

Stylistic Analysis of Hypnotic Language in Selected KFC-Written Advertisements

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ABSTRACT:

A very successful tactic for influencing customer behaviour is hypnotic language, which is founded on subliminal influence and indirect suggestion. This study aims to examine the hypnotic language strategies used in KFC written advertisements and explore how well hypnotic language strategies work to change consumers' perceptions about the KFC brand. To achieve the objective of the study, Milton Erickson's (1979) hypnosis model has been adopted. Erickson's approach is an indirect form of hypnosis that uses linguistic patterns to communicate with the unconscious mind and influence cognition and behavior. The study uses Erickson's linguistic patterns, such as presuppositions, embedded commands, analogical marking, metaphors, and tag questions, to examine the verbal strategies used in KFC advertisements. The study highlights the modality-specific application of hypnotic language techniques in advertising. The findings suggest a differential application of these strategies, with analogical marking often emphasizing key words, embedded commands strategically prompting actions, presuppositions shaping consumer perception, and metaphors linking product benefits with consumer aspirations. Tag questions are used implicitly to be understood through context, while storytelling is primarily used in KFC's television advertisements.

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Introduction

The stylistic analysis of hypnotic language in certain KFC print advertisements presents a fascinating examination of how patterns of language may influence shopper activity through subtle cognitive engagement. Hypnotic language, says Burton (2007), is when sentences are phrased so that they place one into a state of trance—a concentrated attention or focus upon some things to the relative neglect of others—so that one's way of perceiving and thinking is

altered for them. Burton points out that the simplest application of hypnotic language is to assist clients in breaking down and reconstructing their mental structures, bringing about therapeutic change through metaphorical redefinition of experience or taking on new intellectual resources (Burton, 2007).

Hypnotic language in advertising is employed as a convincing tool that reaches the subconscious mind, evoking strong emotions of desire, ease, or vanity to create consumer responses. This increases the persuasiveness of marketing messages through leading the thoughts and emotions of the audience, often unbeknownst to them, thereby increasing brand interest and consumer interaction (Institute of Clinical Hypnosis, 2023). Empirical research also supports the effectiveness of hypnotic-suggestive communication in advertising as advertisements containing high levels of hypnotic language are rated more effective and persuasive than those containing low levels of hypnotic language (BSCAH, 2007). Researches that dealt with this language were studied from another side, such as the study that looks at six language functions, which were identified as referential, emotional, conative, phatic, metalingual, and poetic. According to Jakobson's and Quirk and Greenbaum's theories, the study's examination of KFC video advertisements revealed the most common referential function for product information (Astari, 2023), while the general framework and persuasive techniques of advertising have been extensively researched, the stylistic elements of hypnotic language have received less attention. The current study aims to examine the hypnotic language strategies used in KFC written ads and explore how well hypnotic language strategies work to change consumers' perceptions about the KFC brand.

Applying stylistic analysis to KFC's print advertisements is able to reveal how hypnotic linguistic style is utilized strategically to construct engaging stories appealing to consumers' desires and patterns of thought. Such an approach not only contributes to our understanding of language style as a persuasion device in advertising but also harmonizes with broader research into cognitive and affective processes underlying consumer influence.

Research Questions

The study will address the following research questions:

1. Which hypnotic language strategies are used in KFC written advertisements?
2. How do the hypnotic language strategies used by KFC in their written advertisements change customers' perceptions?

Previous Studies

This study will clarify a few earlier studies that examined hypnotic language and other analyses of advertisements using linguistic descriptions. Li (2009) focusses on language elements such as graphological, lexical, syntactic, grammatical, and semantic markers in his thorough stylistic study of the Atkins Chocolate Chip Granola Bar magazine ad. By combining textual and contextual data, the study shows how persuasive adjectives, vivid images, and coherent devices work together to influence and draw in customers. The advertisement's intentional use of language and layout to improve consumer engagement and communication efficacy is highlighted by this comprehensive approach. By analysing its lexical, syntactic, and rhetorical characteristics, Zhou (2018) offers a stylistic study of English advertising language, emphasising how it deviates from formal English through the use of clear, succinct, and convincing terminology and sentence patterns. The study highlights the use of imperative and interrogative phrases as well as colourful rhetorical elements, all of which contribute to the dramatic and memorable quality of commercials. In addition to drawing in customers, this

unique approach turns advertising language into a well-liked literary genre. In his analysis of the use of neurolinguistic programming (NLP) and hypnotic language patterns (HLP) in sales, McIvor (2021) emphasises the need to build rapport with customers using strategies like matching and mirroring in order to increase their receptivity. Using words and phrases that arouse positive emotions, crafting a story that meets the demands of the consumer, and demonstrating the importance of the product for them are all part of NLP tactics. By giving the appearance of choice, double binds encourage consumer collaboration by directing them towards a desired result and giving them a sense of control. By combining societal discourses on gender equality, the moral motivations of new professionals, and consumer pressures, Middleton (2021) examines how advertising institutions have played a crucial role in advancing gender-progressive market logics, upending conventional stereotypical portrayals. According to the report, prominent and successful ads such as 'This Girl Can' have legitimised and sparked a change in advertising practices towards gender depictions that are inclusive and equal. Advertising's dynamic reaction to larger cultural and market system shifts is reflected in its institutional history, which positions it as a market innovator and society influencer. Vartanova (2023) investigates the application of Ericksonian hypnosis speech patterns in advertising texts, pointing out how well they work to grab consumers' attention and evoke strong feelings. By gaining access to the unconscious mind of the customer, these strategies improve the advertising message's memorability and have an impact on consumer behaviour. The study reveals particular strategies, such as oversimplified ideas, incorrect decisions, and presumptions, all of which are meant to persuade and effectively impact potential customers. According to Lawson (2024), the Milton Model is a collection of 15 hypnotic language patterns that were inspired by Milton Erickson's therapeutic methods and were intended to promote quick trance induction by using presuppositions, embedded directives, and linguistic ambiguity. These patterns increase suggestibility and receptivity in communication by deliberately avoiding conscious opposition by appealing to the unconscious mind. The technique works by subtly altering language to create different cognitive states that encourage changes in behaviour and attitude. Tajbakash (2024) uses a journalistic method to examine how stylistic language in advertising uses visual and linguistic devices, including emotive phrases, figurative language, and graphological aberrations, to effectively draw in customers, arouse their emotions, and convince them. The study emphasises how stylistic elements strategically affect customer attitudes and buying intentions in addition to improving message clarity and attractiveness. According to this approach, stylistic language is a crucial instrument for creating compelling commercial discourse.

