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The Stylistics of English Headlines in Promotional Discourse: a Multidimensional Study

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Abstract. The study is relevant due to the needs of studying promotional discourse in terms of effective use of linguistic means for product and service promotion in a competitive market. The aim of this study is to study the stylistic and communicative features of headlines in promotional discourse in the English language. The research material included 2092 headlines from 115 automobile brochures (44 car brands). The research methods include discourse analysis, linguocognitive categorization by semantic and functional criteria, quantitative analysis, and cognitive mapping. As a result of the study, it was found that the headlines contained a wide range of stylistic devices. The most numerous are lexical means — hyperbole, metaphor, epithet, personification, idioms, metonymy, repetition, incorporation, and blends. The figures of speech based on syntactic means — hyperbole, comparison, antithesis, parceling, parallelism, emphasis, inversion, framing, anaphora, chiasm, and pun — occurred less frequently. However, considering the syntactic organization of the headlines with the predicative, imperative, gerundial, attributive and interrogative structures, syntactic means were found dominant due to their wider functionality. Among phonetic devices, alliteration prevailed. The communicative techniques included customization, text navigation, storytelling, informative facts and issues related to driving. The majority of the headlines epitomized a synthesis of various stylistic means whose classification was fulfilled only for the purposes of the linguistic research. The headline length varied within 1–23 words (average 5, median 4, STD 2.75); standard being concise, while creative — more extended. Thematically, the headlines accentuated comfort, emotional commitment to the brands, engine capacity and their low footprint. The obtained results could be used in the practice of teaching English for specific purposes to students specializing in marketing, advertising and public relations.

Keywords: advertising and PR language, tropes, figures of speech, emotional attachment, car brand, brand positioning, perception management, customization

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Стилистика заголовков в рекламном дискурсе: коммуникативно-функциональное исследование на материале английского языка

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Аннотация. Актуальность исследования определяется необходимостью изучения рекламного дискурса с точки зрения эффективного использования языковых средств для продвижения продуктов и услуг в условиях рыночной конкуренции. Целью исследования было изучить стилистические и коммуникативные особенности заголовков в рекламном дискурсе на английском языке. Материал включал 2092 заголовка из 115 брошюр, рекламирующих модели автомобилей 44 брендов. Методами исследования были дискурсивный анализ, лингвокогнитивная категоризация по семантическим и функциональным признакам, количественный анализ, когнитивное картирование. В результате исследования было выявлено, что в заголовках используется широкий спектр стилистических приемов. Наиболее распространенными оказались лексические средства — гипербола, метафора, эпитет, олицетворение, идиома, метонимия, повтор, инкорпорация, и слияние. Стилистические фигуры, использующие синтаксические средства, — гипербола, сравнение, антитеза, парцелляция, параллелизм, эмпфаза, инверсия, фрейминг, анафора, хиазм, каламбур — были менее частотными. Однако, учитывая синтаксическую организацию заголовков с предикативной, повелительной, герундиальной, атрибутивной и вопросительной структурой, синтаксические средства — более распространенные благодаря их широкой функциональности. В категории фонетических средств наиболее частотной стала аллитерация. Коммуникативные средства включали фокусирование на потребностях покупателей, навигацию по тексту брошюры, повествование от лица производителей, информативные факты и проблемные вопросы, связанные с вождением. Большинство заголовков представляли собой синтез различных стилистических средств, классификация которых выполнялась только для целей лингвистического анализа. Длина заголовков варьировала от 1 до 23 слов (среднее 5, медиана 4, СКО 2,75); стандартные, как правило, более краткие, креативные — более продолжительные. Тематически заголовки акцентируют комфорт, эмоциональную привязанность к бренду, мощность двигателя и его экологичность. Полученные результаты могут быть использованы в практике преподавания английского языка для специальных целей студентам, специализирующимся в области маркетинга, рекламы и связей с общественностью.

Ключевые слова: язык рекламы и PR, тропы, стилистические фигуры, эмоциональная привязанность, марка автомобиля, позиционирование бренда, управление восприятием, кастомизация

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Introduction

Promotional discourse is characterized by a number of lexical, morphological, syntactic, stylistic, and phonetic features which are distinctive from other types of language for specific purposes (LSP). Advertising language, as a specific functional style [1], has a number of similarities with the literary style due to linguistic tools such as metaphor [2], metonymy, antithesis, simile, allusion, hyperbole, rhyme, alliteration, assonance, rhetorical questions, and many others. These act as effective persuasive techniques that entice potential customers into buying the promoted products and services [3; 4]. Linguistically, different tropes occur in certain combinations of morphological forms — nouns, adjectives, clauses, etc. [5]. Rapid marketing development and strong competition in the globalized digital world has led to the emergence of a new sub-discipline — brand linguistics which applies an integrative approach to studying consumer behavior and modelling their interaction with brands [6]. In a highly branded market, it is vitally important to build emotional attachment to brands and create a recognizable brand personality [7]. The research into the language of advertising, characterized by polycodedness, intertextuality, and multimedialization [8; 9], needs to be based on a system-based principle [10].

The headline has a crucial role in promotional discourse which is known for its inverted-pyramid structure, following a reader's interest — 100 % of customers read headlines, 70 % read the first paragraph, and further by the end in a descending order. For this reason, headlines in advertising need special attention, in comparison with news and academic headlines [11; 12].

Material and methods

The aim of this study was to analyze the specifics of headlines in automobile brochures. The objectives included: (1) a quantitative analysis of headlines and their constituent elements; (2) the determination of linguistic and communicative expressive means — tropes and figures of speech; (3) cognitive mapping of relevant topics for automobiles and their features.

