การวิเคราะห์การใช้โวหารภาพพจน์ของโฆษณาผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลผิวหน้าในอินสตาแกรม*

AN ANALYSIS OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE IN FACIAL SKINCARE ADVERTISEMENTS ON INSTAGRAM

นันทวัน ค่ำสุริยา[1*], สุวิชา แสงรุ้งเพชร[2], พีรเดช คุ้มวงศ์ไทย[3] และ นันทิพร เรืองสวัสดิ์[4]

Nantawan Kamsuriya[1*], Suwicha Saengroongpetch[2], Peeradej Koomwongthai[3] and Nuntiporn Raungsawat[4]

[1, 2, 3, 4]มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏราชนครินทร์ 422 ถ.มรุพงษ์ ต.หน้าเมือง อ.เมือง จ.ฉะเชิงเทรา 24000

[1, 2, 3, 4]Rajabhat Rajanagarindra University 422 Marupong Road, Namueang, Mueang, Chachoengsao, 24000, Thailand

*Corresponding author E-mail: nantawan.kam@gmail.com

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บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาประเภทและเหตุผลในการใช้ภาพพจน์ในโฆษณาผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลผิวหน้าผ่านสื่ออินสตาแกรม ผู้วิจัยเก็บข้อมูลโดยใช้คำบรรยายโฆษณา จำนวน 100 ชิ้น จากผลิตภัณฑ์แบรนด์ขายดีห้าอันดับที่นำเสนอระหว่างปี พ.ศ. 2567 ถึง พ.ศ. 2568 โดยมีกระบวนการสุ่มกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบเจาะจง วิเคราะห์ข้อมูลโดยใช้วิธีการแบบผสมผสานระหว่างการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณโดยใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนาเพื่อศึกษาประเภทของภาพพจน์ในภาษาโฆษณาตามกรอบแนวคิดของ Keraf และการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพได้ทำการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหาเพื่ออธิบายเหตุผลในการใช้ภาพพจน์ในรูปแบบดังกล่าว ผลการวิจัยพบว่า จากคำบรรยายโฆษณาผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลผิวหน้า 100 ชิ้นในอินสตาแกรม มีการใช้ภาพพจน์ 406 ครั้ง โดยพบการใช้ภาพพจน์ 28 ประเภทตามกรอบแนวคิดของ Keraf นอกจากนั้นพบการใช้ภาพพจน์เพิ่มเติมอีก 5 ประเภท และพบว่า ภาพพจน์ที่ใช้มากที่สุดสามอันแรก ได้แก่ อติพจน์ (Hyperbole) จำนวน 64 ครั้ง (15.96%) บุคลาธิษฐาน (Personification) จำนวน 44 ครั้ง (10.83%) และสัมผัสอักษร (Alliteration) จำนวน 37 ครั้ง (9.11%) นอกจากนี้พบการใช้วาทวิทยา (Figures of Rhetoric) มากที่สุดสามอันดับแรก ได้แก่ อติพจน์ (Hyperbole) จำนวน 64 ครั้ง (27.11%) สัมผัสอักษร (Alliteration) จำนวน 37 ครั้ง (15.67%) และการละคำสันธาน (Asyndeton) จำนวน 35 ครั้ง (14.83%) และโวหารเชิงเปรียบเทียบ (Figures of Analogy) มากที่สุดสามอันดับแรก คือ บุคลาธิษฐาน (Personification) จำนวน 44 ครั้ง (46.80%) อุปลักษณ์ (Metaphor) จำนวน 11 ครั้ง (11.70%) รวมทั้งอุปมาโวหาร (Simile) และการเปรียบเทียบ (Comparison) ประเภทละ 10 ครั้ง (10.63%) นอกจากนี้ ผลจากการวิเคราะห์เนื้อหาพบว่า เหตุผลในการใช้ภาพพจน์ในโฆษณาเพื่อการดึงดูดความสนใจ สร้างภาพลักษณ์ผลิตภัณฑ์ และสร้างความเชื่อถือของแบรนด์

คำสำคัญ: การโฆษณา, โฆษณาผลิตภัณฑ์ดูแลผิวหน้า, ภาพพจน์, อินสตาแกรม

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[1] *ผู้ช่วยศาสตราจารย์ สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*

[2-3] *อาจารย์ สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*

[4] *อาจารย์ ดร. สาขาวิชาภาษาอังกฤษ คณะมนุษยศาสตร์และสังคมศาสตร์*

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to study the types and reasons for using figurative language in facial skincare product advertisements on Instagram. The data was collected from 100 advertising captions posted on Instagram of top five best-selling facial skincare brands during 2024 to 2025 based on purposive sampling. A mixed-methods approach was utilized for data analysis in this study. Quantitative method was employed to investigate the types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram by using descriptive statistics. Figures of speech framework proposed by Keraf was adopted to analyze the data. Qualitative approach was conducted to describe the reasons of advertisers to employ those types of figurative language through content analysis. The findings revealed that there were 406 utterances out of 100 facial skincare advertisement captions on Instagram containing figurative language. Twenty-eight figurative language types based on Keraf's framework were found while five additional figurative language types were discovered. The top three types of figurative language included Hyperbole (64 times, 15.96%), followed by Personification (44 times, 10.83%), and Alliteration (37, 9.11%), respectively. The top three types of figures of rhetoric were Hyperbole (64 times, 27.11%), followed by Alliteration (37 times, 15.67%), and Asyndeton (35 times, 14.83%), respectively. Moreover, the top three types of figures of analogy were Personification (44 times, 46.80%), followed by Metaphor (11 times, 11.70%), Simile and Comparison (10 times, 10.63% each), respectively. The results from content analysis revealed three categories of reasons advertisers used figurative language to present the products to their customers, namely getting attention, enhancing a product's image, and building credibility.

