

## Obtaining the argumentative text in advertising discourse

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### Abstract

Nowadays it is interesting to listen, read or view an advertisement which has a prominent persuasive force and manages to successfully achieve the goal that the advertiser has imposed himself: the one of informing, persuading and remembering the listener or reader by means of a series of powerful arguments towards which this last one seems to "unconditionally give up". The more publicity a product or service gets, the more successful the sale becomes. The beginnings of advertising are earlier, but their linguistic study was done later. The main purpose of the whole advertising message is in the function of arguing during the advertising broadcasts. In the years that followed, linguistic studies, in addition to economics, followed the development of information theories and orientation of the field of study in the lecturing area, where the role of the advertiser and the way he approaches his idiom, will take a very special importance in today's studies of this field. For this reason the choice of argumentative text in publicity, as the subject of study, has been the first courage we undertook at a time when we have to admit that we are surrounded by a large number and variety of publicity. Studies on publicity are numerous and diverse.

Studies on textual categories and textual linguistics are always being added to Albanian studies. In our study we have taken a less studied category in the Albanian language, but that has wide spaces to address and discuss.

**Keywords:** Argumentative text, advertising, discourse.

### Introduction

The term publicity is a later use on our televisions. Only a few years ago on Albanian televisions the word advertising was written and not publicity. In the dictionary of the Albanian language 2006 we find both terms, where the difference between each other is noticed. *Publicity is widespread through the press, radio, television, etc., of a news, of an event: the propaganda by these means of a product or something else to attract people's attention, advertisement, to be known worldwide*<sup>1</sup>. While the term advertising is explained in this way: *public announcement made on radio, television, on stands, to make known an item, a theatrical performance, the totality of publications, films made for this purpose, the poster, with such notice, tendency to make fuss*.<sup>2</sup> Here, as we see, both terms are used to make something known through the press.

Publicity makes known the existence of a product or service, understanding the product the user can buy, or in other words publicity means any form of payment, but planned for public announcement about any innovation or news from the latest developments of the company. While advertising presents the message to potential

<sup>1</sup> Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë (AKSH). 2006. *Fjalor i Gjuhës Shqipe*. Tiranë: AKSH: Instituti i Gjuhësisë dhe i Letërsisë, page 854.

<sup>2</sup> Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë (AKSH). 2006. *Fjalor i Gjuhës Shqipe*. Tiranë: AKSH: Instituti i Gjuhësisë dhe i Letërsisë, page 898

users and to current users, in order to encourage them at all costs to buy the advertised product. Our study is not intended to study terms, but to take a closer look at how our publicity is constructed, what language is used? How is this language used? How is it acted upon by actors and publicity advertisers?

In Albanian studies there are almost no articles about publicity, first from the linguistic point of view, but they have been studied more from the marketing point of view. They were first used in newspapers and then in the only TVSH station. Years later we have new stations opening. Today, their number is growing. Publicities were all treated equally on all stations, on the same pay, regardless of the type of television station where they were shown.

Publicity has two functions, the first, to promote to the public the need for a certain object, and once this is achieved, to address its attention towards one firm, more than another. Publicity achieves this through publicity discourse, and the strategies it uses to attract attention.

### What is publicity?

Mauro Trotto points out that it is not that easy to determine what publicity is. In fact, there are many definitions, and different fields define it in different ways from each other, such as sociological, economic and linguistic, therefore they must be seen and treated through the eyes of specialists in certain fields<sup>3</sup>. By publicity we mean the fact of presenting an action in front of an audience for commercial purposes, making known the fact of a product, and the urge to capture that message. Publicity is a set of tools competing in this action, the promotion for the recognition of a product brand is in the service of an economic sector and not of a particular brand<sup>4</sup>.

