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SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF GENDER EXPRESSION IN ADVERTISING DISCOURSE

Annotation. This study examines the syntactic features of gender expression in advertising discourse, focusing on how linguistic structures reinforce traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. Through the analysis of various advertisements, the research highlights the use of imperative sentences, elliptical constructions, repetition, gradation, and declarative authority in male-oriented marketing, emphasizing power, efficiency, and exclusivity. In contrast, advertisements targeting women frequently employ softer imperatives, poetic repetition, parallel structures, and gradation, reinforcing beauty, sophistication, and emotional appeal. The findings demonstrate that advertising syntax not only serves a persuasive function but also contributes to the construction and reinforcement of gender roles in consumer culture.

Key words: advertising discourse; syntactic features; gender expression; masculinity; femininity; imperative sentences; elliptical constructions; repetition; gradation; declarative authority; consumer perception; linguistic strategies; marketing language; rhetorical devices.

Introduction

Advertising discourse has its own syntactic features, which are determined by various extralinguistic factors related to the psychology of advertising impact. Syntax distributes huge possibilities for expressing subtle meanings and emotional shades of expression.

As a rule, simple sentences are preserved in advertising discourses, providing easier enhancement of advertising coverage and increased expressivity. Phrases of a larger syntactic syllable usually alternate with simple sentences (of 3-4 words). A short text is best reproduced by the reader:

- the whole five-word text is memorized;
- out of 10 words, for example, four or five are remembered;
- four to eight words out of 25 are memorized [1].

Short, simple sentences are typical for advertising discourse using non-verbal means of influence along with the text itself. For example, an advertisement for nail polish often does not need a detailed explanation of all the advantages of the product offered, if a beautiful model is depicted next to the text of the advertisement, whose nails show us this product in action.



Advertising discourse not only relies on brevity and expressiveness but also strategically employs syntactic structures to shape perception, particularly in the representation of gender. The linguistic choices in advertisements are influenced by cultural stereotypes, societal expectations, and the intended target audience. These choices manifest in the use of specific syntactic constructions, such as imperative sentences, ellipses, parallel structures, and rhetorical questions, which enhance the emotional appeal and persuasive impact of the message.

One of the key aspects of advertising language is its ability to construct and reinforce gender identities through syntactic means. For instance, advertisements targeting female audiences often employ softer, more descriptive phrases, emphasizing emotions, beauty, and care. In contrast, advertisements directed at male consumers tend to use assertive, direct structures that highlight power, efficiency, and action. Such syntactic differentiation plays a crucial role in shaping consumer perception and reinforcing traditional gender roles.

By examining the syntactic features of advertising discourse, this study explores how language structures contribute to gender representation in advertisements. The analysis focuses on the syntactic patterns used in different types of advertisements and how they reflect and reinforce gendered language norms. Understanding these patterns provides insight into the ways advertising influences social attitudes toward gender and identity.

Materials and methods of research

This study employs a qualitative linguistic analysis of advertising texts to examine the syntactic features of gender expression in advertising discourse. The research is based on a comparative approach, analyzing advertisements targeted at male and female consumers to identify recurring syntactic structures, rhetorical devices, and linguistic strategies.

The materials for this study include a selection of print and digital advertisements from well-known brands in the fashion, beauty, automotive, and luxury goods industries. The primary focus is on advertisements for watches, skincare, deodorants, and food products, as these categories frequently employ distinct gendered language. The advertisements were collected from fashion magazines (GQ, Glamour, Vogue), official brand websites, and online marketing platforms.

The methodology involves:

- Identifying and categorizing syntactic structures (imperative sentences, elliptical constructions, repetition, parallelism, rhetorical questions, and gradation).
- Analyzing gendered language strategies to determine how syntax reinforces traditional masculinity and femininity.
- Comparing male and female-oriented advertisements to highlight syntactic differences in marketing communication.
- Contextualizing findings within advertising psychology to assess how linguistic choices shape consumer perception and gender identity.