Language and Persuasion

Persuasion and language in advertising operate by a complex interaction between linguistic and rhetorical means designed to influence consumer attitudes and action. Persuasive advertising language employs diverse techniques such as repetition, appeal to emotions, rhetorical questions, exaggeration, use of inclusive language, and figures of figurative language such as metaphors and similes to elicit attention and emotional responses (Koonnala & Chaiwong, 2023). The techniques enhance memorability and facilitate identification with the brand or product. Stylistically, advertisers use lexical and syntactic means—adjectives, imperatives, questions, colloquialisms, and syntactic parallelism—to achieve cohesion and coherence, which facilitate message processing and persuasion (Antony, 2014). The pragmatically used speech acts, such as promises and commands, also manipulate consumer behaviour by appealing to desires and expectations. Theoretically, persuasion in advertising is viewed as a linguistically modelled manipulation based on psychological and sociolinguistic knowledge. language style categorization and Shash (2012) strategy of persuasion identify

how hyperbole, rationalization, conformity, and hypnotic strategies are employed to exaggerate product virtues and subtly influence buyer decision-making (Muninggar, 2019). This complex model highlights that ad language is both creative and manipulative, attempting to achieve maximum effects of persuasion. In short, advertising language is a powerful weapon of persuasion, cleverly constructed through an array of linguistic devices and psychological tactics in order to exert its influence on consumer attitudes and behavior.

Hypnotic Language and Advertising

The subtle subversion of the subconscious mind through hypnotic techniques is one sophisticated use of language in advertising. Hypnotic language, which has its roots in psychology, uses sensory-rich descriptions, presuppositions, and indirect recommendations to appeal to emotions and needs without requiring critical thought (Erickson & Rossi, 1979). Without explicitly telling people to buy, this type of language in advertising helps customers connect the product with meeting their wants or desires. For example, KFC's commercials appeal to the senses and emotions by using sensory language like "crispy" and "juicy" to conjure up a clear mental image of their food. KFC's clever use of language in their advertisements is a prime example of how hypnotic and stylistic components combine to affect customer behaviour. Through the use of hypnotic language strategies like embedded instructions or Ericksonian pacing-and-leading, KFC gently encourages customers to want its goods while linking them to favourable feelings. These components highlight how language is used in advertising as a potent psychological instrument in addition to a communication tool. Erickson (1979) hypnotic language, rooted in psychological theories of suggestion and subconscious influence, is a powerful tool in persuasive communication, particularly in advertising, where it elicits feelings, circumvents critical thinking, and directs people towards desired outcomes. Moine (2002) hypnotic language in advertising is a nuanced and emotionally compelling marketing technique that activates the consumer's subconscious, generating mental images and arousing sensory sensations, aligning with contemporary marketing's aim to inspire behavior.

Milton H. Erickson's Hypnotic Language Model

Vitale (2007) states that Shakespeare, along with other writers, utilized hypnotic writing techniques to persuade customers. This technique, known as the Hypnotic Brain, was a powerful tool in storytelling, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the story and feel hypnotic. Hypnosis, a practice originating from ancient Hindus, Greeks, and Romans, has roots in mesmerism and magnetic power. During World War I, Germans discovered hypnosis' potential for treating shell-shock victims, leading to the development of Autogenic Training. Milton Erickson significantly impacted hypnosis after World War II, stating that it is a spontaneous state of mind that can be influenced through written words. Today, hypnosis is used for stress management, anxiety, anaesthesia, pain management, and managing various medical and psychological issues. (EdD, 2007) Milton Erickson's hypnotic language is a cognitive approach that involves structuring sentences to induce a trance state, allowing clients to examine a specific focus and adjust its meaning. It can be divided into three forms: restructuring the cognitive frame, metaphorical communication with the unconscious mind, and introducing new resources. Grinder and Bandler's Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) formalized Erickson's techniques into the Milton Model, an antithesis to the precision-driven Meta Model. The Milton Model employs open-ended vagueness, tag questions, and narrative to involve unconscious pattern recognition and transderivational search in therapy change (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). "You might begin to feel more relaxed now..." Examples embed suggestions in seemingly neutral statements and make use of Erickson's indirect influence

principle. Erickson's confusion method, which distracts the conscious mind with paradoxical statements or non-sequiturs, demonstrates his belief in the power of the unconscious mind to restructure (Rossi & Erickson, 1979; Grinder & Bandler, 1975). Then, apply these strategies to broader NLP applications, highlighting their utilisation in advertising and persuasion through unconscious engagement. Overall, Erickson's hypnotising language, formalized by Grinder, Bandler, and later researchers like Burton, is a paradigm shift in permissive communication that focuses on finesse, flexibility, and client-led interaction rather than overt suggestion.

Features of Advertising Hypnotic Language

Embedded Commands

To implant a particular idea in the client's subconscious and reduce the likelihood of resistance, an embedded command is a directive concealed within a longer sentence, often identified by tonal or rhythmic shifts. The construction entails taking a straightforward statement and embedding the command within it (Brooks, 2025). These are subliminal cues concealed inside a sentence. For instance, an ad that says, "Take a break!" indirectly encourages people to crave (Lawson, 2024). Embedded directives, such as "enjoy", "feel satisfied", "try it now", and "taste the difference", are used in hypothetical advertisements for KFC to sway the reader's behaviour or emotions discreetly.

Ambiguity

Use sentences that may be interpreted differently to activate the unconscious mind. Ambiguous wording engages the subconscious and permits several interpretations (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023). KFC's example, playing on the conventional phrase "Think Inside the Bucket," suggests a light-hearted variation.

