

PERSUASION AS A MACRO-SPEECH ACT IN PRINT ADS¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

Studies on ads as one type of persuasive discourse have focused on a number of issues relative to the language of advertising. Leech's (1966) pioneering study dealt with the language of TV commercials in Great Britain. The thesis of Leech's study was that, conditioned by the situation in which an ad is used, the language – in this case, English – of advertising strikes a delicate balance between “conservative” and “liberal” tendencies, making it a specialized language or a register, in much the same category as legal English and scientific English. Leech defined “conservative” as the “tendency to linguistic conformity” which is manifested in what he called “standard advertising English” (p. 99). He described “liberal” as the tendency of “linguistic non-conformity” which shows itself in many different ways: “in the adoption of eccentric ‘styles’, in the invention of new words, in linguistic games and jokes, in fact in any way that is likely to stimulate curiosity and interest” (p. 99). It is this linguistic unorthodoxy that Leech labeled as “non-standard advertising English”.

In 1978-1979, Tash conducted a study that looked at “how the language of advertising deviates from ordinary usage” and determined, as far as possible, “what result such deviation has upon the reader” (p. 222). In addition to looking at well-known linguistic deviations in headlines of ads – alliteration, neologism, and using a word in a less common syntactic role – the study, more importantly, analyzed meaning-based deviations such as idioms (lexemic and phraseological, and sayings and proverbs), expressions that simply appear to be logical, and those that are devoid of logic or are logically false, and the so-called unfulfilled expectations, that is, expressions in which the truth is slightly bent to catch the reader's attention.

In a study that highlighted the interplay between language and culture in ads, Aman (1982) analyzed the words and graphic signs in ads that were “proper in one language but offensive in another” (p. 216). The paper discussed four categories of blunders, viz.: (1) using taboo English words in English-speaking countries; (2) using foreign words in other foreign countries; (3) using foreign words in English-speaking countries (of interest to importers); and (4) using English words in foreign countries (important to exporters) (p. 218). The article cautioned its intended audience, marketing people, against the use of offensive codes and symbols in a particular language.

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Bhatia's (1992) article, on the other hand, dealt with the role of English in print advertising at the global level. Among other things, this paper outlined the structural components of print ads as well as showed the preference for English as "perhaps the single most favored language for global mixing" (p. 213). Of interest in this study was the observation that even closed languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese, French) – i.e., those that traditionally "resist foreignism and attempt to maintain their linguistic purity" (Bhatia, 1992, p. 201) – have begun to accept borrowings from English.

Cook (1992), on the other hand, in his desire for a holistic description of advertising language, explored the social function of advertising, paying attention not only to an ad as text per se but to the objects around it, thus proving that these are in complex interaction with one another. The study was not strictly linguistic in nature as it blended language and poetics in its analysis. Furthermore, apart from evolving a paradigm, the book has a pedagogical value in that every chapter ends with very relevant exercises as an application of the part of the theory that the author is trying to build in that chapter.

Rush's (1998) study aimed at giving "a formal description of two unusual features of the noun phrase (NP) in English print advertising: its ability to operate as an independent clause in all areas of an ad – headline, subhead, signature line and text (body copy) – and its complex premodifying structures" (p. 1). With its corpus drawn primarily from Canadian and American newspapers published from 1993 to 1996, the study focused on premodification in the NP. The study found that NP premodification is "characterized by the abundant use of comparative and superlative adjectives and of colourful compounds, and by the tendency to place the product (or trade) name in first or early position in lengthy designations" (pp. 161-165). Furthermore, the author observed that it is the second unusual feature of print ads – complexity of premodifying structures – that causes disruption in the traditional word-order of premodifying adjectives in the NP. The study concluded that the investigation of the two remarkable features of the NP in print ads "brings to light two opposing tendencies: on the one hand, the complexity of the noun phrase's inner structure, and on the other hand, its simplicity of structure across sentence boundaries" (Rush, 1998, p. 169).

Smith (1982) took a slightly different tack from the foregoing studies in that it looked at ads from a predominantly functionalist perspective. In Smith's study, the persuasive function of an ad was considered a given, and on this basis, the discussion went on to highlight the perlocutionary effect of advertising, namely, the change in consumer's attitude. The latter was a deliberate choice on the part of the writer because he believed that purchasing, the ultimate consequence of advertising, was difficult to measure. Initially, he had described a market segmentation technique known as psychographics (or lifestyle analysis). According to him, this was necessary to enable the ad copywriter to know the audience to whom an ad appeals. Explaining why ads take the form they do, the study then addressed issues such as women's language, form of headlines, and the use of information chunks. On the first issue, the author posited that the absence of women's language in ads could be attributed to the features ascribed to women's language such as hedges, intensifiers, hesitations, etc., which are characteristic of what he called "powerless language" (Smith, 1982, p. 195). As such, women's language is "powerless language" and using this would run counter to the persuasive character of ads. On the second issue – form of ad headlines – the author believed that headlines appear in boldface type, and that they contain neologisms and puns and have the greatest amount of alliteration, assonance, and rhyme, because headlines serve the function of attracting and holding the reader's attention. On the third, the use of information chunks in the body copy is due to an ad copywriter's desire to delete given information and to retain new, focused information.

