An Analysis of Adjective Uses in Business Advertisements: A Desk Review

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ABSTRACT

Business advertisements are communication tools used by marketers to introduce and inspire customers to purchase their goods or services. The study examined how adjectives, as a linguistic resource, play a critical role in promoting the persuasive power of advertising messages. This study scrutinized the use of adjectives in business advertisements through a desk review of published literature. Specifically, the study sought to identify the adjectives commonly used in advertisements, examine their morphological forms, and analyze their communicative functions in advertising discourse. This study reviewed the uses of adjectives in business advertisements from journal articles published between 2018 and 2025. The articles were retrieved through Google Scholar and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) alongside content analysis. The findings identified 83 adjectives frequently employed in business advertisements, with long, best, last, safe, smooth, comfortable, and new among the most recurrent. Most adjectives appeared in their base forms, although derived forms, superlatives, and adjective phrases were also widely used to strengthen persuasive appeals. The analysis further revealed that adjectives primarily function to describe quality, quantity, time, colour, and comparison, thereby enhancing product differentiation, emphasizing desirable attributes, and influencing consumers' purchasing decisions. The study concludes that adjectives constitute an essential persuasive linguistic resource in advertising because they enrich product descriptions, reinforce positive perceptions, and stimulate consumer action. The findings contribute to advertising linguistics and marketing communication by providing a synthesized understanding of how adjective use enhances persuasive business communication. The study recommends that advertisers strategically employ appropriate adjective forms to improve advertising effectiveness and that future research should examine the persuasive roles of other word classes across different advertising media.

Keywords: Adjectives, Advertisement, Business, Market, Persuasive Tools

I. INTRODUCTION

Business prosperity depends on numerous factors, such as business advertisements. Any business advertisement uses language to convey the intended message (Ojwang', 2022). Adjectives are the most used word class in advertisements to facilitate the sharing of information about the products or services (Bai, 2018; Perego, 2019). The great roles played by adjectives, including identifying, describing, and modifying nouns or pronouns, are the reasons for being mostly used in advertisements (Ebaid, 2018). Adjectives provide distinctive information (attract, assure, and compare) about nouns or pronouns, on which the receiver acts on the advertised goods or services (Ebaid, 2018; Ojwang', 2022). Furthermore, the study conducted to analyze linguistic and rhetorical persuasion devices in advertising discourse reveals that adjectives are superlatives, as 62% of words analyzed from different advertisements were adjectives (Šunjić & Runjić-Stoilova, 2024). In this regard, many marketers find adjectives more useful for persuasion, attraction, and affection in customers' responses.

Regardless of the types and functions of language, the effectiveness of business advertisements requires a creative mind to utilize language, information, and images to convey a complete meaning to the consumers. The effectiveness of advertisements depends on various elements such as language, color, design, creativity, and the information given (Ibrahim, 2022). Appropriate use of language attracts, informs, and persuades customers to act on the advertisement (Ojwang', 2022). The linguistic part provides a wide range of analyses of language use in advertisements, such as word classes. Word classes are the classification of words into their respective bases based on their features, such as adjectives for quantifying, modifying, and describing features of nouns or pronouns. The purpose of this study is to examine the use of adjectives in advertisements by focusing on three specific objectives: to identify the adjectives used in advertisements, examine the morphology of adjectives in advertisements, and analyze the functions of adjectives in advertisements.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of Key Terms

Etymologically, the adjective was derived from the Latin language nōmen adjectīvum, a calque of Ancient Greek: meaning 'additional noun' (Mastronarde, 2013, p. 60; Betti, 2021ee: 3; and Al-Sheikh, 2006b: 42) in (Betti, 2022). An adjective is a word class that modifies a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase. (Mohammed Jasim Betti, 2022). Adjectives describe people, objects, events, ideas, and substances (Tan & Quek, 2024). In this view, an adjective provides sufficient information on the noun or pronoun based on the predetermined purpose of a speaker. For example, adjectives can be placed before a noun or pronoun to attribute that noun or pronoun ("We celebrated a **gorgeous** wedding"). Likewise, adjectives can work as a predicative tool that provides information on the proceeded noun. (Hussain, 2014). For example, "my research is **good**".