Publicity is first and foremost an act of communication, that we will understand the transmission of a message. Publicity is an important cultural phenomenon. It spreads rapidly because it weighs more on mass media such as television, radio or the internet<sup>5</sup>. In the first sense, publicity means publication which has freedom of information. Publicity is a communicative component that presents three characteristics: it is a mass communication, with a unique meaning and that has a commercial end<sup>6</sup>. Advertising is a culture, it is a daily, common, popular culture, the culture of the street and the paper we throw in the bins, the culture of the packaging of the most expensive perfumes, the culture of the designs of objects and ideas. It is not only technical, but it is a social phenomenon.<sup>7</sup> Bernard Katelet (Bernard Cathélet) also says that a culture is a configuration of learned behaviours and the achievements of those behaviours, in which the constituent elements are scattered and transmitted by members of a society. Publicity seeks to indulge in its symbolic fashion, but these needs will also be taken into account by society's models of being interconnected.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Mauro Trotto, *La publicita*, SIMONA SPA 2002, page 15 .

<sup>4</sup> *Le nouveau Petit Robert de la langue française 2008*, SEJER 2007, page 2066.

<sup>5</sup> Cossette, Claude. *La Publicité, déchet culturel*. Presses de l'Université Laval 2001, page 290.

<sup>6</sup> Emil Rodriguez, *Les mobilisation contre les publicitet sexistes*, manuscrit .com, Rruga L'Asile Popincourt Paris, 2003, page 15.

<sup>7</sup> Cathelat Bernard, *Publicite et societe*, 2005, page 203.

<sup>8</sup> Cathelat Bernard, *Publicite et societe* 2005, page 203.

Publicity is a social phenomenon, which we usually find on social networks, on television, in cinemas and on the radio. Traditionally we find it even on buses and cars, on other types of public transport where it appears, not to mention the internet where we find a very large distribution of publicity.

Publicity initially belongs to the public, it is situated between information and propaganda. Information in principle is neutral and is sufficient to follow oneself and to spread the news. Propaganda aims at persuasion and indoctrination, while publicity presents a product that it is proud of, promoting its maximum sales. It is the psychology applied to selling products thanks to collective promotion and persuasion techniques. It has become a communication system between the producer and consumer through motivational communication techniques.

Then, it has created a cultural industry which spreads a mass culture and that will be a factor in social integration. Publicity is also an agency that combines through creativity (literary, design, photography and computerization) for sellers in the realization of the advertising campaign. For a complete change of these publicities now are the production designs before its presentation, distribution and first public appearance. Publicity is something that is expensive, and we can not manage its effectiveness; there is no scientific evidence of its effectiveness, but we can not live without it. Those who love publicity more are children, as they are the most selective age and do not imagine publicity as a benefit. The images fascinate them more than the sound, because it explains their interest in TV spots, or street posters. Radio advertising attracts them less because they want the best, things that do not look like in everyday life, ignoring the rules and restrictions that teenagers have. For this reason, they love advertising spots, and as a result, many of the ads seem real to you. For all children, publicity is an instrument of wonders, magic, because it stages their fantasy and makes their imagination work<sup>9</sup>.

Publicity by nature and function affects all areas and sectors of human activities. It is considered as one of the main factors of influence and awareness of the individual, his attitudes and lifestyles<sup>10</sup>. Publicity accompanies modern day man in every aspect of his life. Man is born and grows along with publicity, he is surrounded every day by publicity. For this reason advertisers are always looking for new methods to make the product known and for a mass distribution. They therefore use effective strategies to promote the brand image of the product or service, attracting a large portion of consumers and challenging competition<sup>11</sup>.

Publicity is considered as everything communicative and has the direct or indirect purpose of presenting sales of products or services, in rights and obligations, whatever the place or means of communication.

Publicity is a form of communication, it can consist of a good use, (food, electrical - household) a service (such as insurance services, banks, tourism). The term advertising has traditionally been used in the field of publicity. Publicity used in all fields, seeks to fulfill the commercial, economic and communication mission. For this

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<sup>9</sup> Elaine Armstrong, Michel Deans, Bob Poëll, Laërence Briges, *AU point Nouvelle Edition Tomas Nelson 2000*, page 84.