Indirect Suggestion

Ericksonian hypnosis uses permissive language to suggest actions or moods, allowing clients to understand recommendations in a naturalistic, non-aggressive manner. It uses indirect cues to give the subconscious mind greater freedom to understand and react. KFC's "Believe in Chicken" campaign quietly implies the quality of their chicken via humour and brand confidence. In an attempt to imply its superiority (Vartanova, 2023), and (Sofiyah, 2019).

Presupposition

The reader must accept sentences that include presuppositions for the assertion to make sense. assertions that make particular assumptions about reality. presuppositions to help interpret descriptions, assuming that "everyone likes it," KFC's advertisement highlights its well-known fried chicken. To improve the dinner experience, the advertisement also recommends adding Golden Fries, focusing on making a decision rather than doubting its worth. This example employs presuppositions to affect customer perception and decision-making by including presumptions in their marketing (Vartanova, 2023) & (Brooks, 2025).

Metaphors, Analogies and story telling

Using metaphors to link abstract concepts with familiar images, Erickson enabled his clients to participate subconsciously and deduce their interpretations. These analogies and metaphors are effective hypnotic linguistic strategies that let marketers conjure up vivid images that subconsciously appeal to consumers. Stories in advertisements, such as family gatherings over meals, help explain the advantages of the product in a relevant way, encouraging awareness

and transformation. KFC's "Believe in Chicken" campaign invokes spiritual ties by using chicken as a metaphor for a celestial experience. Using phrases like "a warm hug in every bite", McDonald's appeals to feelings of warmth and pleasure. The cult-like visual highlights dedication to their chicken by drawing comparisons between the movement of followers and the allegiance of KFC customers. Their advertisements make their products approachable by equating the joy of consuming their meals with universal joy. (Singh, 2024) and (Vartanova, 2023). It is worth noting that storytelling is used in video ads more than in written ads.

Truisms & Illusion Choices

Erikson's "truism technique" in written advertising can be explained by theories of social influence and persuasion, as opposed to phases of psychological development. This strategy involves portraying widely held beliefs as true or obvious to increase the likelihood of persuasion and foster consensus while lowering audience resistance, so it is a form of social persuasion known as the truism. approach occurs when an advertisement uses widely held beliefs or ideals to subtly elicit agreement from the audience. The commercial's use of a truism at the outset fosters common ground and makes the audience more receptive to more convincing messaging. People prefer their beliefs and behaviours to align, so this strategy uses cognitive consistency principles to reduce psychological resistance to the advertisement's message.

KFC employs truism, a potent marketing tactic, to establish a connection and trust with its patrons. McDonald's slogans like "I'm Lovin' It" and "You Deserve a Break Today" appeal to the universal need for variety and value, while KFC's "Believe in Chicken" campaign highlights the quality of their meals using universal truths. These maxims help establish a relationship with consumers, which reduces resistance and enhances persuasion, ultimately encouraging engagement and brand loyalty (Dolinski, 2015) and (Vartanova, 2023).

Pacing and Leading

KFC's marketing strategy utilised in advertising is pacing and leading. While leading directs the reader towards a desired outcome or action, pacing acknowledges the reader's present situation or experiences. While leading presents the product as a solution, pace in advertising reflects the attitudes of typical consumers. Its strategies assist readers in navigating their present ideas and experiences. KFC uses slogans and emotional connections to pacify its audience's love for delicious food. KFC's "Finger Lickin' Good" campaign uses universal appeal and truisms. KFC brand uses relatable experiences and emotional connections to guide consumer behaviour, making it appealing to both audiences and promoting a shared experience during holidays. It aims to make their products worth the effort (Onar, 2023) and {Arun, 2024 #156}.

Over-Generalization

Erickson's hypnotic language model employs "over-generalizations" in ads to establish a personalised connection with the viewer. This entails using general, ambiguous sentences that speak to everyone, encouraging readers to fill in the blanks with their feelings and experiences. Avoiding overt persuasion or direct demands engages the reader's unconscious mind and imagination while increasing the message's impact and memorability (Bandler, 1975) and (Vartanova, 2023).

Analogical Marking

Using formatting such as bold or italic text to highlight particular words or phrases inside a sentence is known as an analogical hypnotic language pattern. It entails recognising the medium—such as hand or eye gestures—that is used to convey a command to subconsciously draw attention to the listener's reaction. KFC's tagline "Finger lickin' good" uses sensory language to conjure up a pleasant eating experience. Their "Food for the night owls" advertisement emphasises late-night availability, appealing to the subconscious demands of people who stay up late for business or play. Ericksonian tactics are used in both situations to instil concepts that customers may relate to emotionally and subconsciously. Both instances successfully convey the brand's dedication to excellence and client happiness (ibid).

Sensory Language

Advertising uses sensory language to appeal to the audience's visual, aural, and kinaesthetic senses to activate their unconscious mind. This technique makes the commercial more memorable and convincing by generating strong mental images, stirring feelings, and encouraging a closer bond with the message. To induce a trance-like state without conscious resistance, Ericksonian hypnosis places a strong emphasis on using vivid sensory details. KFC's "Finger-lickin' good" is an example of sensory language in advertising. According to Ericksonian principles of indirect suggestion, these brands boost desire and buy intent by simulating the consumption of their items in the mind (Bandler, 1975) and (James, 2019).

Double Bind Language

Double binding is a sales approach when two or more alternatives result in the same end. Enquiring about the client's preferences, it recommends employing two options for controlling procrastination, identifying desired behavioural changes, and initiating action. By offering two equally tempting options, the Double Bind Language Pattern gives the impression of choice, which strengthens the argument, by giving their customers the impression that they have a choice and may select from a variety of their offerings, KFC employs choice to influence its audience to take desired behaviours. The KFC's "Would you like to enjoy our crispy chicken bucket with friends or savour it all by yourself tonight?" (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023).