An advertisement is a public announcement that seeks to persuade intended buyers of the existing goods or services by creating demand, brand awareness, and loyalty (Kumar & Gupta, 2016). This definition matches the argument made by Danesi (2015) as cited in Javed et al. (2019 that advertisement comes from the Latin language "adventure" meaning to direct someone's attention to an encoding, product, or service by announcing orally or in writing. For an announcement to qualify to be an advertisement, it should possess features such as being in a paid form, nonpersonal, promotional idea, sponsor, influences purchase, market mix, and promotion mix Kumar & Gupta, 2016). In this wider expression of advertisement, the current study argues that an advertisement is any kind of public notification on the product or service that persuades customers to act on the given information.

2.3 Theoretical Review

Two basic models are used to measure the effectiveness of the advertisement: the dichotomous and the three-dimensional models. The dichotomous model focuses on product and brand advertisement by studying both sales and communication effects. The negative effect of the dichotomous model is to ignore other factors, such as company politics. The three-dimensional model examines the communication (affection, attitude, and emotion), cognitive (understanding and remembering), and behavioral (intentions and actions) effects of the advertisement. (Corvi & Bonera, 2010). The three-dimensional model is reflected in customers' (Awareness, Interest, Desire, and Action) AIDA model, which demonstrates how the process of purchasing takes place in the mind. As the study incorporates both marketing and linguistics aspects, the study utilizes also utilizes the concept of grammatical analysis explained by the Standard Theory of Generative Grammar by Chomsky (1965), as it demonstrates the grammar of the human language, which consists of several interactional segments: lexis, syntax, semantics, and phonology (Torto, 2019). The contribution from these models enables the researcher to identify and analyze adjectives as part of language grammar and their application in advertisements.

2.2 Empirical Review

Adjectives are categorized into three: proper, descriptive, and subclasses (attributive and predicative). (Hussain, 2014). A proper adjective is a form of an adjective used with a proper noun and is normally capitalized. For example, "I am pleased by **Young Africans Sports Club's kindness". The descriptive adjective** is used for three purposes: positive (e.g. this is a **wonderful** work"), comparative (e.g. he is **bigger** than me"), and superlative (e.g. it is the **biggest** football club in Tanzania"). Subclasses of adjectives are of two kinds: Attributive adjectives, which come before a noun to give features of the noun (e.g., it is the **biggest** football club in Tanzania is Young Africans Sports. The predictive adjective is placed after a noun to give more emphasis on it. For example, the club above others is the **Young African Sports Club.** (Hussain, 2014; Mohammed Jasim Betti, 2022).

Morphologically, adjectives include those with no prefixes or suffixes, "proper adjectives" such as ***tall, short, good, and thin***. However, adjectives can be formulated by adding prefixes and suffixes such as **il**legal, hand**some**, **un**touch**able**, and beauti**ful.** Adjectives can appear before the noun "**empty** stomach", and after a noun or an indefinite pronoun, "the article is **enjoyable**", or "it is from somebody **famous**" as a complement (Tan & Quek, 2024).

The powerful functions of adjectives, such as identifying, describing, and modifying nouns or pronouns, are the main reason for being mostly used in advertisements (Ebaid, 2018). Furthermore, adjectives can be used to describe people, size, shape, origin, quality, quantity, materials, or nationality (Tan & Quek, 2024). Adjectives provide distinctive information about nouns or pronouns, on which the receiver acts on the advertised goods or services (Ebaid, 2018; Ojwang', 2022). As a persuasive tool, adjectives enable marketers to provide a strong argument supported by evidence or information, which provides a confirmation and a polite command of the product or service advertised (Ebaid, 2018; Elling et al., 2020; Ojwang', 2022). For this reason, many marketers find the adjectives more useful for persuasion, attraction, and affection in the customers' response.

Advertisements are categorized into seven types: printing advertising (newspaper, magazines & brochures), broadcast advertising (television and radio), outdoor advertising (hoarding, banners, flags), digital advertising (digital devices), and product/brand integration (placed on a TV show or YouTube) (Javed et al., 2019). Advertisement has a

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great role in marketing, enabling marketers to send signals and ideas of a product or service for understanding, persuasion, and remembering (Eram, 2020). It is the purpose of any advertisement to make an impact on the product or service in the subject.