This research adopts a discourse analysis framework, considering the cultural, psychological, and sociolinguistic factors that influence advertising language. The study



aims to provide insights into how syntactic structures in advertising discourse perpetuate or challenge gender norms in consumer culture.

Research results

The analysis of the collected advertisements reveals distinct syntactic patterns that reinforce traditional gender roles in marketing:

- Men's advertisements focus on action, power, and exclusivity, using imperative structures, concise elliptical sentences, and declarative authority.
- Women's advertisements emphasize beauty, self-care, and emotional appeal, utilizing gradation, repetition, and poetic descriptions.

Advertising syntax actively constructs and reinforces gender identities, influencing consumer perception and brand engagement.

These findings confirm that syntactic choices in advertising discourse are not arbitrary but strategically designed to align with culturally ingrained gender norms, reinforcing traditional masculine and feminine ideals in consumer marketing.

Sometimes persuasion requires a large advertising text consisting of both simple and complex sentences. Complex sentences are characterized by the presence of an independent clause and one or more dependent clauses. This structure allows for the expression of intricate ideas and relationships between concepts. Let's analyse the advertising text of Dove whole body deodorant:

"72-hour odor control and skin care, everywhere. Our whole-body deodorant sprays, sticks and creams keep you feeling fresh from your pits and thighs to your toes."

[2]

The advertising text is structured with short, direct sentences that enhance clarity and efficiency. However, the syntax also plays a role in reinforcing gender-related aspects of the product's appeal. *"Our whole-body deodorant sprays, sticks, and creams keep you feeling fresh from your pits and thighs to your toes."* This is a complex sentence with a main clause ("Our whole-body deodorant... keep you feeling fresh") and an adverbial phrase ("from your pits and thighs to your toes") specifying the extent of its effectiveness. Focus on "whole-body" care aligns with marketing strategies that emphasize comprehensive beauty and hygiene for women. The mention of specific body areas (thighs, toes) acknowledges women's hygiene needs beyond underarms, reinforcing the idea that women require more extensive care than men. The reassuring, nurturing tone ("keep you feeling fresh") aligns with traditional beauty and self-care marketing aimed at female audiences who prioritize long-lasting freshness and comfort.

Let's consider the options for using other syntactic constructions in the same advertising discourse. The phrase "sprays, sticks, and creams" employs parallel structure, which enhances readability and reinforces product variety. The enumeration of body parts ("pits and thighs to your toes") subtly reflects gender-specific concerns. While male deodorants typically focus on "underarms," this ad expands the coverage to areas commonly associated with female hygiene and self-care.

The NIVEA MEN Fresh Active Deo Roll On advertisement uses complex syntactic structures to appeal to male consumers while reinforcing traditional masculine ideals. The advertisement primarily consists of complex and compound-complex sentences, which contribute to a more authoritative and informative tone, suitable for a male-targeted product.



“The NIVEA MEN Fresh Active Deo Roll On stems from our deep understanding of the modern man’s lifestyle, where confidence and long-lasting freshness play pivotal roles.” [3]

This is a complex sentence with a main clause (“The NIVEA MEN ... deep understanding”) and a relative clause (“where confidence ... roles”). The subordinate clause defines and elaborates on the “modern man’s lifestyle,” reinforcing the idea that men value confidence and freshness in their daily routines. The phrase “deep understanding” suggests expertise and trust, subtly influencing male consumers to believe that the product is scientifically formulated for their needs.

“This product is not just about offering effective sweat and odour protection; it’s about empowering men to seize every moment with a reliable companion in NIVEA MEN Fresh Active Deo Roll On.” [3]

A compound-complex sentence consisting of two independent clauses joined by a semicolon and a subordinate clause (“to seize every moment ... Deo Roll On”) has the parallel structure (“not just about offering... it’s about empowering”) highlights two key product benefits: protection and empowerment. The phrase “seize every moment” aligns with masculine ideals of ambition, action, and control, reinforcing traditional gender expectations.