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Local studies on advertising have likewise focused on the language of ads. For instance, Garcia (1975) found, among other things, that ad copies employed a wide use of English and that English was usually used in ad copy for cigarettes, banks, alcoholic drinks, soft drinks, and milk. Bilingual (English-Tagalog) ads for these products were used only occasionally. Both English and bilingual copy was used for laundry soap and detergents. In addition, there was more bilingual copy that was predominantly Tagalog and mixed with some English terms than there was with a predominance of English mixed with Tagalog terms. The following were the most frequently used bilingual copytypes: Tagalog copy mixed with English sentences, phrases, and words; Tagalog copy mixed with English phrases and words; and English copy mixed with Tagalog sentences, phrases, and words.

In 1976, Rodriguez conducted a similar study on bilingual ads, but one that dwelt on television commercials. In general, her study sought to investigate the frequency of English and Pilipino words and parts of speech contained in bilingual ads on TV. The findings in Rodriguez's study included the following: (1) there were more ads in bilingual Pilipino heard and listened to on TV, (2) there was more Pilipino used in bilingual ads, although there were more content words in nouns and adjectives used in English than in Pilipino, (3) there was a significant relationship between the language of the parts of speech and language style used in bilingual ads, and (4) bilingual ads were used by the advertisers, advertising agencies, and scriptwriters in order to cater to the majority of consumers who were schooled in English, but spoke Pilipino at home.

Finally, Batnag (1995) aimed to investigate the use of Filipino in print and broadcast ads. Her corpus of data consisted of ads in national broadsheets (e.g., *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, *Philippine Star*), and tabloids (e.g., *People's Journal*), and commercials aired on radio and TV. She found that Filipino was used in ads for products that fulfill basic needs, examples of which are food, medicine, personal products, household supplies, etc. Expensive products like cars, refrigerators, etc. were not advertised in Filipino. Batnag's study also found that for print ads the body used words, phrases, and sentences in English; captions and slogans used Filipino. Further, this study revealed that although Filipino was the dominant language used, in TV and radio commercials, most of the announcer's (voice-over) lines were said in English, an observation that led the author to believe that perhaps this was done to show that the language of authority was English.

The above survey of related studies gives us some interesting observations regarding 35 years of research on advertising discourse. First, the majority of them have explored the peculiarities of advertising language, characterizing features of ads in terms of their syntactic, semantic, and lexical structures. Here, Rush (1998), Tash (1978-1979), and Leech (1966) are among those worth mentioning. But scholarship in advertising discourse has gone beyond a purely linguistic analysis of micro-features of ad language to include themes revolving around contact of languages in multilingual settings. Included in this group are local studies such as Garcia (1975), Rodriguez (1976), and Batnag (1995), which paid attention to the influence of two languages (English and Filipino) on ads. Bhatia (1992) was along this line, too, except that the languages in question were English and the so-called "closed" languages (e.g., Chinese, Japanese). Another theme dealt with by studies in advertising language is the larger extralinguistic context in which ads are produced. These include Smith (1982) and Cook (1992), which viewed ads from a predominantly

functionalist perspective, positing that there are several cultural and socio-economic variables that impinge on the structure of ad language.

While studies involving linguistic features have helped in arriving at a comprehensive description of advertising language, much still needs to be done in terms of describing ads as discourse *per se*. This means that a description that looks beyond utterances as discrete units in ads, which has characterized much of the scholarship in advertising discourse, may provide more insights into the workings of persuasion in advertising. After all, if ads are to be classified as a discourse type, there is a sense in which we can say that an analysis of only the linguistic features of utterances, however sophisticated it may be, may be far from giving a holistic picture of how persuasion works in print ads. A functional description in terms of speech acts may partly address this gap in research.

In this paper, therefore, I shall describe persuasion in print ads as a speech act, and more specifically, as a macro-speech act.

The theoretical underpinnings of the present study have been drawn largely from Speech Act Theory, originated by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1965 and 1979), as well as the works of van Dijk (1977) on the pragmatics of discourse.

Pragmatics, as a sub-area of linguistics, has been largely associated with the study of speech acts, sometimes called language acts or linguistic acts (Searle 1965). Austin (1962) uses the term illocutionary acts to refer to speech acts. Speech Act Theory proceeds from "the basic belief that language is used to perform actions: thus, its fundamental insights focus on how meaning and action are related to language" (Schiffrin, 1994, p. 49). In his seminal work *How to do things with words* (1962), which laid the foundation for the study of speech acts, Austin notes that when a person says something, he/she does something. That is, there is a performative dimension to the use of language.

Austin (1962) differentiates between three levels of speech act, namely, locutionary act, illocutionary act, and perlocutionary act. According to him, a locutionary act is further subdivided into three levels: phonetic act, phatic act, and rhetic act. Phonetic act concerns "merely the act of uttering certain noises" (p. 95), or to use a more acceptable term, the act of uttering sounds; phatic act concerns "the uttering of certain vocables or words" that are categorized in terms of choice of vocabulary and conformity with grammar (p. 95); rhetic act is "the performance of an act of using those vocables with a certain more-or-less definite sense and reference" (p. 95). An illocutionary act, which in recent years has come to be synonymous with speech act, is the "performance of an act *in* saying something as opposed to performance of an act *of* saying something" (p. 99; italics in the original). A perlocutionary act, in contrast, refers to the consequence or effect of an illocutionary act on the thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or actions of the audience or addressee. To illustrate the three levels of speech act, Austin gives the following examples (p. 102):

Locution: He said to me, 'You can't do that.'