Tag Question

Salespeople frequently employ tag questions, which are linguistic patterns that reduce resistance. They make proposals more palatable by starting with a declarative statement and ending with a mini-question. These statements affirm that the person is capable of accomplishing particular objectives and promoting agreement. They foster a feeling of comfort and consensus, increasing the proposal's acceptability, KFC employs tag questions to elicit audience agreement and reaffirm the quality of their products. "Nothing beats the taste of our crispy chicken, does it?" A positive affirmation is used by McDonald's to support their slogan, which is "I'm lovin' it." Tag questions are used in both instances to help customers develop an emotional bond and accept the product (Onar, 2023), and (Brooks, 2025).

Tag queries are used more often in spoken language, like videos, than in written advertisements. This is because tag questions encourage agreement and interactively verify information and are a natural fit for conversational discourse. Tag questions, which are employed mainly to engage listeners in dialogue rather than text readers, are less common in written language and are typically more formal. Therefore, tag questions are used more often in spoken promotional content or video advertisements than in static textual advertisements (English, 2025).

Conversational Postulate

Questions that suggest action without explicitly requesting it are known as conversational postulates, the listener responds "yes" to these disguised commands that ask for actions. The purpose of these instructions is to promote self-awareness, relaxation, behavioural reactions, and decision-making. In addition to acknowledging the advantages of both options, they advise visualising a peaceful, calm setting where problems have been resolved. As a type of Double Bind with an implied choice, a conversational postulate is constructed by posing a question that, when presented as a choice or opportunity, inevitably leads the listener to the desired action, KFC employs sensory imagery, ambiguity, and truism to sway customer behaviour. KFC's "Finger Lickin' Good" ad uses a truism to appeal to the universal experience of savouring good food. KFC companies explain the enhanced Quarter Pounder through sensory immersion, which elicits feelings and helps customers picture their own experience. These strategies are used by both businesses to sway customer behaviour, (Vartanova, 2023), (Arun, 2024) and (Lawson, 2024).

In the highly competitive food and beverage sector, companies commonly use advanced language techniques to draw in customers and advertise their products. KFC distinguishes itself by employing hypnotic language strategies based on Milton H. Erickson's paradigm, which include metaphors, hidden directives, indirect recommendations, and sensory language to elicit emotional reactions and influence customer behaviour. Examples of how KFC uses these strategies in its written ads are provided below.

Methodology

- Model of Analysis

Milton H. Erickson's model of hypnotic language serves as the theoretical foundation for this study, which uses a qualitative research approach to examine the stylistic elements of hypnotic language in KFC-written advertising. The research aims to investigate how KFC's written advertisements' linguistic components conform to hypnotic principles in order to affect consumer behaviour and strengthen brand loyalty. Data collection, stylistic analysis, and interpretation using Erickson's model are the three main stages of the procedure. Milton H. Erickson's approach to hypnotic language serves as a prism through which the stylistic analysis is carried out. Indirect recommendations, implicit instructions, sensory-rich language, and metaphorical constructions are some of Erickson's tenets (Erickson & Rossi, 1979). These factors provide a framework for examining the hypnotic strategies used by KFC in its written ads.

- Data Collection

Source Selection

The written advertisements created by KFC, such as print ads, internet marketing campaigns, and promotional slogans, are the subject of the research. To guarantee authenticity and applicability, these resources were chosen from KFC's official websites, social media accounts, and digital marketing archives.

- Material

Twenty typical written ads are chosen using a purposive sampling technique. Materials that prominently use linguistic components, such as calls-to-action, descriptive product language,

and slogans, are the focus of the inclusion criterion. In order to highlight differences in style elements and cultural adaptations, advertisements from a variety of geographical areas are included.

- Reasons for the Data Source


A rich framework for examining the relationship between language and persuasion is offered by written ads. KFC's materials are perfect for investigating the use of hypnotic language strategies in advertising because of its massive marketing efforts and consistent branding.

Framework for Analysis

Analytical Steps



- Data Analysis

A descriptive qualitative content analysis was adopted in this research to examine qualitatively how KFC commercials use particular language patterns and visual techniques to affect customer perception and behaviour by applying Ericson's concept of hypnotic language to the analysis of these commercials. An analysis of the given photos may be found below.

No.	KFC's Images	Description	Ericson's Techniques
1		<p>A fundamental Ericksonian hypnotic language theory, "BUCKET ON THE GO" makes use of limited referential index and ambiguity. A "bucket" might refer to a meal, a container, or a symbol of ease or plenty. Without tying the listener to a particular situation, the word "on the go" conveys mobility, speed, or flexibility, enabling people to project their wants or aspirations onto it (Grinder, 1977).</p> <p>Erickson's flexible, indirect method is used in the slogan "BUCKET ON THE GO" to gently guide the audience to see themselves enjoying the benefits of the product (Work Smart Hypnosis, 2024). It implies that the product is ready and portable and will fit well into a busy life cited in www.hypnotherapy-directory.org.uk. https://www.hypnotherapy-directory.org.uk/approach/ericksonian.html.</p> <p>The audience's bustling lifestyle and demand for ease are reflected in the usage of the word "bucket" to pace their reality (Bandler, 1975) & (Work Smart Hypnosis, 2024). A solution that fits the client's lifestyle is then presented using Erickson's technique of matching the</p>	<p>Ambiguity Presupposition & Indirect Suggestion Pacing and Leading Metaphoric and sensory Language</p>