The text frequently uses abstract nouns and nominalizations, which create a sense of authority and professionalism: “Confidence”, “freshness”, “protection”, and “empowerment” are abstract nouns that appeal to men’s desire for strength and self-assurance. The word “companion” personifies the product, making it sound like a trusted ally rather than just a deodorant.

The NIVEA MEN Fresh Active Deo Roll On advertisement strategically employs complex sentences, nominalization, and direct gender-specific phrasing to reinforce male-oriented themes of confidence, action, and reliability. The syntactic structure reflects an authoritative and persuasive tone, making the product not just about hygiene but about personal empowerment and success.

Advertisements often employ a combination of short, fragmented phrases, complex sentences, and passive constructions to create a sense of luxury, elegance, and effortless transformation. Let us now examine the following advertising discourse:

DEEPLY REPLENISHED BEAUTIFUL FLUIDITY

Introducing the Humectress Caviar

ENCAPSULATE™ Sérum

Replenish nutrients in just one use with this powerful protein-rich serum. Enriched with concentrated 100% pure Elastin Protein and a precious Caviar Complex, this breakthrough formula fortifies hair from within, progressively repairing with continued use. Hair is left smooth, so that it moves with beautiful fluidity. For hair that lives to move. [4]

“DEEPLY REPLENISHED BEAUTIFUL FLUIDITY” – this phrase is not a full sentence but rather a sequence of adjectives and a noun, resembling a slogan. The omission of a verb creates a bold, declarative statement, reinforcing luxury and transformation without unnecessary details. Words like “deeply replenished” and “fluidity” evoke softness, smoothness, and movement, which align with traditionally feminine ideals of beauty and elegance. “Introducing the Humectress Caviar



ENCAPSULATE™ Sérum” – this simple sentence serves as a transition into the advertisement, introducing the product with a direct and formal tone. The proper noun phrase (“Humectress Caviar ENCAPSULATE™ Sérum”) is intentionally elongated to emphasize exclusivity and sophistication.

“Enriched with concentrated ... repairing with continued use.”. This complex sentence begins with a past participle phrase (“Enriched with...”), which gives the product a scientific, premium feel. The main clause (“this breakthrough formula fortifies hair from within”) follows a cause-effect structure, reinforcing the idea that the product penetrates deep for lasting repair. The adverbial phrase (“progressively repairing with continued use”) promotes long-term transformation, reinforcing commitment to beauty routines, a concept often associated with female consumers.

“Hair is left smooth, so that it moves with beautiful fluidity.” The choice of passive voice (...is left...) in this complex sentence with a purpose clause (...so that..) subtly shifts focus away from the consumer’s effort and places emphasis on the product’s effect, reinforcing a luxurious and effortless transformation. The phrase “beautiful fluidity” personifies hair, attributing grace, movement, and elegance, which align with feminine beauty ideals.

Advertisements frequently use antithesis, and complex sentence structures to evoke a sense of refinement, subtlety, and sophistication. Let us now examine the following advertising discourse:

The PINK MAHOGANY - Kiasi advertisement masterfully employs antithesis to highlight the duality of sophistication and subtlety. Through a blend of complex sentence structures, poetic rhythm, and carefully chosen contrasts, the text reinforces the fragrance’s unique identity as both bold and delicate, present yet elusive. This syntactic and rhetorical strategy enhances its appeal to a refined, elegance-seeking audience, making the product feel exclusive, luxurious, and deeply personal. [5]

Antithesis is a rhetorical device that contrasts opposing ideas to create emphasis and intrigue. In this text, it manifests through contrasting concepts of elegance vs. modesty, allure vs. subtlety, warmth vs. elusiveness. The phrase “Discover Kiasi: where elegance meets modesty” is a clear case of antithesis, contrasting “elegance” (luxury, grandeur) with “modesty” (restraint, simplicity). By juxtaposing these ideas, the advertisement redefines sophistication, suggesting that true elegance is subtle, not ostentatious. In the phrase “A fragrance that whispers sophistication” the verb “whispers” contrasts with the noun “sophistication”, as sophistication is typically associated with something bold, grand, and striking, whereas whispering is soft, subdued, and delicate. This antithesis reinforces the paradox of power in subtlety, positioning the fragrance as both refined and understated. “Let its gentle warmth linger, leaving a trace as captivating as it is elusive” – the contrast between “captivating” (engaging, strong presence) and “elusive” (difficult to grasp, fading away) exemplifies how the fragrance is both striking and ephemeral.

