



## Cognitive Aspects of Persuasion in Marketing Discourse a Cognitive Linguistic Study

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### Abstract

The use of language in digital discourse for marketing has rapidly developed through mass media. This paper elucidates how advertisers employ various pragmatic strategies to persuade the recipient to act (behavior) by purchasing specific products. This study utilized different theoretical and conceptual frameworks (Theory of Reasoned Action and Aristotle's Models of Persuasion) to address the shortcomings of the social cognitive approach in studying persuasion, to investigate how language of advertisements can influence the recipient's thinking of a product from a psychological perspective. Guided by the principles of TRA, the present study argues that persuasion in advertisements is structured by three dimensions: attraction (through language features and appeals), evaluation (through beliefs, attitudes, and intention), and behavior (social acceptance or reluctance). This study revealed eight persuasion techniques employed by advertisers including demonstrating distinction, honoring commitment, expressing authority, hyperbolizing, glorification, providing proofs, expressing solidarity, and proving success. Showing distinction and Honoring commitment were the most frequently used strategies. Additionally, the study found that strategies of persuasion involved ethical, logical, and emotional appeals for their large effect on the recipient as they contribute to the recipient's positive evaluations. Appealing to reasoning (logic) is the most common one in slogans.

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## Introduction

The use of language in digital discourse for marketing is rapidly developing in the world of mass media. Digital marketing discourse is a multi-dimensional and multi-disciplinary domain which blends various areas like linguistics, marketing, sociology, logic, rhetoric, and pragmatics. For this reason, investigating the digital discourse reflects people's beliefs, understanding of the hidden and motivations upon providing logical solutions for critical problems across various disciplines (Hargittai & Hsieh, 2011). Among these disciplines, Crystal (2001) accentuates the significance of the linguistic revolution resulting from the language of social media platforms because many sectors such as governments, public organizations and charities are interested in social media advertising (Popova, 2018). These advertisers are creative in using language to persuade buyers of their products as language plays a key role in building the trust of the consumers (Septianasari et al., 2021). Conveying the advertising messages in a proper language would result in persuasion depending on cooperation between the involved parties (i.e. writer-reader, sender-receiver, producer-consumer, addresser-addressee etc.) (Yule, 2002).

Online commercial advertising on social media platforms is regarded as one of the main channels people prefer to use for persuading others of a particular action being a quick way to reach a large target audience, especially during critical periods. Persuasion is a powerful communicative act that is necessary to examine and understand. Persuasion certainly has been greatly considered in advertising as it has an immediate impact on the recipient's choices, and thus it "has become a critical weapon in the arsenal of powerful companies" (Perloff, 2020). In addition, even though several linguists have examined advertising discourse, it is still quite a topical issue (Popova, 2018; Xing & Feng, 2023). Persuasion is extensively examined in various fields, including social sciences and psychology due to its important impact on people's decisions in different domains. This has resulted in different and even competing theories (e.g., Cognitive Dissonance, Discursive Psychology, Speech Acts Theory, and Framing) that each contributed to a better understanding of persuasion from a specific perspective.

There is a dearth of studies on persuasion strategies in online advertisements, though a few studies have considered persuasion as one important aspect of advertisements (Ahangar & Dastuyi, 2017; Kumar et al., 2023), with a very little attention given to cognitive analysis or discursive psychology approach (Greenwald, 1968). No study, therefore, has so far shed light specifically on the pragmatic (cognitive) relationship between the elements of persuasion and the cognitive process of persuasion. It is also necessary to examine the specific language features and appeals that attract the recipients to the goal or which contributes to the recipient's positive evaluation of the expression. It is then a key to his/her perception of a product. It specifies how he/she should think of the product. There is also a need to find evidence to the argument that persuasion implies recipients' evaluation of what is advertised which will later be a following step to attitude change; that is, if the attitude is positive, the evaluation and consequent decision will also be positive. They debate that changing or forming positive beliefs and attitudes is a necessary step towards being persuaded. Accordingly, a negative attitude implies recipients' unwillingness to change his/her evaluation and decision. Thus, attitudes can be predictive of behavior (Fazio & Zanna, 1981). It can dramatically increase purchases. This can explain why companies spend a lot of money on commercial advertisements.