		<p>client's current condition and gently pointing them in the direction of new opportunities (Bandler, 1975). Erickson activated the unconscious mind by using metaphors and experiential predicates, such as "bucket" to represent plenty and "on the go" to represent modern mobility and efficiency. This allowed the unconscious to associate the product with positive experiences and solutions (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023).</p>	
2		<p>According to Erickson's hypnotic principle, metaphorical language allows the unconscious to interact more freely with indicated meaning by avoiding the conscious mind (Vartanova, 2023), and (Singh,2024). The term "Dynamite Burger" evokes excitement and attracts by metaphorising extreme enjoyment and explosive flavour. The power of metaphorical language is demonstrated by the fact that more emotionally and sensory-laden words are more likely to get ingrained in the unconscious mind (Lawson, 2024), and (Brooks, 2025).</p>	<p>Metaphor and Embedded commands</p>
3		<p>KFC is the Love You Can Always Count on" is a hypnotic recommendation. Presupposition: Ignoring opposition and encoding unconscious activity, it assumes the reader is cheering (Vartanova, 2023), and (Brooks, 2025). Embedded command: Transforms a product into an emotional constant by redefining the brand as a trustworthy emotional anchor (ibid), and (Lawson, 2024). This technique, which links safety and trust to a stimulus, is comparable to anchoring in Ericksonian hypnosis (Erickson, 1979). The bucket of chicken symbolizes care, intimacy, and reciprocity, reinforcing attachment behavior. The heart shapes, rose, and romantic lighting frame the product within the schema of love and devotion, appealing to deep emotional templates. KFC is metaphorically framed as a romantic partner or</p>	<p>Presupposition and Embedded Command sensory language, and Metaphor</p>


		<p>emotional caregiver to foster brand intimacy (Bandler, 1975), and (James,2019).</p> <p>The ad, featuring red hues, soft lighting, and warm contrast, evokes a sense of comfort and warmth, highlighting the tactile imagery of hands reaching for chicken, deepening emotional associations with love and reliability (Singh,2024), and (Vartanova, 2023).</p>	
4		<p>The KFC "Think Inside the Bucket" ad features a classic bucket, contrasting colors, and a confident pose to reinforce brand identity.</p> <p>The phrase "Think Inside the Bucket" suggests a fun spin on a conventional proverb (Bandler, 1975) and (James,2019).</p> <p>The ad promotes a comprehensive meal experience with diverse options, reinforcing brand loyalty and nostalgia. It uses the key concepts of Erickson's model of vivid imagery, playful language, cultural resonance, and indirection (Brooks, 2025) and (Lawson, 2024).</p>	Sensory Language Embedded Suggestions
5		<p>The phrase "think outside" invites the audience to use their resources and imagination to absorb fresh viewpoints or solutions. Lack of specificity, according to Erickson's model, makes the idea less likely to cause opposition and more tolerant (Vartanova, 2023) and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>It is used to highlight certain words or phrases in sentences. It involves choosing the appropriate medium to subtly draw attention to the listener's response to deliver an instruction (Work Smart Hypnosis,2024).</p>	Indirect Suggestion Analogical Marking

<p>6</p>		<p>Instead of telling the audience to go to KFC, the phrase asks them to remember someone. This less forceful prompt allows the unconscious mind to function without resistance and aligns with Erickson's preference for indirect suggestion (ibid) & (Work Smart Hypnosis,2023)</p> <p>A characteristic of Ericksonian language is its purposeful ambiguity, which enables the user to fill in the blank with a person from their own life. This promotes personalization, which increases the instruction's effectiveness and significance (ibid).</p> <p>The Ericksonian tactic "mention a person" functions as an implicit command that subtly directs the listener's behaviour without resorting to overt coercion (ibid) & (Bandler, 2019).</p>	<p>Indirect suggestions and sensory Language</p> <p>Ambiguity & Open loops</p> <p>Embedded Commands and Pacing and Leading</p>
<p>7</p>		<p>Erickson, (1979) works on indirect phrasing and the use of the word "Daddy" in advertisements can be seen as a powerful tool in evoking curiosity and motivation. The headline "Take on the DADDY BURGER" presents the action as a daring endeavor, evoking curiosity and motivation. The term "Daddy" carries connotations of authority, comfort, and paternal care, creating a subtle double bind for the consumer (Vartanova, 2023) and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>(Grinder, 1977) advertisement employs imperative language and descriptive culinary items to build connection and acceptance with the audience. The advertisement builds acceptance and rapport by listing elements rhythmically. Briefly, declarative words simulate a hypnotic "list induction" effect by quietly embedding instructions (Brooks, 2025) and (Lawson, 2024).</p> <p>Both Kreitler & Kreitler and Erickson & Rossi have included metaphors in their work, such as the advertisement's warm colour scheme and the visual metaphor of a tall burger. Both metaphors arouse inner moods, producing a complex sensation of fascination and need. The</p>	<p>Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Embedded Commands</p> <p>Sensory Suggestions and</p> <p>Metaphor</p> <p>Ambiguity</p>


		<p>warm tones of the advertisement emphasise the value of metaphor in hypnosis while reinforcing brand identification and desire (Bandler, 1975) and (James,2019).</p> <p>The work of (Grinder, 1977) on advertising campaigns emphasises how crucial ambiguity and exaggeration are to encouraging interaction. While Bandler & Grinder's "kitchen sink" exaggeration emphasises the burger's "everything" and its capacity to heighten attentiveness, Zeig's "Take on" burger advertisement uses open-ended language to elicit personal interpretations, bringing customers further into the message (Lynn, 1991).</p>	
8		<p>The use of alliterative and rhythmic taglines to connect with listeners' inherent rhythms is emphasised in (Grinder, 1977) work on Ericksonian hypnosis. "Wings Without the Wait" suggests that utilising the KFC app will result in instant gratification of wings, directing behaviour and attention (Vartanova, 2023) and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>The technique used by Erickson & Rossi avoids conscious examination by integrating recommendations into common speech (Erickson, 1979). As demonstrated by the KFC app advertisement, which uses the phone metaphor to establish a smooth mental link between the phone, food, and enjoyment, Zeig's concept of utilisation entails adjusting to the client's surroundings or beliefs (Singh,2024) and (Vartanova, 2023).</p> <p>Like an open loop in Ericksonian hypnosis, the elliptical language of "Wings Without the Wait" by Erickson & Rossi creates interest and expectation. The advertisement closes the open loop by asking viewers to visualise quick pleasure by placing an order in advance on the KFC App (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023).</p>	<p>Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Embedded Commands & Metaphor</p> <p>Ambiguity</p>