Illocution: He protested against my doing it.

Perlocution: (a) He pulled me up, checked me.

(b) He stopped me, he brought me to my senses, etc.

He annoyed me.

Elaborating on Austin's (1962) concept of speech act, van Dijk (1977, p. 195) has this to say: "What is usually meant by saying that we do something when we make an utterance is that we accomplish some specific social act, e.g. making a promise, a request, giving advice, etc., usually called speech acts, or more specifically, illocutionary acts."

As a critique of Austin's taxonomy of illocutionary acts which included behabitives, expositives, expressives, exercitives, and verdictives, which he considered arbitrary, Searle (1979) evolved his own taxonomy. He distinguished five classes of illocutionary acts: representatives (later changed to assertives, but the present study has stuck to the old name, in keeping with the literature), directives, expressives, declarations, and commissives. Representatives cover those utterances whose point or purpose is to commit the speaker to something being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition. Members of this class are assessable on the dimension which includes *true* and *false*. Here, the direction of fit is words to the world; the psychological state expressed is Belief (that *p*) (Searle, 1979, p. 12). An example of a representative is the utterance *The Philippines is a beautiful country*. In the present study, utterances that assert something, describe or illustrate an object or thing, give information such as statistics, facts and figures, identify or name something, explain or clarify a point, exemplify or enumerate objects in a series, all fall under the first class.

The second class – directives – includes utterances in which the speaker gets the hearer to do something. The direction of fit is world-to-words and the sincerity condition is want (or wish or desire) (Searle, 1975, p. 14). For the present study, order or advice, request, and suggestion are classified under directives. An example of a directive is the utterance *Please turn off the lights before you leave the office*.

The third group – commissives – has the purpose of committing the speaker to some future course of action. The direction of fit is world-to-words and the sincerity condition is intention. An example of a commissive is *I promise to give you the book tomorrow*.

In the case of expressives – the fourth category – the illocutionary point is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content. Here, there is no direction of fit since "the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed" (Searle, 1979, p. 15). Congratulations, apology, and welcome are included in this class. *I congratulate you on winning the grand prize* is an example of an expressive.

As for the last category – declarations – its successful performance brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality, or a fit between words and the world (Searle, 1979, p. 17). For example, if a priest successfully performs the act of marrying a man and a woman, then they are married.

Because of its multidisciplinary nature, pragmatic study has come to cover other important sub-domains including the pragmatics of discourse. Van Dijk (1977) defines the pragmatics of discourse as "the systematic relations between structures of text and context" (p. 205). Central to this subfield of pragmatics is the notion of the macro-speech act or global speech act and its properties. In other words, discourse pragmatics is interested in "the sequences of speech acts which are realized by text and talk" (van Dijk, 1997, p. 14).

Schiffrin (1994) claims that two issues are critical to the application of Speech Act Theory as an approach to the study of discourse. These are identification of utterances as speech acts and sequential arrangement of speech acts (speech act sequence). On the basis of Schiffrin's claim, we can therefore think of persuasion in print ads as a global speech act

or a macro-speech act.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

The study is descriptive in nature since it is language in use in actual communication (particularly advertising) that has been documented and described. In particular, text analysis, i.e., analysis of print ads as texts or discourse units, is the predominant research technique that has been employed. The use of text analysis may be justified by the fact that the study pays attention to the textual and contextual features of Philippine print ads.

2.2. Corpus of the Study and Data Collection

The corpus of the study consists of print ads from newspapers of general circulation. To ensure a broad base of print advertisements represented in the study, I collected ads from three Philippine English broadsheets, *Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI)*, *Manila Bulletin (MB)*, and *Philippine Star (PS)*. These three newspapers were chosen because they are the three leading newspapers in terms of readership as borne out by findings of surveys, for example, that conducted from September 23 to October 8, 1995, by Networks Marketing Consulting Group, an independent American firm (Dayag, 1997, p. 113), and another that was conducted in May and June 1999 by Asia Research Organization, a member of Gallup International. It should also be noted that members sitting on the editorial board of each of the three newspapers are all Filipinos, making these publications truly Filipino, at least in terms of citizenship.

Only ads promoting products belonging to the consumer nondurable category were included in the corpus of the present study. Of the products that Cutler and Javalgi (1993) classify under this category, only three product types constituted the sample, namely, food and drinks (FD), cosmetics and personal hygiene items (CPHI), and household supplies (HS). Examples of these products are the following: mineral water and donuts (FD), shampoo and skin whitening cream (CPHI), and detergent and air freshener (HS). The original plan was to collect the sample from the Sunday and Wednesday issues of the three broadsheets over four weeks, that is, from April 18 to May 12, 1999, for a total of 24 issues. It turned out, however, that only two ads for household supplies were gathered during the period. For this reason, HS ads had to be taken from issues of the broadsheets beyond the period cited above, that is, in June, July, and August 1999. This was done to make the sample size for the product type comparable with those for food and drinks and cosmetics and personal hygiene items.

In addition, to be considered for inclusion in the corpus, it was important for an ad to be for the brand or product itself, not for an event or contest (e.g., sale or raffle draw) sponsored by the product or brand. Lastly, duplicate, triplicate, or quadruplicate ads, i.e., those ads for the same brand or product that appeared in another newspaper or that showed up in another issue of the same newspaper, were weeded out. This was done "in order to eliminate any redundancies which may [skew] the results" (Stern and Resnik, 1991, cited in Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996, p. 32).