Rhetorical questions in advertising are a strategic way to engage consumers, provoke thought, and subtly guide them toward making a purchase. Ads targeting women often use rhetorical questions to encourage exploration, emphasize choice, and foster emotional connection.



SHADES OF SUMMER

One of the best parts of summer is wearing your favourite pair of sunnies to complete your look. Not sure which pair to buy?

These are the styles making waves. [6]

The sentence “Not sure which pair to buy?” is a rhetorical question that directly engages the reader. This conversational style mimics interpersonal communication, which is often associated with advertising targeted at women. Studies on gendered language suggest that women tend to respond more to interactive and engaging discourse rather than directive statements. [7] The implicit assumption is that the reader (likely a woman) is indecisive or enjoys exploring options, which aligns with gendered marketing strategies that emphasize personal choice and variety in fashion-related products.

Advertisements often employ syntactic features such as imperative sentences, repetition, and gradation to shape gender-specific appeals, reinforcing traditional notions of masculinity and femininity. Let us now analyze the following advertising texts to explore how syntactic structures influence gendered marketing strategies.

Seiko. Since 1881. Keep going forward. [8]

This advertisement promotes the Seiko Prospex dive watch, emphasizing its durability, precision, and adventurous spirit through the slogan “Keep Going Forward” and imagery of rugged ocean waves. “Keep going forward.” is a directive, encouraging perseverance and progress. This aligns with traditional masculinity, which often emphasizes determination, action, and self-improvement. The sentence fragments (“Seiko. Since 1881.”) are short, direct, and authoritative, reinforcing a sense of history, reliability, and power – qualities often emphasized in male-targeted marketing. The message appeals to ambition and persistence, resonating with traditional male identity, where success and progress are core values.

The advertisement promoting Wonderful Pistachios as a high-protein, energy-boosting snack, reinforces traditional male values – strength, energy, and physical endurance – by using an active, direct, and factual syntactic structure. Imperative sentence “Get crackin’ with protein power” commands action, reinforcing the idea of energy, strength, and decisiveness – traits commonly associated with masculinity:

Get crackin’ with protein power.

With all nine essential amino acids and six grams of protein in every 1 oz. serving,

Wonderful Pistachios is the go-to snack that packs a protein punch. [8]

The advertisement of **Brickell’s trial-sized men’s skincare kit**, emphasizes ease of discovery, quality, and widespread customer trust to encourage men to try the products for free:

Try Us. Free.

8 PRODUCTS

Get our trial sized starter kit. Discover what works for you. [9]

“Try Us.”, “Get our trial-sized starter kit.”, and “Discover what works for you.” all use directive language, prompting immediate action and decision-making. The short phrases and minimal detail create a no-nonsense, efficient tone, which is often preferred in advertising for men.



While advertisements for men focus on action, strength, and decisiveness through imperative sentences and concise messaging, advertisements for women employ gradation, repetition, and softer imperatives to evoke self-expression and emotional connection, highlighting a distinct contrast in gendered marketing approaches. Let us now analyze the following advertising text of Fashion Fair's "Finishings" lipstick collection:

Appreciate the beauty in you.
The beauty of you.
Finishings.
Complete Color.
Complete Luxury.
Complete You. [10]

"Appreciate the beauty in you." is a gentle directive that encourages self-reflection rather than commanding action. Unlike the male-targeted ads, which use imperatives to push action, this one invites introspection and self-acceptance, aligning with more traditional feminine themes of self-expression and inner beauty. "The beauty in you. The beauty of you." uses repetition to reinforce a personal connection and emotional depth, common in female-oriented advertising. The phrase "Complete Color. Complete Luxury. Complete You." builds in intensity, creating a rhythmic progression that enhances emotional appeal. This syntactic device reinforces a sense of transformation and self-fulfillment, appealing to female consumers who are often targeted with messages of self-care and personal enhancement.