The study material included 2092 headlines from a corpus of 115 automobile brochures (8200 words), devoted to car models of 44 brands: Acura, Alfa Romeo, Alpine, Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, BMW, Buick, Bugatti, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, Dodge, Ferrari, Fiat, Ford, Genesis, GMC,

Gumpert, Honda, Infiniti, Jaguar, Jeep, KIA, Koenigsegg, Lexus, Lincoln, Maserati, Maybach, Mazda, McLaren, Mercedes, Mini, Mitsubishi, Porsche, RAM, Rolls-Royce, Spyker, Subaru, Tesla, Toyota, Vencer, Volkswagen, and Volvo. The research methods were continuous sampling, discourse analysis, linguocognitive categorization by semantic and functional criteria, quantitative estimation, and cognitive mapping.

Findings

The headline length was 1–23 words (average 5; median 4; standard deviation 2.75) (Fig. 1). The headlines, containing either linguistic or communicative means, comprised 67 %; among these stylistic — 57 % and communicative — 10 %. The majority of the stylistic techniques were characterized as lexical (31 %), followed by syntactic (23 %), and phonetic (3 %). Considering sentence-based headlines, the total number was 82 %. Graphic tools included capitalization (61 %) and dots at the end of headlines (59 %). Morphologically, the headlines had the nominative (65 %), and attributive (8 %) structure. Syntactically, the headlines had the structure of a sentence with the predicate (16 %), elliptical sentences among those (0.6 %), imperative sentences (8 %), gerundial phrases (4 %), and questions (1 %).

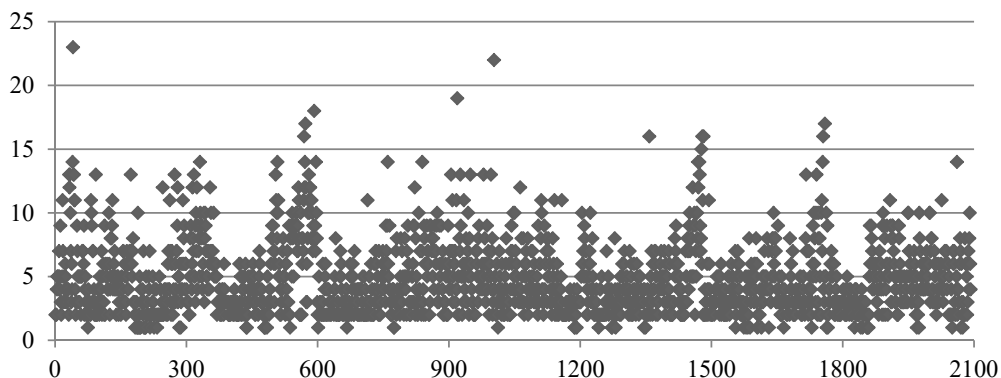


Fig. 1. Headline length in brochures (In words)
 Source: compiled by the author as a result of the study

The brochures generally contained two types of headlines — standard and creative. The former were short, ranging within 1–4 words and occurring at the beginning and at the end of the brochures; whereas the latter could reach the length of 23 words and provided unique linguistic material. The creative headlines differentiated not only brochures, but also brands. The standard headlines were almost similar.

Tropes and figures of speech

Metaphor

Metaphorical representation of driving experience characterized a large category of headlines; they reached the persuasive effect in combination with the hyperbole, imperative, epithets, and many others. Since the automobile market has really strong brands, emotions rather than rationality are in the ascendant and metaphors are widely used. The metaphorical headlines were further classified into subgroups which underlined certain technical, exterior and interior characteristics — a powerful engine, comfortable and roomy cabin, the opportunity to drive and cover long distances without technical failures.

Power

Examples: *WIELD THE **POWER** OF GRAVITY / ELEMENTAL **FORCES** / **Power** has met its hatch. / **POWER** AND EFFICIENCY PLAY WELL TOGETHER. / FIRE. **POWER**. / YOUR **TURBOCHARGED** SECRET FOR CONQUERING CHAOS / TENDONS & **MUSCLES***

Speed

Examples: ***LIGHT SPEED**. / KODO: “SOUL OF **MOTION**” / **Fast-acting** venom / **CHASING LAP TIME** / Heart of a Subaru. Soul of a **sports car**. / **COOL DELIVERY, SEARING PACE**. / CABIN **FEVER**. / READY FOR **BLASTOFF**. / **COMMAND CENTER**. / **TRACK STAR***

Comfort

Examples: *AN **EXQUISITE HAVEN** / LUXE LIVES HERE. / STEER TOWARDS **COMFORT**. / TOUCH OF **BRILLIANCE** / A DARKER SHADE OF **LUXURY** / APPEARANCE PACKAGE WRAPPED IN ATTITUDE / ESCAPE IN **COMFORT** / IMMERSE YOURSELF IN A NEW WORLD OF **OPULENCE**.*

Craftsmanship

Examples: *An objet **d’art** on wheels. / MODERN **ART**. / WORK OF **ART**. / Roadbook. The Porsche **Museum** on the road around the world. / CONTEMPORARY **ART: THE LEATHER APPOINTMENTS** / No stranger to the podium. / Inspirations that build an **icon**.*

Sound

Examples: ***Orchestrate** a more thrilling drive. / The **orchestra** rises for your applause. / **CONCERT HALL ON WHEELS**. / **VISCERAL SYMPHONY** / ALWAYS BEGIN ON A **BRIGHT NOTE***

Road

Examples: *DRIVE YOUR AMBITION / Forge your own terrain / Cure for the common commute. / Horizons that inspire / GUIDING LIGHT / CONQUER THE HORIZON / ADVENTURE WITHOUT LIMITS / Built for adventures / CONFIDENCE FOR MILES / Tread happily. / A journey that never ends.*

