

THE USE OF LINGUISTIC DEVICES IN ADVERTISEMENT SLOGANS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Gabija Konopacka, Dinalda Simuntienė

Kauno kolegija Higher Education Institution

Abstract. With the rise of modern technologies and the implementation of new businesses and brands, the urge for publicity has generated a demand for advertisements. As the key factor for spreading awareness and attracting new consumers, advertising has gained power by employing the written word as the best means of communication. Social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest and many others) are chosen more and more often as they are used by a profuse number of potential customers. A lot of companies have acknowledged that thoughtfully chosen linguistic tools might enhance the popularity of the promoted product or service. Thus, the article aims to unveil the effectiveness of phonetic and semantic devices in advertisement slogans, analyse linguistic peculiarities that boost public interest and curiosity, specify which linguistic techniques evoke most of the emotions and make the advertisement both gripping and memorable. The research was based on the application of theoretical and descriptive comparative linguistic analysis methods. Having analysed a great many advertisement slogans, the number of samples carefully elucidated and presented in this article was 13, as they contained the required linguistic segments set in the objectives of this research, i.e., onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm, as well as denotative and connotative elements of the lexical meaning.

The article reveals that the proper use of linguistic devices benefits to attract and manipulate the target audience; phonetic devices enable to reach the effect of memorability, whereas semantic devices play a crucial role in the domain of emotions.

Keywords: advertisement slogan, linguistic devices, product promotion, effectiveness.

Introduction

Advertisements are essential tools used by traders to attract clients. Scarcely can we find a product released to the worldwide market with no advertising slogan. It has been observed that recently more and more companies have turned to public relations (PR) specialists for their thoughts on how products should be introduced to the public, employing social media as the crucial platform. Language is a complex communication system full of different components; thus, to promote publicity and create an appealing and eye-catching advertisement slogan alongside visual design, different linguistic devices such as sentence structure, punctuation, and accurately chosen wording must be considered. Albeit a great many scholars have analysed sentence structure, the impact of punctuation, forms and patterns most often used in advertising texts (Brown, K. & Miller, J. (2016); Huadhom, N. and Trakulkasemsuk, E., (2017); Bowdery, R. (2008); Bason, J., Roger, A. (2016), only a few studies were conducted on the peculiarities of advertisement slogans on social media, focusing on phonetics and semantics. Thus, **the article aims** to reveal the power of sound and word while creating unforgettable advertisements, i.e., how phonetic and semantic devices are being exploited in social media advertisements. **The research question** is which linguistic peculiarities make certain phonetic and semantic devices mostly appreciated to communicate the message of product promotion. To unveil the problem question and achieve the aim, the following objectives were set: 1) to theoretically review phonetic and semantic devices

and distinguish how they are used in English advertisements; 2) to identify phonetic and semantic devices that are used practically in social media advertisements in English. **The subject matter** is phonetic and semantic devices used in advertisement slogans found on *Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest*. **The methods** of theoretical analysis and descriptive comparative linguistic analysis have been applied. The theoretical analysis is mainly based on the ideas expressed by Beasley, R., Danesi, M. (2002), Sasamoto, R. & Jackson, R. (2016), Nianzu, C., Ageeva, J. V., & Yi, L. (2021), O'Shaughnessy, M., Stadler, J., Casey, S. (2016), Potier, V. (2023), Shariq, M. (2020), Joshi, S. (2022). These authors suggested valuable insights on the usage of the most common phonetic and semantic devices that can be observed in advertisement slogans of various media platforms.

Concept and history of advertisement

From the stone age to the modern days, advertising has helped people to reach potential customers; nevertheless, it has changed a lot (Joshi, 2022). With modern technologies came new ways of advertising. Companies started using the internet to showcase their brands and display their products and services on social media platforms.

According to Wood (1958), the first written advertising in history was found by archaeologists in the ruins of Thebes. The researcher claims that it was the papyrus created in 3000 BC on behalf of a slaveholder who wanted to find one of his slaves. As years passed, advertising did not change just until the Middle Ages with the printing revolution.