<sup>10</sup> Mathieu Vernet, *Les mecanismes du discours publicitaire et ses enjeux*, MAROC, 2008, PAGE 106.

<sup>11</sup> Mathieu Vernet, *Les mecanismes di discours publicitaire et ses enjeux*, Maroc , 2008, PAGE 106.

reason advertisers use it arguing for the sale and retention of customers<sup>12</sup>. A person, a group, such as a political party, a project or an action, such as organizing sporting events, charitable actions are advertised through a publicity. To achieve his goal publicity is given very little time and, with this time, it must capture the needs and desires of the consumer, conveying its message. In this sense publicity can be divided into technical categories and manipulation of the user's conscience.

### Advertising discourse

Advertising discourse has always been defined as a form of communication which is finalized, being achieved only in a competitive environment. Already, it has become one of the most prevalent discourses in the modern era in all types of texts, and is always in keeping with the habits of writing and speaking, with codes and values in every situation and culture<sup>13</sup>. Lecture is always associated with openly paid media support, such as the press, radio, television, internet, etc. Publicity lecturing favors the circulation of products, services, or ideas for presentation purposes for the first time. If we look at it from a linguistic point of view, this discourse is defined by the specified pragmatic dimension, which is dominant and systematically masked by dependent linguistic acts.

The advertising message that is conveyed to a company is a convincing discourse, which lets you understand quite well its purpose. It has more to do with the purchase and the choice the user makes, but does not explain its induced purpose. The indirectly induced act is ascertaining. Through ascertaining subcategories, in the advertising discourse we also find descriptive, informative, qualifying acts, which qualify something, and at the same time reassuring because this action occurs when they insure on something. We also have a declarative act, but this happens in cases of publicity where the main actor is a consumer using a product, or even a product placed in a context of action. We have a declaratory act when it addresses the quality of production, and when at first it represents a value of this production and then it is the production itself that appears and overlaps in a signature position.

### Advertising communication and argumentation

The study of publicity: in addition to marketing and economics, publicity has been studied and is also studied in the theory of communication. What interests us in this study is to address these publicities in communicative situations. In publicity we are dealing with communicative situations whether written or spoken, which fit quite well into linguistic communication schemes. In the case of perfect information, some firms may find an interest in presenting to the market the characteristics of their offerings. This communication activity, then, covers part of the publicity.<sup>14</sup> We are dealing with a casual communication, when it is addressed to an audience which is not expecting it and also is not obliged to receive this message or information. But the speed and frequent repetition of an advertisement makes the public capture this

<sup>12</sup> Mathiue Vernet, *Les mecanismes di discours publicitaire et ses enjeux*, Maroc 2008, PAGE 106 .

<sup>13</sup> Hazar Maiche, *Le discours publicitaire algerien: la conciliation kulture, langua et discours*, Doctorante, Universite d'Annaba, page 289.

<sup>14</sup> Kim Huynh, Damien Besancenot, *Economie industrielle*, Editions Bréal, 2004, page 144.

information, sending it through numerous channels, such as spoken media, print media, internet, etc. Advertising communication is ambiguous; linguistic or iconic publicity, where words are associated with image, is compounded by the ambiguity of the product, which is destined to hit the market. The manufacturer finances for the advertising space it occupies in the above mentioned media only to convey and ensure communication with the user. We have differences between advertising communication and symbolic communication, because in advertising communication the emphasis falls on production in particular and on the economy of the user. So publicity is a set of processes that bring information to different users<sup>15</sup>.

### What is an argument in an advertising text?

The definition of the term argumentation in *Petit Robert Dictionary* is this: Action, the art of arguing. A certain number of arguments that have a final purpose and the same conclusion<sup>16</sup>. To argue means to defend or oppose an opinion, an idea or even a given thesis, conveying to the giver the conviction and credibility against what is conveyed. Argumentative text as well as explanatory, informative, regulatory text belong to the category of lecture<sup>17</sup>.