This study therefore aims to fill up all research gaps by examining persuasion as a cognitive phenomenon where the advertisers build trust between producers and recipients. This study offers new insights into persuasion by drawing upon three dimensions (attraction, evaluation, and behaviour) and establishing a connection between them. This can help researchers develop analytical frameworks to analyse persuasion in advertising contexts from a socio-cognitive perspective. Additionally, this study has also chosen the Theory of Reasoned Action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) which is rather neglected in linguistics research as there are few studies that employed theories of psychology, despite their significance in commercial discourses. Hence, this study will also bridge the gap between linguistics and psychology to gain a better understanding of persuasion.

### *This Study Endeavors to Answer the Following Research Questions*

1. What are the persuasion strategies used in Jordanian advertisements?
2. What are the pragmatic functions of the persuasion strategies?
3. What are the main linguistic features of these advertisements?
4. What appeals are involved in persuasive strategies?
5. How do advertisements affect people's perception?

While the first two questions deal with the pragmatic aspects of persuasion, the third and fourth questions investigate the linguistic aspects of persuasion. The fifth question investigates the cognitive aspects of persuasion. These questions thus aim at providing a more comprehensive and deeper understanding of persuasion by investigating the pragmatic, linguistic, and cognitive aspects of persuasion in the context of advertising.

This study would be of great value to those interested in marketing discourse in real life and social media. The findings of the study would be of great importance to those who are interested in conducting research in pragmatics, cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics. They would provide a solid understanding of the socio-psychological foundations of persuasion, i.e. how recipients can be impacted by persuasion strategies from a socio-psychological and cognitive perspective. This shows the powerful impact if appropriately used by language exerts on people's actions and behavior. This would also facilitate collaboration between linguists and advertisers so as to help establish future multiple interdisciplinary activities that would support businesses in improving their messaging, communicating their desired meanings, and influencing consumers' subconscious decision-making.

## Theoretical Background

Persuasion is a complex phenomenon with multiple linguistic and psychological aspects. Therefore, it was necessary to investigate it using multiple frameworks to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon and how it works. There are two theoretical approaches to persuasion as developed by experts: Discursive Approach (Edwards & Potter, 1992) and Social Cognitive Approach (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Persuasion is presented in both approaches as a socio-cognitive phenomenon where the recipient is persuaded to act in the context of free choice. While the social cognitive approach focuses on the potential effect, the discursive approach focuses on how speakers interact through 'turns' in natural contexts (Humă, 2023). Turns refer to initiating actions and responsive actions in the discursive approach and are important for examining effects on the recipient within the adjacency pair sequence. In turn, the next turn (the responsive action) is proof of the consequential effect that language leaves on the addressee (Humă, 2023). However, regardless of either approach, scholars emphasize the free context of persuasion (O'Keefe & Reid, 1990), which means the recipient must have the freedom to make a choice. This is a basic requirement for persuasion.

The current study was planned to utilize the discursive approach and adopted the conversation analysis method to analyze persuasion exercised (through turns) in natural contexts. Taking conversation analysis as a method of analysis helps researchers look at the conversation in terms of rhetorical dimension.

Another theory of psychology often used to study persuasion is the Theory of Reasoned Action, TRA (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This theory draws upon four main psychological constructs, namely, beliefs, attitudes, intentions and behavior. These constructs offer explanations of how people make decisions or change behavior via the means of persuasion. The TRA theory was first developed in health psychology but then it was applied in social and political contexts to present how concepts work to persuade. It is a cognitive theory which explains that the addressee's intention is behind changing their behavior within a social group. It thoroughly explains how various psychological constructs (beliefs, attitudes, intentions, and behavior) contribute to recipients' decisions. For example, behavior and intention are affected by attitudes that are based on specific beliefs. This means that attitude is one important determiner of whether the addressee will act and behave a certain way.

This study assumes that the intention is the motivating force behind the addressee's choice of a certain product. In turn, adopting an attitude is key to the intention. This study is also guided by the principle of TRA to offer a comprehensive understanding of how the recipient can decide as a result of forming specific beliefs and attitudes, with the result that this influences their decision in the context of free choices. This theory demonstrated the power of attitudes in shaping the addressee's decision. This theory is consulted as persuasion aims at changing recipients' attitudes about action so that specific action is taken on the part of the recipient. This can explain why advertisements try to change attitudes and beliefs.