KEYWORDS: Advertisements, Facial Skincare Advertisements, Figurative Language, Instagram

Introduction

Fundamental aspect of successful business operation is to achieve sales and profits. So, it is essential for business to engage in advertisement that can impact customers' determination. Advertisements is the powerful means for reshaping individuals' attentions. For this reason, large companies, non-profit organizations, and small businesses use strategic advertisements to transfer product and service information. Furthermore, advertisement supports to accelerate and activate product sales across boundary (Qader et al., 2022). Advertisement has undoubtedly grown into a major element in human social life. Advertisement is an important tool that is greatly helpful to persuade consumers to purchase the products or services (Hutagalung et al., 2023; Septiana, 2022). Moreover, advertisement is a communication instrument in marketing strategy, and the effective language is key mechanism for capturing customers' attitude and influencing the purchasing decision including brand loyalty (Bahadur et al., 2025; Gong & Seo, 2025). According to Qader et al. (2022), the information shown in the advertisements can motivate customers' impression and judgement for product's aspect. In addition, the language employed in the advertisement is distinct from the everyday language because it must be as interesting as possible. Thus, companies need to focus on language style used to ensure it coordinates with target group (Septiana, 2022).

Language is the significant strategy in advertisements to promote the products or services to public. Figurative language is employed in advertisements to convey a hidden meaning rather than literal meaning, so the readers should interpret the contextual meaning (Anastari et al, 2024; Atmaja, 2022; Ketaren et al., 2021). Figurative language is defined as words or phrases that are meaningful, but not literally true (Merriam–Webster Dictionary, 2025). Similarly, Meredith (2022) describes that figurative language is a rhetorical device that uses words, phrases or expressions in ways that go beyond their literal meanings, enhancing persuasion in language. These devices include various classifications, such as Metaphors, Similes, Idioms, and Hyperboles, which convey meanings more vividly and creatively. To make messages in advertisements more impactful and memorable, the use of figurative language is recommended.

In the recent digital world, social media marketing plays a major role to inform and persuade prospect customers about the products. Recently, advertising on social media is rapidly growing so that marketers and customers can interact in online communities anywhere and anytime. Instagram is a platform that brands employ to attract customers and build brand loyalty. Instagram is the popular social media platform where more than 3,000 million people around the globe engage in the forms of photos, videos, texts, audio, and animation (Hesti et al., 2022; Salim & Purwaningtyas, 2022; Statista, 2025). Moreover, it is the center of trendy and inspired contents. Consumers could widely explore the latest products depending on individual preferences (Alexander, 2025). Skincare product advertisements are mostly found on Instagram these days (Amalina, 2023) which is consistent with the report of Trade Policy and Strategy Office (TPSO), Ministry of Commerce. It revealed that skincare products held the largest global market share among all cosmetics at 48.13% in 2024. In the same year, skincare was also announced to be the largest category within cosmetics market share in Thailand with 46.8% (Mandala AI, 2025). Especially, facial skincare had sharply higher sale figures (84%) when compared to body skincare (16%). The aim of facial skincare advertisements is to persuade customers that the products can treat a variety of facial skin problems, including acne, wrinkles, dullness, and others (Hesti et al., 2022).

Trakulkasemsuk (2018) emphasizes that since the facial skincare industry is highly competitive and the products are luxury items, their advertisements should be wisely created to persuade costumers to purchase them. To convince customers that products advertised on Instagram are worth buying, advertisers attempt to draw consumers' attention and make their advertisements recognizable at a glance by using impactful language in the captions (Pho–Klang, 2020). Salim and Purwaningtyas (2022) stated that the use of figurative language plays an important role in advertisement captions. According to Yusuf and Abas (2024), figurative language has been widely acknowledged by advertisers to illustrate images and grasp customers' interest, increase product memorization as well as improve the efficacy of the persuasive process. Several studies have investigated the use of figurative language in advertisements on Instagram. Pho–Klang (2020) investigated the figurative language and functions used in captions for clothing advertisements on Instagram using the framework of Phillips and McQuarrie launched in 2002.

A wide range of studies have investigated figurative language used in beauty advertisements. Anastari et al. (2024) examined figurative used in fashion and beauty advertisements of Red Digital Magazine based on Johnson and Arp's theory. It was found that seven types of figurative language – Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Metonymy, Allegory, Paradox, and Hyperbole – out of twelve types of figurative language were employed in

the advertisements in Red Digital Magazine. The three most frequently used figurative language were Hyperbole (e.g. “Rapid is exactly the word we’d use. This gave patchy–looking skin a polish glow after a week and continued to lighten the darkened area over time.”), Metaphor (e.g. “Victoria Beckham’s lilac sequin skirt is a serious serotonin booster, especially when it’s paired with Palma Martin’s floral cotton puffed–sleeve dream”), and Personification (e.g. “One swipe gives a whisper of color and petal–soft lips.), whereas, no Synecdoche, Apostrophe, Symbol, Understatement, and Irony were discovered in fashion and beauty advertisements of Red Digital Magazine. Srichaiwong (2020) used persuasive language and figurative language framework to investigate English for communication in cosmetic advertisements from web pages. The result showed that persuasive writing was frequently used rather than figurative language.

