliner'.

II. Research Method

The research design of this study uses a case study. It is a document analysis

employing qualitative approach. This study examines various selected culinary advertisements from a *Facebook* group called 'Malang Kuliner'. This group is chosen since it is one of the most popular *Facebook* groups related to culinary review and marketing in Malang. Moreover, 'Malang Kuliner' is also considered as the most active *Facebook* culinary group in Malang. The participants in this study are the selected vendors who are actively posted their advertisement every Saturday or Sunday (because these are the day when these popular vendors usually post their advertisements and these are the only days that allow vendors to promote their products), and are considered to be popular among the members of the group. The popularity is rated by the number of comments and 'like' in the vendor's page or advertisement posts. The selected vendors are: *Pizzaholic*, *Kedai Sumochi*, *Bara-bara Eat&Grill*, *Lutuna*, *Muji Prol Tape* and *Gemuse Hydrofarm*.

Moreover, the researcher decided to take the advertisements from August (2015) because it was the last month when vendors were still allowed to creatively post their advertisements in the group. Starting from September, the administrators of the group have activated a new rule which does not allow vendors to write or post their usual styles of advertising (they have made a new format of advertising that does not allow creative writing and every vendor must obey this new rule).

There are two types of data of this research. The first data are the utterances in the chosen advertisement texts. This data is obtained from downloading (screen capturing) the *Facebook* page containing the advertisement. Not all parts of the advertisement are used in this study; the researcher only uses the advertisement text without considering the picture attached to the advertisement. The second data is interview response. This data is used to support the finding obtained from *Facebook* screen captures. The interview questions are asked to each culinary vendor in this research and to some potential customers who are chosen based on the level of activity and regularity in posting or purchasing a product from 'Malang Kuliner'.

The methods employed to analyze the data of this research are classifying the utterances obtained from note-taking the screenshot page, then determining the generic structure of each collected advertisement. After that, the researcher identified speech acts found in the utterances and analyzed them. Lastly, the researcher investigated the relation between the most used speech act and its advertising function.

III. Result

Based on the analysis, table 1 shows the distribution of speech acts found in the advertisement:

Table 1. The Distribution of Speech Act in Ads

Speech Act	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
Direct Speech act		
<i>Representative</i>		
- Informing	128	43.7%
- Asserting	21	7.2%
<i>Directive</i>		
- Telling (commanding)	64	21.8%
- Requesting	3	1%
- Questioning	3	1%

Speech Act	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
<i>Commissive</i>		
- Offering	8	2.7%
- Promising	19	6.5%
<i>Expressive</i>		
- Thanking	3	1%
- Apologizing	1	0.4%
Indirect Speech Act		
<i>Directive</i>		
- in Representative form	37	12.6%
- in Commissive form	5	1.7%
<i>Commissive</i>		
- in Directive form	1	0.4%
TOTAL	293	100%

According to this finding, the direct speech act of informing is the most used by the popular vendors in 'Malang Kuliner' group (43.7% from 293 utterances). Since 'Malang Kuliner' is a culinary group in social media, it is possible for new comers or users to be added as members in this group. Therefore, the number of members will never be fixed as it keeps adding each day. There might not be new vendors every day, but there are always be new potential customers. Thus, it entirely makes sense if the vendors choose to write 'informative' style of advertisements. They might be popular to regular customers or old members in the group, but not to the new ones who are also new potential customers. On this basis, the vendors put as much information as possible in regards to their products; they always introduce the name and price of the products, the specialties,

and how to get information or even purchase the product. For five consecutive weeks (in August 2015), the researcher found this pattern almost in all advertisements studied in this research.