9		<p>The value of doing fried chicken the "hard way" is emphasised by both Zeig (1980) and Erickson & Rossi (1979). Customers are put in a difficult situation since the slogan structure, "Done the Hard Way... The Only Way," suggests that the "hard way" is the only acceptable approach to ensure authenticity and excellence (Brooks, 2025) and (<i>Jacquin Hypnosis Academy</i>, 2023).</p> <p>This strategy emphasises the labour-intensive process above direct command, which is consistent with Erickson's indirect suggestion (Vartanova, 2023) and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>Viewers may mentally fill in specifics like KFC's secret recipe or slow cooking methods because of Rossi's elliptical phrase "Done the Hard Way... The Only Way" and its open loop and minor ambiguity (<i>Jacquin Hypnosis Academy</i>, 2023).</p> <p>In order to calm the viewer's senses, Bandler & Grinder's advertisement combines vivid imagery that highlights the fried chicken's golden hue, breading texture, and suggested crunch. "Done the Hard Way... The Only Way" is an indirect exhortation that emphasizes the significance of comprehending the sensory experience (Arun, 2024).</p> <p>It is reminiscent of Erickson's strategy of enclosing recommendations in a more general, non-threatening statement (Lawson, 2024).</p>	<p>The Double Bind and Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Ambiguity</p> <p>Sensory Pacing and Embedded Commands</p>
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<p>10</p>		<p>A fundamental component of Ericksonian hypnotic language, "Some things just belong together", assumes a "you and me" relationship and a natural and inevitable tie between the speaker or brand and the audience. Emotional truths are incorporated into the communication, and the audience is able to automatically embrace inclusion thanks to this deliberate identity fusion (Vartanova, 2023), and (Brooks, 2025).</p> <p>"You're the fries to my chicken — together, we're a match made in Krispy heaven!" Erickson promoted spirituality and emotional replacement by using metaphors to speak to the unconscious mind (Singh,2024). He employed romantic imagery and commercial aspects, such as KFC, to spiritualize products and strengthen physical intimacy and shared experiences as Zeig's refers in (Lynn, 1991).</p> <p>By portraying the reader as someone who identifies with the brand, the advertisement links KFC with their identity. Bypassing conscious filtering, as Erickson frequently does while pacing and leading to induce hypnosis, the statement "Some things just belong together" acts as a gentle direction, promoting acceptance without opposition (Bandler,1975).</p>	<p>Presupposition</p> <p>Metaphor Over-generalization, Embedded Command and pacing and leading</p>
<p>11</p>		<p>By presenting KFC in an unusual context, Zeig's 1980 advertisement subtly alludes to the fast food chain's global reach without resorting to explicit statements like "Order KFC everywhere" (Lynn, 1991).</p> <p>The ambiguous phrase, "We Are Going Down—We Take Control Anywhere," encourages implied ubiquity and ambiguity by asking viewers to picture situations in which KFC "arrives" or "takes over" anywhere they want food (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023).</p> <p>The KFC commercial implies KFC's smooth entrance in a magnificent location by using a parachute metaphor to express surprise and astonishment</p>	<p>Open Loops and Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Ambiguity</p> <p>Metaphor</p> <p>Sensory Language</p>

		<p>(ibid).</p> <p>The Sphinx and pyramids, two well-known representations of Egyptian ancestry, serve as emotional anchors for the brand, bringing favourable emotions to the product itself</p> <p>(Lynn, 1991).</p>	
<p>12</p>		<p>The phrase "Dip Me Again" seems to be a request from the fries themselves, rather than a command from the company. Subtle suggestions are more common in Ericksonian hypnosis and frequently circumvent resistance (Erickson, 1979). The fries themselves "speak" in this instance, enticing the audience to indulge without the company ever stating, "Buy this product."</p> <p>Dip Me Again' appears to be a humorous statement, but it serves as an embedded command (Grinder, 1977). Without making a straight sales pitch, the advertisement gently urges the viewer to do something—dip, taste, and enjoy—by framing it from the fries' point of view.</p> <p>"New Fries Coming Soon" creates an open loop by implying an impending launch or change (Brooks, 2025) and (Lawson, 2024). What's new about these fries?' consumers may ask themselves. What will they taste like? This interest encourages people to stay involved with the company, either looking for further details or anticipating the release with great anticipation.</p> <p>As an open-ended metaphor, "DIP ME AGAIN" employs a fundamental Ericksonian technique to let the unconscious mind produce individualised meaning and emotional resonance(ibid). It is employed to draw attention to certain words or phrases within sentences. It involves identifying the media that is utilised to subtly highlight the listener's response in order to deliver a directive (Work Smart Hypnosis,2024).</p>	<p>Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Embedded Command</p> <p>Metaphor & Open Loop Analogical Marking</p>

<p>13</p>		<p>The statement "one bite and you'll sign a long-term contract" uses Ericksonian presupposition and future pacing to establish behavioural expectations in the unconscious mind (Vartanova, 2023), and (Brooks, 2025). It avoids cognitive scepticism by assuming the observer would bite into it, resulting in an involuntary commitment (Erickson, 1979).</p> <p>According to Zeig, mentally transporting the audience to a future event, future pacing establishes targeted behavioural results, such as brand loyalty, also similar to Erickson's inductions, the smaller text has a pacing structure, expressing facts that are likely to be accepted: "Place after place, year after year, our great taste hangs in there." This builds rapport and decreases cognitive defences (Lynn, 1991).</p> <p>The reader is then led to the intended conclusion—KFC as a dependable source of happiness and contentment (Arun, 2024).</p> <p>Metaphors redefine the eating experience as a relationship agreement by acting as subliminal links between desirable ideas and well-known notions. When subconsciously triggered, this metaphor creates strong, emotionally resonant, and long-lasting relationships between consumers and brands by appealing to identity and stability (Bandler, 1975).</p>	<p>Presupposition and Pacing and Leading</p> <p>Metaphor</p>
<p>14</p>		<p>The semantically ambiguous and open-ended phrase "SUPER VERY VERY" is an example of how Ericksonian language employs ambiguity to activate the unconscious mind.</p> <p>The repetition in "PER! PER!" and "VERY VERY" deepens the suggestion and creates rhythm, fostering trance-like engagement or heightened attention.</p> <p>This gently reaffirms the point and serves as an order, encouraging the reader to embrace the product's distinctiveness or intensity, also using</p>	<p>Ambiguity, and metaphor</p> <p>Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Embedded Command</p>