*(The definition of discourse is a bit problematic because it is a controversial term; which can be given many definitions, interpretations and uses. Linguistics uses the term discourse to describe units of speech larger than the sentence. However there are many who consider literature as discourse, likewise a conversation between two or more persons may be considered discourse<sup>18</sup>).* Much has been said and written about argumentation, what interests us in our study is to look at the argumentative text inside the advertising message from an internal point of view, treating the text of these publicities, but also from an external point of view, seeing from the image and video.

The argumentative text reports the placement of a textual typology before the creation of all textual typologies: Why do we study argumentative text? Because we find the decoding of persuasion by the user in advertising lectures, but also in political ones which show an immediate interest in this type of text. For this reason, publicity discourse is necessary in the development of society, which also shows us its historical<sup>19</sup> dimensions. The advertising text is first and foremost an argumentative text that seeks to convince the reader, leading him towards a particular buying behavior. Publicity mainly gives us demonstrative actions, that is, proposals related to each other by means of connecting means<sup>20</sup>. We call it demonstrative, because from the demonstration we see we manage to be convinced and informed about a new product or service.

Argumentative discourse in publicity shows a position (a view, a judgement, a theory), held by one or more advertisers, by the protagonists who participate in publicity, and who seek to make known the validity, merits and necessities of this

<sup>15</sup> Kim Huynh, Damien Besancenot, *Economie industrielle*, Editions Bréal, 2004, page 144.

<sup>16</sup> Le nouveau Petit Robert, Editoin 1993, nouvelle edition 2008. page 136.

<sup>17</sup> Klodeta Dibra, Nonda Varfi, *Gjuhësi teksti*, shtëpia botuese e Librit Universitar, Tiranë 1999, page 123.

<sup>18</sup> Bob Mattheës, Liz Ross, *Metodat e Hulumtimit*, Përkthyes Majlinda Nishku, Ilir Nishku, page 391.

<sup>19</sup> Richard Lerch, *Le texte argumentatif*, Edition Le Manuscrit Paris 2005, page 10.

<sup>20</sup> Nicol Everaert –Desmedt, *Semiotique du recit*, Edition De Boeck Universite, Bruxelles 2000, page 187.

production or service. In our advertisements we find only one advertiser and many protagonists who can be female and male, but also of different social levels. Through these speeches, they seek to convince the interlocutor / recipient, participant or not, identifiable or not is always in front of a large television screen, in front of a newspaper, computer or even listening to the radio. The argumentative adjective insists on the participation of a structured reason, on the ideas of construction, maintenance, and the presented theory. Argumentative discourse in publicity mocks the product or service that belongs to the point of view of the saying, the point of view it defends, (the production) the ideas that keep it connected (the arguments) and the situations it illustrates (images and recorded images), the way the encounter ( the way of reasoning adapted from logical ideas) and progress, especially those used to persuade more easily and efficiently (calling the interlocutor, illustration by example, calling imagination, sensitivity ...). Finally, by trying to convince a recipient, whoever he is, the giver of an argument tries to modify what the interlocutor thinks or believes (we do not need to convince who thinks like him). At this point he opposes the thesis of this supposed or real interlocutor (or some generally accepted ideas), and intends to reject it. The argumentative publicity discourse is found in a kind of dialogue, direct or indirect, whether it is between a sender and a recipient, or between two theses given by the same sender (or speaker).

All these features serve as an anchor point to do the criteria analysis, and to verify that we have understood the meaning, structure and issues of an argument: The user must show that he has understood the thesis given to him, which in this case is production. It also means knowing exactly who this publicity belongs to.