There is another theoretical concept which complements TRA, the Aristotle's model of persuasion. Aristotle's three modes of persuasion, namely ethos (ethics), logos (logic) and pathos (emotions) are commonly used to investigate the appeals that constitute an important part of any negotiation and recognized as the dimensions of persuasion. These appeals (ethical, logical, and emotional) are regarded as elements which advertisements draw upon to attract the recipient's attention, which in turn forms an important part of negotiations. Negotiation is important to create positive evaluation about the product as it contributes to the recipient's positive evaluations.

## Literature Review

Persuasion is defined as "a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behavior of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some message" (Bettinghaus & Cody, 1987). Changing attitudes is considerably investigated in persuasion in past and recent research since it is looked at as the core of persuasion and shapes people's beliefs and behavior. Persuasion is also defined as "a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviors regarding an issue through the transmission of a message in an atmosphere of free choice" (Perloff, 2020). Not far from that definition, persuasion is also defined as "a cognitive process triggered

or implemented by messages capable to influencing the attitudes of persons and their representation of the world” (Baldi, 2020). Examining persuasion implies “human communication that is designed to influence others by modifying their beliefs, values, or attitudes” (Simons, 1976).

Several past studies (Ali & Al-Bahrani, 2021; Simon & Dejica-Cartis, 2015) have examined persuasion-related frameworks and theories such as speech acts, Grice’s maxims, Framing theory, or Aristotle’s model of persuasion to investigate persuasion from different perspectives. This study contributes to the existing literature by consulting adapted models and theories from psychology to examine persuasion as a cognitive process rather than as a linguistic process. Persuasion has various complex linguistic, pragmatic, and cognitive aspects. It has been thus approached by researchers stemming from different fields ranging from linguistics (Almegren, 2022; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Shamaileh, 2022), psychology (Humă, 2023), to neuroscience (Yomogida et al., 2017).

Romanova & Smirnova (2019) suggested ten persuasive techniques, based on rhetorical principles (Aristotle’s models of persuasion, (logos) logical reasoning, positive image of the company (ethos), and emotional state (pathos). The corpus of their study comprised 60 advertisements and original scripts of sample advertisements. Most advertising techniques pertained to pathos principle: “Persuasive techniques are employed not so much to increase sales but rather to build and maintain rapport and raise brand awareness” (Romanova & Smirnova, 2019). The study maintained that the goal of advertisements was not to increase sales but to raise recipients’ awareness of a product and create a rapport, without imposing the product on them. Thus, persuasion is a significant technique to be crucially employed in advertisements. However, the study concluded that these principles coexist and overlap to achieve desirable effects. Hence, it is difficult to draw boundaries between them.

A few research studies have asserted that persuasive strategies direct recipients’ attention to specific products. For example, Kumar et al. (2023) claim that advertisements impose on recipients, directing them to purchase a product or service. They present various strategies of persuasion in advertisements and developed a multi-task attention-fusion model for predicting such strategies. They maintain that persuasion strategies provide various cognitive and affective reasons with the aim of motivating the advertisement viewers towards products. The top three persuasive strategies are Concreteness, Eager, and Fashionable. Among recent studies that undermined the social cognitive approach to studying persuasion is Humă (2023). She claims that this approach relies on implicit effects (how a message is inferred and processed that certain persuasive practices have and how the addressee would comply. She argues that a discursive psychological approach is better suited than a social cognitive approach since it pays attention to the language properties in interaction (e.g., sequences) and the role of language in persuasion.

With a similar perspective, Ta et al. (2022) studied how linguistic features (but rather than studying these features on persuasion in isolation) relatively impact persuasive appeal in social interactions (online forums), where a poster poses a problem and then he/she invites other users of that forum to debate that problem. The poster can then mark the responses that are most convincing to him or her. This way researchers can measure persuasion through verbal behavior. These linguistic features highlighted in those responses were grouped into three main dimensions (structural complexity, negative emotionality, and positive emotionality). The data was collected from an online forum (r/ChangeMyView). It is publicly available, and its users can engage in debates on different topics that have opposing perspectives. This study adds important literature to persuasion as it investigates how language is used to secure the highest levels of persuasion. Emotionality-related aspects are greatly considered in persuasion research.