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Given the above restrictions for data collection, 60 ads made up the corpus of the present study. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the sample according to product category and the newspaper where the ads were taken from.

Table 1. Total Number of Ads in the Corpus

<i>Newspaper</i> <i>Product Type</i>	Manila Bulletin	Philippine Star	Philippine Daily Inquirer	TOTAL
Food and Drinks (FD)	7 (11.67%)	7 (11.67%)	14 (23.33%)	28 (46.67%)
Cosmetics and Personal Hygiene Items (CPHI)	8 (13.33%)	2 (3.33%)	9 (15.00%)	19 (31.66%)
Household Supplies (HS)	1 (1.67%)	0	12 (20.00%)	13 (21.67%)
TOTAL	16 (26.67%)	9 (15.00%)	35 (58.33%)	60 (100%)

2.3. Procedure

The procedure consisted of the following:

1. Collection of ads from *PDI*, *MB*, and *PS*
2. Sorting and eliminating of duplicate, triplicate, and quadruplicate ads
3. Segmentation of texts into syntactic units
4. Classification of syntactic units into complete sentences and sentence fragments and further into specific types
5. Labeling of the illocutionary acts performed by utterances in the ads
6. Description of persuasion as a macro-speech act in terms of speech act sequence

2.4. Data Analysis and Treatment of Data

The unit of analysis of the present study is the ad itself. Specifically, the analysis centers on the verbal component (i.e., utterances) of each of the ads. The concept of utterance in the present study is not limited to the complete sentence and therefore includes the sentence fragment. Because of the difficulty of chunking the text in the absence of illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) employed in oral discourse like pitch, stress, intonation contour, etc., I had to rely on the terminal punctuation (period, exclamation point, question mark) as the device for determining the end of an utterance, and capitalization as that for signalling the beginning.

The data were analyzed using a number of tools, as presented and discussed in Section 1. With regard to the description of persuasion as a macro-speech act in the print ads, inferencing was done to determine the linguistic functions of the utterances with the end in view of mapping out the speech act sequence occurring in the ads. The functions include the following: assertion, description/illustration, identification, information, explanation/clarification, enumeration/exemplification, emphasis, order/advice, suggestion, and request. To arrive at these classes of speech acts, I relied on earlier taxonomies of explicit performative verbs evolved by Austin (1962) and Searle (1979), but these were modified to suit the objectives of the present study. One such modification entailed transforming explicit performative verbs into nominal forms to denote the performance of illocutionary acts. For instance, the performative verbs *describe*, *inform*, *identify*, which all appear under the class expositives in Austin (1962, p. 161), were labeled as description, information, and identification, respectively. The conversion of explicit performative verbs into nominal-type labels of language functions can be justified by the fact that a great majority of the utterances in the corpus perform indirect speech acts (as opposed to direct, explicit ones), thereby rendering the use of performative verbs inappropriate.

A further classification of the speech acts into bigger groups made use of Searle's (1979) taxonomy of illocutionary acts, as explained and exemplified in Section 1. These classes are representatives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations.

Finally, on the treatment of data, all of the above descriptive data were quantified using simple frequencies and percentages.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Illocutionary Acts in Print Ads

As stated in Section 1, illocutionary acts may be classified following Searle's (1979) taxonomy of representatives, directives, declarations, expressives, and commissives.

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of illocutionary acts in the print ads, using Searle's taxonomy.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Illocutionary Acts in Print Ads

<i>Speech Act Type</i> <i>Product Type</i>	Representatives	Directives	Expressives	Declarations	Commissives	TOTAL
FD	189 (29.81%)	45 (7.10%)	0	0	0	234 (36.91%)
CPHI	205 (32.33%)	54 (8.52%)	2 (0.32%)	0	0	261 (41.17%)
HS	103 (16.25%)	36 (5.68%)	0	0	0	139 (21.92%)
TOTAL	497	135	2	0	0	634
%	78.39	21.29	0.32			100%

It should be mentioned, first of all, that the data show that all of the illocutionary acts in the corpus are indirect, meaning that there is not one single utterance that uses an explicit performative verb. For the purpose of differentiating between a direct and an indirect speech act, a request is given below in two versions, the first directly and the second indirectly:

Direct speech act: *See me in my office tomorrow at 2 p.m.*

Indirect speech act: *Can you see me in my office tomorrow at 2 p.m.?*

In the first example above, the utterance is a direct speech act because it is a direct command said in a very straightforward manner. In the second example, no explicit performative verb shows up in the utterance. Syntactically, the utterance is a question. But it performs the illocutionary act of request even without the performative verb; hence, it is an indirect speech act.

Table 2 shows that more than three-fourths (or 78.39%) of the total number of utterances that constitute the corpus of this study are classified as representatives, making this type the mostly widely used category of speech acts in Philippine print ads. Trailing far behind is the second group – directives – with a little more than one-fifth (or 21.29%) of the total classified as such. And a negligible 0.32% of the total number of utterances are categorized as expressives. None of the 634 utterances can be labeled declarations and commissives.

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The same trend can be seen across product types, with representatives topping the list, followed by directives and expressives, if the latter group occurs in the data at all. Also, worth noting is the fact that for representatives and directives, it is the CPHI ads that manifest the biggest chunk of the total number of utterances grouped under each illocutionary act. They are followed by the FD ads and the HS ads, which rank second and third, respectively.