Eventually, at the beginning of the 20th century, advertising was everywhere. Joshi (2022) affirms that colossal political, economic, and social changes inspired the urge for creativity, which was considered the key aspect of advertising content. Specialists started to think out big ideas, relying on psychology and data research and allocating big budgets. The author states that the synergy of economics and science in advertising that began in the 1980s reached its peak in the 1990s with the creation of the World Wide Web (Berners-Lee, 1994). Companies saw the World Wide Web as an opportunity to showcase their products and services. Corporations not long after developed the first online advertising- DoubleClick, which allowed traders to deliver the right message, to the right person, at the right time. Just after a decade of DoubleClick, a new advertising platform was created (Charters 2002).

According to Joshi (2022), Facebook Ads, a newly introduced platform, has given rise to a number of targeting possibilities that advertising boards could offer to businesses. The creators of advertising content attempted to frame the message so that the potential clients would be convinced that it is far better than other similar products (Mohammad, 2020). As claimed by the scholar, they tried to exploit the language to the utmost to achieve a persuasive effect on the customer's behaviour. Following this mindset, both linguistic and stylistic devices were employed to draw people's attention or make advertisement slogans memorable, appealing, and amusing.

Theoretical background of phonetic devices exploited in advertisement slogans

Shariq (2020) describes phonetics as the branch of linguistics that deals with the production and reception of sound. According to scholars, it is especially important to structure words, phrases, and sentences to get the desired phonetic effect; otherwise, the information will feel plain and unattractive or not even be understood. Phonetic stylistic devices such as onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm are indistinguishable while creating advertisement slogans.

Onomatopoeia is a figure of speech used to describe a word that mimics the natural sounds made by an object or animal (Sasamoto and Jackson 2016). The linguists identify two types of onomatopoeia, direct and indirect. Direct onomatopoeia is recognised by words which mimic natural sound sources: dingdong, buzz, bang, mew, ping-pong, roar, hiss (snakes), baa, quack. Direct onomatopoeia usually suggests creatures or actions of whoever produces that sound. According to

Sasamoto and Jackson (2016), indirect onomatopoeia is less understandable than direct. Onomatopoeia is mostly used in advertisements because the sound of nature usually draws the attention of children and adults. This feature is consistent with the primary purpose of advertising, namely, to capture clients' attention.

Alliteration is the use of a similar-sounding word that points at conferring a melodic impact on the expression. The substance of this device lies within the redundancy of comparative sounds, in specific consonant sounds, in near progression, generally at the start of progressive words. In the field of branding, marketing, and advertising, over the years, alliterations have been used for the names of brands, sports teams, products, and events. Ruban and Backiavathy (2016) state that alliteration renders musical rhythm. Hence, the slogan texts become more appealing and absorbing, and the readers/ listeners tend to remember them easily.

Rhyme, thoroughly analysed by Shariq (2020), falls under certain categories:

1. full rhyme presupposes the character of the lower sound and the taking after consonant sounds in a stressed syllable: e.g., might-night;
2. incomplete rhymes can be subdivided into:
 - a) vowel rhymes as consonants are different, and the vowels of the syllables in corresponding words are indistinguishable: "flesh – fresh – press",
 - b) consonant rhymes appear concordance in consonants and dissimilarity in vowels: "worth – forth; tale – tool – treble – trouble";
3. in broken or compound rhymes, words rhyme, even with multiple combinations of words, e.g., "bottom – forgot 'em – shot him";
4. in eye, rhyme sounds are no longer identical, but letters continue duplicating. Broken and compound rhymes can be recognised while reading loudly, but eye-rhyme can only be identified in the written verse: "love – prove, flood – brood."

According to Shariq (2020), the rhyme makes slogans and headlines more eye-catching. Thus, when the rhyme scheme is followed, the popularity of products tends to augment among buyers.

Rhythm. *Stress-timed* dialects are characterised by foot isochrony, whereas *syllable-timed* are presented by syllable isochrony. Stashko (2018) claims that rhythm enables a better understanding of sounds, making the advertisement more persuasive.