In another similar study, Rocklage, Rucker, & Nordgren (2018) found people’s language is of greater emotionality when they need to persuade others of their arguments. That is, people who intend to persuade use affective words and expressions as an effective strategy to affect the recipient (Rocklage et al., 2018). This theory offered a theoretical understanding of how the addressee is persuaded by the advertisements and how the advertisements can direct the addressee to specific products. Thus, the effect of persuasion is a product of cognitive processes.

While past studies focus on various aspects of persuasion, this study aims to integrate a more cohesive framework based on the social cognitive approach and psychology to investigate how advertisements affect the addressee’s choices to give a more in-depth analysis of how persuasion can work in the context of advertisements. To enrich the analysis with a more comprehensive explanation of persuasion aspects, this study made use of theories of psychology as one source for explaining how the recipient is affected by advertisements.

## Methodology

### *Research Design*

The study used a qualitative research design comprising theoretical and conceptual models, Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and Aristotle’s Models of Persuasion, viz., logos, ethos and pathos. The research design adopted a social cognitive approach to study models of persuasion and psychological perspectives to study TRA. This approach was

suitable to investigate the current study since it helps to understand how language can influence the speaker's thinking from a psychological perspective and build bridges based on the rhetorical principles of persuasion.

### Data Collection

The data comprised advertisements and slogans written on products in Jordan, such as rice, milk, juice, and bank services, published during 2018 to 2023. The researcher personally photographed these slogans and stored them in a file. A total of 80 slogans/ statements were selected for this study. The selection of these advertisements had a few criteria such as: they must promote a specific service or a product; each expression should be different for different products; and they must be short statements. It was also specified that each statement must bear a lot of linguistic and pragmatic features that are worth investigating, as they have tremendous effects on the recipient. The data was collected over two months period.

### Data Analysis

The data was analyzed from a cognitive perspective. A conceptual framework was employed to analyze it. The framework consisted of strategies adapted from different studies (Kumar et al., 2023; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019). The newly developed framework consisted of both old and new strategies. However, all strategies were categorized based on semantic content and pragmatic function. Besides, the framework also included Aristotle's model of persuasion (appeals) and was guided by the principles of the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) to explain how the recipients can be impacted and consequently make their choice for the purpose of enriching the analysis with the cognitive aspects of persuasion. The data was classified into eight persuasion strategies, which are explained and discussed in the next section.

## Results and Discussion

### Persuasion Strategies Used in Jordanian Advertisements

With regard to Research Question One, this section presents eight strategies of persuasion used in Jordanian advertisements. Each strategy is discussed with an example extracted from the slogans used by the commercial companies. Table 1 lists the persuasive strategies and their descriptions or illustrations, showing how it was used in this study to analyze the data. These categories were labeled and adapted from different studies (Kumar et al., 2023; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019).

**Table 1:** *Persuasive Techniques and Their Illustrations.*

No	Persuasive Strategies	Illustrations
1	Demonstrating Distinction	The advertiser describes a product/service as being unique. No one else can provide such a product/service in such a quality.
2	Honoring Commitment	The advertiser pledges to continue offering the product/service according to the best standards as usual.
3	Expressing Authority	The advertiser has a long experience necessary to keep quality.
4	Hyperbolizing	The advertiser exaggerates about the excellence of the service or product they offer.
5	Glorification	The advertiser shows that the customer's care is a top priority.
6	Providing Proofs	The advertiser offers social/ scientific evidence regarding its product/service and thus worth purchasing.
7	Expressing solidarity	The advertiser tries to find ties (and thus reasons to keep them purchasing the product) between the customer and the company.
8	Proving success	The advertiser tries to demonstrate that they are successful with regards to offering their products.

### Demonstrating Distinction

The frequency of this strategy was 18, with a percentage 22.5 of the sample collected. It was regarded the most frequent strategy employed by the advertisers. It demonstrates uniqueness and that the product is number one. One example is given below:

- /الْحَايِزُ دَرَعٌ لَتِي إِذْ لَفَضْلُ صِرْفٍ/
- /Alḥaʔiz cala darc altamyuuz liʔfdhal sinf/
- [It is the winner of the Shield of Excellence for the best category]

This slogan is placed on a rice product package. It draws customers' attention to this brand of rice by describing it as award winning product for best quality. In this slogan, the advertiser indicates why it is worth purchasing it; as being awarded the best product in its category. This brand is thus distinctive. The advertiser



appeals to ethos (ethics) since it is awarded based on meeting all standards and criteria successfully. It also appeals to the logos (logical) since this product is the one that the recipient should have as being the best. This slogan also aims at forming certain positive perceptions about the product through changing beliefs and attitudes so that the customer could behave in a specific way (to purchase this product) based on his/her positive evaluation.

