

VAGUENESS IN COCA-COLA ADVERTISING SLOGANS

THESIS



BY:

SITI MUTMAINAH

REG. NUMBER: A03216044

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
UIN SUNAN AMPEL SURABAYA**

2020

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NIM : A03216044
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Siti Mutmainah

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VAGUENESS IN COCA-COLA ADVERTISING SLOGANS

by

Siti Mutmainah

Reg. Number: A03216044

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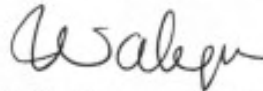
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Thesis Advisor



Murni Fidiyanti, MA.
NIP. 1983005302011012011

Acknowledged by:
The Head of English Department



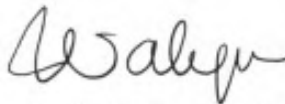
Dr. Wahyu Kusumajanti, M.Hum
NIP. 197002051999032002

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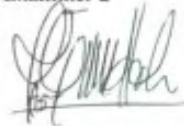
The Board of Examiners are:

Examiner 1



Dr. Wahyu Kusumajanti, M. Hum
NIP. 197002051999032002

Examiner 2



Roudlotul Jannah, M. App. Ling
NIP. 197810062005012004

Examiner 3



Suhandoko, M.Pd
NIP. 198905282018011002

Examiner 4



Dr. Mohammad Kurjum, M.Ag
NIP. 196909251994031002

Acknowledged by:

The Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Sunan Ampel Surabaya



Agus Aditoni, M.Ag
NIP. 196210021992031001



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN AMPEL SURABAYA
PERPUSTAKAAN

Jl. Jend. A. Yani 117 Surabaya 60237 Telp. 031-8431972 Fax.031-8413300
E-Mail: perpus@uinsby.ac.id

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Nama : Siti Mutmainah
NIM : A03216044
Fakultas/Jurusan : Adab dan Humaniora / Sastra Inggris
E-mail address : Inamutmainahjktbkln@gmail.com

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(Siti Mutmainah)

desirability, such as the actor, clothes, statement, language and etc. Persuasive language in advertising is needed to attract the consumer to consume the goods, services, or ideas advertised (Kenechukwu , 2013, p.952). In addition, a set of words also includes a factor that can interest the audience of advertising.

Advertiser must arrange a set of words as well to make a persuasive, concise, and understandable advertising such as in advertising slogans.

People will see slogans as a part of advertising, especially mass media, both in electronic or printed media. According to Duda (2013, p.11), a slogan is a way to build the memorable image and value of a product by a set of words that usually accompanies or comes after the brand name product. Hence, in this present research, the researcher focuses on analyzing advertising slogans. The advertising slogans that will be analyzed in this research are Coca-Cola advertising slogans made by The Coca-Cola Company. American Marketing Association in 2013 stated that Coca-Cola Company always changed its slogans for nine times as of the year (2000), meanwhile, some companies leave their slogans unchanged for decades, this statement found in Duda (2013, p.11). A survey done by World Panel on (2018) in the edition of Kantar Worldpanel's Brand Footprint report (<http://kantarworldpanel.com>) informs that Coca-Cola is number one best seller product in the world for the sixth year running. Specifically, it has been chosen by more than 1 billion times in a year by consumers globally. Based on this fact, the researcher analyzes how Coca-Cola advertising slogans use one linguistic feature phenomenon that recently was found in advertising slogans.

Various slogans use some words that have a vague meaning which then causes various questions in people's minds, this kind of linguistics phenomenon is called as vagueness.

According to Ronzitti (2011, p.125), vagueness is included in the semantic core of linguistic phenomenon which creates a problem or threat to its simple picture of meaning. In daily linguistic problems, vagueness is frequently considered as ambiguity, but actually, both of them are different. Ambiguity happens when a statement semantically has unrelated meaning and enable to approach with separate dictionary entries. However, vagueness happens when a statement has definite meaning but lack of specification. Ronzitti (2011, p.125) enlightened that vagueness is about problem of 'meaning' in linguistic expression. Vagueness might be used to appear the purpose of the writer or a speaker. Some researchers have determined the function of using vagueness, such stated by Pan (2012, p.2530), the function of vagueness based on Grice's theory of cooperative principle are such as; make communication easy, lead conversation more persuasive but not rude, provide protection against uncertainty and have no limitation to time or place. Deemter (2010, p.10) also clarified that vagueness is not always a bad thing and it is an unavoidable phenomenon. On the other side, Lawry (2006, p.10) construed that vague concept is an essential issue in natural language which also has an essential function in communications around people within a shared linguistic context. Furthermore, 'vague' concept recently comes

confusion in people's mind because of its fuzzy boundaries. Hyde (2008, p.52) supported this impression with his declaration that vagueness potentially build logical problem.