Below are the two expressives found in the corpus. Utterances classified as representatives and directives will be discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

Thanks to New Cream Silk with more protein. (Cream Silk Conditioner)

"Adios blackheads!" (Pond's Clear Pore Strips)

The utterance from the *Cream Silk* ad is an expressive since it conveys a psychological state (i.e., gratitude) about the product. It is the word *thanks* that determines the classification of this utterance into an expressive. The second utterance – from the *Pond's Clear Pore Strips* ad – is problematic, however. This is because although it uses *adios* (the Spanish equivalent of goodbye) which also expresses a psychological state and should therefore qualify as an expressive, this is directed to blackheads and not to a person. In Searle (1979), it is assumed that in order for farewell or goodbye to be considered an expressive, it should be addressed to a person, as should *welcome*, *congratulate*, *condole*, and other explicit performative verbs that fall under expressives. It is the same assumption in Austin's (1962) inclusion of farewell under the class *behabitives*, the equivalent of Searle's expressives. Be that as it may, the above utterance from *Pond's* has been categorized as an expressive if only for the use of *adios* and with the assumption that it is an attempt at ascribing a human act to a non-human entity, which may be another characteristic of print ads.

3.2. Representatives in Print Ads

Just which utterances are counted as representatives and how they are distributed in the corpus are revealed in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Types of Representatives in Print Ads

<i>Product Type</i> <i>Type of Representative</i>	FD	CPHI	HS	TOTAL
Assertion	91 (18.31%)	95 (19.12%)	48 (9.66%)	234 (47.08%)
Description/ Illustration	35 (7.05%)	25 (5.03%)	19 (3.82%)	79 (15.90%)
Information	22 (4.43%)	46 (9.26%)	10 (2.01%)	78 (15.69%)
Identification	24 (4.83%)	17 (3.42%)	17 (3.42%)	58 (11.67%)
Explanation/ Clarification	7 (1.41%)	11 (2.21%)	6 (1.21%)	24 (4.83%)
Rhetorical Question	3 (0.60%)	8 (1.61%)	1 (0.20%)	12 (2.42%)
Exemplification/ Enumeration	6 (1.21%)	3 (0.60%)	2 (0.40%)	11 (2.21%)
Emphasis	1 (0.20%)	0	0	1 (0.20%)
TOTAL	189 (38.03%)	205 (41.25%)	103 (20.72%)	497 (100%)

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Table 3 reveals that there is widespread use in the corpus of representatives classified as assertions. Out of the total number of representatives, 234 (or 47.08%) are classified as assertions. On top of this, all but two of the 60 ads contain utterances that are inferred as assertions. The aggregate figures also reveal that description/illustration, information, identification, and explanation/clarification, occupy the second, third, fourth, and fifth positions, respectively.

Comparing the figures across the three product types, it is still assertion that tops the list. In the FD sample, the second largest percentage is obtained by description/illustration, followed by identification, information, and explanation/clarification. In the CPHI sample, however, next to assertion in terms of frequency is information; description/illustration, identification, and explanation/clarification occupy the third, fourth, and fifth spots, respectively. In the HS sample, the second position is taken by description/illustration, and the third, fourth, and fifth positions are occupied by description/illustration, identification, information, and explanation/clarification, respectively.

What is common to both the aggregate figures and the data for each of the product types is that the same types of representatives are included in the first five most frequently used representative types in the corpus. They are assertion, description/illustration, information, identification, explanation/clarification. Putting together the aggregate figures for these types of representatives will yield 473, or 95.17% of the 497 utterances that have been classified as representatives.

Assertions of the type counted as representatives may be exemplified by the following utterances culled from the *Carnation Calcium Plus* and *Betadine Feminine Wash* ads, both of which appear in these ads as headlines:

Milk is the best source of calcium. (Carnation Calcium Plus)
When it comes to monthly itching and irritation, the stronger
sex needs a little help. (Betadine Feminine Wash)

Assertions in the data such as those quoted above usually take the form of positive statements of belief or judgment. It is also apparent that these utterances typically are in the form of what traditional grammar calls declarative statements. The pervasiveness of assertions in the corpus is consistent with the fact that ads make claims, and to do this, they make use of statements asserting something about the product such as the above extract from the *Carnation* ad, or the product user, like the above excerpt from the *Betadine* ad.

Description/illustration is another type of representative in the corpus. This representative type accounts for 15.90% (or 79) of the total number of utterances under the class of representatives. That makes it the second largest in terms of frequency. The following utterance from the *555 Tuna Afritada* ad is illustrative of the description/illustration type of representative.

Siksik sa protina para laging malusog at masigla ang buong pamilya.
Ngayon, fortified pa with Vitamin A

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The occurrences of description/illustration in the corpus such as the one above quite obviously describe and illustrate something, in this case, the product. The description/illustration-type, however, has not been confined to the physical features of the product being advertised. It has been expanded to include the physical composition of the product as well.