Language makes advertising a game and, in certain cases, is an ideal environment for its implementation (Nianzu, Ageeva, Yi, 2021). Phonetic devices provide richness for advertisements, making them unforgettable.

Theoretical background of semantic devices used in creating advertisements

Semantics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the interpretation and meaning of words, sentence structure, and symbols. Moreover, the latter analyses a relation between joining words and clarifies the sense of a sentence, whether the meanings of the words are literal or figurative. According to Potier (2015), language is about structure, and today's challenge is unlocking the wealth of language. Semantic devices are important in advertisements, the same way they are in all forms of communication.

Careful use of words, sentences and symbols helps convey meaning exactly and vividly to the audience. Linguists distinguish between denotative and connotative meanings. Emodi (2011) outlines that connotation deals with a wide range of positive and negative associations that most words naturally carry, whereas denotation is a precise, literal definition of a word that might be found in a dictionary.

The denotative meaning of a word is to be perceived as its literal meaning that is stated in a dictionary and accepted by everyone. However, it is not always that straightforward. As a matter of fact, dictionaries present different meanings of the same word, evoking possible confusion. Therefore, not many advertisements can be seen on social media platforms, as they can sometimes be misinterpreted. Connotation is known for being subjective and personal by itself, thus referring to emotions and evaluations that individual associates with a word rather than an explanation provided in a dictionary.

New words are continually formed as the need arises in advertising. Emodi (2011) highlights that sometimes, new words are formed by telescoping two or three words together to create a third or fourth with the connotations of all of them. Non-existing words are used in advertising for special effects to make them more eye appealing. Therefore, advertisers indirectly tell prospective consumers about their products and services. They manipulate consumers to buy through language. The emotional connotative meaning used more by advertisers relates to pleasantries, happiness, and good memories. Although the meaning of the word might be misleading, it is the writer's job to manipulate the verbal context so that unwanted backlash does not arise.

Research methodology

The theoretical analysis facilitated determining linguistic devices, most incorporated in creating advertisements. The chosen advertisement slogans

for the research were accumulated from social media platforms, namely Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest, as the latter are viral among people and are excessively used by businesses for their product and service promotion.

These advertisements were specifically chosen because they contained the required linguistic segments for this type of research, i.e., phonetic or semantic devices. The major phonetic means defined in the theoretical part of the research are onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm, while the semantic means that fall under detailed analysis is the use of denotative and connotative elements of the lexical meaning. Having analysed a great many advertisement slogans, the number of samples carefully analysed and presented in this article was 13, while the number of advertisements with phonetic devices was 9 (onomatopoeia identified in 2 samples; alliteration was pointed out in 5 pieces; rhyme and rhythm were spotted in 2 promotions), and the number of advertisements containing semantic means was 4 (connotative standards were identified in 2 samples; denotative means were pointed out in 2 slogans).

The descriptive comparative linguistic analysis of actual sample advertisements enabled recognition of how phonetic and semantic devices contribute to the popularity of the promoted product.

Use of phonetic devices in advertisements

Onomatopoeia authenticity, as claimed by Sasamoto and Jackson (2016), differs compared to other phonetic stylistic devices as due to imitating the sounds of nature, this phonetic device constitutes making a slogan much livelier and more melodic to the ear of the listener or the eye of a viewer. Modelling sounds of some sort of action that express something big happening, words like boom, bang, and dong are chosen. A great example of the use of onomatopoeia, found on *Facebook*, is an event advertisement. The slogan aims to catch people's eye and invite them to actively participate in the event. The advertisement says, "**BIG BAY BOOM**". "Big Bay" is a harbour in San Diego. "Boom", on the other hand, can have many descriptions. But its main and probably most accurate meaning is an explosion. The message could be misleading, but with the visual advertisement, the onomatopoeia "boom" is a connection with the explosion sound of the fireworks. The name of the event displayed in the advertisement is not only onomatopoeic but also alliterative. This advertisement is an alliteration because of the repeating consonant "B". Using both devices in unison in this advertisement makes it

memorable and attracts the attention of more possible participants.