Accordingly, informing means giving information or certain knowledge to an addressee, believing that the person does not have a clue of what is being informed and that he/she needs to be informed. Thus, after delivering the information, the addressor assumes that addressee would have to believe that what has been informed is true. From 293 utterances counted in this study, the researcher found 28 utterances bearing the speech act of informing. Datum (3) will illustrate this finding (the utterances are taken only from the bodycopy of the advertisement):

Datum (3) (PH,12) (in Bahasa Indonesia)

Line	Utterances
1	<i>yeaay udah sabtu.. mau nongki cantiik ehh duit THRan abis.. mau ngedate.. boro boro</i>
2	<i>punya pacar, ttm ajah gak punya cyinn.. ya udah di rumah aja ditemenin pizzaholic gratis</i>
3	<i>tiss tiss. Minggu ini ada yg special.. 1 pemenang yg berlokasi di malang kota akan</i>

Line	Utterances
4	dapat free ongkir malang kota dari kurir andalan Antaraja.. horeee!! Per 1 agustus
5	ini Pizzaholic sudah 6 bulan melayani pecinta kuliner malang jadi minggu ini
6	hadiahnya juga special deh.. sebutin 1 menu pizzaholic yang kamu pingin cobain
7	dan menu itu akan jadi milik kamu kalau kamu menang. Yeeaayyy.. seperti biasa ada:
8	1 pemenang beruntung di grup FB malang Kuliner (s&k) dan 1 pemenang
9	beruntung di fanpage pizzaholic delivery (s&k). Syaratnya juga dipenuhi yaa:
10	1. Sebutin menu pizzaholic favoritmu 2. Like fanpage kita pizzaholic delivery
11	3. Like fanpage Antaraja malang (kalau mau dapet free ongkir malang kota pas menang
12	nanti) 4. Klik foro pizzaholic di bawah ini, lalu klik tombol 'share" atau "bagikan" di
13	kanan bawah. QUIZ berakhir pada hari MINGGU 2 AGUSTUS pk 22.00.
14	Pengumuman pemenang di komen bawah dan di fanpage pizzaholic delivery ya.
15	Follow us: IG dan Line @pizzaholic malang.FBpage: Pizzaholic delivery. Call/sms/Line
16	087859702778.Pin BB 554FAE41.Delivery station: jl. Simpang dewandaru B 6
17	Malang.Order: 24 jam/7 hari. Jadwalkirim: senin-minggu pk 10-16. Sabtu pk 10-
18	18.Area kirim: malangkota all area,malang kabupaten (batu, karanglo,
19	karangploso, singosari, lawang, pakis, tumpang, bululawang, gondanglegi,
20	turen, kepanjen, sengkaling).

Datum (3) (PH,12) (in English)

Line	Utterances
1	yeaayy it's Saturday already.. you wish to hangout but no THR money left.. you wish to
2	have a date.. you don't even have a 'very close and romantic' boy/girl friend. That's
3	okay, just stay at home and be with a totally free pizzaholic.. There is something special
4	this week, one winner from <i>malang kota</i> will get free delivery cost in <i>malang kota</i>
5	sponsored by the mainstay courier service Antaraja.. horaayy!! Per 1st of August,
6	Pizzaholic has been serving Malang culinary lovers for 6 months, so this week the
7	prize will also definitely be special.. mention 1 pizzaholic menu that you want to try and it
8	will be yours if you win. Yeeaay.. as usual, there will be: 1 lucky winner in FB group
9	of malang Kuliner (terms&conditions apply) and 1 lucky winner in pizzaholic
10	delivery fanpage (terms&conditions apply). Please fulfill the following conditions:
11	1. Mention your favorite pizzaholic 2. Like our pizzaholic delivery fanpage 3. Like
12	Antaraja malang fanpage (if you want free delivery fee in <i>malang kota</i> when you win)

Line	Utterances
13	4. Click pizzaholic photo below, then click 'share' or ' <i>bagikan</i> ' in bottom right. QUIZ
14	Ends at SUNDAY 2nd AUGUST 10 p.m. the winner announcement is in the bottom
15	comment and in pizzaholic delivery fanpage. Follow us: IG and Line @pizzaholic
16	malang. FBpage: Pizzaholic delivery. Call/sms/Line 087859702778. Pin BB
17	554FAE41. Delivery station: jl. Simpang dewandaru B 6Malang. Order: 24 hours/7
18	days. Delivery schedule: Monday-sunday at 10 a.m-16 p.m. Saturday at a.m-6 p.m.
19	Delivery area: malang kota all area, malang kabupaten (batu, karanglo,
20	karangploso, sengkaling). singosari, lawang, pakis, tumpang, bululawang,
21	gondanglegi, turen, kepanjen,