Giving information as a type of representative is also shown in Table 3. In the data there are 78 occurrences of this type or 15.69% of the total number of representative-type utterances, making it the type with the third biggest share of representatives. This figure, though, is small compared to that for assertion. Despite this disparity in number between assertion- and information-type representatives, the latter is an interesting case of how print ads get their messages across. In the following excerpt from the *VIVA! Mineral Water* ad, two information-giving utterances follow an assertion, thus:

*The best source of life comes to you in every bottle of VIVA!
VIVA! Mineral Water is taken from the underground natural
springs of Mt. Makiling and Mt. Kanlaon. Both sources are
sheltered within tropical virgin forests under 24-hour security to
prevent contamination and pollution.*

In the *VIVA!* extract above, although it cannot be ascertained whether the company has indeed put the two sources of *VIVA!* under 24-hour security, the last two utterances, on the whole, aim at giving information presumably to make sense of the claim that the “best source of life comes ...in every bottle of *VIVA!*”. The justification for such a sweeping statement has to be made even if, by itself, its truth value remains questionable.

Still on Table 3, there are a total of 58 ads (or 11.67% of the total) whose function is to identify the product or some object. The following headline of the *Aquafresh Flex Direct Toothbrush* ad exemplifies the identification type of representative.

Introducing New Aquafresh Flex Direct

The fifth largest share (or 4.83%) of representatives in the corpus is obtained by explanation/clarification. The following utterance from *Breeze Powermatic* exemplifies this type of representative.

*Dahil ang all-new BREEZE POWERMATIC ay may mas mabisang
NEW GENERATION ANTI-STAIN SYSTEM.*

(emphasis in the original)

The above extract from *Breeze Powermatic* performs the illocutionary act of explaining or clarifying since the utterance is an attempt to explicate the assertion previous to it – *Sa unang laba, tapos ang matitinding mantsa.*

Description/illustration, information, identification, and explanation/clarification, when combined together, account for less than 48.09% of the total number of representative-type utterances in the corpus. That the ads use these four types stresses the complementary role they play vis-à-vis assertions. This is because whereas assertions make claims, the above-mentioned representative-type utterances are an attempt to provide supporting material to the claim, which is done to make it believable or, at the very least, give it a semblance of credibility.

3.3. Directives in Print Ads

As shown in Table 2, an overwhelming majority of utterances in the corpus are representatives. Still, a description of the corpus in terms of illocutionary acts requires a brief discussion of directives, the type which has obtained the second highest number of occurrences. Three sub-classes of directives have been identified in the data (see Table 4).

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Types of Directives in Print Ads

<i>Directive Type</i> <i>Product Type</i>	Order/Advice	Suggestion	Request	TOTAL
FD	39 (28.89%)	5 (3.70%)	1 (0.74%)	45 (33.33%)
CPHI	49 (36.30%)	5 (3.70%)	0	54 (40%)
HS	35 (25.93%)	1 (0.74%)	0	36 (26.67%)
TOTAL	123 (91.11%)	11 (8.15%)	1 (0.74%)	135 (100%)

Table 4 reveals that of the 135 utterances labeled directives, 91.11% are considered order/advice. Suggestion accounts for 8.15% of the total number of directives, making it the second in terms of frequency. Request, which constitutes a negligible 0.74% of the total, takes the third position. This overall trend is the same tendency across product types. In the case of order/advice, more utterances in the CPHI ads perform this function than in the FD and HS ads, taken separately.

It should be mentioned that all imperatives in the print ads have been labeled order or advice which, according to Table 4, falls under the category directives. This type of directive is exemplified by the *Nesvita Natural Cereal Drink* ad, reprinted below.

So start a new healthy habit. Drink fiber-rich Nesvita.

The two utterances from the *Nesvita* ad are imperatives in that both do not have a phonetically audible *you* as subject of each, which should make them directives. However, the important reason for classifying imperative sentences as directives has less to do with structure than with the illocutionary force of each utterance. This is because the utterances by themselves aim at getting the potential buyer to do something, hence the use of overt instructions.

Another type of directive included in the corpus is suggestion, although the number of instances of suggestion pales in comparison to that of order/advice. In spite of this discrepancy in number between these two types of directive, the occurrence of suggestion as a directive is equally interesting. Suggestion, which may be another name for an instruction but said in an indirect manner, is realized in print ads in various ways. A case in point is the pair of utterances in the *Enfagrow Milk* ad, which reads:

Also available! New Enfagrow Lacto-Free with Fiber.

The above utterances read like mere information-giving utterances, or at best, a declarative. A closer examination of the sentence fragments, however, seems to reveal an utterance that has the illocutionary force of suggesting. That is to say that aside from the product mainly promoted by the ad, there is another variant of the same brand name that is out in the market, thus endorsing the latter to the potential buyer and further suggesting that s/he buy the second product. Certainly, this power of suggestion in print ads is not as clear-cut as perhaps in oral discourse with the latter's use of paralanguage like pitch and intonation contour, but given that print ads, at least those included in the corpus of the present study, presumably aim at influencing a buyer's decision, inferring this type of illocutionary act from the printed language appears to be an appropriate interpretation.

In this age of information technology, Philippine companies cannot afford to be left behind by their Western counterparts. Nowadays, a number of these firms placing their ads in newspapers include their web pages, suggesting to buyers that they can surf the Internet and engage in on-line commercial transactions one way or the other. Thus, in the present study, this information is considered a suggestion, a type of directive. An example of this form is that which has appeared in the *Alaska Milk* ad, to wit:

<http://www.alaskamilk.com.ph>

The occurrence of the third type of directive – request – is not as pervasive in the study as the first two. This is because, out of 135 directive-type utterances, there is only one utterance which has been classified as request. This type of directive which is directly realized through politeness-indicating words like *please* in English or prefixes like *paki-* in Tagalog, has indirect forms like the use of question.