Based on these all statements, it wraps up that the study of vagueness has become an important aspect of linguistic phenomena, especially on advertising slogans which currently appear in various media and places of human life. Recently, there has been growing interest in vagueness moreover it must focus on one aspect of business that is an advertisement which also will be a valuable knowledge for knowing the trick in advertising slogans arrangement. However, the development of vagueness is a classic problem in many linguistic researches such as about the definition, function, various types, and the others.

There are some researchers who have brought up some problems with vagueness in numerous fields in language use. The first previous literature coming from the College of Beijing Union University China, written by Weiwei Pan (2012) by the title "An Analysis of Vagueness in English News from Grice's Cooperative Principles". Pan said that if newspapers do not contain vague language, the degree of reliability and veracity will be reduced, and its contents will not be trust-worthy at all. The vague language also considered as a feature which can help and give more strength to the artistic effects of the news which cannot be directly expressed by detailed information or the exact number found in the English newspapers. The scope of that analysis is based on the theory

of Maxims Pragmatics, which is Grice's Cooperative Principle. It should be limited to 4 categories of maxims principles, like maxims of quality, quantity, relevance, and manner. This research has tried to cover why journalists prefer to use vague language in their news and identified the function of using it related to the Maxims principle. However, the news those are taken as the data on this research are spread, it means they are not coming from one institute only of news program, most of them coming from CNN news, but several from another country that is not an English country. This research also did not give a clear explanation for the decision of which words are classified as vague and how the word can be vague. This research also served in-consistent conclusion about the function of vagueness.

The second research conducted in Inner Mongolia University of Technology China, written by Fang Xi (2013) under the title "A Study on the Vagueness in English Language Teaching from the Pragmatic Perspective". Fang Xi in his journal has analyzed how vagueness used in the daily process of teaching English, either by teachers or students and what is the function that will be got by teachers or students. He tried to expose in detail, in every angle of the learning-teaching process at class and every part vagueness appears such as in grammar, pronunciation, lexis, discourse, and when doing evaluation based on pragmatics perspective. It will be a larger analysis because all field of vagueness possibility in class is discussed, such as vague language teaching, namely, teaching with

reference to Chinese, practice based on text, and a thorough understanding of English culture. Unfortunately, the researcher did not mention clearly whose theory as the theoretical framework of pragmatics used to analyzed and did not obviously show how the students and teacher can get the benefit from using vagueness, and there is no specific way how language can be identified as vague because there is no more detailed explanation for vague, types, or characteristics used and specific theory by any author. The next previous study about vagueness also collected by Indra Grietena (2010) that is “Vagueness of Expression in Public Speeches: Interpreter’s Strategies and Techniques”. The researcher served the idea of vagueness and the implications in public speeches for conference interpreters, based on linguistic and philosophical aspect. The basic theoretical framework is Relevance Theory (RT) by Sperber and Wilson as a tool to analyze the idea of deriving the meaning in speech exchanges by integrating inferential model with parsing account then elaborated by inference in a particular context. The study's fundamental purpose is to analyze techniques applicable and appropriate strategies for interpreters to interpret vagueness in public speeches. The researcher gave emphatic diversification between vagueness and ambiguity. However, this action could not clear the characteristics of vagueness yet. If there is no measurement of how vagueness happens, it still causes consciousness to identify a vague word.

All of the previous research analyzed vagueness in any aspect and answered various questions about vagueness such as the advantages, benefit of

such as identify the meaning of sentences with the true conditions or the circumstances. He also stated (2011, p.2) that almost any lexical categories are possible to be vague expression. Classical vague expressions are adjectives such as the words; tall, fast, adolescent, and etc. For instance, the word “tall”, declaring that someone is "tall" when he has 160 centimeters tall will not always true, it can be based on the variety with the locale or habitually in the surrounding of case. We may agree that someone is "tall" and someone is "short", but there are numerous of people who are hard to decide as "tall" or "short".

