

## **The Impact of Visual and Verbal Rhetoric in Advertising on Mental Imagery and Recall**

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### **Abstract**

*Rhetoric, considered for a long time as reserved only for a verbal discourse, is applied to image in advertising. This research tests the impact of stylistic elements in advertising that form visual and verbal rhetorical figures on imagery and recall. The visual and verbal figures examined here produce more mental images and led to a more favorable attitude toward the ad. This stylistic device affects the ad memorization. However, the ability of mental imagery contributes to enhance the recall of advertising messages using figures of rhetoric. Involvement had a moderating effect on the relationship between rhetorical figures and attitude toward the advertisement.*

**Key Words:** Rhetoric, image, mental imagery, recall, advertising, attitude, involvement.

### **Introduction**

The rhetoric known as the art of feigned speech, has always been considered as the basis of the study of persuasion through verbal discourse. It is henceforth used as an element that could explain the manner in which the consumer interprets advertising images. These are assimilated to a discursive style as the writing able to produce tinges in communication, and as the numbers able to facilitate the analysis (Scott 1994 a). They apply variations of styles, viewpoints, contexts and interactions with the text. An image describes a facet of the reality into a space plan showing one particular aspect of this image within some angle and some lighting. It creates a vocabulary of visual symbols requiring a series of complex cognitive skills. As opposed to other symbolic systems, the image is a semantic and syntactic amalgam, which can not therefore be decomposed. A symbol is "a denotation by agreement or convention" (Scott, 1994 a). The advertising image establishes a set of connotations and a manner of information processing (Bratu, 2010).

This research focuses on studying the role of advertising rhetoric, both visual and verbal, in the process of persuasion and recall and in which case it is the most appropriate. This involves checking the effect of rhetorical figures on mental imagery and recall. This approach relies on the importance of the imagination (Evrard et al, 2000) and on the process of mental imagery (Helme-Guizon, 1995) representing the first response considered in this research. The second response covered is recall. The latter is part of the explanatory variables of experiential behavior. The overall affective reaction is represented by the attitude toward the advertisement and the attitude toward the brand (Gouteron, 1998). The theoretical framework of the advertising rhetoric is first presented. The effect of the figures on imagery and recall is then studied. An experiment checks the existence of the previously considered relationships.

Visual rhetoric fits into an interpretative approach (Durand 1970 ; McQuarrie 1989 ; Stern 1989 ; McQuarrie and Mick 1992 ; Mick and Politi 1989 ; Scott 1994 a) which considers that the image and the text are likely to carry the meaning intended by the advertiser. Visual rhetoric has evolved with Barthes (1964) and Durand (1970). Following a detailed semiotic analysis of an advertisement, Barthes acknowledges that an advertisement is composed of two levels: denoted and connoted. The literal message appears as the basis of the "symbolic" message. The literal image is denoted and the symbolic image is connoted. Based on this observation, Durand (1970) concludes that the creative advertising is based on the transposition of rhetorical figures to image advertising. He presented a two-dimensional classification of rhetorical figures existing in advertising. The first dimension is represented by the operation that enabled the transition from the literal sense to the figurative one. The second consists of the relationship used to define the link between the components of the figuration.

McQuarrie and Mick (1996) have subsequently presented taxonomy of the figures used in advertising in which they consider that the distinctive trait of the figuration is the presentation of a message in a manner different from that usually encountered by the recipient. It represents a way to legitimize the violation of certain standards and conventions.

## **1. Background**

### **1.1. Effect of rhetorical figures on mental imagery, recall and attitude**

Resolution of the figure generates new ideas by looking at the relationship between the literal sense and the figurative one (Ortiz, 2010; Pracejus et al., 2006; Whaley and Wagner, 2000). Elaboration is defined in psychology as the process by which the information is integrated with the knowledge structure in memory (MacInnis and Price, 1987). It may come as a discursive or a visual form (MacInnis and Price, 1987). In the advertising context, the elaboration is caused by the incongruity (Heckler and Childers, 1992b). The stimulus of the incongruity is simply the deviation (Berlyne, 1971). The fundamental property of rhetorical figures that stimulates the elaboration is then its deviation from what is usually observed (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999). This characteristic causes the recipient to want to know the reasons that led the advertising using this deviation (Ahluwalia and Burnkrant, 2004).