Pathumratanathan and Tapinta (2012) analyzed figurative language in English advertisements in Sawasdee and Fah Thai In–flight magazines based on the frameworks of McQuarrine and Mick, Thorn, as well as Wells, Moriarty, and Burnett. The results depicted that five types of figurative language used in advertisements consisted of Alliteration (e.g. “Watch the sitting sun melt into the sparkling sea…and discover the myriad charms of Pattaya”), Metaphor (e.g. “In this wonderful country where smiles seem to be the national language, where welcomes are always heartfelt, and where making friends is so easy”), Parison (e.g. “Fly to Johannesburg – Gateway to Africa”), Personification (e.g. “A design resort immersing you in the beauty of nature”), and Rhetorical questions (e.g. “Need finances to build your dream home?”). Hutagalung et al. (2023) identified figurative language used in cosmetic advertisements on Indonesian television. The results demonstrated that types of figurative language engaged in the advertisements were Personification (e.g. “Listen to your lips”), Hyperbole (The powerfulness of youthfulness”), Repetition (“e.g. “More glowing more beauty”), Metaphor (e.g. “Bright Complete”), and Simile (e.g. “Feel like a queen everyday”).

Pho–Klang (2020) explored figurative language in social media caption for clothing advertisements. Findings were shown that the three most frequently figurative language used were Alliteration (e.g. “Swing into spring style”), Imagery (e.g. “Relax your mood and spend good time in softness and comfort”), and Assonance (e.g. “Denim never fails”). Moreover, the functions of figurative device employed in advertisement captions included describing product features, illustrating the model’s look, action or feeling, and emphasizing product quality. Hesti et al. (2022) investigated figurative language employed in skincare advertisements on Instagram by using stylistic theory. The results revealed that skincare advertisements on Instagram contained rhetorical language styles including Alliteration, Assonance, Asidenton, Polysidenton, Eroticism and Hyperbole. Moreover, figurative language styles were also found including Simile, Personification, Synecdoche, and Metonymy. The function of language styles aims to explain, strengthen and bring life to inanimate objects in Instagram of skincare advertisements. Trakulkasemsuk (2018) investigated the functions of English language used in printed advertisements in facial cosmetic advertisements available in Thai magazines. It was found that English language is used as a tool for presenting meaning, getting attention, enhancing a product’s image and value, and denoting modernization. Amalina (2023) conducted text analysis to examine skincare product advertisements on Instagram. The findings revealed a number of figurative language types, namely positive and negative adjective, imperative sentence, modality, simile, repetition and parallelism, and slogan. Advertisers used these types as a marketing technique to attract consumers, manipulate, and control customers’ minds.

Based on the previous studies above, figurative language was identified as the most favored applied in advertisements. Nonetheless, the figurative language conducted in facial skincare advertisements is insufficient. Moreover, the captions of facial skincare products on Instagram have not been explored. Based on Keraf (2010)'s framework, Salim and Purwaningtyas (2022) analyzed rhetoric and figurative language in cosmetics advertisements on Instagram. For skincare product advertisements, Hesti et al. (2022) examined functions of rhetoric and figurative language in skincare advertisement on Instagram by using stylistic theory. Amalina (2023) explored language used in skincare product advertisements found on Instagram and advertisers' strategies to promote their brands by employing three-dimensional frameworks proposed by Fairclough. However, figurative language used particularly in facial skincare advertisements is underexplored. Moreover, the figures of rhetoric and analogy of Keraf (2005) which were especially created a particular effect to analyze the language used in advertisements of facial skincare products' captions on Instagram are rarely employed. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the way in which figurative language is used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram to better understand how advertisers employ language styles to promote their products.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram.
2. To explain the reasons for employing figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram.

Conceptual Framework

As shown in Figure 1, the conceptual framework in this study represents the relationships between key concepts, variables, and theory relevant to the study. To elaborate, the current study aimed to explore language used in facial skincare advertisements available on Instagram in terms of types of figurative language and the reasons why the facial skincare product advertisers employed those types of figurative language. Figurative language framework proposed by Keraf (2005), which was further divided into figures of rhetoric and figures of analogy, was employed to elicit the data in this research