As analysed, onomatopoeia can be used in advertisements that show edible products to emphasise crunchiness, fizziness, and crispiness. A brand of beverage going by the name “Fizz” is a top example of how onomatopoeia can be used both easily and efficiently. Fizz is another often-used onomatopoeia that can make advertising more catchy and sometimes even haunting. It is the sound of a drink that fizzes. The statement employed in the advertisement is “*Get Fizzy with It*”. This type of advertisement is quite effective, because after seeing and reading or hearing it, people instantly remember the sound of a bubbly beverage and want to drink something. Usually, it is the same drink. Thus, it might facilitate reaching the target audience while triggering emotions through melody and sounds.

Alliteration, as defined in the Cambridge English Dictionary (2021), is a similar-sounding word usage that points at conferring a melodic impact to the expression and is one of the most used phonetic stylistic devices.

Alliteration may be the reason for the success of some of the most known worldwide brands. The first alliteration example is a fizzy drink that is well-known worldwide for its taste and its name - “*Coca-Cola*”. The name speaks for itself, it is simple and eye-catching with its bright red logo, so it is easily memorable. Next is a chocolate candy bar, “*KitKat*”, famous for its crunchiness and chocolaty flavour. A telephone production company that was quite popular before touch screen phones and even now because of using alliteration in its branding is “*BlackBerry*”. It is understandable why easy, prominent brand names work so well. The similarly sounding phrases create harmony for the reader or listener and are more prevalent among people.

Alliteration is used in advertisement texts as well. For example, on *Twitter*, there is a promotion for grape soda named “Crush”, and the slogan says, “*Gotta Get a Grape*”. Every word starts with the letter G, which makes continuous repetition of that sound and makes consumers enjoy saying that. Moving further, another alliteration example found in social media advertisement texts is a well-known fast-food restaurant, “McDonald’s”. To promote their burgers, “McDonald’s” started to use slogan like, “*big. beefy. bliss.*” The repetition of the letter “B” in this advertising depicts assets of alliteration. This technique helps make the text more exciting and pleasant to read aloud and creates an image of something immense. Apparently, the slogan was created to be connected to another signature product, “Big Mac”, and starts with the same letter “B.” Moreover, in this advertising the three words

are separated with a full stop to show and strengthen the difference between each burger presented. Overall, this phonetic device was incorporated to highlight the products listed above, provide playful and simple wording, and, as a result, enhance an advertisement and make it more memorable and appealing to consumers.

Rhyme and rhythm are mostly used together in literature, but currently, they can also be seen in advertisements as well. Usually, rhyme and rhythm can serve the purpose of product enhancement or boost interest. Advertisements with these phonetic devices give a strong, innovative idea that reaches the audience and makes them lean towards the item promoted.

Thus, a worldwide known sportswear manufacturer, “Nike”, can serve as a perfect example for analysis. The mission of the company is focused on amplifying and alleviating the life of customers. The advertising of “Nike”, found on *Instagram*, tells consumers using rhyme and rhythm to: “*Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything.*” Since rhyme and rhythm are characterised by the repetition of similar sounds and the flow of sentences, the message of this company can be seen to rhyme rhythmically with both sentences ending with “something” and “everything,” which are similar-sounding words. Using these phonetic devices helps the text to be more perceptible, meaningful, and momentous, attracting the attention of a wider audience. With the help of these tools “Nike” transforms itself into a motivational company that helps people be more confident in themselves and assists in achieving their goals.

Another company that is seen to use rhyme and rhythm is “7-Eleven”. This multinational retail convenience store has one of the best slogans: “*Oh, thank God for 7- eleven*”. This slogan has been utilised for more than 50 years and is still popular today. Even though the words in the slogan are not similar by any means, it is absolutely captivating to consumers’ ears and tends to be unforgettable.