The interpretation of a message using rhetorical figures is deeper than an explicit message (Campelo et al., 2011; Bulmer et al., 2006; Toncar and Munch, 2001). The receiver has to find a different sense from the literal one representing the solution to the incongruity of the figure (Vlasis et al., 2008). This presents information without stimulating the cognitive defenses of the receiver. The approach of the cognitive response shows that advertisements employing the rhetorical figures increase the elaboration (Petty et al., 1981). The receiver thinks about the message, prepares the different arguments and finally develops a response.

#### **H 1: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on mental imagery.**

*H.1.1.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on the elaboration of mental imagery.*

*H.1.2.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on the quantity of mental imagery.*

*H.1.3.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on the vivacity of the imagery.*

An iconic stimulus can trigger the imagery process (Houston et al. 1987; MacInnis and Price, 1987; Miniard et al., 1991; Scott, 1994b). It is likely to generate mental images outnumbering, more elaborated and more favorable than a verbal stimulus (Babin and Burns, 1992). In the presence of an incongruent stimulus, the receiver will infer idiosyncratic images (Serafini, 2011; Gkiouzepas and Hogg, 2011). He operates a cognitive elaboration in order to reduce the gap between expectations and the perception and give a sense to the perceived incongruence by giving personal interpretations (Heckler and Childers, 1992b). When interpreting a nonverbal stimulus the activation of perceptual structures through semantic structures is less intense than a direct activation (Miller and Marks, 1997).

#### **H 2: Visual figures have a positive effect on mental imagery higher than that of verbal figures.**

*H 2.1.: Visual figures have a positive effect on the elaboration higher than that of verbal figures.*

*H 2.2.: Visual figures have a positive effect on the vivacity higher than that of verbal figures.*

*H 2.3.: Visual figures have a positive effect on the quantity higher than that of verbal figures.*

Reading an advertisement with rhetorical figures can lead to multiple interpretations (Jeong, 2008). This is due to the deviation of the figures compared to what is usually observed by the consumer. This unusual message then causes a positive attitude toward the advertisement (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999, 2003, 2009). The levels of subjective comprehension model (LSC) proposed by Mick (1992) considers that the understanding of an advertisement has an effect on the attitude toward the message. Figures give rise to positive affective responses associated with the feeling of accomplishment felt after decoding the hidden sense (TonCar and Munch, 2001). The receiver then will look at the whole advertisement with a more favorable attitude (Mick, 1992). The pleasure comes from the successful resolution of the incongruity. The effect of the figures made at the visual and the verbal levels will be checked by hypothesis. The comparison between the two types of figures will be subject to a research proposal.

#### **H 3: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on the attitude toward the advertisement.**

*H 3.1.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on hedonism.*

*H 3.2.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on utilitarianism.*

*H 3.3.: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on interest.*

**P.1.: Visual figures have a positive effect on attitude toward advertising higher than that of verbal figures.**

**P.1.1.: Visual figures have a positive effect on hedonism higher than that of verbal figures.**

**P.1.2.: Visual figures have a positive effect on utilitarianism higher than that of verbal figures.**

**P.1.3.: Visual figures have a positive effect on interest higher than that of verbal figures.**

Rhetorical figures generate greater positive attitude toward the brand (McQuarrie and Mick 1992). Advertising employs tacit elements that implicitly highlight the characteristics of the brand. The reduction theory of counterarguments (Gurthie, 1972) considers that the receiver spends most of his cognitive resources to resolve the deviation. He is unable to contradict the message content. Processing of this type of advertising requires greater cognitive resources compared to a literal message reducing thereby counterarguments and increasing persuasion. The consumer will be distracted from the idea that it is an advertisement made for commercial reasons. The implicit conclusions induced by the advertisement involve the receiver who will deduct by himself (Hung et al., 2011). The attitude thus depends on the degree of deviation of the message. More the advertisement presents incongruity, more the attitude is favorable.

