

Reflections Of Aesthetics In Turkish Television Advertisements*

Betül Çanakpınar**

1. Introduction

Nowadays, adverts are everywhere. We are constantly exposed to advertisements while living our daily lives. Advertisements are prepared to promote and sell the product by providing information to consumers. However, an advertisement not only promotes the product but also enriches our aesthetic experiences. When watching an advertisement, it is expected to appeal to the eye, ear and soul. This can only be achieved with an aesthetically successful advertisement. Today, aesthetic concerns are quite high for individuals. Therefore, people can prioritise aesthetics in their brand preferences. So what is aesthetics in advertising and how is it achieved? Aesthetics is 'beautiful' in the shortest definition. Humanity has searched for the beautiful and the good throughout history. For this purpose, it has constantly improved itself and strived to find better and continues to strive. The fact that aesthetics, as an intensely talked about concept, is still being discussed fervently today ensures the continued popularity of the concept.

Aesthetics can be considered as the ability to reflect the pleasure, delicacy, detail, situation or a state in the mind of the artist to the minds of others (Albayrak, 2015, p. 613). Aesthetics means that something is beautiful, but the concept of 'beautiful' is a very relative and inclusive use of broad definitions. Because for some, it can be a beautiful smile, look or posture, while for others,

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** İstinye University, İstanbul, Türkiye, E-mail: betulmar@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-7373-8637

a value can be perceived as beautiful. The Greek word 'aisthesis', which means the power of sensation or sensitivity (Kemalettin, 1931, p. 1), seeks an answer to the question "What is beautiful?". Early aesthetic theories were the theories that examined the question of what is beautiful. In other words, they questioned beauty rather than distinctions such as nature or art. The later theories, on the other hand, are narrower, but perhaps more effective, theories that deal more with beauty in art. Eco emphasises that the term beauty was more comprehensive in antiquity and the Middle Ages than it is today and that it included moral value and utility (Eco, 1988, p. 183). When we consider aesthetics in terms of advertising, we see that material needs are blended with spiritual needs and presented to the buyer. In other words, a product is presented in a meaningful way to represent a spiritual feeling that is needed. The product, which is associated with this emotion for a long time, will evoke that emotion as a result of being repeatedly presented to the consumer over time (classical conditioning). Thus, after a while, the consumer will feel that the way to experience his/her emotions is to buy that product. An effort as small as buying the advertised product will change the whole life of the person, allowing him/her to experience desired emotions such as beauty, love, prestige and happiness (Berger, 2009, p. 131). Adverts do not sell the product, but the meanings attributed to the product. In other words, by appealing to people's emotional worlds, they put the life they desire in front of them.

2. Aesthetics and Advertising Aesthetics

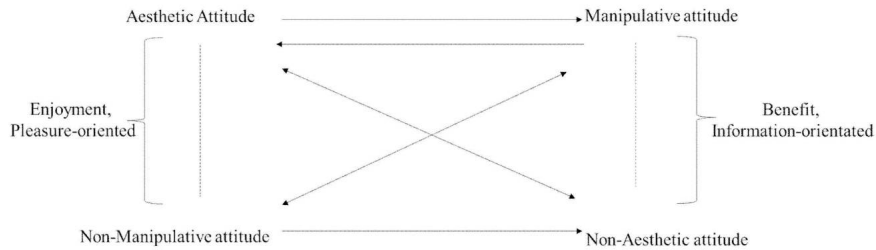
It can be said that aesthetics, which thinks about beauty and investigates what beauty is, is 'the art of thinking about beauty' (Akgün, 2016, p. 9). The fact that something is beautiful does not mean that it is aesthetic, some qualities are sought for a beautiful thing to be aesthetic at the same time. In advertisements, aesthetics are created through some indicators. Advertisers attribute abstract meanings to products through the signs that they bring together the signifier and signified (Williamson, 2001, p. 16). Advertising aesthetics, which refers to the aesthetic elements used in advertisements, is the use of sensory elements in a way that contributes to brand identity in the post-modern period when advertisements have