### **Argumentative text processes**

According to Charaudeau (Charaudeau P) the setting of arguments consists in the subject to be argued, using processes that contain different components of this way of organizing, must provide the means of communication depending on the situation and the way another person perceives<sup>21</sup>. The main function of these activities is to evaluate an argument, in short to show that the question is justified, and for this we need to find evidence. Various argumentation processes help to create the argument and show its validity. The processes that rely on argument values are semantic processes. Processes that use language categories in order to produce certain effects of expression are discursive ones. The main points to be used in an advertising text are strong arguments and built on true and credible foundations. The users are the biggest selectors and this selection starts first from what appears in the publicity. We may be dealing with a very good product, but if the publicity of this product is not at the right level, then its sale becomes more difficult. The advertiser needs to touch on and know the strengths of all the users of the product being advertised. First, one needs to study the public, study their desires and demands towards a certain product, find their weak point and hit as hard as possible through publicity and make this product the most sold.

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<sup>21</sup> Charaudeau P. *Grammaire du Sens et de l'Expression*, Paris, Hachette 1992, page 814.

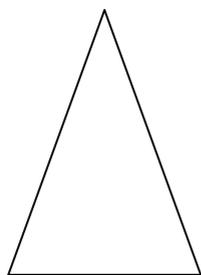
## Argumentative structure of the advertising message

According to Murand (Moirand S.) we find the argumentative text in every part of the text that we can detach from a newspaper, magazine, book, from a conversation that takes place between two or more people, in a short slogan and wherever we are dealing with a written or spoken language. The argument may be complete, but it may not be complete for a reader or listener. We will look at how an argument is constructed in a promotional text, and the elements that make up that argument. An argument is made up of three elements.

The main premises for an argument are assertions that may be elements of evidence which are very advanced before these ones come to the defense, which hold or justify a given conclusion. Connections by various means or connectors exist between the main premises and the conclusion.

One conclusion has to do with an assertion that we want to defend, uphold, or justify. If we make a statement, we must defend it at all costs, by arguing and convincing the statement to remain as such and not to be rejected by the opposing party.

An argument can be presented by the following scheme:



- the idea of the beginning (the premises)
- the argument developed starting from the idea of beginning
- the conclusion: which holds all the elements brought by:

Basic arguments.

The structure of an argument consists of three moments: premises, arguments, conclusion or thesis. But the order can be different and can be found in other forms<sup>22</sup>:

Premises - thesis - arguments

Antithesis - premises - arguments and counter - arguments - conclusion.

Conclusion - premises - arguments.

Always according to Murand, one of the elements can be implied, as for example, the premises in the advertising argument are realized either by viewing a photo, or a publicity video. Not all have the same syntactic or semantic construction. We have seen advertisements that start immediately with the main thesis, with the presentation of the product, we have also seen advertisements where the presentation of the product is given only at the end of it.

### Argumentative stages in a publicity

According to Platinum (Platinum. C)<sup>23</sup> in argumentation we have a reasonable activity held daily in everyday language. In general, to argue means to address the interlocutor or the viewer with an argument for him to accept the conclusion and of

<sup>22</sup> Moirand S. (1990), *Une grammaire des textes et des dialogues*, Paris, Hachette, page 145.

<sup>23</sup> Plantin C. *Argumenter, De la langue de l'argumentation au discours argumenté*, Centre National de Documentation Pédagogique, 2002, Paris, page 5.

course to adapt his behavior to ours. An argument consists of a conclusion, being illustrated with one or more proofs. An argument consists of two essential elements which are the argument and the conclusion. The argument in publicity goes through the various stages presented below.

In general, we can distinguish four important stages within advertising argumentation: The first stage: The importance given to the user to attract his attention.

Stage Two: The meaning of the word being transmitted and the promise to be kept of what is being said.

Stage Three: The credibility that needs to be created in the user.

Stage Four: Memorization by the user.

An advertising message has to go through these different stages to be successful and going through these stages, it has a great benefit for both the advertiser and the user.

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