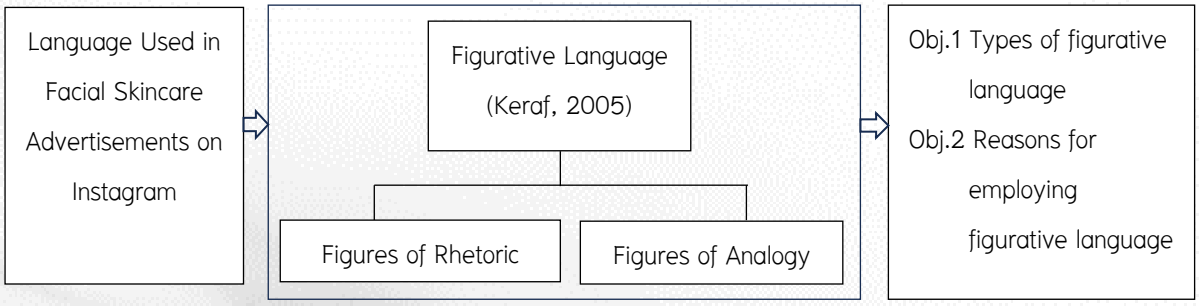

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Keraf (2005) categorized figurative language in advertisements into two groups: figures of rhetoric and figures of analogy. Figures of rhetoric refer to the strategic use of language to persuade customers to buy products, influencing emotions, logic, and trust such as Alliteration, and hyperbole whereas figures of analogy are a literary

device that creates a comparison between two very different things in order to explain a concept or highlight their similarities such as Similes and Metaphors. Figures of rhetoric and figures of analogy and their definitions along with an example are described below.

Figures of rhetoric:

1. Alliteration: The same consonant sound or sounds appear at the beginning of two or more words that are close to each other, e.g. sea, sun, sand, seclusion.

2. Assonance: A repetition of similar vowel sounds preceded or followed by different consonant such as I hate to wait.

3. Anastrophe: Inversing the usual word order in a sentence such as People that he had known all his life; he didn't really know.

4. Apophasis: The writer pretends to hide something, but he actually shows it, e.g. I don't want to say that your daughter has been pregnant.

5. Asyndeton: The omission of the conjunctions that ordinarily join coordinate words, phrases or clauses, e.g. I came, I saw, I conquered.

6. Polysyndeton: The opposite of asyndeton. Some series words, phrases, or clauses is connected each other with conjunction such as This semester I am taking English and history and biology and mathematics and sociology.

7. Ellipsis: The deliberate omission of a word or words in a sentence that can be interpreted by the readers or the listeners such as If you fail to do your job...but we won't talk about this.

8. Hyperbatons: Saying something illogically, e.g. The cart goes away in front of the horse.

9. Pleonasm: The use of more words to express an idea in a sentence or phrase such as The red blood wet his body.

10. Periphrasis: Almost the same as pleonasm, which is using word more than it should be. The difference is that the word can be substituted with one word, e.g. The answer of your demand is no (refuse).

11. Prolepsis: Using a word or some words before the idea or the event happens such as On a bad day, he drove a motorcycle.

12. Eroteme: A question doesn't need an answer to reach a deeper effect, e.g. Doesn't he deserve a dinner that looks as good as yours?

13. Epanorthosis: At first, Epanorthosis is asserting something, but then improve it such as I have visited the place four times, no, five times.

14. Hyperbole: An exaggerate statement, by exaggerating something, e.g. I'll die if I don't pass this course!.

15. Paradox: Speech that contains opposition or contrasts with the real fact such as Enemy is usually a close friend.

16. Oxymoron: The use of two terms which are ordinarily contradictory, e.g. Expression like sweet pain, luxurious poverty.

Figures of analogy:

1. Simile: Something is the same as the other thing by the use of words such as like, the same as, similar to, resembles and the like such as Trying to get any response from the class was like trying to strike a match on a blancmange.

2. Metaphor: The comparison that does not use word such as like, the same as, similar to, resembles and the like so that the first thing is connected with second thing directly such as Word is sharp sword.

3. Allegory: A brief story or narrative that contains analogy. It has an ulterior meaning beneath the surface one.

4. Personification: Inanimate objects as if they have humanity characteristics such as Assignments wait for us.

5. Allusion: Similarity among people, places or events in real life based on presupposition that both the reader and the writer have the same knowledge about it such as Bandung is Paris of Java.

6. Epithet: The use of the word to state a particular characteristic of something or someone such as King of the jungle is for lion.

7. Synecdoche: A part of something to state the whole or vice versa such as Get your foot out of here means get yourself out of here.

8. Metonymy: A word to state other things, because they have close relationship such as The word government of the United States as “White House”.

9. Hypallage: A certain word is used to describe a word that should be applied to another word such as He lies on a worried pillow.

10. Irony: The use of a word in a manner that conveys an opposite meaning to its literal meaning such as This room is very clean, cigarette butt and paper are everywhere.

11. Satire: A figure of speech in which the words laugh at or refuse something. It contains the negative side of human being.

12. Antiphrasis: The use of a word with inverse meaning such as You are indeed a smart student (a foolish student).

Research Methodology

A mixed–methods research design was employed to analyze data in this study. The types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram were investigated through a quantitative method using descriptive statistics and the possible reasons of advertisers to employ those types of figurative language were analyzed by using content analysis as a qualitative approach.

Data Collection

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, sampled advertisement captions were purposively selected from the Instagram of the top five purchased facial skincare products in 2024, namely L’Oréal, Nivea, Lancôme, Guerlain, and Estée Lauder, according to Today Bizview (2024). The chosen advertisements captions must contain figurative language and was published during 2024–2025. Totally, there were 100 sample group captions, divided into 20 captions of each facial skincare brand. To facilitate the data analysis, captions displayed in the form of written statements and expressions appeared in the advertisements of the five brands on Instagram were

duplicated and arranged in the table on Microsoft Word, that is one column for advertising captions and another column for the types of figurative language.