Emotions

Examples: *ACCELERATING THE FEEL OF MODERN REFINEMENT. / STIRS YOUR EMOTIONS / EXHILARATION IS IN THE AIR / BUILT FOR WHAT LIFE THROWS AT YOU / Fuel for thought. / DRIVING THRILLS FROM A GOLDEN AGE. / A JOURNEY FOR THE SENSES / IGNITE YOUR SENSES. / Senses working overtime. / THRILL AT EVERY TURN*

Certain headlines contained the concepts ‘blue’ and ‘green’ indicating the intention of car manufacturers to underline higher operational efficiency and energy saving technologies in their automobiles: *THE PERFORMANCE OF A V-8. BMW ADVANCED DIESEL WITH BLUE / THINK BLUE. / NEW GOLF BLUE MOTION / MEETING IN THE GREEN HELL.*

Hyperbole

Hyperbole and metaphor were the most extensively used stylistic means. The hyperbolisation effect was achieved with the aid of two groups of syntactic (the superlative form of adjectives and functional words) and one group of lexical tools. For this reason, the hyperbole was included in two different categories (see Fig. 2).

The superlative forms of adjectives

Examples: *The **best** of all worlds / THE **CLOSEST** CONNECTION / Make the **most** of every season. / **Largest** passenger volume in its class. / THE **STRONGEST** RAM TRUCK EVER. / **The most** elegant way to show your character / AT OUR **BEST** WHEN IT MATTERS MOST*

Functional words

Examples: *POWER **WITHOUT** COMPROMISE. / Comfort **without** compromise / CONVENIENT **BEYOND** COMPARE / **Beyond** expectations / SAFETY & SECURITY GOES **ABOVE AND BEYOND** / Safety from **all** sides. / THE MAYBACH EXPERIENCE INDULGES **ALL** THE SENSES / **EVERYTHING** IS CONSIDERED / INSPIRATION IS **EVERYWHERE***

Lexical means

Examples: ***AWE INSPIRING** BEAUTY / AN **ICON** REBORN / **INSPIRING GREATNESS** / MAINTAINING **THE EXTREME** / BORDERING ON **OBSESSION** / ON-BOARD **SOPHISTICATION** / GIVING CONNECTIVITY **ASTARRING** ROLE / **Phenomenally** exciting. / **Formidable** power. / **Unprecedented** strength and **unrivalled** style.*

Epithet

Epithets, being descriptive terms which accompany names and objects, give additional characteristics to automobiles, for example, to the interior, color, performance, engine, as well as benefits that customers will obtain after they make purchases, such as social status, comfort, dependability, functionality, the opportunity to travel, and usefulness.

The epithets include a wide range of adjectives: *aesthetic, aggressively styled, attention-grabbing, attractive, authentic, beautiful, boundless, bright, compelling, dramatic, dynamic, electrified, elegant, exciting, exclusive, executive, exhilarating, extraordinary, fascinating, fine, fresh, furious, genuine, glorious, grand, high-key, iconic, impressive, intrepid, intuitive, irrepressible, legendary, magical, magnificent, menacing, mild, muscular, original, outstanding, palatial, passionate, powerful, precious, pure, razor sharp, refined, rich, sensory, serene, silent, silky smooth, sporty, striking, sublime, subtle, thrilling, timeless, touching, tranquil, turbocharged, ultimate, unmistakable, vibrant, and wild.*

Examples: **ICONIC DESIGN / HIGH-KEY CONVENIENCE. / EXHILARATING PERFORMANCE / LOOKING FRESH / Genuine accessories / DRAMATIC SPORTINESS / A RICH HISTORY, AN EXCITING FUTURE / TIMELESS LINES, EXTRAORDINARY VISION / Intrepid wheels. / Compelling veneers. / A magical fusion. / A striking presence. / Wild. At heart. / Razor sharp. Silky smooth.**

Metonymy

Metonymical representation in brochure headlines replicates everyday English which is essential for advertising texts. Metonymy and synecdoche, as a specific kind of metonymy, produce the effect of simplicity, clarity, and conciseness, typical of colloquial language and authentic narration. In particular, *fingers* are associated with vehicle control, *rubber* — with wheels and speed, *engine* — with the entire automobile, *electric drive system* — with clean natural environment, *life on wheels* — with long journeys, *every turn and every mile* — with quality driving and a reliable engine, *home* — with multiple facilities in the salon that create the atmosphere of functionality and coziness, *two paths* — with the powerful engine that is able to go all over terrain, etc.

Examples: **TECHNOLOGY AT YOUR FINGERTIPS / RUBBER. MEET THE BACK ROAD. / START YOUR ENGINE. / THE EFFICIENCY OF A FOUR-CYLINDER. THE PERFORMANCE OF A V-8. BMW ADVANCED DIESEL WITH BLUE PERFORMANCE TECHNOLOGY. / AT THE PUSH OF A BUTTON. / The role of his life — on wheels.**

Personification

As a figurative way to creatively express inanimate objects, personification attributes human qualities to automobiles, their parts, and technical characteristics. Car models are associated with the most senior members of the royal family, officers

of high and middle ranks in the army or marines, leaders, environmental enthusiasts, people who are determined to achieve a high social status, friends and family members.

Examples: *King Of The Hill / Captain of the off-road. / MOOD MHANCER. / HIGH ACHIEVER / NATURE LOVER. / SPEED RACER. / City. Slicker. / THE URBAN ADVENTURER. / YOUR PERFECT CITY COMPANION. / YOUR PRO-ACTIVE PARTNER ON THE ROAD.*

According to the relatable concepts used as non-literal language for the purposes of personification, automobiles possess properties of the human body parts and its social attributes designed to facilitate driving.