Although there is no general measurement of advertisement effectiveness, it is a critical question to be answered, as both preparation and implementation of the advertisement consume resources. Advertising effectiveness is the measurement used to examine the extent to which the desired goal of the advertisement has been achieved (Corvi & Bonera, 2010). Traditionally, the analysis of advertisement effectiveness was done by communication effect research (portfolio, direct rating, and laboratory test) and sales effects research (number of sales), but currently, analysis tools and integrated direct marketing are used to measure the effectiveness of the advertisement (Eram, 2020).

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1Research Design and Approach

This study employed descriptive desk review research designs. The use of descriptive design enabled a researcher to identify, organize, and describe the categories, morphological forms, and communicative functions adjective in business advertisement. The design suits the study because it relevant approach toward variable manipulation and hence provides comprehensive understanding of the adjective uses in advertisements through evidences (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Saunders et al., 2023). The design facilitated an understanding of the relationship between adjective use and their persuasive functions, including the description of quality, quantity, time, colour, and comparison that influence consumer perceptions and purchasing intentions (Saunders et al., 2023; Hair et al., 2023). The approach used by the study was a mixed approach which includes both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive conclusion on the variables and the parameters used.

3.2 Data Collection Tool and Analysis

A desk review was employed to synthesize available literature retrieved from Google Scholar by using search terms *"adjective in advertisement" and "language in advertisement"* from 2018-2025. A total of twenty-six (26) articles were identified as relevant to adjective use in business advertisements and peer-reviewed papers. Seven papers were then selected for data extraction and analysis. The study used descriptive analysis with frequencies and percentages, and content analysis to enrich the descriptive findings. The use of descriptive statistics and content analysis enabled a systematic synthesis of evidence and enhanced the credibility and comprehensiveness of the findings (Krippendorff, 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Adjectives Used in Advertisements

The data obtained from seven articles that discussed the use of adjectives in advertisements provide the following list.

Table 1

Adjectives Used in Advertisements

Adjectives	rates%	Adjectives	rates%
Long	7.228915663	Colorful	1.204819
Best	6.024096386	Extreme comfort	1.204819
Last	4.819277108	Egg-city	1.204819
Safe	3.614457831	last longer	1.204819
Smooth	3.614457831	Advanced features	1.204819
Comfortable	3.614457831	Flawless	1.204819
New	3.614457831	Punkish	1.204819
Thin	3.614457831	Friendly	1.204819
Clear	2.409638554	Stronger	1.204819
Fast	2.409638554	Accessible	1.204819
Beautiful	2.409638554	Soft	1.204819
Pure	2.409638554	Silky	1.204819
Robust	2.409638554	Long-lasting	1.204819
Heavy	2.409638554	Heavy duty	1.204819
Fresh	2.409638554	Reddish brown	1.204819
Quality	2.409638554	Tiny	1.204819
Normal	1.204819277	Two	1.204819

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Durable	1.204819277	Lower	1.204819
Responsive	1.204819277	one of	1.204819
Completive	1.204819277	Small	1.204819
Stylist	1.204819277	Later	1.204819
Full	1.204819277	Open	1.204819
Innovative	1.204819277	Famous	1.204819
Impressive	1.204819277	Dense	1.204819
next-level	1.204819277	Close	1.204819
ultra-fast	1.204819277	Dynamic	1.204819
		Bold	1.204819

Note. A desk review from (Bai, 2018; Butar Butar et al., 2019; Chandran, 2020; Dian & Candra, 2019; Ojwang', 2022; Perego, 2019; Torto, 2019).

Table 1 provides a list of adjectives used in business advertisements. In the list, some adjectives appeared more than once. This suggests that adjectives signify positive emotions to kindle and attach a feeling of satisfaction (Ngulube & Kelech, 2023). For example, the adjective "long" has an occurrence of 7.2%, which is the highest. The context where this adjective has been used suggests that the intention was to emphasize the durability of the products or the size (Perego, 2019; Torto, 2019).

The adjective "best" scored 6.2% and "last" scored 4.8% as the most used adjectives. Marketers tend to make a comparison of their goods and services with their competitors. For them to attract, assure, and convince customers, the use of adjectives such as best is preferable. The adjective "last" is the third most used adjective, especially when marketers intend to emphasize the lifespan or version of their products or services.

Other adjectives that scored 3.6% are safe, smooth, comfortable, new, and thin. Also, data in Table 1 show that adjectives such as clear, fast, beautiful, pure, robust, heavy, and quality have 2.4% of uses in advertisements. This indicates that most advertised products were given attributes that influenced the decisions of customers (Dian & Candra, 2019; Perego, 2019).