turned into shows where fetish images of objects are presented (Akgün, 2016, p. 91). In other words, in a way, aesthetics in advertisements search for ways to create a relationship between the brand and the customer by establishing a connection between the consumer's identity, value judgements, lifestyle and character and the brand. For this reason, advertising aesthetics is not interested in the product in the advertisement, it is interested in how to attribute a meaning to that product. It focuses on how to convey the desired emotion. Various codes are placed in the advertisement and the consumer is expected to find these codes by using the ways of seeing and understanding that he/she has acquired as a result of his/her life and to understand the messages to be given. It is aimed to evoke this feeling in the consumer by attributing meanings related to the consumer's lifestyle or values to the product. In this way, advertising aesthetics creates the idea that the doors of a different world will open with the purchase of the product (Casanovas and Poch, 1989, p. 140). The main purpose of advertising aesthetics is to manipulate the way the viewer experiences and perceives the world by helping the viewer to see the world from a different point of view by helping the viewer to see the world from a different perspective and to react by activating their emotions by allowing the viewer to experience the highest level by clarifying, intensifying and intensifying the real experiences in the viewer's mind (Zettle cited in Akgün, 2016, p. 92). The point to be considered here is that the aesthetic elements positioned in the advertisement should be in harmony with each other. Otherwise, the consumer may not understand the message correctly and as a result, the effect expected to be created by the advertisement is not realised and therefore the effect of the advertisement decreases. When the advertisement makes an unwanted association, a negative perception may occur in the consumer. For this reason, while preparing advertisements, various consumer profiles are taken into consideration. In adverts, all elements such as the consumer's habits, social environment, tastes, cultural values, and economic status are meticulously evaluated and handled with a broad perspective. Because an aesthetically successful advertisement should attract the attention of the consumer with its form and content. In advertising, form is the element of expression that aesthetically transforms the content, attributes a profile and gives it expressive power depending

on different artistic tools, especially style and aesthetic categories (Petrovici, 2016, p. 750). For this reason, although they are prepared for commercial purposes, it is the aesthetic aspect of the advertisement that attracts the consumer at first glance and creates a sense of uniqueness in him/her.

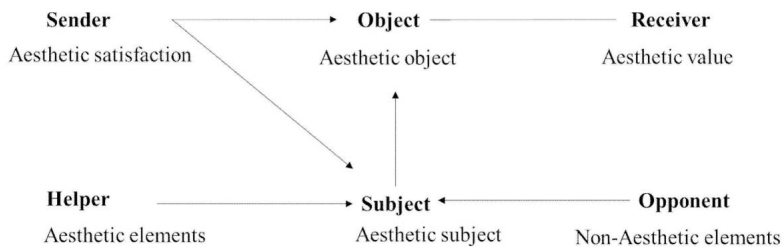
According to Kant, what is subjective in the design of an object, that is, what associates the design with the subject rather than the object, is the aesthetic quality of the design. Here, it would be appropriate to mention the aesthetic elements. *Aesthetic subject and attitude, aesthetic object and aesthetic value* can be listed as the elements of aesthetics (Akgün, 2016, p. 11). There is an *aesthetic subject* who is the addressee of every aesthetic phenomenon. *The aesthetic subject* is the carrier of the value of beauty, the being who perceives aesthetic objects and gets an aesthetic taste from them (Bozkurt, 2004, p. 40). It separates from the real world and creates a subjective world in accordance with its own imagination. Therefore, aesthetic behaviour is more subjective and more fictional. *The aesthetic subject* seeks convincing reasons to buy or not to buy the product in order to reach its object (aesthetic object) and establishes a bond with its object by making its own internal matching. If the consumer desires to buy the product, his/her aesthetic attitude about the product comes into play and attributes meaning to the product. In other words, there is a search for meaning in *the aesthetic attitude* exhibited here (Cevizci, 2002, p. 378). Because aesthetic attitude is related to the feelings of the aesthetic subject. While an object positioned in an advertisement is an object for others, as soon as it is given meaning by the aesthetic subject, it ceases to be a real object and turns into an object in the 'mind' of the subject. The meaning attributed to the object here is a valid meaning for that subject. Here, the *aesthetic object*, which is a real object for others, becomes a reflection of the feelings of the aesthetic subject. After all these processes, the subject-object bond is finally established. The perception formed here involves not only seeing but also seeing something as something (Townsend, 2002, p. 223). Or the opposite is the case. Here, how the aesthetic elements are positioned in the advertisement will be decisive. In this case, the *aesthetic object* ceases to be an ordinary object and becomes a part of the aesthetic situation. Because the *aesthetic object* is the object that is perceived and signified emotionally. Here, aesthetic object corresponds to