Examples: *How our elements of style write a new design language. / The soul of a new machine. / NOW, YOU'VE GOT EYES IN THE BACK OF YOUR HEAD. / A car that sees in the dark. / THE WHISPER FROM THE ENGINE / THE DODGE GARAGE — PERFORMANCE LIVES HERE / THE ONLY CAR THAT COMES WITH FRIENDS — STANDARD.*

Idioms and Cliché

The brochure headlines containing idiomatic and stereotyped phrases with the figurative meaning were divided into two subgroups. The first was comprised of expressions which preserved its original form; the second included modified idiomatic phrases. The meaning of the set expressions referred to competition, success, prime quality, and movement.

Competition

Examples of original expressions: *BRING OUT THE COMPETITION. / MAKE YOUR MARK / GO ALL OUT / STAY THE COURSE. / LET YOUR TECH TAKE CENTER STAGE / POWER PLAY / SUVs DON'T STAND A CHANCE / PEACE OF MIND IS KNOWING THE COAST IS CLEAR / SETTING THE STANDARD FOR SAFETY MEANS ALWAYS RAISING THE BAR. / SKY'S THE LIMIT*

Examples of modified expressions: *COUPE D'ÉTAT.* (Original: coup d'état) / *INNOVATION REDLINED.* (Original: redline) / *What good is a mold if you don't plan on breaking it?* (Original: break the mold)

Prime quality

Examples of original expressions: *PERFECT FOR LIFE'S TWISTS AND TURNS / FINE ART / When the right materials strike a perfect chord. / DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH / REFINEMENT IN THE RAW*

Examples of modified expressions: *Beauty is in the details.* (Original: The devil is in the details) / *CHASING LIGHTNESS* (Chasing rainbows) / *SOLAR FLAIR.* (Original: solar flare) / *JAWS, PREPARE TO DROP.* (Original: Jaw dropped) / *ROADS ALL LEADING IN ONE DIRECTION. PERFECTION.* (Original: All roads lead to Rome)

Movement

Examples of original expressions: *READY, STEADY, GO. / REACH CLOUD 9 / NO MESSING AROUND. / HIGH PERFORMANCE WHEN IT COUNTS: IN A FLASH. / Performance at its core / ONWARDS AND UPWARDS. / The ins and outs of efficient living.*

Examples of modified expressions: *FROM A LINE TO A BLUR. (Original: Blur the lines) / ALL-WHEEL. ALL-OUT. (Original: All in, all out) / HIT THE BYWAY. (Original: Hit the road) / READY, CHARGE, GO. (Original: Ready, steady, go) / TOURER DE FORCE (Original: Tour de force)*

Antithesis

As a figure of speech aimed at opposing two ideas, antithesis served in the brochure headlines for reaching a contrasting effect and emphasizing the qualities of the exterior and interior, the engine and gearbox efficiency, accessories, roads and the driving process, as well as personal experience and impressions.

Quantitative opposition

Examples: *LESS IMITATION. MORE INNOVATION. / Less emissions. More driving pleasure. / ENJOYING MORE, USING LESS / More with less. / MORE COMFORT, LESS COMPROMISE / VEHICLES THAT REQUIRE LITTLE AND GIVE A LOT. / ONE LIFE — MANY LIFESTYLES / Dream **big** even on **small** trips*

Exterior vs. interior

Examples: *Evolutionary **outside**, revolutionary **inside** / The **outdoors**. It's **inside** Subaru. / The **exterior** is for everyone else. The **inside** is just for you. / BRING THE INSIDE OUTSIDE. / NOT TOO PRETTY TO GET DIRTY. / LOOK COOL. STAY WARM. / YOU MAY BE TRAVELLING, BUT YOU'LL STILL FEEL COMPLETELY AT HOME*

Technology

Examples: *LEVELING MANUAL **SYSTEM**, AUTOMATIC / Free of **emissions**, full of excitement / INSPIRED BY NATURE. IMPLEMENTED IN THE **MAYBACH** / VISIBLE ELEGANCE AND HIDDEN **STRENGTHS** / Not just **accessories**. Genuine Toyota **Accessories**. / One day, one **charge** — all the stops / The challenges of tomorrow. Already our strongest **driving force** today.*

Road

Examples: *From city roads to no **roads**. / PERFECT FOR DRIVING IN THE REAL WORLD / The **road** may waver, but not your priorities. / SHORT SPRINT. LONG **RANGE**. / WHEREVER YOU'RE **GOING**,*

A MAYBACH SHOWS THAT YOU'VE ARRIVED / THE STAYCATION THAT TRAVELS / A BOLD VISION THAT EMBODIES BOTH THE CALM AND THE STORM.