### *Honoring Commitment*

This strategy was used 13 times (16.25%) by advertisers in this study. This strategy was employed to enhance the customers' trust in following the best standards.

- / نلتزم بالفضل دائماً مع داريتك المفضلة الطبيعية /
- /Niltazim bilʔfdhal mac bharaatk ilmufadhaliḥ altabiicyah/
- [We always commit to the best with your favorite natural spices]

This slogan states commitment on the part of the advertiser that they only stick to the best standards. This slogan indicates the high-quality services that the company offers to customers. The advertisers make certain beliefs about their services as being of high quality. This statement shows appeals to ethos (as they always commit to the best standards, thus their commitment to the best standards is the best), logos (since they are a team of experts and workers), and pathos (the advertiser indicates that it is the best selected and most natural. This mix of appeals can successfully secure more compliance from the addressee as it can positively affect his/her choices. They enhance the sense of persuasion.

### *Expressing Authority*

This strategy occupies the third position, occurring 11 times (13.75%). It creates or enhances a sense of guarantee and trust.

- /محصة في طويقتنا المعوده جاهزلك طحن لتذوق قهوة ذورك مة خصه/
- /Mhamasah cala ʔariqtna almachuudih jahzih llʔahin wlitthawuq qahwih thu nakha khaṣah/
- [Roasted in our usual way, ready to grind and taste the coffee with a special flavour]

This statement directs the recipient to make positive evaluations of the product by building certain beliefs about this product (coffee). The advertiser relies on their long experience in this field as one important strategy that the advertiser uses to show how they are the ones that customers can trust. These beliefs in turn help make positive attitudes and then direct them to action. The slogan appeals to the recipient's ethos as it creates a sense of being them as credible. This slogan also appeals to the pathos (to have very tasty coffee), thus appealing to the recipient's emotions, triggering them to choose this product rather than any other product by encouraging them to have this brand.

### *Hyperbolizing*

The hyperbolizing strategy occurred 10 times (12.5%) in the sample of 80 slogans. By this strategy, the advertiser exaggerates about the excellence of the service or product they offer.

- /ويغتخسك مع كل اكلة لبي بدنا/
- /Wibyiftah nafsak mac kul aklih halib baldna/
- [You will enjoy each meal with our Baladna milk]

Here this expression aims at forming certain beliefs about the product. It appeals to the addressee's emotions. This expression does not state (proven) facts. However, it aims at directing the addressee to form specific attitudes towards this product so that he/she can evaluate this product positively to make certain social actions (purchasing or deciding to purchase the product). Thus, with expected positive beliefs, the recipient would decide to consume this product rather than products of other brands. This decision is made through various cognitive processes starting from making beliefs about this product to forming the desired attitudes so that he/she evaluates the product positively and thereby making the intention to purchase that product. Thus, this decision is a social discursive consequence of this cognitive process.

### *Glorification*

This strategy was used 9 times (11.25%) by the advertisers, to show that the customer's care is a top priority.

- /بنكنا السر كان بيك الحياة ولت حيلنا/
- /Bank alʔisnaan banki llihayaa winta hayaatna/
- [Housing Bank.. My bank for life and you are our life]

This slogan establishes steady ties with the recipient. It invites them to think of their socioeconomic future through this bank, which can provide them with all the prosperity they need. This expression appeals

to the pathos. It constructs an effective message that the addressee is a top priority that they always take care of. Besides, this advertisement appeals to logos since it invites the recipient to logic and reason to think of this ideal bank. This expression then aims to form specific attitudes in addressees about this bank for the purpose of directing them to deal with this bank. This brief slogan indexes many facilities and services that the bank provides. It glorifies the recipient as being the top priority for the bank. The brevity is an important feature that such a slogan is characterized by. “ولدت حبيلاً” [our life]. This expression presents self-representation as it appeals to authority (bank, in this context).