Data Analysis

Data analysis of this study was conducted by using Keraf (2005)'s framework which categorizes figurative language in advertisements into two groups: figures of rhetoric and figures of analogy. To identify the types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram, words, phrases, and sentences appeared in the captions were thoroughly analyzed by using descriptive statistics including frequency and percentage. Then the content analysis was utilized to explain the reasons behind the use of figurative language in facial skincare advertisements. To increase credibility and accuracy of the data analysis., three inter–raters who have experience in the field of English teaching were invited to verify the findings from the content analysis. The inter–rater reliability showed a value of Cohen's Kappa at 0.90 ($p < .05$) which demonstrated a high level of agreement between raters' judgments on the reasons the researchers provided for the use of figurative language in this study.

Research Results

The results of this study are illustrated in two sections according to the research objectives: 1) types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram and 2) possible reasons for using figurative language in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram.

Table 1 Overall Frequency and Percentage of Figurative Language Used in Facial Skincare Advertisements on Instagram

Rank	Types	Freq.	%	Rank	Types	Freq.	%
1	Hyperbole	64	15.96	13	Paradox	4	0.98
2	Personification	44	10.83	14	Anastrophe	3	0.73
3	Alliteration	37	9.11		Polysyndeton	3	0.73
4	Asyndeton	35	8.62		Hyperbaton	3	0.73
5	Imperation*	31	7.63		Hypallage	3	0.73
6	Assonance	30	7.38	15	Oxymoron	2	0.49
7	Comparison*	22	5.41		Allegory	2	0.49
8	Prefixation*	17	4.18		Metonymy	2	0.49
	Numeration*	17	4.18	16	Apophasis	1	0.24
9	Pleonasm	12	2.95		Ellipsis	1	0.24
10	Prolepsis	11	2.70		Epanorthosis	1	0.24
	Erotema	11	2.70		Allusion	1	0.24
	Metaphor	11	2.70		Synecdoche	1	0.24
11	Simile	10	2.46		Irony	1	0.24
	Repetition*	10	2.46		Satire	1	0.24
12	Periphrasis	7	1.72		Antiphrasis	1	0.24
	Epithet	7	1.72				
			Total			**406**	**100**

* Remark: Types of figurative language emerged during data analysis

1. Types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram: Out of 100 facial skincare advertisement captions on Instagram, 406 expressions were found to contain figurative language.

Table 1 shows overall frequency and percentage of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. The results reveal that the top three types of figurative language were Hyperbole with 64 times, counted as 15.96% (e.g. "*Watch your skin replump in just one hour!*"), Personification with 44 times, counted as 10.83% (e.g. "*Your skin will thank you.*"), and Alliteration with 37 times, counted as 9.11% (e.g. "*Soft sounds and skincare secrets.*"), respectively.

Moreover, five more techniques employed in facial skincare advertisements which were not aligned with the framework proposed by Keraf (2005) were discovered during the data analysis. Therefore, the researchers classified them into five additional types of figurative language. The first category is "Imperation" which action verb beginning is able to attract the consumers' attentions on the products, e.g. "*Discover the perfect skincare routine!*" The second is "Comparison." Comparative adjectives are used to motivate predominantly consumers' decisions to buy the products, e.g. "*Revitalizing the skin, making its smoother, softer and more radiant.*" The third is "Prefixation." The prefixes used in facial skincare advertisements were regularly portrayed to play the decisive role in consumers' perspective. It symbolizes the noticeable improvement in fascinating conditions, e.g. "*Skincare reactivates skin's renewal & recovery and restores a more youthful look.*" The fourth is "Numeration." It uses numbers to establish the great credibility and trustworthy of facial skincare products, e.g. "*In 1 month, skin appears 6x firmer, 3x plumper, 2x more radiant.*" The last strategy is "Repetition." The same words are used repeatedly aiming to boost brand recall, build trust, and improve sales performance, e.g. "*It's waterproof, sweat-proof, and friction-proof*".

Table 2 Frequency and Percentage of Figures of Rhetoric and Analogy Types in Facial Skincare Advertisements on Instagram

Figures of Rhetoric Types				Figures of Analogy Types			
Rank	**Types**	**Freq.**	**%**	**Rank**	**Types**	**Freq.**	**%**
1	Hyperbole	64	28.44	1	Personification	44	52.38
2	Alliteration	37	16.44	2	Metaphor	11	13.09
3	Asyndeton	35	15.55	3	Simile	10	11.90
4	Assonance	30	13.33	4	Epithet	7	8.33
5	Pleonasm	12	5.33	5	Hypallage	3	3.59
6	Prolepsis	11	4.90	6	Allegory	2	2.38
	Eroteme	11	4.90		Metonymy	2	2.38
7	Periphrasis	7	3.15	7	Allusion	1	1.19
8	Paradox	4	1.77		Synecdoche	1	1.19
9	Anastrophe	3	1.33		Irony	1	1.19
	Polysyndeton	3	1.33		Satire	1	1.19
	Hyperbaton	3	1.33		Antiphrasis	1	1.19
10	Oxymoron	2	0.88				

Table 2 (Cont.)