Personal experience

Examples: *TOP DOWN. HEART RATE UP. / Indulge us in our efforts to indulge you. / Our focus is your focus. / LESS ACCENTS. MORE STATEMENTS. / On our radar, off your nerves. / Have control. Let loose. / IN ONE SECOND A PERSON CAN LESS TALK. MORE DRIVE / DUAL POWER SOURCES. A SINGULAR DRIVING EXPERIENCE.*

Comparison

In this category, the headlines with the comparative forms of adjectives were included, for example: *PILOT ASSIST. DESIGNED TO MAKE DRIVING SAFER AND EASIER / A CERTIFIED PRE-OWNED MINI HAS MORE TO GIVE. / SERVICE BY VOLVO. A SIMPLER WAY. / Make the indoors as great as the outdoors. / A HIGHER GRADE OF LUXURY. / A more personal network / More than capable / Larger / Stronger.*

Combinations with other devices created a deeper effect:

- the imperative: *Don't pass up a chance for greater peace of mind; Dream bigger / MAKE A SMARTER CONNECTION;*
- repetition: *More efficiency means more fun;*
- metaphor: *Tame wilder terrain;*
- epithet: *Sharper styling;*
- antithesis: *WELL BUILT IS BETTER THAN WELL SAID;*
- idiom: *ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER;*
- the interrogative: *WHICH ONE COSTS MORE TO MAINTAIN?*
- comparison: *AS BALANCED AS IT IS BEAUTIFUL;*
- storytelling: *WE'VE TAKEN IT FURTHER. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN*

Repetition

The use of repetition as a stylistic device emphasizes certain automobile parts and their qualities, producing the effect of catchiness. Repetition was intended to underline customer focus, functionality, high quality, and safety.

Customer focus

Examples: *Your Volkswagen your way. / ANY ROAD IS YOUR ROAD. / BMW ConnectedDrive. So connected, you're free. / Stay connected any time, anywhere. / EFFORTLESSLY NAVIGATE YOUR NAVIGATION SYSTEM*

Functionality

Examples: *SPORT TOURING: **BOLD ON BOLD** / FOOTWORK THAT WORKS / FOUR DOORS. FOUR SEATS. SHARE IN THE LUXURY OF ASTON MARTIN. / THE 4-DOOR 4. / SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY THAT DOESN'T FORGET TO SUSTAIN THE FUN. / Every part is the fun part. / A PLACE TO WORK AND A PLACE TO RELAX: THE REAR PASSENGER COMPARTMENT / MULTIFUNCTIONAL MEETS MULTITASKING*

High quality

Examples: *AFTER WE FINESSE THE DETAILS, WE FINESSE THE DETAILS. / Outstanding service — outstanding quality / FIRST-CLASS ADVICE TO MATCH THE FIRST-CLASS PERFORMANCE OF YOUR MAYBACH / The Amarak. 100 % pickup. 100 % premium*

Safety

Example: *THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON ON THE ROAD IS EVERY PERSON ON THE ROAD*

Parallelism

Parallel structures help relate one idea to another, thus highlighting relations between them, and simultaneously, point out the importance of both. Parallel structures can be based on homogeneous predicates or similar positions of actants at a deeper semantic level with some variations at the superficial syntactic level.

Parallel actants

Examples: *EFFORTLESS POSE, ULTIMATE CONTROL. / Elegantly sporty. Uniquely daring. / A heritage of innovation. A future of sustainable exhilaration. / DESIGNED TO PERFORM, CRAFTED TO IMPRESS*

Parallel prepositional structures

Examples: *IN TOUCH. IN COMMAND. / INSPIRED BY NATURE. PERFECTED BY CRAFTSMANSHIP / THE POWER OF LUXURY. THE ART OF ASTON MARTIN. / A JOY FOR PASSENGERS. A SENSATION FOR THE DRIVER.*

Homogeneous predicates

Examples: *Your thoughts are racing. Your senses are quivering. Take a deep breath / SUPERHEROES GET CAPES. THE ILX GETS A-SPEC / Love every moment. Trust every mile. / All the space you need. All the style you want. / PERFECTION YOU CAN FEEL. PERFECTION YOU CAN SEE / Getting there is important. Being there is everything.*

Homogeneous nominatives

Examples: *NO ORDINARY LOOKS. NO ORDINARY CAR. / ACCESSORIES. EVEN MORE V40, EVEN MORE YOU.*

Parcellation

Splitting headlines into two or more parts was referred to as parceling, when the word order was not changed, and detachment when certain words were isolated and placed after the main sentence. Parceling was graphically expressed with the dot, while detachment — with the dot, comma or dash. Parceling could be observed in homogeneous subjects, predicates, objects, and attributes. Detachment was mainly seen with isolated attributes.

Parceling

Examples: *POWER. BEAUTY. SOUL. / LUXURY. POWER. SUSTAINABILITY. / Style. Power. Comfort. A dream comes true. And goes into overdrive. / CONTACT VENCER. ENQUIRE. MEET. DRIVE / ENHANCE. PROTECT. PERSONALIZE. / JOY WANTS MORE MPH. MORE MPG. AND LESS CO2. BMW ACTIVE HYBRID. / SOPHISTICATED. LUXURIOUS. STYLISH. THE INTERIOR*

Detachment

Examples: *THE MOVES OF A CHAMPION, REFINED. / THE POWER OF ELECTRIC, REDEFINED. / SHAPING THE FUTURE — RESPONSIBLY. / UPHOLSTERY — SENSATEC / PEACE OF MIND, STANDARD / DYNAMIC LUXURY, PERFECTLY STAGED / The dynamic Swedish SUV experience. Evolved.*

Miscellany

The effect of emphasis was achieved via the use of emphatic syntactic structures with ‘*even*’, ‘*only*’, the auxiliary verb in statements, and the impersonal subject that places the accented object at the beginning of the sentence. Anaphoric positions were occupied by the name of a car model, the second-person pronouns focusing on customers, and the determiner ‘*every*’ for emphasizing comfortable driving. The inversive syntactic order was also used for emphasizing certain car qualities. Multiple linguistic devices acted in unison.

The headlines in the form of questions were mainly directed to deeper involve readers by imitating dialogic interaction of a conversation. The direct question followed by the reference words: “*Are we there yet?*” said no one. — implied the supreme silence of the engine that cannot be heard by anyone. At a deeper semantic level, it contains double negation in which the reference words exclude the possibility of the question to have been asked.