### *Providing Proofs*

The providing proofs strategy occurred 8 times (10%). It enhances the customer's perceptions of the benefits of the product.

- /حزام طبييساعد طفلي المشي مبكرا. التكنولوجيا الالحدتقدي لالعالم/
- /Hizaam yusaacid cal almashi mubakiran. Altaqniyah alahdath fi alcalam/
- [A medical belt helps babies walk early. It is the latest technology in the world]

This statement indicates important information that is directed to parents to consider this product for their babies and keep them purchasing it. Proofing is a very important strategy used in the advertisements/slogans. It persuades the recipient by presenting medical or statistical evidence that the product or service offered is excellent, as one way to encourage the customer to purchase it. However, this proof is not necessarily true. This statement implies the necessity of using this product for their babies as it is made and designed by the best international standards. It states medical information that is aimed to build certain medical beliefs about this product. This advertised product has medical that help babies to walk earlier than if the parent used another brand. This in turn forms positive attitudes, which directly affects the recipients' evaluation of this product. This slogan appeals to the recipient's logos (since it includes medical information) and appeals to ethics (as it states it is made using the most advanced technology).

### *Expressing Solidarity*

Expressing solidarity is used 6 times (7.5%) in the sampled slogans. In this strategy, the advertiser attempts to build bridges between the customer and the company.

- //لحين القرن اسوى وينك مل سوى//
- /halibunal kibrna sawa wbinkamil sawa/
- [With halibuna, we have grown, and we should continue to grow altogether.]

This expression calls for sincerity and solidarity on the part of the client. This slogan assumes that everyone in Jordan was having this milk (since this brand of milk is very old and there were very few brands at that time). Therefore, they should keep consuming this milk, although there are many other brands of milk in the market at present. This expression appeals to pathos that this milk has been used for a long time, and thus it is worth continuing. Besides, this appeal (to the client's emotions) seeks loyalty from the clients who were having this milk (since this milk was almost only used in Jordan). Thus, the slogan aims at leading the recipient to positively evaluate this product and keep evaluating this product positively through having desired attitudes towards this brand.

### *Proving Success*

This strategy is the least frequent strategy, used only 5 times (6.25%). It reveals why the customer needs to trust the product/service.

- /قصتنا سر نجاحنا/
- /Qisatna sir najaahna/
- [Our story is the key to our success]

The advertiser relies on their story of success as one important strategy used to make the recipient trust what they claim. The advertiser appeals to ethos to affect the recipient's beliefs and eventually their attitudes about the products they offer. The advertiser is establishing credibility on what they claim. This ethical appeal can lead the recipient to take the desired action, especially if he/she needs this product. Thus, the recipient's needs trigger the recipient to purchase the product since these needs can help them form positive attitudes about the product.

### *Pragmatic Functions of The Persuasion Strategies*

Regarding the research questions Two, inquiring about the pragmatic functions of the persuasion strategies, Table 2 presents the persuasion strategies and gives information about the frequency of persuasion techniques used in this data as well as their pragmatic functions. Eight persuasion strategies were identified based on the content of the slogans collected for this study.

**Table 2:** Persuasion Strategies, Frequency, Percentages and Pragmatic Functions.

No	Persuasive techniques	Frequency	Percentage	Pragmatic functions
1	Demonstrating Distinction	18	22.5%	To show uniqueness and number one producer
2	Honoring Commitment	13	16.25%	To enhance the customers' trust in following the best standards
3	Expressing Authority	11	13.75%	To create/enhance a sense of guarantee and trust
4	Hyperbolizing	10	12.5%	To exaggerate and trigger the customer to purchase
5	Glorification	9	11.25%	To show customer's care is a top priority
6	Providing Proofs	8	10%	To enhance the customer's perceptions of the benefits of the product
7	Expressing solidarity	6	7.5%	To build bridges between the customer and the company
8	Proving success	5	6.25%	To show why the customer needs to trust them
	Total	80	100.0	

The results, as presented in the Table 2, reveal that while the distinction strategy (22.5%) is the most frequently used strategy in this data, the proving success (6.25%) is the least frequent one. The distinction strategy demonstrates that the advertiser/company stands out about presenting the best service and quality. This can suggest how unique they are. It reveals the uniqueness of the product. With this strategy, many superlatives are used. For example, *the sweetest* in the state. This strategy shows that a product is the best of other brands so that the recipient has only one choice, which is to purchase it.