The occurrence of specific linguistic features were used both in written and spoken text, included vagueness (Hinkel, 2002, p.12). A vague word has general and homogeneous meanings which essentially always depend on the context used. In the foreground of semantic features, it refers to object, concept, and event which may have a lack definition and lack of boundaries in the non-linguistic world.

2.1.1 Characteristics of Vagueness

In concentrating on the problem of vagueness, knowing the precise superficial description of the phenomenon is a necessary to be explained (Horwich, 1997, p.929). This will be the theoretical presupposition which rise to understand the characteristics of vagueness. The characteristics of vagueness according to Nicholas J.J. Smith (2008, p.133-140) consist of 3 characteristics, they are borderline cases, blurred boundaries, and sorite-paradox.

convinced it. The concept of sorites-paradox is *"if there a grain is taken from a heap, then could the heap still be called as a heap"*. This parable portrayed the sense of sorites-paradox in a discourse.

2.1.2 Meaning

Meaning study is a kind of study in semantics aspect of language study. It is confirmed by Leech in his book (1981, p. ix), he said that semantics is the study of meaning which becomes a center of communication, it grows to be more fundamental in social organization, and it causes a necessary to be understood. Recently, someone says more than he has literally said (Kyburg, 2000, p.584). Meaning is commonly referred to as the intention behind a language or the translations of words between languages. Riemer stated in his book (2010, p.2) that the primary mission of semantics, in this case, is to differentiate between various types of meaning and understand what position each of them has inside a principled theory of language. Hence, there are some types of meaning based on Leech's division in his book "Semantics-The study of meaning" (1981, p.9-23) that are categorized to be three general divisions.

2.1.3 Types of Meaning

There are some types of meaning to show how methods of study appropriate to one type may be appropriate to another. In a form of outline, types of meaning consist of conceptual meaning, thematic meaning, and associative meaning (Leech, 1981. P.9). Hence, associative meaning is divided into 5

deliver the idea, and so on. People may have the same concept of meaning, but there must be the different effects of communication, as a result, there are no synonym words which truly the same. For instance, the word 'horse' is used for casual condition, but to give poetical effect usually the word is 'steed', and to communicate with children commonly use the word 'gee-gee'. Between those three different vocabulary, they give different effects of meaning based on their social circumstances.

c. Affective Meaning

Affective meaning indicates that language can depict the speaker's feelings, including his attitude to the hearers or his attitude about something he explains. Some factors can affect a language, such as politeness, tone of voice (intonation, and voice-timbre). Affective meaning used to express emotions, but it needs to use conceptual, connotative, or stylistic meaning as mediators. Leech summarized that affective meaning is a thing that is communicated to the feeling and attitudes of the speaker or writer.

d. Reflected Meaning

Reflective meaning is meaning which appears in multiple conceptual meaning if a conceptual word builds part of our response to another concept. If a sense of word has dominant suggestive power, it will completely remove another meaning. However, only such as in a poem, reflective meaning works in vague circumstances. Leech concluded that what is communicated through association with another sense of the same expression is reflected meaning.

e. Collocative Meaning

Collocative meaning consists of words associations acquired which are caused by word meaning that tend to appear in its circumstance. A word is possible to have definite collocation, such as the term 'pretty' for woman and 'handsome' for man, which will give a sense of co-occurrence, and this case is known as collocative meaning. Sometimes, the sense of co-occurrence is caused by stylistic dissimilarity or conceptual dissimilarity.

2.2 Advertising

Advertising or advertisement, based on Goddard (1998, pg.6) is an idea that is purposed to develop an image of organization, group, or person, included commercial promotion of a product. Tsany (2016, pg.20) informs that advertisement is used to be found around us, in electronic media such as television, radio, internet or printed media, such as newspapers, magazine, billboards along the street, etc. Its form also can be spoken or written or both. However, advertisements usually use transactional language which prioritizes the content of the communication, such as explanation by Widyahening (2015, pg.71).

Furthermore, some internal and external elements support to understand the message in an advertisement. Internal elements are from the language, audio, and visual that are used in the advertisement. External elements are such as the figure who plays on the advertisement and the place where the advertisement is taken.

All of the elements are conducted to give influence to the audience properly.

According to Tsany (2016, pg.17), a good advertisement also needs to be informative besides persuasive. Based on that condition, the language will be one of the most influential and important elements in an advertisement. Advertising or

There are some structures of advertising text based on Duda (2013, pg.9-11) which is used primarily in written, and also occasionally used in spoken, such as advertising on TV or Radio. The structure of advertising text includes *Brand Name, Headline, Slogan, and Body Copy*.