	Figures of Rhetoric Types			Figures of Analogy Types		
11	Apophasis	1	0.44			
	Ellipsis	1	0.44			
	Epanorthosis	1	0.44			
	Total	**225**	**100**	**Total**	**84**	100

Table 2 illustrates the rank of figures of rhetoric types in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. It is found that the top three types of figures of rhetoric were Hyperbole with 64 times, account for 28.44% (e.g. *"Rebuild your routine with oil serum for deep youth repair from the first drop."*), followed by Alliteration with 37 times, account for 16.44% (e.g. *"Worth the wait anyways!"*), and Asyndeton with 35 times, account for 15.55% (e.g. *"One pad, shake it, swipe it."*, respectively.

In addition, it presents the top three types of figures of analogy in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram including Personification with 44 times, account for 52.38% (e.g. *"Don't let your skin face the day alone."*), followed by Metaphor with 11 times, account for 13.09% (e.g. *"It doubles on crow's feet and dark spots."* Simile with 10 times, account for 11.90% each (e.g. *"When your skin care feels like a relaxing bedtime story."*

2. Reasons for using figurative language in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram:

After analyzing the types of figurative language, content analysis was conducted to find out the rationales for employing figurative language found in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram captions. The findings reveal three categories of reasons: getting attention, enhancing a product's image, and building credibility.

1. Getting attention refers to create a standout impression in advertisement using writing techniques to capture consumer's attention, altering the focus from "ignoring" to "interested" in the product or advertisement content. Writing techniques for this purpose are Hyperbole (e.g. *"Nothing repairs better."*), Personification (e.g. *"Say hello to your dynamic anti-aging duo."*) and Alliteration (e.g. *"Given her the gift of glowing skin."*).

2. Enhancing a product's image means the process of creating awareness, feelings, and confidence in a product in consumers' opinions that is clear and distinct from competitors, through written communication, in order to make the product memorable, build loyalty, and encourage repeat purchases. Writing styles for this objective are Simile (e.g. *"Designed to act as the master architect for your skin."*), Metaphor (e.g. *"All aboard the golden train of dreams"*), Imperation (e.g. *"Meet No. 1 serum for skin repair."*)

3. Building credibility is advertisement writing techniques to persuade consumers to trust a product and brand, assuring its quality, effectiveness, and reliable results. This leads to repeat purchases and long-term brand loyalty, achieved by leveraging supporting data, statistics, expert testimonials, and storytelling. Written statements used for this goal are Numeration (e.g. *"8 out of 10 would never stop using it."*), Comparison (e.g. *"Try to experience a fresher, smoother appearance within an hour."*, Epithet (e.g. "The life force of the mythical ten-thousand-generation orchid."

Conclusion

Language used in advertisements is one of the important aspects to be analyzed because the companies could communicate their products to customers honestly and frankly through language (Arjulayana & Enawar, 2022). The purpose of this study was to investigate the types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. One hundred top five best-selling facial skincare brands advertising captions on Instagram were purposively selected during 2024 to 2025. Four hundred and six linguistic units of figurative language were analyzed by a mixed-methods approach. Based on Keraf (2005)'s framework, 28 figurative language types were found. The top three types of figurative language were Hyperbole (64 times, 15.96%), followed by Personification (44 times, 10.83%), and Alliteration (37, 9.11%), respectively. The top three rhetoric figurative types included Hyperbole (64 times, 28.44%), followed by Alliteration (37 times, 16.44%), and Asyndeton (35 times, 15.55%), respectively. Additionally, the top three types of figures of analogy consisted of Personification (44 times, 52.38%), followed by Metaphor (11 times, 13.09%), Simile (10 times, 11.90%), respectively. Besides, five additional figurative language types which are not stated in Keraf (2005)'s framework were discovered by the researchers, namely Imperation, Comparison, Prefixation, Numeration, and Repetition.

This study also aimed to explain the reasons for employing figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. Findings from content analysis reveals three reason categories of using figurative language to get attention, enhance a product's image, and build credibility. Summary of the findings is presented in Figure 2.