Honoring commitment (16.25%) is another important strategy used in advertising the products/services in this study. In this strategy, the speaker commits to offering a perfect product or service to the customer. Simon & Dejica-Cartis (2015) believe that advertisements not only inform the customer but also direct them to make a positive statement about the product or service "without bringing the necessary evidence to support them" (p.238). Authority is important since the advertisement/slogan shows that the owner of the product is worth dealing with as they are experts in the field. This strategy then seeks to gain the trust of the customer. For glorification strategy, it honors the customer as being loyal to the product and it encourages the recipient to purchase the product. Solidarity is another important strategy that demonstrates that the customer is a partner to the company and altogether they can grow by benefiting from each other.

### Main Linguistic Features of Advertisements

About Research Question Three, examining the main linguistic features of advertisements, it was premised that advertising language is intentionally crafted and manipulated to be memorable. People nowadays are more likely to remember and immediately recall words from an advertising that they have seen or heard than anything else. To achieve this effect, advertisers use certain techniques and features. Brevity is among the most important features that these slogans are characterized with. They are very short. However, they have important effects on customers. This feature can encourage the recipient to read it as being very short. This feature can thus help attract the recipient's attention to such slogans and what they imply. In addition, superlatives are very commonly used in slogans. This feature conveys that they are number one in this regard. It shows to what extent they are unique and distinctive regarding their product and services.

Moreover, the constancy of action is another important aspect of these slogans. This feature is conveyed by the constancy forms such as (*bin Kamil sawa*, *biyifta7 nafsak ma3 kul aklih*, and the adverbs of constancy, *naltazim bilafdh al daimaan*). This feature can help the company grant the recipient a sense of guarantee that the product maintains as best expected quality as possible. The plural forms of pronouns and verbs are also one important of the key characteristics distinguishing advertisements. This shows that they are a team of experts working together to offer the best services.

### Appeals Involved in Persuasive Strategies

About Research Question Four, the study focused on the three appeals of logos (logic), ethos (ethics), and pathos (emotions). This can be explained by the fact that these advertisements address adults. Therefore, they rely on this appeal as one effective way to think about purchasing it. It shows that both the advertiser and the customer are on one side. Thus, there should be more cooperation and solidarity. Table 2 exhibits these three appeals under each persuasive technique.



**Table 3:** Appeals Involved in Persuasive Strategies.

S.No	Persuasive techniques	Logos	Ethos	Pathos
1	Demonstrating Distinction	X	-	-
2	Honoring Commitment	X	X	-
3	Expressing Authority	X	X	-
4	Hyperbolizing	-	-	X
5	Glorification	-	-	X
6	Providing Proofs	X	X	-
7	Expressing Solidarity	X	X	X
8	Proving Success	X	-	-

### Advertisements Affect People's Perception

With regard to Research Question Five, which examined whether advertisements affect people's perception, this study utilized the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) from psychology. Guided by the principles of this theory, the authors argue that persuasion is structured by three dimensions: attraction (through language features and appeals), evaluation (beliefs, attitudes, and intention), and behavior (social acceptance or reluctance). In more detail, language features and appeals attract the recipient to the goal (which is changing the recipient's attitudes) of the expression. It is then a key to his/her perception of a product. It specifies how he/she should think of the product. Thus, this meaning aims to affect the recipient's beliefs and attitudes, which is a prior step to evaluation. Thus, with regards to evaluation, it is a cognitive process where the different psychological elements (beliefs and attitudes) contribute to evaluation that leads to taking a specific behavior. Social needs play an important factor (the recipient's needs for a product advertised) leading to social acceptance (the recipient's willingness to have the product) his/her needs for a product can push him/her to purchase that product.