The smallest element in advertising text is "Brand Name". The brand name can identify a single product and categorize the product, a line of products, or the producer. The principal purpose of the brand name linked to the product is building powerful and comprehensible assumptions in potential customer's minds. Intelligibility, melodiousness, and memorability are the strategy to create the brand name. Uniqueness and conspicuousness also allocate the brand name product to become more stand out within the market competition. The second, a structure in advertising text which is a little longer than the brand name and usually accompany it but also as the most conspicuous textual part is "Headline". It usually shows the vision of products, should be outstanding, readable, motivate the customer to continue reading, and effective (clear and have memorable points). The longest text in advertising structure which contains of overall concept of a product advertised and will make the advertisement much stronger is "Body Copy". The most important purpose of a longer body copy is to persuade

customers for the quality of products. The text written on body copy must be coherent, consistent, and easy to be read as much as possible. It should depict the headline as well and the point in the direction of the slogan, finally it should provide a coherent conclusion. Hence, the structure of advertising that becoming the object of research in this study is advertising slogans.

The other important element of advertisement is the slogan. According to Duda (2003, pg.127), the slogan is a phrase designed to be memorable, attaching to a product or service during a particular advertising campaign. Slogan is used also to suggest people about the quality of the product, superior, benefit, or other messages which relate to the product to attract and to persuade them. An advertising slogan must connect an idea that is offered to the brand of the product.

Duda (2013, pg.11) also explained that slogan is the shortest part of traditional advertising text apart from the brand name. It is used to connect the brand name with the product, service, or idea being advertised. It usually expresses a value or purpose of advertisement shortly and memorably. There are three types of slogans distinguished by Duda (2013, pg.11) according to their function and duration of their service, there is a product slogan, a campaign slogan and a corporate slogan. Sometimes, a placed slogan, collected with a strong visualization, or only text. Slogan as part of company identity has function based on its long term used and repetition. As a result, some companies change their slogans rarely in a period or a year.

This part explained all about the data collected for research, the data sources, instruments used for collecting data, the technique of collecting the data, and data analysis.

3.2.1 Research Data

The data of this research were taken from sentences, phrases, words, and images contained on the advertising slogans. The advertising slogans were Coca-Cola advertising slogans which were taken from some English countries in the world, they are; UK, USA, Ireland, and Australia. The researcher took the various slogans in different period since 1957 until 2016, and different websites of official companies in those countries.

3.2.2 Data Source

The data sources of this research were from Coca-Cola Company websites. Coca-Cola products were sold in various countries in the world, and they have their own website company in each country. The data were taken from website companies of several English countries, included the U.S.A, (United States of America), UK (United Kingdom), Ireland, and Australia. The advertising slogans were in the form of images and text, totally there are 18 slogans have chosen by the researcher. The official websites of Coca-Cola Company are listed in the following table below:

This is the slogan of Coca-Cola on 1979. The picture portrayed a hand is holding a Coca-Cola.

2. The researcher described the literal meaning of slogans and underlined the vague words or phrases.

That slogan declared a sentence "Have a Coke and a smile". The advertiser ordered the audience of slogan to have a Coca-Cola and have a smile. The verb of this slogan is the word "have", and the object of "have" is "a Coke or Coca-Cola" and "a smile". The coke has been represented on the picture, but the smile is not represented there, this is the uniqueness. The meaning of word "smile" based on Oxford dictionary is (1) an expression of the face with the corners of the mouth turned up, (2) showing amusement, happiness, etc. This word can be potentially vague, because it has fuzzy meaning.

The slogan: "Have a Coke and a smile"

3. The researcher analyzed the characteristics of vagueness by correlating the sentences, phrases, words, and images contained in the slogans.

Here, the researcher analyzed logically how the word became a vague based on the characteristics of vagueness has been construed in Chapter II. Finally, there must be a characteristic founded such as blurred boundaries, borderline case, or sorites-paradox.

product is favorite? or what?, and how 'a great' coke taste is it ?, what is the specification of great coke taste? There is no specification about precise taste such as sweet, or no so-sweet, or something else, and there is no theory for contents that must be had by the product. This word 'great' make the phrase "great coke taste" become vague, because the word 'great' has characteristic of vagueness, that is blurred boundaries.