Overall, rhyme and rhythm are not as commonly used phonetic devices because it is hard to come up with good-sounding slogans that sound good and are short, but when businesses make an effort in trying to come up with one, it can stay in the world for quite some time.

Use of semantic devices in advertisements

The effectiveness of advertising depends on the careful choice of words. Words can convey meaning precisely and vividly to the audience and help with advertising productivity. Two semantic devices can make or break an advertisement -denotative and

connotative. As discussed in the theoretical part of the article, denotative meanings are far less complicated to perceive as they do not change among language users. On the other hand, words with connotative meanings might be interpreted diversely as different people give individual meanings to words and phrases, and it is sometimes hard to understand them.

It would seem that advertising is connotative; however, the latter type is far less abundant. As a matter of fact, connotative advertisements are quite frequently presented without text and leave everything to customers' imagination. To elaborate on the advertisements used by the company "Lego", it can be stated that they exploit simple yet attractive designs to advertise their product. For example, the company took a twist and decided to prove that Legos can make one intelligent. In this advertising, they are not using any words besides "**Pure Brainfood,**" which can indicate that Legos are food for the brain. Visually, it is displayed as a spaghetti and meatballs dish. Still, it provides the opportunity for the customers to perceive it themselves and, in this way, enables the population to become more intelligent. This use of connotative matter opens a person's imagination and lets the image speak for itself.

Another example of connotative meaning is from "LG" when they introduced a new product to the world. The slogan invites to "**Roll out the Future**". Introducing a new model of a TV does not mean that you need to take something and roll it out; rather than this, it appeals to the new product and its functions. Due to the mentioned connection, the advertisement looks more compelling, eye-catching, and intriguing. Therefore, skilful wording might benefit in achieving the desired effect of arousing curiosity in the consumer's mind.

Moving further, advertisements have a denotative meaning; however, there are quite a few. Denotative advertisements are usually recognisable as containing a profuse number of adjectives, mostly observed in skin care product advertisements. As an illustration, one of a few examples that contain this semantic device is the promotional slogan of "Nivea". For example, for one of their advertisements and celebration for the upcoming 2023, the post on Pinterest sounded like this: "**Start your 2023 feeling good and looking good! Take that dewy glow with you into the new year with a thorough skincare routine**". The multiple usages of adjectives appeal to the connection of positive emotions and the undoubtable effect of the product promoted. The choice of denotative meaning for the mentioned slogan might evoke the urge to obtain the product,

as everybody strives to "feel good", "look good", and have "that dewy skin".

In another instance, the company on *Instagram* "The Jojobaco" that sells products for skin care exploits adjectives in each of their posts to explain to the followers how it feels to use their products or what the product does to the skin: "**For happy, healthy skin this summer, try these ultra-hydrating, lightweight Jojoba favourites!**". Thus, it might be stated that using several adjectives in a row makes advertisement slogans more noticeable and attractive to potential consumers. Incorporation of this semantic device gives added value while magnifying the attention of the audience.

Therefore, the effectiveness of advertising depends on how companies decide to display it. Sometimes lovely and closer-to-heart adjectives can change advertisements for the better, but on the other hand, leaving the advertising text to the open imagination can make or break it. It is hard to know when this type of advertisement can work, so there are not many slogans with semantic devices in them.

Having considered the outcomes of the article, it might be stated that the research is **relevant** to students studying English and PR specialists who aspire to improve their skills of employing phonetic and semantic natures of English lexis while developing emotionally strong pieces of promotional texts.

Conclusions

Based on the theoretical sources and practical analysis of phonetic and semantic devices used in advertisements, the following conclusions were made:

1. Social media currently taking the leading role in spreading awareness is more often than not being exploited as an advertising platform, where phonetic and semantic means benefit in reaching the desired effect.
2. The main phonetic and semantic devices used in social media advertisements are onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhyme, rhythm, connotative and denotative means.
3. Phonetic devices are more common in advertisement slogans than semantic ones because sound, rhythm and melody create an unforgettable and long-lasting effect on the customer.
4. Due to the redundancy of comparative and specific consonant sounds, alliteration creates harmony for the reader or listener, thus enhancing the advertisement slogan.
5. Onomatopoeia, known for imitating sounds of various sources, such as nature, animals, people, actions, etc., is often employed in advertisements

that show edible products to emphasise crunchiness, fizziness, and crispiness.