#### **H.4: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.**

Semioticians explain that because of its implicit nature, the visual message raises more interpretations than the verbal message (Marchand, 1985). The combination of two incongruent elements in the same image pushes the receiver to accept the message without asking questions. Visual rhetoric increases the number of positive inferences related to the brand compared to verbal rhetoric (Delbaere et al., 2011; McQuarrie and Phillips, 2005).

#### **H. 5: Visual figures have a positive effect on attitude toward the brand higher than that that of verbal figures.**

Advertisers seek to maximize the attention and the recall of their messages (Batra et al. 1986; Gorn et al, 1997; Rossiter and Percy, 1997). They consider that the original advertisements are the key to overtake the concurrence (Pieters et al; 2002). An original advertisement use different techniques of "defamiliarization to push the audience to receive familiar elements with an unexpected perspective" (Scott, 1994a) as rhetorical figures. It presents a deviation from what is usually encountered. It is a combination of familiar elements in a non-familiar manner (McQuarrie and Mick, 1999). Original visual stimuli tend to attract the attention (Mitchell, 1987; Pieters et al, 2002; Rossiter and Percy, 1985; Bettman, 1979). They challenge the consumer to understand the purpose of advertising and direct attention to the brand and message. Increasing attention contributes indeed to enhance aided recall (Pieters et al, 2002) and unaided recall (Rosbergen et al., 1997).

Recall depends on semantic channels activated by the advertising stimulus (Childers and Houston 1984). This constitutes the activation of concepts in the network model of memory (Eco, 1979). The image of a product represented in consumer 's memory may be the one he uses in certain situations. Staging the latter is likely to evoke the image of the product in consumers' memory. This process will be marked by the receiver at the resolution of rhetorical figures encountered in the advertisement. Once resolved, the figures create more recall, because of the semantic channels raised in the interpretation of the message (McQuarrie and Mick, 1992). The interaction between the consumer and the deviation encountered in the image will generate a greater number of associations (elaboration). Memorizing the message will be thus made easier.

#### **H. 6: Rhetorical figures have a positive effect on recall**

The theory of differentiation of the code explains that mental imagery is reflected in a code allowing differentiating the stimulus encoded in other mnemonic traces (Helme-Guizon, 1997, Denis, 1979). The visual codes are qualitatively superior to verbal codes. They are likely to activate two recognition paths at their retrieval time. Words can just activate a verbal encoding process (Babin et al., 1992). The superiority of the iconic stimulus is due to the encoding quality. Visual rhetoric facilitates recall. Morgan and Reichert (1999) assess that visual message presents an illustration of the cited comparison facilitating thus the understanding of the figure. Verbal rhetoric implies that the receiver must create his own image. Further processing of a visual stimulus has a positive influence on recall by increasing retrieval index (Mick, 1992).

#### **H.7: Visual figures have a positive effect on recall higher than that of verbal figures.**

#### **1.2.Effect of mental imagery on Persuasion Responses**

Research shows that the different dimensions of the imagery have an effect on the attitude toward the advertisement and the attitude toward the brand (Babin et al, 1992; Babin and Burns, 1997; Bone and Ellen, 1992). The latter is influenced by information coming to the mind at the time of judgment. The imagery process generates an activation of stored information and its elaboration (Kisielius and Sternthal, 1984, 1986). Perceptual structures hence elaborated are readily available as they can be activated by several associative links (Miller and Marks, 1997).

The availability hypothesis states that more the information is available more the attitude is positive. Mental imagery positively influences the attitude toward the advertisement and the attitude toward the brand (Bone and Ellen, 1992).