The near-absence of request in the data may be explained by the fact that polite, indirect language does not seem to have a place in persuasive discourse such as print ads. This is because request, although the preferred language form in many conservative societies like the Philippines, may be considered weak, and hence, inconsistent with the nature of persuasive language which is usually direct, strong, and concise.

3.4. Speech Act Sequence

This section aims to amplify the notion of macro-speech act by looking at the sequentiality of illocutionary acts in Philippine print ads, that is, a sketch of the type of speech act that precedes another and the type that follows a preceding act. Illustrations of each possible pattern will be given.

A macro-speech act is otherwise known as a global speech act that typically consists of component acts, some of which may be preparatory or auxiliary (van Dijk, 1977). In a study of the speech act of request, for example, van Dijk (1977, p. 240) enumerates the following steps or components that constitute the act:

1. establishing a necessary condition: the possession by A of requested object;
2. motivating the request;
 - a. establishing a necessary condition: birthday;
 - b. intended action for which the object is needed: giving as a present;
3. stating a condition: request to be complied with only if the requested object is for sale/is not used;
4. request-proposition; statement of intentions with respect to the object as repeated motivation.

Initially, it should be mentioned that 33 (or 55%) of the 60 ads in the corpus open with a headline that contains at least one assertion. Given this number, we can therefore say that the typical Philippine print ad attracts and holds attention by making an assertion. Here is an example from the *Alaska Milk* ad.

Milk makes the Megastar shine.

Here is another one, this time in Tagalog, from the *Red Bull-S Energy Drink* ad:

Walang tatalo sa sukdulang lakas!

The *Del Monte Fresh-Cut Sliced Pineapple* ad has the same type of speech act in its headline, which is reprinted below:

*Everything good about **harvest-fresh** fruit can be yours!*

(emphasis in the original)

Data also show that in a number of ads, an assertion-type headline is followed by another assertion in the same part of the ad, as in the following extract from the *Clean and Clear Foaming Facial Wash*:

*Sleeping with wet hair won't make you blind...
Jumping on New Year's Eve won't make you taller...
Breaking a mirror won't give you bad luck...
And regular washing won't give you **REALLY CLEAN SKIN!***

(emphasis in the original)

MACRO-SPEECH ACT IN PRINT ADS

Or, if the assertion-type headline is a single utterance, this is followed by another assertion or a series of assertions in the body copy, such as that which appeared in the *Bear Brand* ad, cited below:

Sa apat na health-giving nutrients ng New Improved BEAR BRAND lalong mas masustansiya ang gatas ng pamilya. Bawat baso ng Bear Brand ay mas sagana sa lahat ng essential vitamins and minerals. At dahil galing sa Bear Brand of Switzerland, garantisado at subok na ang quality at freshness nito.

In the *Bear Brand* ad the first utterance – an assertion – that makes up the headline of the ad is followed in the body copy by three more assertions, two of which are quoted above.

Sometimes, what comes after an assertion or a series of assertions in the headline is a number of assertions in the body copy, interspersed with either description/illustration, information, and identification, or a combination of two or all of these representative-type utterances. This pattern is evident in the following excerpt from the *Vitasoft Cologne Gel* ad:

Ngayon, puwede nang mag-amoy maganda buong araw!

(Headline)

Finally, a gentle, refreshing fragrance in a unique new form. Introducing Vitasoft Cologne Gel. It's non-greasy and non-sticky. Unlike liquid cologne which evaporates quickly into the air, Vitasoft Cologne Gel is better absorbed by the skin. Plus, it kills odor-causing germs so it leaves you smelling fresher, longer. Kaya pagdating ng hapon, amoy maganda pa rin.

(Body Copy)

(emphasis in the original)

In a number of cases, at least one order/advice, which may be in the headline or body copy, is mixed with assertion, description, identification, information, explanation/clarification, etc. The *Bain de Soleil* ad is one example, thus:

The hottest two-piece you can wear under the sun.

(Illustration below the headline)

Ban the sun with Bain de Soleil.

Get maximum protection with these two NEW sunblock lotions.

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The *Retin-A* ad seems to exemplify the combination assertion-order/advice-assertion. An extract from such an ad (the first utterance is the headline and the second two are part of the body copy) is shown below.

*Go through years without looking a day older.
Let time stand still...with Retin-A. A nightly dose of Retin-A
will make your skin softer, younger, and wrinkle-free.*

In the body copy of the ads in the corpus, the assertion-type utterance is usually interspersed with other assertions, in combination with either description/illustration, information, identification, explanation/clarification, exemplification/enumeration – representatives all – or a directive, e.g., order/advice, even if the headline performs an illocutionary act other than asserting something. The *Defence Sunblock Lotion* ad provides an illustration of one such possible combination, viz.:

*Friday? Or, Fried Day?
No matter what day it is...
Getting fried is a risk you take...Put on your Defence
everyday.
Whatever you do, you can't get away from the sun's UV
rays. It is the main cause of aging and darkening. You need
protection everyday.*

In the above excerpt, despite the occurrence of a headline composed of two rhetorical questions, the body copy opens with an utterance labeled assertion after which comes an order/piece of advice. The directive is then succeeded by a pair of utterances performing the illocutionary act of assertion.