Male-oriented advertising discourses also use repetition and gradation:

Look strong. Feel strong. Be strong. [11]

The phrase "strong" is repeated in all three sentences, reinforcing the central message of masculine strength and resilience. This repetition creates a rhythmic and memorable effect, ensuring that the audience absorbs the key idea. The progression from "Look strong" → "Feel strong" → "Be strong" represents a logical and psychological build-up: "Look strong" suggests an external, physical appearance – how others perceive the man. "Feel strong" shifts to an internal state – confidence and emotional well-being. "Be strong" completes the sequence, implying true, holistic strength in both mind and body. This structure intensifies the message, guiding the reader from superficial to deeper levels of masculinity and well-being. The use of repetition and gradation in this advertisement enhances its persuasive impact by reinforcing the idea of strength as a defining trait of masculinity, progressing from external perception to internal realization, and ultimately to an ideal state of being.

To understand how advertising reinforces traditional masculinity, we can analyze the syntactic structures used in male-targeted ads, such as negative constructions, repetition, and elliptical sentence construction. Let us now examine the following advertising texts:

Confidence is never out of style.
RULE NO. 56
Looks aren't important. Second looks are.
After a workout or before a night out, our 3-in-1 Performance Body-wash
will put you at the top of your game and always in style. [12]



“Confidence is never out of style.” The use of negation (“never”) reinforces the idea that confidence is an unchanging, permanent trait of masculinity. Rather than stating “Confidence is always in style,” the negative framing makes it more assertive and definitive, emphasizing stability and unwavering self-assurance – qualities often associated with traditional masculinity. “Looks aren’t important. Second looks are.” – this construction omits unnecessary elements, making the sentence more punchy and memorable. The contrastive parallel structure (negating the first statement and affirming the second) enhances wit and confidence, reinforcing the masculine ideal of effortless attractiveness – where looks may not be everything, but commanding attention is.

Duke is for men, and men only. [13]

This simple, declarative sentence is direct and authoritative, leaving no room for ambiguity. The elliptical construction omits unnecessary elaboration, making the message sharp and assertive, which aligns with stereotypically masculine communication styles – short, direct, and to the point.

Both advertisements use syntactic structures to reinforce traditional masculinity, but in different ways: the first ad employs negative construction, elliptical phrasing, and goal-driven language to emphasize confidence, performance, and effortless attractiveness. The second ad uses elliptical structure, repetition, and exclusivity to create a sense of bold, unchallenged masculinity and group identity.

To explore how luxury watch advertisements reinforce gendered marketing strategies, we will analyze the syntactic structures used in ads targeted at men and women. Reverso women’s watch ad:

Reverso. The watchmaker of watchmakers. [6]

The phrase omits unnecessary words, creating a refined and minimalist statement. This reflects luxury, exclusivity, and timeless elegance, which are often emphasized in women’s high-end advertising. Unlike male-oriented advertisements, which often include imperatives or goal-driven language, this phrase is more subtle and descriptive, appealing to a sense of appreciation rather than conquest or ownership. This aligns with how luxury products for women are marketed: emphasizing intrinsic beauty and prestige rather than performance or competition.

Let’s consider men’s watch Porsche 911:

Porsche Design.

The 911 among watches. The 911 was his first masterpiece.

Then, Prof. F. A. Porsche wrote history with the world’s first black timepiece. [8]

These short, authoritative sentences create a factual and confident tone, reinforcing masculinity as decisive and achievement-driven. The reference to historical milestones and personal legacy (“his first masterpiece”) aligns with masculine ideals of innovation, legacy, and dominance in craftsmanship.

Both advertisements use syntactic structures to reinforce gender-specific appeals:

- The Reverso women’s watch ad employs elliptical phrasing, repetition, and an evocative, prestige-driven tone, emphasizing sophistication, beauty, and exclusivity.
- The Porsche 911 men’s watch ad uses metaphoric comparison, declarative authority, and references to historical achievement, reinforcing masculinity through power, status, and technical mastery.