**H 8: Mental imagery has a positive effect on the hedonism dimension of the attitude toward advertising.**

*H 8.1.: The vivacity has a positive effect on hedonism.*

*H 8.2.: The elaboration has a positive effect on hedonism.*

*H 8.3.: The quantity has a positive effect on hedonism.*

**H 9: Mental imagery has a positive effect on the utilitarianism dimension of the attitude toward advertising.**

*H 9.1.: The vivacity has a positive effect on utilitarianism.*

*H 9.2.: The elaboration has a positive effect on utilitarianism.*

*H 9.3.: The quantity has a positive effect on utilitarianism.*

**H 10: Mental imagery has a positive effect on the interest dimension of the attitude toward advertising.**

*H 10.1.: The vivacity has a positive effect on the interest.*

*H 10.2.: The elaboration has a positive effect on the interest.*

*H 10.3.: The quantity has a positive effect on the interest.*

**H 11: Mental imagery has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.**

*H 11.1.: The vivacity has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

*H 11.2.: The elaboration has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

*H 11.3.: The quantity has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

Purchasing intention is positively influenced by the imagery process (Anderson, 1983; Carroll, 1978; Gregory et al, 1982) which create relationships between the items stored in the long-term memory. Information is rapidly activated at the time of purchasing decision (Bone and Ellen, 1992, Anderson, 1983).

**H 12: Mental imagery has a positive effect on the purchasing intention.**

*H 12.1.: The vivacity has a positive effect on the purchasing intention.*

*H 12.2.: The elaboration has a positive effect on the purchasing intention.*

*H 12.3.: The quantity has a positive effect on the purchasing intention.*

**1.3. Relationship between the attitude toward the advertisement, attitude toward the brand and the purchasing intention:**

A favorable attitude toward the message has an effect on the attitude toward the brand. It influences the purchasing intention (Gardner, 1981; Stayman and Aaker, 1988; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989; Homer, 1990). This effect corresponds to the peripheral road of the ELM model of Petty and Cacioppo (1986). The receiver adopts a peripheral process when the audience members respond less to the content of the persuasive message than to accessory messages of the content.

**H 13: The attitude toward the advertisement has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.**

*H 13.1: The hedonism has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

*H 13.2: The utilitarianism has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

*H 13.3: The interest has a positive effect on the attitude toward the brand.*

**H 14: The attitude toward the brand has a positive effect on the purchasing intention**

**1.4. Moderating variables**

**1.4.1 The involvement**

The consumer is likely to be influenced by elements of the "peripheral" road of the ELM model if he is weakly involved (Petty and Cacioppo, 1979). He does not make a collection of information. In case of high involvement the consumer is interested in the processing of the content of the message. High involvement encourages consumers to make an evaluation based on the performances of the product. Weakly involved individuals will be influenced by peripheral stimuli (colors, music, staging...). MacInnis and Jaworski (1989) show that the category of the product has a moderating role in the relationship between stimuli and mental imagery. The deviation of rhetorical figures represents a peripheral execution element of the advertisement. It presents the qualities of the product in a figurative manner. Its action is more effective in case of low-involvement products. In this case, the consumer is disinterested from the literal advertisement. He is not motivated to view the message and develop a response toward it. The presence of deviation creates a more favorable attitude toward the advertisement when the consumer is weakly involved (Toncar and Munch, 2001).

**H 15: The involvement has a moderating effect on the relationship between the rhetorical figures and the attitude toward the advertisement.****1.4.2. Ability of mental imagery:**

It is defined as "the ability to maintain mental images in memory and make them voluntarily undergo specific transformations (Gavard-Perret-Guizon and Helme, 2003).

The imagery ability is composed of two dimensions : vivacity expressing the clarity of evoked mental images (Childers et al, 1985; MacInnis, 1987; Bone and Ellen, 1992) and the degree of imagery control corresponding to the facility of transformation of images (Childers et al, 1985; Babin et al, 1992) and their retention in memory (Helme-Guizon, 1997). An individual may have a vivacious mental imagery without being able to easily manipulate it (Richardson, 1972). He presents hence a good vivacity and a low degree of control. These variables are then processed separately. The ability of mental imagery represents a moderating variable of individuals' reactions to advertising (Hirschman and Solomon, 1984). Responses generated by this message depend on the ability to generate mental images.