The *Jergens Liquid Soap* ad is another example of an ad with a non-assertion-type headline, but with a body copy composed of a combination of assertions interspersed with description/illustration. Here is an excerpt from the ad:

*Introduce your skin to a new kind of clean
Unlike ordinary bath soap bars, Jergens AntiBacterial Plus 3-
in-1 Liquid Soap is pH balanced and has conditioners to help
skin retain moisture. So it leaves skin feeling soft and smooth.
It also has a special fragrance compound that counteracts
stubborn body odors. Plus Triclosan that kills skin germs
while bathing. And because it's from Jergens, you can be sure
you can have truly clean, truly beautiful skin.*

Speaking of the signature line, the utterances in this part of the print ad, more often than not, perform the illocutionary act of identification or description/illustration, or occasionally, both, and understandably so, because it is this component of the ad that names the product or company manufacturing the product, and sometimes, for better effect, comes with a slogan. Exemplifying this are the extracts below, the first from the *Coppertone Lotion* ad and the second from the *Nesvita Natural Cereal Drink* ad:

Sun Protection by Coppertone.

High in Fiber. Good for Health.

Overall, the illocutionary acts constituting the body copy of print ads fulfill a bigger function in realizing the discourse function of persuasion in the ads – that of motivating the potential buyer. As mentioned above, the signature line, on the other hand, primarily serves the function of identifying or naming the product or company.

Moving on to the last structural component, it seems print ads included in the corpus typically end with a directive. Simply put, what appears to be a pattern in all the ads is that this last part is filled with utterances that perform the illocutionary act of getting the potential buyer to do something, i.e., a directive. In particular, the form of directive used is either an order/piece of advice and/or suggestion. And the data bear this out since out of 62 utterances which comprise the standing details, 39 (or 62.90%) have been inferred as performing the illocutionary act of ordering, advising, or suggesting. The excerpts that follow are examples of directives in standing details of a number of ads:

*Fax this coupon to 890-5617 or Mail it to Janssen
Pharmaceutica, c/o Trackline Corp., MCPO Box
282, Makati City, Metro Manila 1268*

(Retin-A)

*For more information, call toll-free:
564-1169 (Metro Manila) or 1-800-888-7563
(elsewhere) or
Write: P.O. Box 950 Manila, Phils. 1099.
e-mail: ponds.institute-ph@unilever.com*

(Pond's Clear Pore Strips)

The occurrence of directives, specifically order/advice or suggestion, in the standing details of the ads may be due to the fact that this is the part where ads usually stimulate action by getting the reader to take a specific action in regard to the product being advertised. Needless to say, the standing details section is not the only part where order/piece of advice and suggestion are found since even the headline and body copy contain these directives. In the latter parts of the ads, however, they are usually interspersed with representative-type utterances such as assertion, description/illustration, identification, etc.

On the whole, then, the available data show that the following are possible speech act sequences in Philippine print ads: (1) Assertion-Assertion-Assertion-Order/Advice/Suggestion, (2) Assertion-Information-Assertion-Description/Illustration-Order/Advice/Suggestion, (3) Assertion-Order/Advice-Assertion-Description/Illustration-InformationAssertionOrder/Advice/Suggestion, (4) Rhetorical Question/Order/Advice-Assertion-Description/Illustration-Assertion-Order/Advice/Suggestion. In any case, working within Searle's (1979) taxonomy of illocutionary acts, it can be said that the typical Philippine print ad opens with at least one representative-type illocutionary act followed by at least one directive. And as already pointed out, the former includes specific types like assertion, description/illustration, information, identification, and explanation/clarification, whereas the latter covers such acts as advice, order, and suggestion.

4.0. CONCLUSION

What I have just presented is a description of persuasion in Philippine print ads as a macro-speech act. Overall, the data show that a typical print ad follows a representative-directive pattern.

An analysis of persuasion in print ads as a macro-speech act provides significance to what Schiffrin (1994) calls the properties of discourse: structure, meaning, and action. For persuasion to occur, a print ad, like any discourse type, has to have a structure. As the above data show, minimally, this is realizable by an assertion which may be interspersed with information and description, followed by a directive in the form of suggestion or advice. What this shows, in other words, is that whereas print ads do not appear to follow some definite structure, the present study says otherwise. It is this structure that defines the coherence of the ads. Coherence, in turn, helps the reader (the prospective buyer) make sense of the ad as a whole. Herein comes meaning, the second property of discourse (Schiffrin, 1994). It seems to me that readers interpret print ads as persuasive only insofar as they are able to reach out to what Stiles (1981) calls the *other*, a diffuse collectivity to which they are directed. More than this, however, it is how they reach out that matters. And here we see the importance of the utterances in the ads that purportedly perform illocutionary acts, given the context in which they are produced.

Finally, the recognition of an *other* to which illocutionary acts are addressed highlights the notion of discourse as language use, or what van Dijk (1997) calls action and interaction. Indeed, print ads, regardless of the mode they appear in, are a cooperative discourse involving two main interactants: the seller/manufacturer (through the advertiser or creative team) and the reader/s (prospective or potential buyer/s). There is action and interaction and an analysis of print ads such as in this study has to look at utterances as chunks of information that are context-dependent or context-sensitive, rather than decontextualized, abstract, discrete units. After all, as functionalists put it, the internal structure of language is defined and shaped by the context in which it is used. This, in effect, underscores the relevance of a functional description of print ads over a predominantly formalistic account of this discourse type.

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