Thus, behavior, as the last element of persuasion, represents the recipient's act (willingness to purchase the product or not). However, if the recipient didn't show his/her willingness to have the product, this means that the persuasion failed. The study asserts that successful persuasion is based on three dimensions: attraction, positive evaluation, and social action. These three dimensions are of consecutive and causative relationship. That is, the preceding dimension causes the following in a consecutive order. Table 4 demonstrates persuasion dimensions (positive and negative) with language features and appeals serving as inputs; Beliefs, Attitudes and Intention as processing tools for positive or negative evaluation, and acceptance as positive social action and reluctance as negative social acceptance representing outputs.

**Table 4:** Main Dimensions of Persuasion- Positive and Negative Evaluation.

Dimension	Step 1: Input	Step 2: Processing	Step 3: Output
Positive	Attraction	Positive evaluation	Positive social action
	Language features and appeals	Beliefs, Attitudes Intention	Acceptance
Negative	Attraction	Negative evaluation	Negative social action
	Language features and appeals	Beliefs, Attitudes Intention	Reluctance

While the positive dimension indicates successful persuasion, the negative displays unsuccessful persuasion. This is because persuasion does not achieve its goal, which is the recipient's acceptance. For example, while a slogan of a product like 'milk' can attract the recipient's attention and impact their decision to purchase it, the same slogan may not trigger the recipient to do the same action, and thus the recipient's evaluation is negative.

Table 4 also indicates the relationship between the persuasion dimensions (attraction, evaluation and social action) and how they work to reach consequences (social action or behavior), where the horizon represents a causative relationship, and columns indicate the components of each dimension. Persuasion consists of three main dimensions with various elements for each dimension. While the first dimension represents linguistic aspects, the second dimension represents cognitive aspects, and the third dimension represents consequences. Thus, linguistic aspects are a key to cognitive processing (where the recipient evaluates the product or service advertised) that in turn leads to social consequences (acceptance or reluctance). Hence, Table 4 shows that evaluation not only can be positive but also it can be negative. Based on his/her evaluation, the recipient makes the decision. That is, he/she is more likely to purchase the product if his/her evaluation is positive. But he/she is not if his/her evaluation is negative.

## Conclusion

This study investigated persuasion from a psycho-social cognitive perspective. It discusses how persuasion components can lead in a causative manner to specific social consequences (behavior), as explained in the cognitive process. The advertisements/slogans aim at creating rapport between the advertiser and recipient to direct them to specific products. They used to draw the recipient's attention to those brands. They address the recipient's emotions and reason. They do not necessarily direct them to these products (they do

not make any imperatives), but they are designed to affect their choices. Thus, the language used for advertisements is carefully selected so that it can address recipients' emotions and minds. The data analyzed demonstrates that the advertisers used a mix of appeals in one statement (slogan) for the sake of influencing the addressee's perceptions of the product.

The study also found out that language features (metaphor, brevity, nomination, and appeals) can attract the recipient's attention to the message that the recipient processes cognitively, leading him/her to certain behavior (acceptance or reluctance). Brevity, superlatives, and continuity are among the most important language features that advertisements/slogans are characterized with. The hyperbole strategy involves appeals to emotions. It aims at affecting the recipient's emotions by motivating them to the behavioral intention so that he/she takes a decision based on what the hyperbole implies.

The study concludes that successful persuasion is based on three dimensions: attraction, positive evaluation, and social action. These three dimensions are of consecutive and causative relationship (that is, the preceding dimension causes the following in consecutive order). In pedagogical contexts, ESL/EFL students can benefit from this study in learning how persuasive language should be created in spoken and written discourse and which strategies can better affect the recipient's choices, and thus they can better understand writing as a social practice used to create rather than reflect knowledge.

This study offers important principles that can serve as guidelines to course designers and educators for designing activities that can promote students' effective use of various persuasive features in their writings and presentations. For example, ESL/EFL students can utilize such various techniques as discussed in this study for the purpose of improving their methods of presenting arguments in a persuasive manner.

Nevertheless, this study has some limitations: It did not employ experimental tools such as tests, scaling questionnaire and interviews to measure people's perceptions of these products that can corroborate these socio-cognitive explanations. The study was only confined to offer explanations of how recipients can build evaluations, and hence make social actions towards products advertised. Thus, this study recommends employing experimental frameworks and tools for the purpose of investigating participants' perceptions and thus can offer more concrete results regarding the effectiveness of these persuasive strategies. Additionally, this study recommends examining a larger corpus to explore more persuasive techniques that advertisers may draw upon and how they are used.

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