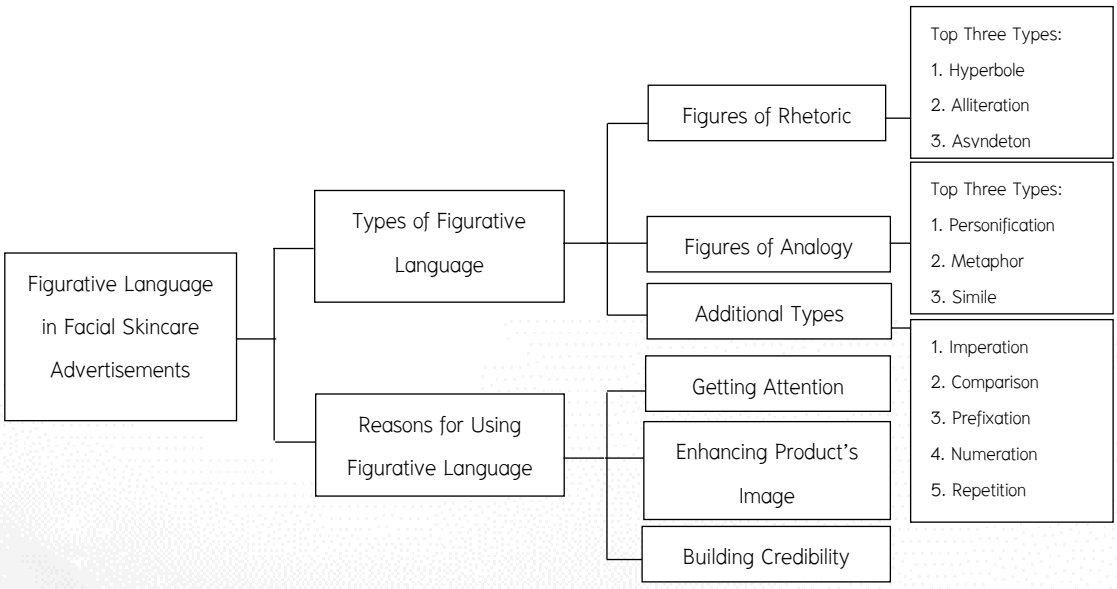

Figure 2 Summary of Findings

Discussion

1. Types of figurative language used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram:

This study found that Hyperbole (15.96%), Personification (10.83%), and Alliteration (9.11%) were frequently used in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram based on Keraf (2005)'s framework. These findings align with the research of Hesti et al. (2022), Amalina (2023) and Hutagalung et al. (2023), who identified that the figurative types such as Assonance, Alliteration, Hyperbole, Simile, Personification, Imperation, and Repetition

are essential tools in skincare advertisements on Instagram. The consistency of the current study and previous research findings can be explained based on the application of rhetoric devices in beauty advertisements, such as Hyperbole, Personification, Simile, and Alliteration (Shi, 2021). Simply put, the aim of rhetoric devices is to use a variety of linguistic features in order to appeal customers. Appropriate and intelligent use of rhetoric can make the language in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram vivid and full of artistic charm.

Moreover, the study shows five additional types of figurative language employed in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram which were not mentioned in Keraf (2005)'s framework. These include Imperation, Comparison, Prefixation, Numeration, and Repetition. This finding is in line with what revealed in the study of Amalina (2023) who found the use of imperative sentences for manipulating the customers and repetition for enhancing long-term memory of skincare products advertised on Instagram.

Additionally, Amalina (2023) and Hutagalung et al. (2023) discovered that Imperation and Repetition are considered crucial roles in cosmetic advertisements on Instagram and TV, respectively. Obviously, Larasati and Pariyato (2022) realized that Prefixation is one of the most frequency employed in cosmetic products descriptions in U.S. celebrities' beauty brands. Furthermore, Naser (2021) found that Numeric is utilized to emphasize the necessity of the advertisements of health and beauty products for customers' daily lives. Zuhriani (2022) described that Comparison appeared on cosmetic advertisements because the cosmetic products are more remarkable than other competitive brands.

It was mentioned that Hyperbole (15.96%), Personification (10.83%), and Alliteration (9.11%) were the results of the top three of figurative language in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. The findings of this study are consistent with the result examined by Hesti et al. (2022). The main purpose of utilizing Hyperbole, Personification, and Alliteration on facial skincare advertisements is to influence public's interest in purchasing the products. Furthermore, these aspects are applied to enhance product recognition in the competitive business. Therefore, advertisers attempt to initiate and promote the attractive messages through advertisements.

Noticeably, five techniques – Imperation, Comparison, Prefixation, Numeration, and Repetition – did not comply with Keraf (2005)'s framework were identified in advertisements of facial skincare products on Instagram. Facial skincare brands frequently utilize these five techniques in the current online platforms, particularly Instagram, in order to establish impressive and persuasive messages in the immense competitive era. Additionally, these five strategies are constructed to accelerate purchasing decisions. Mukhammadovna and Matluba (2025) found that Imperation is the effective tool employed in advertisements because its feature is concise, clear, memorable, and impactful. The Comparison is frequently used in facial skincare products in accordance with the finding of Zuhriani (2022) found that Comparison is a strategy to illustrate the products as superior among their competitors. In terms of Prefixation and Numeration, Caesary et al. (2022) explored that Prefixation is employed to enhance the appeal of advertisements; and advertisers aim to capture customers' attention including highlight the benefits of the products. In addition to Prefixation, Shi (2021) presented that the use of Numeration enhances the credibility of the advertising contents and the products' effectiveness to consumers, highlighting specific figures make the products' trustworthiness. While the study of Nurlanbek Kyzy (2025) found that Repetition is one of strategies for reinforcing the product, ensuring that the messages were remarkable and favorable in order to embed in consumers memory.

Similar to social media platforms, the study of Anastari et al. (2024) also found that Hyperbole was the most frequent strategy in printed magazines to emphasize product potency. In contrast, the result of Pathumratanathan and Tapinta (2012) found that Eroteme was frequently used in magazine advertisements to engage readers whereas it was less found on Instagram advertisements in this study. Eroteme is a type of a rhetorical strategy which is not a literal question, normally leading to negative meanings. Hence, Eroteme is rarely found in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram. As beauty products, positive language should be used in advertisement content to enhance their images. In conclusion, although the main objectives of advertising, namely getting attention, enhancing product image, and building credibility, remain consistent across media, the linguistic delivery on Instagram is significantly denser and more descriptive than that of traditional printed formats.