'value object' in semiotic terms. In other words, it is not just any object, it has turned into a symbolic object to which the sender attributes meaning and the sender makes sense of it. Presented in various forms, the aesthetic object constitutes a unity with the meaning it carries. In other words, it would be misleading to see the object that stands out in the advertisement only with its form. It is important what its content, that is, what its meaning is and what it conveys. For this reason, only as a result of the combination of form and content, the subject called *aesthetic object* will emerge. What constitutes the *aesthetic object* is the perspective of the recipient. Value is a phenomenon that may differ from person to person and is determined within the framework of cultural norms. In this respect, values are classified as theoretical, economic, social, political and religious values according to the aims and needs of people (Akgün, 2016, p. 16). *Aesthetic value* emerges as a result of an aesthetic event. In other words, in order for something to have aesthetic value, an aesthetic subject, an aesthetic object and an aesthetic situation are required, and as a result of all these, aesthetic value will emerge. If a person observes his environment according to the principles of aesthetic value, he should consider value principles such as symmetry, harmony, rhythm, balance, and unity in multiplicity (Akgün, 2016, p. 18). All these elements are taken into account when it comes to advertisements. Aesthetic elements are vital to create a qualified and effective advertisement. It should not be forgotten that aesthetic value may vary according to the value judgements of the society in which it is located. Aesthetic value can also take shape according to the 'beautiful' understanding and value judgements of the current age. In this respect, it is difficult to make a definition of aesthetic value drawn with sharp boundaries. In certain periods of history, aesthetic understanding and value have had different criteria. For example, an advertisement that may seem aesthetic to us now may not be aesthetic at all years later. Advertisements are prepared by taking into consideration the needs, expectations and value judgements of the current age. This situation can be summarised in the semiotic square as follows:



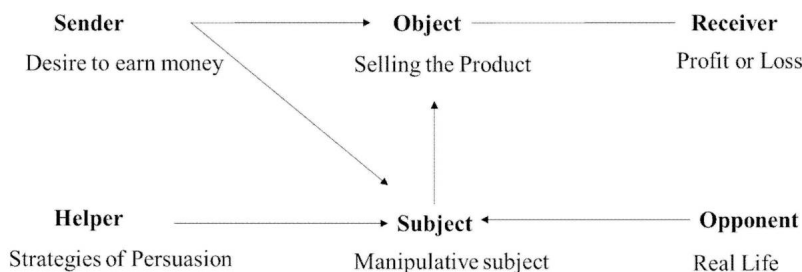
Scheme 1: Aesthetic Attitude and Manipulative Attitude

The aesthetic attitude and the manipulative attitude are opposite to each other. The aesthetic attitude does not contain a material return; it appeals to emotions and mobilises them. The aim here is to enjoy what is presented visually or audibly. The situation is completely different in the manipulative attitude. Here, the aim is to obtain information and benefit from the product. Here, if we consider aesthetic and manipulative attitudes separately, we obtain two agent models:



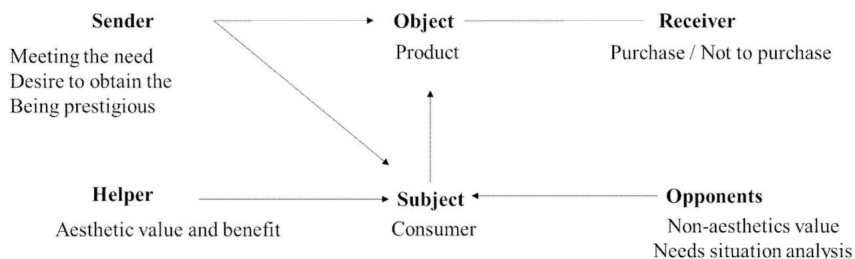
Scheme 2: Actants in terms of Aesthetic Attitude

In terms of aesthetic attitude, it is seen that the aesthetic subject approaches its object aesthetically. For the aesthetic subject, the advertisement will gain value according to whether it has aesthetic value or not. The aesthetic subject aims to reach the aesthetic object in order to obtain aesthetic satisfaction and, as a result, to achieve aesthetic value. Here, while other aesthetic elements are the supporters of the aesthetic subject, all other non-aesthetic elements are the inhibitors of the subject.



Scheme 3: Actants in terms of Manipulative Attitude

The subject who looks at the advertisement through the eyes of the manipulative subject approaches his/her object for benefit. He wants to reach his object to get something. With the desire to earn money, he/she strives for the realisation of the sale of the product and thus tries to obtain the targeted benefit. While the persuasion strategies used will be the advertiser's helper, factors such as the realities of life, material concerns and needs will also be opponents. When it achieves its goal, it will make a profit, and when it fails to achieve it, it will make a loss. Here, each subject will evaluate the situation from his/her own point of view. However, the advertiser should not ignore the aesthetic attitude. Only in this way will it be successful. Because the consumer who is thinking of buying the product will make his/her decision by considering both situations. In this case, the final version of the agent model will be as follows:



Scheme 4: General Actantial Model of the Adverts

When we construct the actantial model in terms of the consumer, we see that the subject (consumer) approaches his/her object (product) with both an aesthetic and manipulative attitude. The subject wants to reach his/her object for purposes such as fulfilling his/her needs, having the product and the prestige he/she will gain when he/she obtains the product (it may vary according to the product). This time, both the aesthetic value and the benefit to be obtained are helpers. Non-aesthetic elements and need-situation evaluations will be opponents.

4. Principles of Aesthetics in Advertising

Aesthetics in advertising can be said to make products attractive and attractive. Advertisements are made aesthetic by using visual, auditory and sensory elements. Elements such as colours, design, music and text reveal the aesthetic quality of the advertisement. Advertising aesthetics is a strategy to increase the power of advertising in the most general sense. It is aimed for the consumer to understand the advertisement in the fastest way and to establish a bond with the advertisement. Aesthetics in advertising is used to make the advertisement more attractive and effective. Because when the consumer buys a product, he/she may prefer it not only because it is a useful product or a product that meets his/her needs, but also because it appeals to him/her aesthetically. Here, criteria such as the purpose of the advertisement, presentation of the advertisement message, and suitability for the target audience are taken into consideration. The use of aesthetic elements in the advertisement provides clues about the authenticity of the product and creates a first impression that can positively or negatively affect the subsequent perception at the audience level. In advertisements, images that can mobilise the emotions of the consumer are placed in connection with the product. In doing so, they emphasise the different and superior aspects of the product. Advertising, which can also be considered as a process of creating meaning, is a process in which symbolic changes are experienced at every moment, changing according to culture, context and consumer experiences, and in which symbols reproduce themselves by including social and cultural codes (Leppert, 1996, pp. 7-8). Context is an important element to be taken into consideration in advertising. For example,

a picture enters millions of houses at the same time and is seen in a different context in each of them; now the picture goes to the audience and thus the meaning of the picture multiplies (Berger, 1986, p. 20). This situation is also valid for advertisement. In other words, the advertisement is not perceived in the same way by everyone, individuals receive the advertisement within the context they are in. The items in the house, the weather, the atmosphere of that day, etc. factors affect the individual's interpretation process. Since the effect of context is known by advertisers, all stages are carefully organised to leave positive associations in the minds of consumers. In adverts, it is tried to arouse happiness and desire in the individual through affirmation.