4.2 Morphology of Adjectives Used in Advertisements

Table 2 below presents how adjectives used in advertisements are formed.

Table 2

Morphology of Adjectives Used in Advertisements

Morphology	**Adjectives**
Base	Long, last, safe, smooth, new, thin, clear, pure, robust, heavy, fresh, quality, normal, full soft, two, small, open, famous, dense, close, dynamic, bold
Suffixes to nouns	Silky, tiny, stylist, punkish, flawless, friendly
Suffixes to verbs	Competitive, responsive, innovative
Superlative	Lower, stronger, best, last longer
Adjective phrase	Extreme comfort, long-lasting, heavy-duty, reddish brown, egg-city, safe, and friendly

Note. A desk review from (Bai, 2018; Butar Butar et al., 2019; Chandran, 2020; Dian & Candra, 2019; Ojwang', 2022; Perego, 2019; Torto, 2019).

Data from Table 2 shows that most of the adjectives used in advertisements are in a base form, such as **long, last, safe, and smooth,** to mention a few. This indicates that marketers use simple, direct words to convey their intended message. The presentation of direct and simple words simplifies and makes the advertisement easier to remember. These adjectives significantly attract, convince, and persuade people to act on the advertised goods or services (Bai, 2018; Perego, 2019).

Data from Table 2 indicates that some of the adjectives used in advertisements are formed by adding suffixes to the nouns, such as "silk**y**, tin**y**, stylish, punk**ish,** and friend**ly**. The addition of suffixes **(y, ist, ish, ly**) changes the noun into an adjective (Tan & Quek, 2024). This kind of modification makes the noun become an adjective by giving it the quality of manner (state); for example, the word friendly expresses the situation of a person being kind and pleasant, but if it has been used with an object in an adjective phrase such as "friendly hotel" it denotes that the hotel provides a comfortable condition with no harm to customers in terms of security and price. This observation is in line with previous studies that adjectives are formed by the addition of suffixes to nouns (Tan & Quek, 2024; Perego, 2019).

Some adjectives were formed by adding suffixes to the verbs (v+ive), such as "complet**ive**, respons**ive**, and innovat**ive,**" as shown in Table 2. This kind of morphology provides qualities and affirmation to the verbs. Modified

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verbs become more attractive and affirmative. For example, the adjective "responsive" indicates that it's a person, object, or service provided quickly, humbly, and friendly, and accountable for the issue at hand. Marketers give verbs additional quality to enable the customers to sense the positive outcome of their products (Tan & Quek, 2024; Butar Butar et al., 2019).

Superlative-formed adjectives such as **"best, longer, lower, last-longer, and stronger"** have been observed in the data shown in Table 2. Superlative adjectives are formed to show the comparative degree between two or more objects, qualities, or sizes (Tan & Quek, 2024). The use of superlative adjectives is more powerful in this competitive business era. When a customer sees these adjectives, what comes to their mind is the grading of the goods or services, and hence they believe and are attracted (Ojwang', 2022; Torto, 2019).

Also, the adjective phrase is part of the adjective morphology observed in this study, as shown in Table 2. Adjectives can be formed by sequencing more adjectives (adj+adj), an adjective plus a noun (adj+n), or adjectives plus verbs (adj+v) (Tan & Quek, 2024). In table two adjective phrases observed are adjectives formed by: adjective plus adjective (adj+adj)= "**safe and friendly" 'reddish brown",** adjective plus a noun (adj+n)= "**extreme comfort"**, adjective plus verb (adj+v)= **"long-lasting"**. For examples "reddish brown" is formed by two adjectives to emphasis on the color, "heavy duty" is adjective plus a noun to emphasis on the effectiveness, toughness of the product, and "long-lasting" is made up of adjective plus verb to express the durability. The use of adjective phrases provides marketers with a wide range to exercise their professionalism by capturing the intention of customers through exciting phrases such as "egg-city" (Torto, 2019). \

4.3 The Functions of Adjectives Used in Advertisements

Table 3

Functions of Adjectives in Advertisements

Description	Adjective
Time	fast, ultra-fast, last, long, new
Quantity	thin, large, two, one of, full, heavy, small
Color	bright, colorful, reddish-brown
Quality	durable, safe, clear, pure, comfortable, impressive, smooth, bold
Comparison	best, lower, stronger, last-longer, later

Note. A desk review from (Bai, 2018; Butar Butar et al., 2019; Chandran, 2020; Dian & Candra, 2019; Ojwang', 2022; Perego, 2019; Torto, 2019).