The analysis of advertising discourse demonstrates that **syntactic structures play a crucial role in reinforcing gendered marketing strategies**, shaping consumer perceptions and expectations. Advertisements targeting men frequently employ **imperative sentences, declarative authority, elliptical constructions, and repetition**, emphasizing **power, action, efficiency, and exclusivity**. In contrast, advertisements directed at women often utilize **gradation, softer imperatives, parallel structures, and poetic repetition**, highlighting **beauty, sophistication, and emotional connection**.

Conclusion

These syntactic choices reflect **broader societal norms and cultural stereotypes**, reinforcing traditional gender roles in advertising. By understanding how **sentence structure, linguistic economy, and rhetorical devices** influence gender representation, we gain insights into how advertising **not only sells products but also perpetuates social ideals**. Recognizing these patterns allows for a more **critical engagement with advertising discourse**, opening discussions on how language can be used to **challenge or reinforce gender norms in modern marketing**.

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ЖАРНАМАЛЫҚ ДИСКУРС ТА ГЕНДЕРДІ БІЛДІРУДІҢ СИНТАКСИСТІК ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ

Аңдатпа. Бұл зерттеуде жарнамалық дискурста гендерді білдірудің синтаксистік ерекшеліктері қарастырылады, әсіресе, тілдік құрылымдардың дәстүрлі еркектік және әйелдік ұғымдарды қалай нығайтатынына баса назар аударылады. Өртүрлі жарнамалық материалдарды талдау көрсеткендей, ерлерге бағытталған маркетингте бұйрық райдағы сөйлемдер, эллипстік құрылымдар, қайталау, градация және декларативті авторитеттілік кеңінен қолданылады, бұл билік, тиімділік және эксклюзивтілік ұғымдарын ерекше көрсетеді. Ал әйелдерге арналған жарнамаларда көбінесе жұмсақ бұйрық рай формалары, поэтикалық қайталаулар, параллель құрылымдар және градация қолданылады, бұл сұлулыққа, талғампаздыққа және эмоционалдық әсерге басымдық береді. Зерттеу нәтижелері жарнама синтаксисінің тек сендіру қызметін ғана емес, сонымен қатар тұтынушылық мәдениеттегі гендерлік рөлдерді қалыптастыру мен нығайтуға да ықпал ететінін көрсетеді.

Кілт сөздер: жарнамалық дискурс; синтаксистік ерекшеліктер; гендерді білдіру; еркектік, әйелдік; бұйрық рай сөйлемдер; эллипстік құрылымдар; қайталау; градация; декларативті авторитеттілік; тұтынушы қабылдауы; лингвистикалық стратегиялар; маркетинг тілі; риторикалық тәсілдер.

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СИНТАКСИЧЕСКИЕ ОСОБЕННОСТИ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ ГЕНДЕРА В РЕКЛАМНОМ ДИСКУРСЕ

Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматриваются синтаксические особенности выражения гендера в рекламном дискурсе, с акцентом на то, как языковые структуры укрепляют традиционные представления о мужественности и женственности. Анализ различных рекламных материалов показывает, что в маркетинге, ориентированном на мужчин, широко используются повелительные предложения, эллиптические конструкции, повтор, градация и декларативная авторитетность, подчеркивающие власть, эффективность и эксклюзивность. В отличие от этого, реклама, нацеленная на женщин, чаще применяет более мягкие повелительные конструкции, поэтические повторы, параллельные структуры и градацию, акцентируя внимание на красоте, утонченности и эмоциональном воздействии. Результаты исследования демонстрируют, что синтаксис рекламы не только выполняет функцию убеждения, но и способствует формированию и укреплению гендерных ролей в потребительской культуре.



Ключевые слова: рекламный дискурс; синтаксические особенности; выражение гендера; мужественность; женственность; повелительные предложения; эллиптические конструкции; повтор; градация; декларативная авторитетность; восприятие потребителей; лингвистические стратегии; язык маркетинга; риторические приемы.