		<p>sensory connections of heat and excitement, the chilli pepper emoji 🌶️ functions as a visual metaphor.</p> <p>Erickson often used this approach to elicit emotional and physical reactions (Erickson, 1979).</p> <p>NEW" stimulates audience attention by implying freshness and improvement. Principles are frequently used in Ericksonian language to present concepts as true while avoiding critical examination (Lynn, 1991).</p> <p>According to (Bandler, 1975), an embedded command is a nonverbal indication that exemplifies the desired behaviours. When spectators witness him savouring the chicken, they could unconsciously feel pressured to do the same.</p>	
15		<p>Bypassing conscious opposition and allowing the listener to subjectively interpret the meaning, the phrase "THE FLAVOUR HAS SPOKEN" employs Ericksonian hypnotic language, which utilises personification and indirect suggestion to convey a message or verdict (Grinder, 1977) and (<i>Jacquin Hypnosis Academy</i>, 2023).</p> <p>Metaphors and ambiguous language are used in Ericksonian hypnosis to encourage introspection and subjective interpretation. By giving the word "flavour" a metaphorical voice, the viewer is prompted to speculate about what it may mean. The proposal becomes more customised as a result of the ambiguity, which invites people to fill in the spaces with their recollections. Acceptance without opposition results from the ingrained assumption of a strong flavour (Vartanova, 2023) and (Bandler, 1975).</p>	<p>Indirect Suggestions</p> <p>Sensory language</p>

<p>16</p>		<p>Zeig, Bandler, and Grinder's research on sensory anchoring shows how advertising can use physical sensations, like licking your fingers, to make people feel more strongly and lower their doubts. Bandler and Grinder's research on nonverbal commands also backs up this method (Lynn, 1991), and (Bandler, 1975).</p> <p>Using the audience's curiosity or pre-existing interests to spur action is one of Rossi and Erickson & Rossi's tactics (Erickson, 1979). Customers are left to fill in the blanks or verify the claim by tasting the goods themselves because Rossi's "Finger lickin' good" tagline doesn't describe the intricacies of the product's success. Customers can be engaged and motivated to take action by utilising this uncertainty (<i>Jacquin Hypnosis Academy</i>, 2023).</p> <p>It is used to highlight certain words or phrases in sentences. To convey an instruction, it entails determining which medium is used to gently highlight the listener's response (Work Smart Hypnosis,2024).</p>	<p>Sensory language and Embedded Commands</p> <p>Open Loops & Ambiguity</p> <p>Allegory Marking</p>
<p>17</p>		<p>A visual anchor is provided by the intricate picture of fried chicken that displays its golden texture. Vibrant or thorough allusions to the senses (taste, smell, and sight) can strengthen the persuasive impact in Ericksonian communication (Bandler, 1975), and (James,2019). A mental "sound" of crispiness can also be evoked by the imagined crunch.</p> <p>Rather than explicitly telling the audience to consume or purchase KFC, the phrase "Indulge in the Crispy Goodness" assumes that "crispy goodness" exists and indirectly suggests that they "indulge" (Vartanova, 2023), and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>This is consistent with Erickson's use of presuppositions, in which the listener is gradually persuaded to accept the experience as a given by assuming its reality (Bandler, 1975).</p> <p>The word "indulge" serves as an</p>	<p>Sensory language</p> <p>Indirect Suggestion, and Truisms and Illusion Choices</p> <p>Presupposition</p> <p>Embedded Command</p> <p>Open Loops & Ambiguity</p>

		<p>embedded command. The statement gently urges the listener to give oneself a nice experience without being explicitly prescriptive. Erickson frequently used orders to guide behaviour without provoking resistance by incorporating them into seemingly casual expressions (Brooks, 2025), and (Lawson, 2024).</p> <p>Customers may fill in the specifics of flavor, texture, and overall happiness by focusing on the general idea of "crispy goodness" in advertising, (<i>Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023</i>). This open loop promotes individual interpretation and participation, which is consistent with Ericksonian use, in which the communicator creates constructive reasons by drawing on the subject's preexisting beliefs or wants.</p>	
<p>18</p>		<p>Golden fried chicken, biscuits, and drinks are featured heavily in the promo. Via inciting subconscious yearning, sensory anchoring, primarily via invoking taste and texture, improves persuasion, according to Ericksonian principles (Bandler, 1975), and (James,2019).</p> <p>The contrast between warm hues and crunchy textures further enhances the attractiveness.</p> <p>The referee-dressed guy acts as a visible authority figure, a tactic frequently employed in Ericksonian persuasion. His "OK" hand gesture serves as a nonverbal embedded command that indicates that this is the "right" choice, gently reinforcing approbation (Brooks, 2025), and (Lawson, 2024).</p> <p>"Super Deals on Super Meals" and "No Penalty for Clipping" are two advertising campaigns that employ the terms "clipping" and "super deals" to entice customers to hunt for savings and reassure them that utilising them is OK. To help the subconscious mind remember and accept the information, the words make use of pleasant connections and repetition (Dolinski,</p>	<p>Sensory language</p> <p>Embedded Command Truisms and Illusions Choices</p>