The examples of incorporation, framing, pun, and chiasmus underline such automobile qualities as beauty, efficiency, uniqueness, sportiness, simplicity, high speed, and innovation.

Emphasis

Examples: **THE ONE AND ONLY ESCALADE / EVEN THE GLOVEBOX HAS MORE SPACE.** / *It's been said that **only** the brave few get powerful works of bold ambition.* / **WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE COUNTS / Absolute power **does** corrupt your desire for any other vehicle. / A design that helps diminish an impact is **no accident.** / Speed **isn't all there** is to thrill.**

Anaphora

Examples: **JOY CAN BE COUNTED. JOY IS BMW / YOUR TIME. YOUR PLACE. YOUR WI-FI. / EVERY METRE IS A JOY. EVERY CORNER PURE PLEASURE**

Inversion

Examples: **With efficiency** comes great power. / **A shade** more extraordinary. / **ECONOMY IMPROVED**

Incorporation

Examples: **THREE CHOICES FOR ONE-OF-A-KIND JOURNEYS / YOUR FAMILY'S AT-THE-READY BUBBLE. / ON-OUR-WAY READY MAKES PROMISES KEPT. / AT-A-GLANCE**

Framing

Examples: **THREE WAYS TO CONNECT WITH THE 3. / Home** Away from **Home / ROUGHING IT SHOULDN'T FEEL ROUGH / THE TAILGATE TO END. ALL TAILGATES**

Chiasmus

Example: *Courage changes **the sports car of the future.** And the future of the **sports car.***

Pun

Examples: *Has a **track record of breaking** them. / It turns out, **science fiction** has **nothing on reality.***

Blends

Examples: **BEAUTILITY. / FASTERPIECE.**

13. Phonetic Means

Phonetic expressive means add to the attention-grabbing effect by repeating consonants, vowels or selecting words which have similar acoustic characteristics and able to produce rhyme.

Alliteration

Examples: *COOL AND COLLECTED* (/k/) / *A CAVERN FOR CARGO.* (/k/) / *FEEL-GOOD FUEL EFFICIENCY* (/f/) / *THE FUSING OF FORM AND FUNCTION* (/f/) / *FamCAM KEEPS YOU FACING FORWARD* (/f/) / *XTREME XCITEMENT. BMW X.* (/ks/) / *POISE, PRESENCE AND PERSONALITY.* (/p/) / *BEAUTY, BRAINS AND BRAWN.* (/b/) / *PLUG AND PLAY.* /p/) / *THE SCIENCE OF SAFETY* (/s/) / *BALANCING SILENCE AND SOUND* (/s/) / *DESIGN EQUALS DRIVING DYNAMICS.* (/d/) / *INGENIUM ENGINES* (dʒ) / *THREE THRILLING DRIVES FROM ONE THRILLING CAR* (/θ/)

Assonance

Examples: *Individual and intuitive* (/ɪ/) / *Individuality and inspiration* (/ɪ/) / *EFFORTLESSLY CONNECT TO EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE* (/e/) / *EXPERIENCE EXHILARATION EVERY DAY* (/ɪ/) / *PACK YOUR BAGS* (/æ/) / *UNCOVER THE UNEXPECTED* (/ʌ/) / *REDEFINING REFINEMENT* (/ɑɪ/) / *THE REAL DEAL.* (/i:/) / *Outfit your Outback.* (/ɑʊ/)

Rhyme

Examples: *RACE WITH GRACE.* / *ADD SUN TO THE FUN.* / *ACTUALLY, IT IS MY WAY OR THE HIGHWAY* / *Easy. Breezy.* / *Feel protected. Stay connected.* / *Tough Not Rough* / *LESS IMITATION. MORE INNOVATION.* / *TECH THAT PROTECTS*

Syntactic organization

Syntactically, 72% of the headlines had the nominative structure, with 73 headlines being short nominal sentences of 1–3 words. Other syntactic forms of the headlines, due to greater extension or variation in their morphological structure, had a higher attention value. The predicative structures had a better potential for narration and choice of the narrative mode (Fig. 2).

Predicative Sentences

Examples: *HYBRID DRIVERS STILL **NEED** SEATING AND STORAGE SPACE* / *The roadster **has come** full circle* / *Boundaries **are meant to be challenged.***

Elliptical Sentences

Ellipsis was often combined with personification, metaphors or other tropes with the omitted subject that was supposed to be a certain car model.

Examples: **SPEAKS FOR ITSELF IN 10 DIFFERENT GEARS.** / **CARRIES THE WEIGHT OF OUR WORDS.** / **KEEPS YOU MOVING ALONG**

The Imperative

As manifestations of indirect communication, imperative sentences implied the hidden intention of the seller to persuade the customer to follow behavior models prescribed in the communicative message.

Examples: **Amplify** your drive. / **Find** your accessories / **SEEK PERFECTION IN EVERY DETAIL.** / **TAKE THE WHEEL — AND TAKE CONTROL OF THE ROAD.**

The Attributive

The attributive headlines consisted of an adjective, sometimes emphasized with an adverb, two adjectives paired with a coordinate conjunction, triple adjectives separated by the dot or comma.

Examples: **UNIQUE** / **UNRIVALLED.** / **UNBREAKABLE** / **STRIKINGLY SEDUCTIVE**

Refined and practical. / **COMFORTABLE AND DYNAMIC** / *Assertive, yet graceful.*

Sporty, elegant and versatile / **INFORMED, IN CONTROL AND ALWAYS UP TO DATE**

The Interrogative

Examples: **WHICH F-PACE FITS YOUR LIFE?** / **WHAT SETS IT APART? EVERYTHING.** / **HOW DOES MUSIC MAKE YOU FEEL?**

The Gerundial

Driving Assistance package new Aussie icon / *Inspiring all round.* / *Creating a Examples*

The wide range of syntactic constructions creates the effect of linguistic diversity and avoidance of monotony with the aim of both informing and entertaining potential customers.