Table 3 indicates the functions of adjectives as gathered from seven journal articles. The adjectives have been observed to denote the time that the service could take to be accomplished, duration, or speed of accomplishment. Some examples of adjectives denoting time are fast, ultra-fast, last, long, and new. These adjectives provide significant meaning to customers that the advertised goods or services are up-to-date, take a short time to work or are accomplished, and are durable. Knowing the time enables customers to decide after being persuaded and are assured that the service or good will fit their time (Chandran, 2020).

Quantity is another description made by adjectives in advertisements, as Table 3 shows: "thin, large, full, heavy, and small". Quantity expresses various attributes, such as the size and extent to which advertised goods or services can be achieved. Customers are easily persuaded and made to act because of the quality assurance provided in the advertisement. The assurance given by these adjectives makes customers act on the advertised goods or services because they speak to the existing quantity (Perego, 2019).

Description of color is another function of adjectives used in the advertisement, as seen in Table 3. Among the best eye-catchers are the color and the embedded meaning in every color. These adjectives are mostly used when no image demonstrates color or the subject in question does not give room for color use, or to give the goods or service a colorful feature to make it more attractive, as mentioned in the color. For example, adjectives such as "bright, colorful, reddish-brown" connect the advertised goods or services with the colorful attribute. For example, "bright" means shining; therefore, if an advertised good is described as bright, the customers will connect the brightness with the goods, and hence the desire for ownership will be raised. Color is attractive, reflective, and eye-catching, used in advertisements to attract and capture the attention of customers (Chandran, 2020; Ojwang', 2022).

Quality is the function played by adjectives in advertisements, as seen in Table 3 with words like "durable, safe, clear, pure, comfortable, impressive, smooth, bold." These adjectives provide health and psychological assurance that the advertised goods or services will not harm anyone. For example, the word "comfortable" shows that the service or goods advertised have a relaxing and safe mode. For any goods or services to be purchased, the assurance of quality is the priority as a reflection of meeting the needs and wants of your customers. This confirmation enables customers to reach a peak to act on the advertised goods or services (Torto, 2019).

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The comparison function of the adjectives in advertainment is the last observation made, as shown in Table 3. Comparison in this contemporary business era, where competition is higher, means that marketers use superlative adjectives to compare and contrast their goods or services with others. For example, an adjective such as "stronger" provides a comparative evaluation that the mentioned goods or services are more powerful than others. Marketers make a comparison of their products to enable their customers to decide quickly (Bai, 2018; Dian & Candra, 2019).

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the use of adjectives in advertisements. Adjectives as part of the word class have been observed as the most used in advertisements because of their functions such as description, identification, and modification of nouns or pronouns. Adjectives play a great role in giving more, exaggerating, and distinguishing products or services through pointing, directing, and cementing information. A total of 83 adjectives were identified from seven journal articles published from 2018 to 2022. The analysis made on understanding the morphology of the adjectives identified indicates that most of the adjectives used are in their base forms, such as "**long, new, and normal"**. The other forms of adjectives are formed by sequencing more adjectives (adj+adj) = "**safe and friendly" 'reddish brown",** adjective plus a noun (adj+n) = "**extreme comfort"**, and adjective plus verb (adj+v) = **"long-lasting"**.

The last focus of the study was to examine the functions of adjectives in advertisements. The findings show that adjectives describe and modify nouns or pronouns by denoting quality, time, comparison, quantity, and color. These descriptions attract and influence customers to act upon the advertised goods or services. It has been observed that adjectives are the most used word class in advertisements because they describe nouns or pronouns (goods or services advertised have names). It is the call from this study that other studies can be done on other parts of speech and their usage in advertisements.

5.2 Recommendations

The study recommends that businesses should use persuasive adjectives to influence customer purchase. Marketers, business agencies, and SME should ensure the creative is linguistically accuracy, truthful to improve brand credibility and consumer trust. The study recommends further studies to be conducted on other word classes to determine their uses in promoting business advertisements.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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