		<p>2015), and (Vartanova, 2023).</p>	
<p>19</p>		<p>The "KFC Is Coming!" advertisement invites viewers to consider their hunger by posing vague questions (Jacquin Hypnosis Academy, 2023).</p> <p>The phrase "KFC Is Coming!" avoids giving out explicit orders and instead suggests instant relief. The word "coming" is left open-ended, encouraging viewers to add specifics that speak to their circumstances (Vartanova, 2023), and (Sofiyah, 2019).</p> <p>"Hungry?" serves as a gentle imperative, asking the audience to recognise hunger before associating it with KFC. To steer a subject's thinking without giving them explicit instructions, Erickson frequently employed implicit or embedded commands inside questions (Brooks, 2025), and (Lawson, 2024).</p> <p>"KFC Is Coming!" implies that the brand is the instant solution to hunger, even if it doesn't mention "buy KFC."</p>	<p>Ambiguity</p> <p>Indirect Suggestion</p> <p>Embedded Commands</p>
<p>20</p>		<p>The use of embedded orders, which gently train the unconscious mind, is a defining feature of Erickson's approach. As an implicit instruction, "Let the gravy flow" invites the audience to unwind and let pleasure happen naturally. This statement embodies the permissive language that was essential in overcoming psychological barriers. The expression suggests a normal, unavoidable process of excess, pleasure, and contentment (Sivakumar, 2024).</p> <p>In Ericksonian hypnosis, the phrase "Let the gravy flow" refers to luxury, pleasure, and plenty while signifying indulgence and release. In line with Erickson's metaphoric trances, in which clients interact with emotional symbols, the flow stimulates the body's inherent reward systems (Erickson, 1979).</p>	<p>Embedded Command</p> <p>Metaphor</p>

Discussion

The results of this study, which were examined using Milton H. Erickson's hypnotic language model, shed light on the intricate use of hypnotic language in KFC's written

commercials. Embedded instructions, ambiguity, indirect suggestions, presuppositions, metaphorical language, and sensory-rich descriptions are some of the stylistic and linguistic elements that work together to undermine critical opposition and appeal to the target audience's subconscious. These results support the larger body of research on advertising stylistics, which contends that language is a powerful psychological instrument that may influence perceptions, evoke feelings, and guide customer behaviour in addition to serving as a medium for information (Fomukong, 2016), (Fatima, 2023). Interestingly, KFC's use of indirect recommendations and embedded orders in their ads is a perfect example of how subtly hypnotic language works. Advertisers avoid the conscious filter by enclosing directions like "enjoy" or "feel satisfied" in seemingly benign sentences. As a result, there is less chance of opposition since the persuasive goal is less apparent. This is in line with the results of (Lawson, 2024) and (Vartanova, 2023), who highlight the effectiveness of the Milton Model in generating a trance-like state that stimulates activity and suggestion. Additionally, the deliberate use of ambiguity and presuppositions, such as the idea that "everyone likes", normalises acceptance and desire for the product, enhancing the brand's appeal and creating a feeling of community among customers.

The study also emphasises how crucial sensory appeals and metaphorical language are for evoking strong emotional connections and mental imagery. In addition to describing the goods, terms like "crispy" and "juicy" arouse the senses, which strengthens the advertisement's persuasiveness and memorability. This supports the findings of Skorupa (2014) and Jafari and Mahadi (2014), who argue that stylistic analysis aids marketers in selecting the most appropriate language to employ when communicating with specific audiences (Sinulingga, 2023), and (Namwandi, 2019). The hypnotic effect is further enhanced by the use of storytelling and analogies, as stories about family get-togethers and shared meals appeal to our innate need for belonging and connection. The fact that Ericksonian hypnotic language is culturally adaptive is a crucial conclusion of these findings. Although the study focuses on KFC's worldwide branding, the concepts of emotional involvement and subconscious suggestion apply to all situations as long as the language and style choices are sensitive to regional cultural norms and values. According to Sells and Gonzales (2002), language patterns that are effective in one context may not be in another. This is consistent with their warning. Advertisers must therefore strike a balance between the individuality of language and cultural quirks and the universality of hypnotic tactics.

Conclusions

In summary, this study shows that a careful and planned use of linguistic elements intended to subtly affect customer behaviour is shown by the stylistic analysis of hypnotic language in KFC's written commercials. Through the use of Ericksonian strategies like sensory language, ambiguity, embedded commands, and presuppositions, KFC successfully gets around crucial opposition, elicits powerful emotional reactions, and strengthens brand loyalty. Future studies should examine the cross-cultural applicability of hypnotic language and its integration with multimodal advertising strategies to ensure that advertisers can maximise the persuasive potential of their campaigns in diverse cultural contexts. The findings add to the expanding body of research on the intersection of linguistics, psychology, and marketing, highlighting the power of language as a tool for persuasion in the global marketplace.

تحليل أسلوبية اللغة التنويم المغناطيسي (الايحاءية) في إعلانات مختارة لمطاعم كنتاكي

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المستخلص:

من التكتيكات الناجحة جدا للتأثير على سلوك العملاء استخدام اللغة المنومة المعتمدة على التأثير الباطني والإيحاء غير المباشر. إذ تحدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة استراتيجيات اللغة المنومة المستخدمة في إعلانات كنتاكي المكتوبة، واستكشاف مدى نجاحها في تغيير تصورات المستهلكين حول علامة كنتاكي التجارية. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة، تم اعتماد نموذج التنويم المغناطيسي لميلتون إريكسون (1979). حيث يعد نمج إريكسون شكلاً غير مباشر من التنويم المغناطيسي، حيث يستخدم الأنماط اللغوية للتواصل مع العقل الباطن والتأثير على الإدراك والسلوك. وتستخدم الدراسة أنماط إريكسون اللغوية، مثل الافتراضات المسبقة، والأوامر المضمنة، والعلامات القياسية، والاستعارات، والأسئلة الدليلية لدراسة الاستراتيجيات اللفظية المستخدمة في إعلانات كنتاكي. وتسلط الدراسة الضوء على التطبيق الخاص بالوسيلة لتقنيات اللغة المنومة في الإعلان. حيث تشير النتائج إلى تطبيق مختلف لهذه الاستراتيجيات، حيث غالباً ما تبرز العلامات القياسية الكلمات المفتاحية، والأوامر المضمنة التي تُحفز على اتخاذ الإجراءات استراتيجياً، والافتراضات التي تشكل تصورات المستهلك، والاستعارات التي تربط فوائد المنتج بتطلعاته. تستخدم الأسئلة الدليلية ضمناً لفهمها من خلال السياق، بينما يستخدم سرد القصص بشكل رئيسي في إعلانات كنتاكي التلفزيونية.