6. Rhyme and rhythm are not as commonly used phonetic devices because it is hard to develop good-sounding slogans that are melodic and short; if successful, they reach the audience easily and make them lean towards the item promoted.
7. Due to its more subjective, personal, contextual nature, connotation, as a semantic device, alludes to the emotions and evaluations that a

person correlates with a word and enables the advertiser to manipulate consumers to buy through language.

8. Denotative meaning proved to be recognisable as containing profuse adjectives, mostly observed in skin care product advertisements.
9. Though regarded as a simple means of linguistic expression, denotative meaning is not a widely desirable tool in all kinds of advertisement slogans.

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LINGVISTINIŲ PRIEMONIŲ VARTOJIMAS SOCIALINIŲ TINKLŲ REKLAMINIUOSE ŠŪKIUOSE

Santrauka

Šiuolaikinių technologijų vystymasis, naujų verslų ir prekių ženklų atsiradimas pareikalavo daugiau viešumo, kas paskatino poreikį visa tai reklamuoti. Reklama, kurią galima traktuoti kaip esminį elementą, skleidžiantį sąmoningumą bei pritraukiantį daugiau naujų vartotojų, tapo galingu įrankiu, kurio dėka rašytinis žodis tapo pagrindine komunikacijos priemone. Didėjant potencialių pirkėjų, besinaudojančių socialiniais tinklais skaičiui, vis dažniau ir dažniau kompanijų ar produktų reklamai pasirenka tokias populiarias socialinių tinklų platformas, kaip Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest ir daugelį kitų. Daugelis kompanijų pripažįsta, jog apgalvotai parinktos lingvistinės priemonės reklaminiuose šūkiuose gali ženkliai padidinti reklamuojamo produkto ar paslaugos populiarumą. Taigi, šiame straipsnyje siekiama atskleisti fonetinių ir semantinių priemonių, naudojamų reklaminiuose šūkiuose, efektyvumą. Analizuojami reklamų lingvistiniai ypatumai, įtakojantys visuomenės susidomėjimą ar smalsumą, akcentuojama, kokios lingvistinės technikos sukelia bene daugiausiai emocijų ir reklaminių šūkių padaro patrauklų ir įsimintiną. Atliekant tyrimą, buvo taikomi teorinės analizės ir aprašomosios lyginamosios lingvistinės analizės metodai. Išanalizavus eilę reklaminių šūkių, šiam straipsniui buvo atrinkta 13 reklamų pavyzdžių, kaip geriausiai atliepančių darbo tiksluose apibrėžtus kriterijus. Pateiktuose pavyzdžiuose aptinkamos tokios lingvistinės priemonės kaip onomatopėja, aliteracija, rimas, ritmas bei denotatinės bei konotatinės žodžių reikšmės. Straipsnio išvados leidžia teigti, kad tinkamas lingvistinių priemonių panaudojimas sąlygoja reklamuojamos produkcijos patrauklumą bei įgalina manipuluoti masėmis. Fonetinių priemonių panaudojimas sukuria įsimenamumo efektą, o semantinės priemonės vaidina svarbų vaidmenį sužadinant vartotojo emocijas.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: reklaminis šūkis, lingvistinės priemonės, produkto reklama, efektyvumas.

Information about the authors

Gabija Konopacka. Student at Language Centre of the Department of Arts and Education of Kauno kolegija Higher Education Institution, Lithuania. Research area: English linguistics.
E-mail address: gabija.kon620@go.kauko.lt

Dinalda Simuntienė. Lecturer at Language Centre of the Department of Arts and Education of Kauno kolegija Higher Education Institution, Lithuania. Research area: English linguistics.
E-mail address: dinalda.simuntiene@go.kauko.lt