Communicative techniques

from the marketing point of view, customer focus is fundamental to any advertisement. Linguistically, it was expressed through the use of the second-person pronouns in the headlines. Arguably, placing the focus on the customer is more important than the identity of the organization. This principle was clearly seen in the quantitative data: the number of the headlines containing the first-person

pronouns ‘we’ and ‘our’ representing the organization (Storytelling) was only one-third of the headlines containing the second-person pronoun ‘you’ (Customization) (Fig. 2).

Customization

Examples: *JUST **YOUR** STYLE / INTUITIVE SAFETY BY VOLVO CARS. FOR **YOU**, AND FOR THOSE AROUND **YOU**. / TAILORED TO **YOU** / SMART ENOUGH TO BE WHATEVER **YOU** NEED IT TO BE / **YOUR** NEXT STEP / MORE POWER TO **YOU**.*

Storytelling

Examples: *How We Managed Our Battery Cobalt Supply Chain in 2020 / Our Response to COVID-19 / Our Roadmap / We’ve appropriated countless hours to developing character. / We don’t see safety as an option, or a luxury.*

Brochure Navigation

A number of brochures contained a kind of ‘navigation’: certain elements were repeated in the headlines throughout the entire edition, sometimes along with particular graphics, and produced the impression of a holistic view of the brochures.

Examples: *BE SEEN: SWEEPING OLED DISPLAY / BE HEARD: AKG® AUDIO SYSTEM / BE MOVED: AVAILABLE SUPER CRUISE™*

BEAUTY IS IN THE DETAILS. / BEAUTY IS EVERYWHERE / BEAUTY FOR EVERYONE / OPEN AIR BEAUTY

CHOOSE YOUR ENGINE / CHOOSE YOUR MODEL / CHOOSE YOUR OPTIONS / CHOOSE YOUR COLOR / CHOOSE YOUR WHEELS / CHOOSE YOUR INTERIOR / CHOOSE YOUR JAGUAR

Informative Facts

Factual information was placed with the aim of underlining human possibilities and their driving experience.

Examples: *WHEN SOMEONE SEES SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL, THEIR PUPILS DILATE BY UP TO 20%. / OVER A LIFETIME, THE AVERAGE PERSON WILL TAKE DETOURS OF NEARLY 15,000 MILES. / A person can focus on something for around 20 minutes before losing concentration.*

Issues

Mentioning modern problems attracts readers’ attention to relevant social issues and those solutions that manufacturers suggest in their automobiles due to certain technological advancements.

Examples: ***Human Rights / Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery and Child Labor / Underrepresented Communities in the U.S. / Waste Generated Per Vehicle Manufactured***