2. Reasons for using figurative language in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram:

The result from content analysis reveals three reasons of figurative language use in facial skincare advertisements on Instagram including getting attention, enhancing a product's image, and building credibility. This is in line with Trakulkasemsuk (2018)'s research findings which indicated a role of English language in facial cosmetic advertisements as a tool to get attention, enhance a product's image and value, and denote modernization. It might be because language used in facial skincare advertisements and those found in facial cosmetic advertisements play a similar role in getting attention and creating something memorable for the consumers, and portrayal of an international image.

Besides, this study analyzed the use of comparative language in Instagram advertisements of five facial skincare brands, L'Oréal, Nivea, Lancôme, Guerlain, and Estée Lauder, that have shown continuous growth in skincare market both in Thailand and abroad (Today Bizview, 2024). The five selected brands are categorized into two main groups: high–end brands (Lancôme, Guerlain, and Estée Lauder) known for their patented ingredients, advanced delivery technologies, and proven clinical results. On the other hand, mid–range brands (L'Oréal and Nivea) that combine high–end quality with affordable pricing.

For marketers or content creators, the use of figurative language should align with the communicative objectives at each stage of the marketing strategy. During product launch, Metaphor and Personification bring the products to life, connect it to daily life, and create brand recognition and a sense of closeness. At the stage of product information broadcasting, Simile and Personification clarify complex features or technologies in a simpler way. For sales promotion stage, Hyperbole and Repetition create memorability, stimulating interest and accelerating purchasing decisions. Finally, during the phase of building long–term relationships with consumers, Metaphor, Simile, and Personification help simplify complex information, convey emotions, and foster a stronger connection, trust, and brand recognition among consumers.

Suggestions

Recommendations for Pedagogical Implications

The results of this research can contribute to English language instruction in various aspects. First, the language structures used in facial skincare advertisements such as Hyperbole, Personification, and Alliteration are different from those found in accepted standard English which are the usual correct form. This is due to the fact that the aim of figurative language is to create vivid imagery, evoke emotion, and convey a message

about a product to draw consumers' attention and persuade them to purchase the product (Trakulkasemsuk, 2018). Therefore, the teachers should raise the learners' awareness in terms of English writing techniques used in specific genres with specific purposes.

Second, the results of this research can be presented in an English creative writing class as a guideline for English language learners, especially those who pursue their career as a cosmetic and beauty advertisement content creators and online product reviewers. This knowledge enhances learners' creativity and critical thinking, expands vocabulary, improves persuasive writing skill, as well as allows learners to practice their communication skills to the customers effectively by using figurative language. All these combined can pave the way for the learners to the real world of social media marketing where is highly competitive these days.

Third, based on the research findings, word selection plays an important role in advertisement writing. Words and expressions appeared in facial skincare advertisements are more creative when compared to those used in everyday conversation. This is because skincare products appear as gorgeous items and can give pride and dignity to customers (Lakkam, 2017) such as "reduce impurities in your skin", "get ready for clearer, brighter skin", and "the perfect finishing touch for all your makeup looks!" Thus, the teachers should suggest the learners how to choose the words that provide information about skincare and beautiful images of women that can be used as a linguistic device in promoting a brand, drawing customers' attention, and persuading customers to believe in the advertisements (Amalina, 2023).

Finally, the teachers can adopt facial skincare advertisement captions on Instagram from this study as the authentic materials in English writing classes. These are real-world resources representing genuine language use rather than simplified coursebook materials. With these materials, learners will have more opportunity to connect their language learning experience to figurative language used in real life contexts. According to Chamba et al. (2019), authentic materials help learners produce better language and introduce them to the natural use of the language which attracts their interest and increases positive motivation.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Future studies may conduct the comparative study of figurative language used in advertisements in different social media applications, various products by using another approach in order to realize the writing strategies of advertisements. Moreover, future research should study the effect of figurative language used in product advertisements on social media captions on customers' purchasing decisions to investigate the language vitality across generations.

Obvious limitations of the current study have been exhibited in sampling method and specific selection of the top five best-selling facial skincare brands on Instagram. With the first suggestion, systematic random sampling tends to be more beneficial and generalizable to a larger research repertoire with the enhancement of validity and reliability. Thereby, such methodology is recommended in further research to sample language resources in beauty product advertisements. Secondly, future studies should be proceeded beyond the category of high-end facial skincare brands to foster comprehensive insight and extensive implications of the figurative engagement. Messages expressed on general mass-market and other medical-grade segments should be correlatively taken into account to ascertain figurative language roles with its persuasive and informative functions. Eventually, further investigation

should be spotlighted on the consumers dimension and the degree to which figurative strategies are perceived, interpreted, and responded by message receivers and their behaviors.

Original Contribution to Knowledge

The result of this research contributes to the knowledge of written language in advertisements for English learners. It boosts their creativity and critical thinking in English writing in line with vocabulary expansion. Also, students' persuasive writing skill are enhanced by using figurative language. For the English teachers, facial skincare advertisement captions on Instagram can be used as authentic teaching resources in their writing classes because learners can adapt persuasive language as those employed in the real–life settings.

Author Contributions

Nantawan Kamsuriya: Supervision, Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft

Suwicha Saengroongpetch: Validation, Project Administration, Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing – Original Draft

Peeradej Koomwongthai: Methodology, Writing – Review & Editing, Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Investigation

Nuntiporn Raungsawat: Resources, Visualization, Conceptualization, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft

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