In the process of reproduction, meaning is constructed by replacing the people or objects in the advertisement with any other 'thing'. At this point, the power of aesthetics will emerge. Because situations such as harmonising the successive images with each other, presenting them in a certain meaning, and identifying the incompatible ones can only be regulated through aesthetics. While an advertisement is shaped, it must also be harmonious. It is aimed to ensure that the product presented in the advertisement is permanent for the target audience. For this, it is important how the advertisement will be presented. Some aesthetic elements are positioned in advertisements in order to mobilise wants and desires. A successful advertisement is possible with the harmony of colours, a good composition, correct positioning of characters and correct selection of typography.

When designing an advertisement, the target audience to be reached is determined and the design is made accordingly. The design of advertising images follows a set of aesthetic principles: order, ratio, proportion, equivalence, size, unity, variety, etc. (Vit & Gomez-Palacio, 2012, pp. 34-38). At this stage, it is important to apply aesthetic principles correctly. The following principles should be considered for a more effective advertisement presentation (Aesthetic Principles in Advertisement Design, 2023):

1. Balance: Visual elements in the advertisement should be placed in a balanced way. Thus, the design can achieve an asymmetrical or symmetrical balance and be pleasing to the eye.

2. Colour Harmony: Choosing the right colour can increase the emotional impact of the advertisement. The colours must be harmonious and compatible with the brand's identity.

3. Contrast: Contrast helps emphasise important elements by creating a visual hierarchy. A striking design can be achieved by using a marked difference in colour, shape or size.

4. Movement and Rhythm: Giving a sense of movement in the advert can attract the viewer's attention. A rhythmic design can be created by using elements such as flowing lines, directional arrows or repetitive patterns.

5. Simplicity and Minimalism: Instead of a complex design, simplicity and minimalism should be preferred. It should be aimed to convey a simple message with few clear and impressive elements.

6. Typography: The right choice of font has a great impact on the readability of the advert. Typography should be carefully considered to ensure harmony between the headline and text.

7. Content-Challenge Relationship: The relationship between text and visual elements is important in advertisement design. Text and visuals being compatible with each other can convey a consistent message to the audience.

If the above-mentioned principles are fulfilled correctly in the advertisement, the advertisement can be more permanent and the effect it creates on the target audience can be greater. In addition, the brand image can be strengthened and as a result of all these, the target audience can expand. Thus, a successful advertisement emerges.

The use of colour in advertising is a very important issue affecting the success of the advertisement. If the colours, which are indispensable in the advertising world, are chosen correctly, the aesthetic effect of the advertisement will also increase. Since colours have an equivalent in the human mind and emotionally people connect with colours, they are effective in establishing a bond with the product. As it is known, colours have different connotations. For example, red is associated with energy, passion, power, joy and happiness, blue with calmness,

confidence and hope, yellow with optimism, warmth and clarity, purple with creativity, wisdom, nobility, reputation and self-confidence (Dokumacı, 2020, p. 126). Of course, combining colours in a certain harmony and in the right way is important in terms of perceptual selectivity. In fact, since factors such as the life, tastes, interests, and value judgements of the addressed society will increase the impact power of the advertisement, colour selection should be made by considering each of these in detail. Because any colour may have different connotations in different cultures. For example, while white colour symbolises purity and cleanliness in Western culture, it is used in Turkish culture in meanings such as greatness, goodness, wisdom and respectability (Kakan, 2018, p. 27). Therefore, the colour selection should be made according to the culture of the society addressed.