**H 16: The ability of mental imagery has a moderating effect on the relationship between rhetorical figures and recall.****2. EXPERIMENTATION****2.1. Subjects and Procedure**

The stimulus used in this experiment is a collection of print advertisements. The criteria considered for selecting ads are: the presence of figures at both visual and verbal levels, the involvement of the consumer.

It uses four ads. The first is concerned with a high involvement product and employs a visual figure. It is divided into two parts. The first presents a picture of an old car. The second part is the portrait of the same car after being scanned. The second ad is concerned with a high involvement product and which do not have figures. The image shows a simple picture of a scanner with a fictive brand name. The third advertisement shows a product with a low involvement. It uses a verbal figure namely a paronomasia which is to bring together two vocables which are similar in sound but opposed in the meaning. The fourth ad is a low-involvement product. It does not use rhetorical figures. The fifth ad is a highly involving product using an anaphora at the verbal level. This figure consists in starting several sentences with the same word or groups of words.

The ad presents the fictive name of the brand. The sixth message concerns a product with a high involvement and which does not have figures. Seventh ad is an advertisement of a weakly involving product using a metaphor at the visual level. In this figure, the literal signification of a word is transferred to another signification that fits it only with an implied comparison. It presents a picture of a bottle of energy drink in the form of a cactus to emphasize the spicy characteristic of the mint contained in the product. The ad used in the last experimental condition concerns a low involvement product without rhetorical figures. It includes a picture of a bottle of energy drink with the name of the brand. The selected target population consists of students aged between 20 to 25 years. This convenience sample is apportioned equally between the various cells of the experimental design. The sample size is ten times the number of items (Evrard and Roux, 2003). It consists of 512 students.

**2.2. Selection of measuring instruments**

Measuring instruments are borrowed from literature and this according to two criteria: the research objectives, reliability and validity of scales in previous studies.

**Measurement of mental imagery:** Babin and Burns (1998) were inspired by the scale of Ellen and Bone (1991). They use 14 items to measure the three dimensions of the imagery: vivacity, quantity and elaboration. It is a seven-point Likert scale.

**Measurement of the attitude toward the advertisement:** We considered the scale of Olney, Holbrook and Batra (1991) for two reasons. It represents the hedonic component of the attitude (Olney et al, 1991). It was adapted to the advertising field (Olney et al, 1991; Batra and Athol, 1991). It is a semantic differential scale of seven points.

**Measurement of recall:** It is measured by unaided open questions of recall: What type of product was this ad?, What was the brand of this product?, What was the name of the product?.

**Measurement of the attitude toward the brand:** The scale of MacKenzie and Lutz (1986) is used to measure the attitude toward the brand. It has been empirically tested and validated by several studies: Good/ bad, Pleasant / unpleasant, Favorable / unfavorable.

**Measurement of the purchasing intention:** This variable was measured by the tool of MacKenzie et al. (1986) through three items. It is a Likert scale of seven points ranging from do not at all agree to totally agree.

**Measurement of the imagery ability:** The scale VVIQ of Marks (1973) is used. It evokes statements describing various scenes that the subject must mentally visualize. He must then evaluate the vivacity of the generated mental images on a scale. This tool consists of four different scenes, each comprising four distinct statements. For each the assessment is made of a five-point scale ranging from "no image evoked" to "absolutely clear image, as accurate and true that a real perception." An individual score ranging from 4 to 64 is calculated to classify respondents as "good image" and "weak image".

**Measurement of involvement:** The scale used is the Zaichowsky's scale (1987). It represents an inventory of personal involvement (IPI). It calculates a single score using the responses to twenty semantic differential in seven points. It identifies a group with a high involvement (score  $\geq 90$ ) and a group with a low involvement (score  $< 90$ ). Its objective is to measure the lasting involvement for a product category or every object.