In datum (3), we can see some utterances showing the speech act of informing. In line 4-5, the vendor informs that in August 1st Pizzaholic has been serving the customers for 6 months (*'Per 1 agustus ini Pizzaholic sudah 6 bulan melayani pecinta kuliner malang'*). The next information can be seen in line 7-9 which informs the potential customers about how many winners in the quiz (one winner in Facebook group of 'Malang Kuliner' and one winner in Pizzaholic fanspage). We can also find information in line 13-14 in regards to the time limit of the quiz (it is closed on Sunday, August 22nd at 10 p.m). The last information found in the advertisement is in line 16-20, which informs the potential customers about Pizzaholic delivery station (*jl. Dewandaru*), delivery schedule (Monday to Sunday at 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday at 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.), as well as the delivery area range (*malang in town for all areas, malang kabupaten, batu, karanglo, karangploso, singosari, lawang, pakis, tumpang, bululawang, gondanglegi, turen, kepanjen, sengkaling*).

The researcher found that this type of speech act can be seen in each advertisement. As stated previously, vendors bear in their mind that there will always be new members and new potential customers need to be informed. Regular customers might know the products very

well and even keep the contact number, but not with the new potential customers who are completely unaware of the vendor and the products.

The researcher asked several questions to both vendors and customers related to this finding. The interview revealed that most of the vendors chose informing as their advertising strategy. The reason behind this was because they considered information as the most essential part in their advertisements. They did not choose to directly tell the potential customers to buy their product. The vendors were aware that there would be many new members in the group every week. This means that they could have new potential customers. This is why information becomes very important; the new potential customers needed adequate information about the products they are selling. If they merely sell or ask the new potential customers to buy the products without providing good information, they would not gain these people's attention and thus, would fail to achieve their advertising goal. In the interview, they mentioned that informing is one of the best strategies in advertising their product: the better information they can provide, the more potential customers they can persuade.

Respectively, the researcher also asked similar questions to some customers. Their responses were mostly as expected by

the vendors: they put more attention to advertisements provided with good and adequate information than those which merely tell them to buy the product. According to these customers, if the vendors already provided adequate information regarding the product, they would not need to ask a lot of questions to the vendors. In their perspective, the vendors that could provide good and adequate information were considered reliable and trustworthy. In customers' view, this factor is very important in buying online products because they cannot see the 'real' shop and that is why they need to rely on the information provided by the vendors in the posting. If they just read 'buy this product or this food' without reliable information in the advertisement, they would probably just skip the posting and scroll down to look for other advertisements with more information.

From both finding and interview, it can be deduced that most of the popular vendors used informing as one of their strategies in writing advertisements. By displaying adequate information, the vendors can provide what the potential customers need to know about the products. Even without blatantly state 'buy my product, not theirs', the popular vendors can still draw the potential customers' attention and can successfully persuade them to buy, eventually. Respectively, some potential customers interviewed by the researcher also gave similar responses to the vendors. They were not so interested in the advertisements that mostly 'order' them to buy the products without providing good and adequate information. The potential customers need to be assured that the product they are going to buy has clear and trustworthy specifications. Without adequate and good information, these potential customers will avoid purchasing the product due to the uncertainty.

So, it can be said that there is an apparent relation between the choices of

speech act in the advertisements to the marketing function. In this study, popular vendors have proved that informative speech act is actually very effective in marketing strategies when it comes to advertisements placed in *Facebook* group page, unlike some other online advertisements that might use mostly commissive or directive speech act in their writing.

IV. Conclusion

Related to the speech acts found in this study, the previous chapter shows that *informing* (direct representative) is the most used speech act in the advertisements (43.7% from 293 utterances). The vendors chose this speech act based on the consideration that they need to provide information for new members of 'Malang Kuliner' group. Telling the potential customers to buy their product directly is not preferable because they think it will not be reliable and desirable enough.

Moreover, a successful advertisement is not always about telling people to buy the product (being directive) or making promises related to the product. In some cases, giving 'pure' information can actually be the most preferable strategy chosen by the advertisers to achieve their marketing goal in online advertisement.

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