As a vague word, 'great' also has associative meaning. The meaning of 'great' can be solved when knowing this case. The word 'great' is attached to complete the phrase 'coke taste', and the consumer of a coke must be known the taste. Coca-Cola is the pioneer of Coke and the most popular Coke in the world. The coke has its taste as characteristics, so 'the great' means that the taste of the coke is the best. It is the portrayal of Coca-Cola as the number one coke in the world, which must be the most favorite and also the most delicious taste. In simplicity, the word 'great' gives the meaning agrees with the collocation, because the collocation is 'Coke taste', so 'great' must mean as "the most delicious flavor of coke", this is called as Collocative Meaning.

what aspect of life is it mean?. Is 'life' the same as 'world'? or is it like kinds of activities done by humans in the world ?. This word has blurred meaning which has brought this word to be such kind of vagueness. it has a characteristics of vagueness that it blurred boundaries.

The word "life" becomes a vague word in this slogan. It is vague because its conscious meaning when it becomes a phrase accompanies "the coke side". This consciousness can be answered by knowing the meaning of its associative meaning. Related to the picture, there is an illustration that the bottle of Coca-Cola is full of colorful and varying inhalations. This impression expresses the meaning of "life" implicitly. "Life" must be full of color and varying, such as the inhalations. An inhalation and a bottle are such as a couple. A bottle will never be completed without an inhalation as the completer. This illustration wants to express as the metaphor of the product, precisely about "the product" related to "the life of people". By using this word "life", then the product will have a closer impression of people's life. However, "life" is not always mean as everything happens in people's lives, but it refers to the "lifestyle of people especially in consuming a beverage". This word is used to build the sense of getting closer to the consumer of the product based on social relationship, that is named as Stylistic meaning of its associative meaning.

The slogan is: “**Things go better with Coke**”

This slogan contains some words which constrain to vagueness. The first is 'Things', this word builds a lot of perception in the audience's mind, such as whether the word 'things' mean as 'tools', 'equipments', 'instrumentations', or 'events' or 'activities'. There is no borderline case which makes this word vague, moreover, it has a position as the subject in this sentence, finally, it causes the main conscious of the idea of the sentence. This consciousness adds more and more by the existence of the word 'better'. This word also becomes vague, because there is no exact measurement of a thing which is considered as 'better'. This word has blurred boundaries. The final consciousness is when both of those words are combined. The questions might appear in people's minds are such as; what aspect 'things' will run 'better'? , this must appear an obscure perspective on people's brains. In the end, it can be said that the words 'things' and 'better' are vagueness.

Both of words need to be interpreted their meanings, to break down the intention of the slogans. The word 'things' refers to 'everything' that people do such as an event, a party, or the other activity that presents the Coke in it. This word has a connotative meaning, because as has explained by Leech (1974, pg. 12) that the communicative value of this word is based on what it refers to. The second is the word 'better' as the connotative to the subject noun of this sentence, that is 'Things go better', it means that 'things' will be 'run well' if there is 'a Coke'. Both of these words have a connotative meaning which needs to be known their meaning in order this slogan can be understood.

The next word vague in this advertising slogan is the word "Good". There is no detailed specification about "good", "what is mean by the word 'good'?". Because this word is collocated with the word "taste", so what kind of taste that can be categorized as "good" actually?. These all consciousness made consciousness because the word "good" does not have a borderline case. Finally, the word "good" becomes vagueness because it has no borderline case.

The words which posit as vagueness in this advertising slogan are "Sign" and "Good" must be broken open the meaning, in order the purpose of this slogan can be cleared out. The word "sign" is like something which left out as a symbol of the existence of something. In this case, "sign" means as a symbol of the existence of Coca-Cola. This word is colloquial language, which can give image "closer to the consumer" in the social aspect. That is the purpose of Stylistic meaning as associative meaning in this slogan.

On the other side, the word "good" is the collocation of the word "taste", which the meaning must be suitable with the collocation. In thesaurus dictionary "taste" is the flavor of some quality, so the most suitable meaning of "good" is as same as "delicious". This word is mentioned as Collocative Meaning.