### 3. RESULTS

#### 3.1. Scales analysis:

It appears that the vivacity dimension of imagery is divided in two according to its valence. The items reflecting clear pictures are summarized by the vivacity 1 (Alpha=0.8319, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.8330). Those corresponding to a fuzzy imagery are represented by the vivacity 2 (Alpha=0.7674, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.7631). The two other factors represent the quantity (Alpha=0.8069, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.7968) and the elaboration (Alpha=0.8422, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.8263). Attitude toward the advertisement has two factors corresponding to hedonism (Alpha=0.8422, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.8263) and utilitarianism (Alpha = 0.8648, Rh $\hat{=}$ 0.8652).

#### 3.2. Direct effect of rhetorical figures:

The first part of the hypothesis is intended to examine the direct link between rhetorical figures in advertising and imagery as well as recall. To test these relationships analysis of variance were performed. Results show that the rhetorical figures have a significant effect on three dimensions of mental imagery namely vivacity 1 ( $p = 0.00$ ,  $F = 8351$ ), elaboration ( $p = 0.00$ ,  $F = 4.726$ ) and quantity ( $p = 0.00$ ,  $F = 6.723$ ). The relationship between rhetorical figures and vivacity 2 is not significant ( $p = 0.549$ ,  $F = 0.847$ ). This confirms partially the hypothesis H.1. The relationships stated in the sub-hypotheses H 1.2 and H 1.3 are indeed validated, unlike the one stated in the sub-hypothesis H 1.1. The descriptive statistics show that for dimensions vivacity 1, vivacity 2 and elaboration, the effect of visual figures are higher than verbal figures. These results confirm the sub-hypotheses H.2.1 and H.2.3. For the quantity dimension, verbal rhetoric has a greater influence than the visual rhetoric.

The sub-hypothesis H.2.2. is therefore invalidated and the hypothesis H3 is partially accepted.

Rhetorical figures positively influence the first dimension of the attitude toward the advertisement. The relationship between the figures and the utilitarianism dimension is indeed significant ( $p = 0.001$ ,  $F = 3501$ ) in contrast to that between figures and hedonism which is non-significant ( $p = 0.112$ ,  $F = 1677$ ). Hypothesis H3 is partly rejected. The sub-hypotheses H.3.1 and H.3.2 are invalidated and H3.3 is confirmed. Results show that the effect of verbal figures on the attitude toward the advertisement is higher than that of visual figures. The proposition P.1 is totally rejected. Multivariate analysis shows that rhetorical figures have an effect on the attitude toward the brand. The results are significant in terms of prescribed thresholds ( $p = 0.01$ ,  $F = 3586$ ). H.4 The hypothesis is thus verified. The descriptive statistics show that the influence of verbal figures on the attitude toward the brand is greater than that of visual figures. H.5 is then invalidated. Rhetorical figures have a significant effect on recall ( $p = 0.001$ ,  $F = 7682$ ). These results confirm H 6.

#### 3.2. Effect of mental imagery on Persuasion Responses:

The dimensions of hedonism and utilitarianism of the attitude toward the advertisement are not influenced by mental imagery. Vivacity, elaboration and quantity have no significant effect on the attitude toward the advertisement. These results reject the hypotheses H8, H9. Results show that the effect of imagery on the attitude toward the brand is not significant. The latter is not influenced by the dimensions belonging to the mental imagery. The hypothesis H11 is rejected. The purchasing intention is influenced by the dimensions vivacity 2 and quantity of imagery. The effect of the dimensions vivacity 1 and elaboration are not statistically significant ( $p = 0.054$ ,  $p = 0.991$ ). The hypothesis H12 is then partially confirmed.

#### 3.3. Effect of the attitude toward the advertisement on the attitude toward the brand

Results show an effect of the attitude toward the advertisement on the attitude toward the brand. The sub-hypothesis is then accepted H13. The effect of the attitude toward the brand on the purchasing intention is not significant. This result invalidates the hypothesis H14.