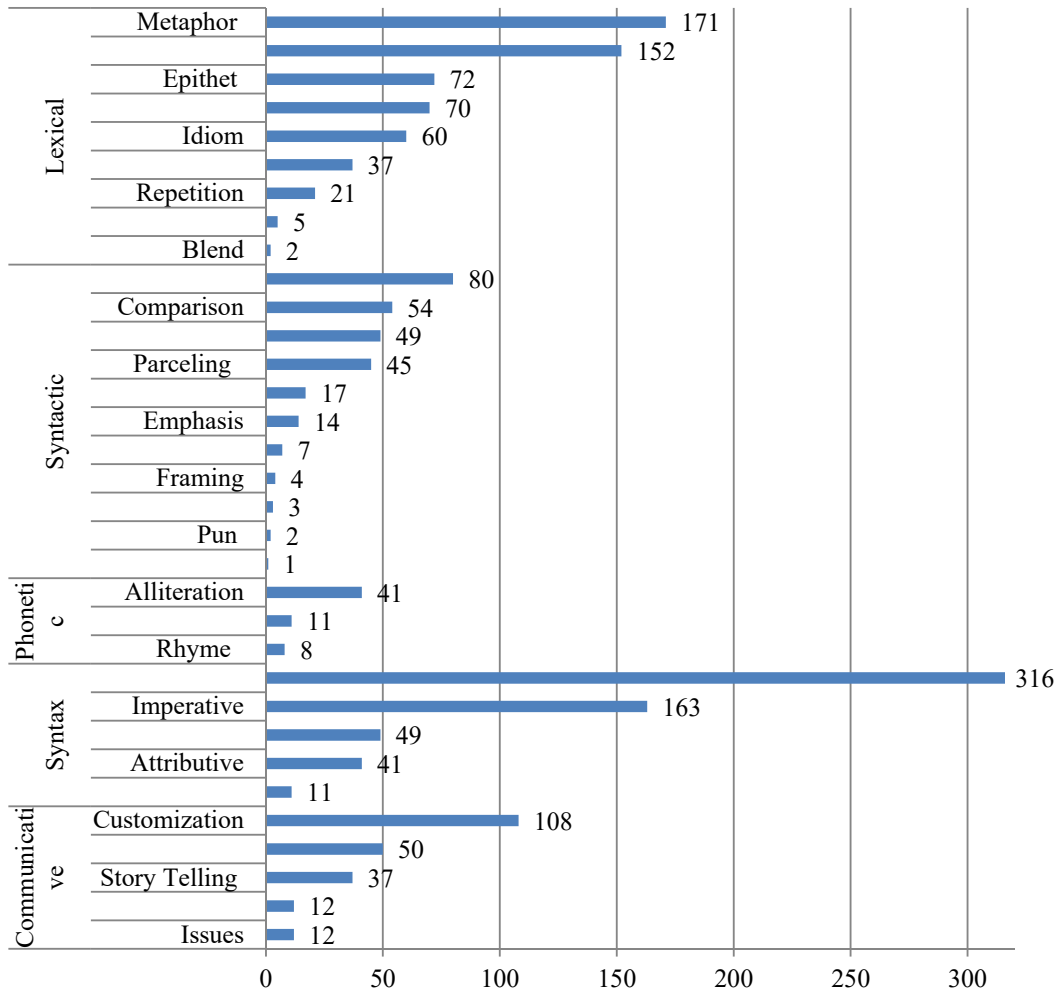


Fig. 2. Linguocommunicative means of expressiveness in promotional brochure headlines
 Source: Compiled by the author as a result of the study

The thematic scope in automobile brochures included the exterior and interior qualities that characterize the powerful engine, upholstery, a wide choice of materials and colours, wheels, road adhesion, elegant design of the car body, craftsmanship of manufacture that distinguishes these automobile models from all other models and underlines their uniqueness. Actually, the high quality of the salon and innovative engine are represented through the anthropocentric view, expressed in terms of personal impressions such as perfection, luxury, exclusivity, exhilaration, the spirit of adventure, and other positive emotions (Fig. 3).

The automobile market is highly branded which makes it difficult to develop and position each car model in its niche. Personal perception becomes the key aspect of branding. In a competitive climate, brand is more important than product. Brand positioning is about perception management rather than practical value. For this reason, the top priority in brochure headlines belongs

to comfort and pleasure as major characteristics of car models (see Fig. 3). The headlines are of crucial importance for brochures because potential customers rarely read the entire text. The headlines bear the entire charge of informing and persuading them to buy the products. The headlines were emotionally charged and focused on creating a strong belief that this particular car model was specially designed and customized for them. Despite the presence of detailed descriptions of technical features at the end of each brochure, the headlines containing emotional linguistic means of expressiveness comprised the backbone of each release. Irrational argumentation was aimed at developing unconscious preferences.

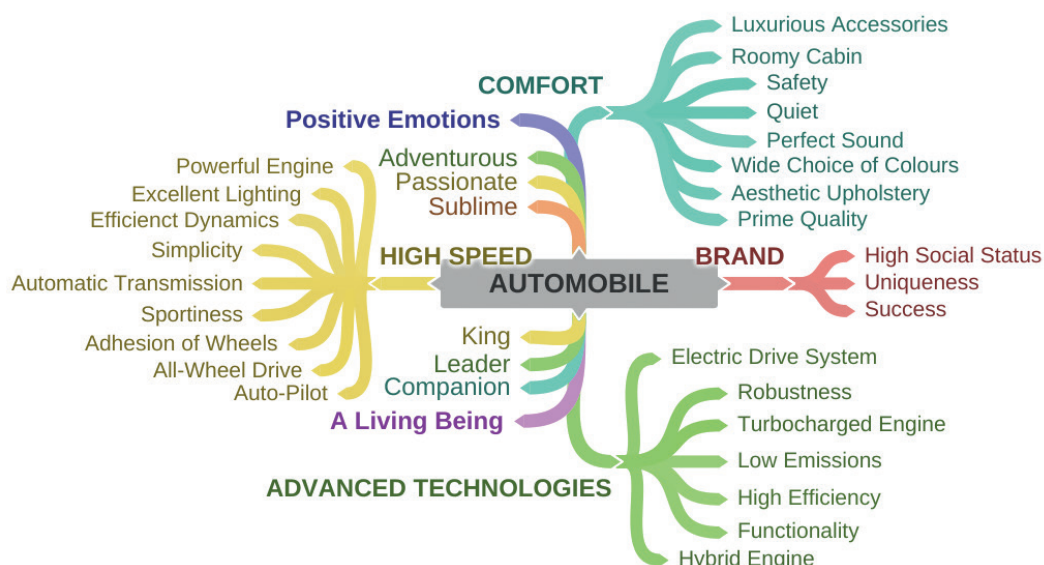


Fig. 3. A cognitive map of promotional brochure headlines /
Source: Compiled by the author as a result of the study

Conclusion

the majority of the headlines (82 %) in the promotional brochures devoted to car models had certain linguistic and communicative features that made them distinct, either stylistically or structurally. Standard brochure headlines tended to be laconic (1–4 words), whereas creative titles were more extended (up to 23 words). The headlines were mainly nominative (72 %). Those with the predicative structure had the narrative potential (16 %); numerically, they were followed by the imperative structures which model customer behavior (8 %). Among stylistic devices of expressiveness, the hyperbole and metaphor constituted the majority,

as the law of hyperbolisation establishes rules in the virtual world, in which objects have to comply with emotions and irrational expectations. Generally, tropes (592) exceeded syntactic figures of speech (274) twofold. However, in conjunction with sentence-patterned headlines, syntactic means outnumbered the tropes by 32 %. The phonetic means comprised a small category (60). The communicative techniques fulfilled the function of persuasion due to the projection of personal perception of car parts and their functional characteristics (108), text navigation elements that created an overall view of the entire brochure (50), narration on behalf of the manufacturers (12), informative facts (12) and social issues (12) that concentrate readers' attention on driving-related aspects. To conclude, the analysis shows a wide range of linguistic and communicative means for creating the emotional commitment to each particular car model. In essence, each headline was a combination of several expressive means immersed in the contextual environment of the promotional discourse.

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