Data 13:

Figure 4.14. Coca-Cola advertising slogan¹³

This slogan is one of the booming slogan of Coca-Cola, even though becomes a song entitled “Have a Coke and a Smile” too. The images pinned there is a hand which grip a can of Coca-Cola. The hand showed in the image is like hand of someone who offers Coca-Cola, such as wants to represent the word “have” in the slogan. Besides of the image there is a txt of slogan. The theme of color used here is like normally, that is red and white.

The text of slogan put here is “Have a Coke and a Smile”. The advertiser invites the audience to have a Coca-Cola and have a smile. Coca-Cola has been portrayed in the slogan as the product promoted, but the smile is becomes vague then. In Oxford dictionary, “smile” as a noun means as expression of the face with the corners of the mouth turned up, shc ; amusement, happiness, etc. There is a lot of possibilities as the expression of smile based on this dictionary because the statement “etc” in the end. This word in the slogan may have another meaning behind of the word “Smile”. Finally, this word becomes vague in this statement.

The targets of this slogan must be the audience, but why the audience must "smile" and feel happy?, the answer is in the previous noun phrase, that is because they "have a Coke". Implicitly, the product will give "smile" or happiness to the customers who have it. In this case, there are associative meaning that is Reflected meaning.

4.2 Discussion

After presented the findings in the previous chapter, the discussion is presented in this session currently. This study purposed to recognize vagueness in Coca-Cola advertising slogan, identify the characteristics, and interpret the meaning based on Associative meaning theory. Two research questions organize the discussion in this research. The first is the characteristics of vagueness in advertising slogans. The second is the meaning of advertising slogans. To answer the research questions, the researcher used the theory vagueness from Nicholas J.J. Smith about the characteristics of vagueness, and the theory of associative meaning based on Geoffrey Leech (1974). The characteristics of vagueness are revealed in the word vague with the analysis then, the meaning is interpreted based on types of associative meaning used.

Vagueness often used in advertising slogans of course along with the purpose of advertisement, which is to persuade the audience about the product advertised. Vagueness is a natural language phenomenon that shows that a word meaning is often so imprecise or underspecified and there is no clear-cut boundary

between true and false (Pinkal, 1996, p. 185). Vagueness need to be interpreted to get the best understanding of meaning, such as interpreting used the theory of types of meaning. Associative meaning is kind of meaning which shaded unstable meaning.

A vague meaning in advertising may be a normal thing as long as there is no falsehood. However, Bertens (2013, p. 286) in his book explains that advertising must be clear, the advertiser must give true information and pay attention to the ethics of advertising. He stated that advertising need to be controlled by government, advertiser, and society in order there is no manipulation in advertising (2013, p.297). According to his observation (2013, p.286), Manipulation and falsehood are done in advertising frequently which make society complains in advertising practices which is not deal with the ethics. He mentioned there are four factors that must be considered to apply the principle ethics of advertising: the intention of advertiser, the content of advertising, the condition of public or the audience of advertising, and the culture in advertising. The advertising slogan consists of a set of words or sentences which made to influence the audience too about the product. Finally, language has also become the most important thing in an advertisement which can influence people (Kesuma, 2012, p.61). In creating an advertisement, the advertiser must be honest and say the fact about the product, do not deceive. God asked humans to be fair in business and always be honest, even though when promoting something or

Is 'The Feeling' caused by consuming the product?, having the product? , and how that feeling means?. If someone just touches the product but does not drink it, so is it named “feeling”?. From this analysis, 'The feeling' has a characteristic of vagueness that is Sorites-paradox.

The second research question is to interpret the meaning of vagueness in the advertising slogans used the theory of the associative meaning. The slogan "You can't beat the feeling" has unstable meaning, so that it included in associative meaning. The advertiser creates this slogan to build a branding of product in people's minds, so 'the feeling' must refer to 'the product', even though it is considered as 'the feeling of someone' but it must be caused by consuming the product. There is nothing that can strike 'the feeling' that will consumer get if he consumes this product. The phrase 'The Feeling' reflects to another sense of word response and arises a multiple conceptual meaning. It means, "The feeling" has reflected meaning.

Some of the previous research about analyzed vagueness based on pragmatics point of view, but this research served vagueness analysis to correlate with the semantics aspect. Because no research revealed the detailed characteristics of vagueness and interpret the clear meaning through associative meaning so the findings of the present study are noteworthy. However, this study only covered vagueness based on its characteristics, while there is some aspect of vagueness that can be revealed such as the purpose of using vagueness, the functions, advantages, and others. Hence, the data used in this research only

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