### **3.4. Effect of moderating variables**

The moderating variables are not too strongly correlated. When the link is significant, correlation does not exceed 0.3. We can conclude that the presence of bias will be limited.

#### **3.4.1. Moderating effect of the ability of mental imagery:**

Following the recommendations of Baron and Kenny (1986), results show that the interaction between the rhetorical figures and the ability of mental imagery has a statistically significant effect on recall. The ability of mental imagery has a real moderating effect on the relationship between rhetorical figures and recall. The hypothesis is thus confirmed.

#### **3.4.2. Moderating effect of the involvement:**

This research aims to verify the moderating role of the involvement on the relationship between the attitude toward the advertisement and the rhetorical figures. We thus were interested in checking whether this link is different depending on whether the subjects are strongly or weakly involved. Baron and Kenny (1986) assess that this effect is verified by studying the interaction between the moderating and the independent variable. The results are significant. The hypothesis is hence accepted.

## **4. Discussion**

In this research we were initially concerned with the direct influence of the visual and verbal figures on all the dependent variables. Results indicate that rhetorical figures represent an effective method to directly influence the quantity and the vivacity 1 dimensions of mental imagery. This effect confirms the findings of Leigh (1994) concerning the use of verbal figures and those of Phillips (1997) concerned with the potential effectiveness of visual figures. The insignificant impact of the figures on the elaboration do not converge with the results of McQuarrie and Mick (1999) who have shown that the deviation from what is usually observed, stimulates the elaboration. This research highlights the effect of rhetorical figures on the utilitarianism dimension of the attitude toward the advertisement. According to the results of McQuarrie and Mick (1996, 1999), advertisements employing rhetorical figures generate a positive attitude toward advertising. The interpretation of the message composed by rhetorical figures following a reading of the advertisement causes an accomplishment sentiment felt after the decoding of the hidden meaning. The latter is generated by the consumer himself explaining hence the positive effect of the figures on the utilitarianism dimension. The non-significant link between the figures of rhetoric and the hedonism dimension can be explained by the receiver's engagement in the process of the resolution of the figures. In trying to understand the meaning of the figuration, he is rather interested in the utilitarian side of the message.

The attitude toward the brand is positively influenced by the rhetorical figures confirming hence the results of McQuarrie and Mick (1992, 1999). The conclusions drawn by the consumer concerning the characteristics of the brand enable to develop a positive attitude toward the brand. The relationship between figures of rhetoric and recall is significant. The averages for the different modalities of the qualitative variable suggest that the recall of an advertisements without figures is higher than messages using a visual or verbal rhetoric. This result does not converge with the results of McQuarrie and Mick (1992). This can be explained by the fact that people spend all their cognitive resources to solve the deviation of the rhetorical figures. They do not remember thus the name of the brand. The impact of attitude toward the advertisement on the attitude toward the brand is significant. This result is identical to that of MacKenzie et al. (1986). The divergence is however observed in the relationship between attitude toward the brand and purchasing intention. The link is not significant. Purchasing intention is actually explained by mental imagery. Positive cognitions resulting from this process influence the purchasing intention.

This research highlights the role of two types of moderating variables in the persuasion process: involvement and ability of mental imagery. Individual reacts differently to the presence of visual and verbal figures in the advertisement. All these variables influence the relationship between advertising rhetoric and the responses related to persuasion. They are able to moderate the strength of this link. The results of this research show that the ability of mental imagery could have been a variable contributing to strengthening the recall of advertising messages using figures of rhetoric. McKelvie and Demers (1979) showed the existence of significant differences in terms of recall depending on individuals' imagery capacity. Individuals with substantial mental imagery capability are those who have memorized most of the presented messages. It has been demonstrated involvement had a moderating effect on the relationship between figures of rhetoric and attitude toward the advertisement. This result is consistent with the hypotheses introduced by Toncar and Munch (2001) considering that in case of low involvement, the deviation of figures gives rise to a more favorable attitude toward the advertisement. Individuals tend to focus on peripheral elements rather than on the content of the message. When the receiver is weakly involved, rhetoric attracts his attention. He engages himself in the resolution process of the figure causing a favorable attitude toward the advertisement.