4. Aesthetic Appearance of “Perwoll Flower Attraction” Advertisement

The aesthetics of advertising images should take into account several basic design principles relating to compositional elements, such as image integrity; harmony, coherence and sequential arrangement of elements; emphasis, regular focus on a particular element, privileging the depiction of this element over all other elements (McNeil, 2010, pp. 14-15). In addition, elements such as the use of contrasts, the use of colours, emphasis and intonation also come to the fore. Some excerpts from the “Perwoll Flower Attraction” advertisement are presented below:



Figure 1: Visuals from “Perwoll Flower Attraction” Advertisement¹⁾

1) “Perwoll Flower Attraction” Advertisement/ Channel D, (2023),

It is seen that aesthetic elements are taken into consideration in the analysed advertisements. For example, in the "Perwoll Flower Attraction" advertisement, the images are arranged one after the other and a dynamism is provided. In addition, the fact that the flowers at the end of the advertisement are moving is a sign of vitality. After pale colours, thanks to Perwoll, the dress suddenly takes on vivid colours and the woman opens up just like a flower and becomes happy. Another point to be considered in the advertisement is the correct use of colours. Considering that the colour purple is identified with creativity, wisdom, nobility, reputation and self-confidence, it is seen that a correct choice was made in the advertisement. The woman who uses Perwoll is presented as a noble, self-confident woman. Again, the colour blue, which is the symbol of calmness, trust and hope, is used extensively in the advertisement. The transformation of the blue dress into a flower reflects the feeling that women who use Perwoll wear their clothes comfortably and confidently. Again, it can be observed in the continuation of the moving images towards the end of the advert that women using Perwoll are coded as flowers.

Conclusion

It is a well-known fact that it is important to include the aesthetic value in the advertisement instead of emphasising only the material, utilitarian part. Because advertisement is not only a simple presentation, it is a genre that also conveys culture and emphasises artistic and moral beauty. Advertising should not be restricted to product promotion and its aesthetic value should be made more visible. Because adverts meticulously apply situations such as culture and the construction of spiritual values, and for this reason, they stand out from being a simple persuasion tool. Of course, this aesthetic value should not be considered separately from the economic value of the advertisement. As mentioned above, both values support each other. In other words, it is necessary to consider the

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYWQS6m6BLw>

advertisement not only as a field created for economic reasons but also as a field of construction of culture and some values.

Advertising communication aims to create an effect of the instrumentalised image or object through correct expression techniques. Although adverts are products that encourage consumption, they also contain aesthetic elements. For this reason, the advertisement will be successful as a result of the harmony of aesthetic elements (form) and meaning. A meaningful bond should be created between the message to be conveyed and the consumer. Thus, it will be possible to achieve the targeted goal. This study focuses on the importance of aesthetic elements in advertisements. In adverts with high aesthetic value, it is thought that the power of aesthetics is high in influencing consumers and ultimately making them buy. For this reason, aesthetic elements in advertisements should be meticulously emphasised. Of course, adverts should not be considered as purely aesthetic products that appeal to consumers and attract their attention, and a holistic approach should be taken by including other factors..

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[Abstract]

Reflections Of Aesthetics In Turkish Television Advertisements

Betül Çanakpınar

If we think about aesthetics, we see that there are many definitions and interpretations. With the most well-known definition, there are still comments on aesthetics, which is known as beautiful, useful, and pleasing, and this is normal. Since aesthetics is a pleasant field of study, it opens vast doors for those interested in it. Aesthetic understanding can offer different perspectives according to societies. Aesthetics offers an artistic point of view and awakens emotions by appealing to human beings. Straying from its known purpose and definition, we now see that aesthetics is used in advertisements to make products more attractive by affecting human consciousness. Before showing purchasing behaviour, the buyer looks at whether the product appeals to his/her lifestyle, identity and status as well as appealing to his/her needs and buys or does not buy the product according to these features. For this reason, aesthetic concerns come into play for marketers.

As it is known, television commercials are one of the types of advertisements that mobilise the emotions of the audience the most. From this point of view, the use of aesthetics in Turkish television commercials is discussed in this study. Firstly, a general framework of aesthetics is drawn and then the relationship between advertising and aesthetics is emphasised. The study endeavours to understand the appearance, construction and positioning of aesthetics in Turkish television commercials. For this purpose, at the end of the study, the aesthetic appearance of an advertisement film selected by random sampling method is presented.

Keywords: Aesthetic, Advertising, Advertising Aesthetics, Principles of Aesthetics, Semiotics

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