## **5. Limitations and Future Research**

This work highlights some limitations at the experimental and the methodological levels. This research takes into account two types of figures: visual and verbal. McQuarrie and Mick (1996) propose a taxonomy classifying the figures used in advertising according to the nature of the deviation (schemes / tropes). It would be possible to complete this research by integrating experimental tropes and schemes in the text and the images related to the various operations of this classification (repetition, inversion, substitution, destabilization). A comparison of the effect of all these figures at visual and verbal levels on the responses of the consumer would be interesting. The considered "laboratory" experimentation is a limitation in this research. The observed effects may be different in conditions in which the consumer is less involved especially since the figures of rhetoric are primarily aimed at pushing the receiver to generate himself the sense of the advertising. It would be hence interesting to conduct an experiment under real conditions of exposure. Our objective was to study the advertising rhetoric and to compare messages with visual and verbal figures. The experimentation showed that advertisements using rhetoric have a positive effect on mental imagery, attitude toward the brand and recall. This result does not mean that the used figure is the best possible rhetorical technique. Visual and verbal figures used are different for all the ads. It would be preferable to use the same figures for further study. It would be possible to check whether figures visually and verbally arouse the same answers for the different considered products. The use of different stimuli does not allow a generalization of our results.

Another limitation is related to the choice of the media support that is magazine advertisements. It would indeed be enriching to test the effect of presence of visual and verbal figures in television advertisements. The methodology adopted in the processing of the results limits their scope. Analyses of variance were conducted to compare the different effects of visual and verbal figures on responses related to the third route of persuasion and recall. Regressions checking relationships between these different responses have been established. It would be interesting to test the effect of such links by using structural equations. This procedure has the advantage of estimating simultaneously all the causal relationships between the different variables. Results showed that messages presenting figures have an effect inferior to that of advertisements employing rhetoric. This influence is not consistent with previous research considering that the presence of the figures increases the recall of the advertising. The questions asked were probably not complex enough to be able to observe an effect of this method on recall. This is because visual stimuli using figures do not include verbal information except for the brand name. The sample is composed by students. This choice ensures good internal validity of research due to the homogeneous character. The results are not generalizable, however, except for this population group.

The different responses of the consumer to the presented stimuli were measured immediately after viewing the advertisements. The results concern hence immediate reactions from consumers who are likely to change over time (Helme-Guizon, 1997). This can undermine the robustness of the study defined as "the extent to which research findings reflect the reality of the phenomenon and enable reliable predictions of the responses from the knowledge of certain initial conditions " (Evrard et al . 1993). To remedy this shortcoming, it is possible to take a measure following the exposure and a measure after a time interval. This research proposes a set of hypotheses checking the effect of rhetorical figures on persuasion and recall as well as the influence of moderating variables. This work can be enriched by including new variables such as the need in cognition.

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**Table 1: Results for the direct effect of rhetorical figures**

Dependant variable	F	P
<b>Vivacity 1</b>	8.351	0.000
<b>Vivacity 2</b>	0.847	0.549
<b>Quantity</b>	6.723	0.000
<b>Elaboration</b>	4.726	0.000
<b>Hedonism</b>	1.677	0.112
<b>Utilitarianism</b>	3.501	0.001
<b>Abd</b>	3.586	0.001

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the direct effect of rhetorical**

Dependant variable	Visual figure	Verbal figure
<b>Vivacity 1</b>	3.5	3.3398
<b>Vivacity 2</b>	4.1855	3.9983
<b>Quantity</b>	3.2292	3.8123
<b>Elaboration</b>	3.4340	3.0347
<b>Hedonism</b>	3.6048	3.9115
<b>Utilitarianism</b>	3.5559	4.0508
<b>Abd</b>	3.5286	3.9581