



P-ISSN 2355-2794
E-ISSN 2461-0275

Larger than Life: Linguistic Aspects as a Strategy for Provoking Hedonism in Car Slogans

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Abstract

Advertisements sell fantasy rather than just products, with their slogans creating lasting impressions of fantasy in the minds of target consumers. This research aims to explore how English slogans in Indonesian car advertisements provoke hedonism through specific syntactic forms and illocutionary forces. Through a qualitative analysis of syntactic and pragmatic aspects, the proportion of syntactic forms, illocutionary forces, and contextual ideas in 87 slogans from nine automotive brands sold in Indonesia: Toyota, Suzuki, Mitsubishi, Daihatsu, Honda, BMW, Mercedes Benz, Hyundai, and KIA were analyzed. It was discovered that low-priced car slogans are shorter, typically in phrase form, while expensive car slogans are longer and often in clause form. Despite the syntactic differences, both categories share similar illocutionary acts, predominantly representative acts aimed at informing consumers, building rapport, and enhancing the brand's reputation. While directive acts are more persuasive, they can also be perceived as forceful, potentially creating a negative impression. The study highlights the importance of examining car slogans from a syntactic perspective, in addition to sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic angles. Additionally, the study explored how fantasy and hedonism are conveyed in slogans. Low-priced car slogans evoke close-to-reality fantasies with minimal use of adjective phrases and a weaker provocation of hedonism, whereas expensive car slogans offer symbolic fantasies, strongly provoking hedonism and encouraging indulgence in luxury, comfort, and independence, using both phrases and clauses with representative and directive acts. These findings suggest that car slogans make use of linguistic strategies that are conformed to fit the target market of a car.

Keywords: Fantasy, hedonism, illocutionary acts, slogans, syntactic form.

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Citation in APA style: Munandar, A., & Octoveria, E. N. (2025). Larger than life: Linguistic aspects as a strategy for provoking hedonism in car slogans. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 12(1), 412-425.

Received October 18, 2023; Revised May 20, 2024; Accepted December 14, 2024; Published Online January 31, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v12i1.34806>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Companies use slogans next to the names of the products they sell to make products linger in customers' heads. As one of the key elements of an advertisement, a slogan is a concise, advertisable, and autonomous phrase highlighting a concept while conveying a persuasive message to the target audience about a product (Alnajjar & Toivonen, 2021). It can be used for marketing purposes and serve as the brand's identity, enhancing the value of the product (Sujatna et al., 2022). In reaching this goal, linguistics strategy helps in slogan creation, since people can be persuaded to purchase products advertised through the combination of multiple semiotic resources employed in advertisements for products by steering their minds toward specific values (Ananda et al., 2019). Slogans are typically short, but they need to convey a straightforward message with a lasting impression about a product. Using a phrase in a slogan is the notable difference between standard English and advertising English, where English in advertisements can convey a complete idea as how typically carried out through a clause (Rush, 1998). although the syntactic form of a slogan is not limited to a phrase. Thus, slogan creation is inseparable from using linguistics strategy if a company aims to create a lasting impression of the products it sells.

It is common to find products with descriptive slogans in almost all industries; the automotive industry is no exception. Slogans do not only give a glimpse of what the car is like, but they also get people to associate certain qualities with that car. Based on data from the *Badan Pusat Statistik* or the Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia, car ownership in Indonesia increased by 755,514 units in 2022 compared to 2021 (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024). Automotive companies operating in Indonesia originated from many countries, some of the best-selling ones include companies from Japan, Korea, and Germany (Gaikindo, 2022). These companies need to ensure that their products are not overlooked amid many competitors in a saturated automotive market. In addition, they need to consider how they want the public to be familiar with their products.

Interestingly, slogans of cars marketed in Indonesia are mostly in English, despite the target customers being non-native English speakers. The use of English language is more appreciated by consumers due to its positive association, regardless of consumers' English proficiency (Hornikx et al., 2010). Despite the Indonesians are not speakers of English, their English proficiency level demonstrates an increasing trend ('EF English Proficiency Index', 2023) to better facilitate their understanding of advertisements presented in English. Within the context of advertisements in Indonesia, companies use a mix of English in their advertisements to provide globally focused commercials with a locally targeted audience, which belongs to the category of English language commodification (Dewi, 2017). Moreover, the use of multiple languages in advertising has been noted to improve brand recall, increase the advertisement's ability to grab the viewer's attention, and have a positive psychological impact on the consumer (Hornikx & Mulder, 2015). These findings become supporting factors as to why car advertisements in Indonesia tend to use English slogans in their advertisements.

Modernity, quality, innovation, and glamour are effects of using English in advertising (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2004). While these values embedded through slogans may positively affect companies in terms of sales, consumerism may be an aftermath that can cause adversity among the public as the target market. Advertisement sells fantasy more than it sells products. Emotional processing is proven to consistently help the target audience in the semantic processing of advertisement (Zhang et al., 2024), which emphasizes the importance of a particular linguistics strategy to provoke a specific fantasy. Most advertisements provoke consumers to dream of having a sensation of buying rather than enjoying the product (Uncu, 2020), which can be an indicator of a hedonistic value. Advertising promises are not entirely true; they display a dream that the consumers may not be able to realistically achieve. In this way, the consumers are prompted to imagine a dream-like journey where they get the illusion of reaching the life they want by purchasing a product. Slogans in advertisements aim to convince consumers of promises (Berger, 2011, p. 146; Uncu, 2020, p. 4). Examining the linguistic aspects of slogans in cars marketed in Indonesia will contribute to understanding the emotional appeal of the slogans which

has a significant effect on purchase intention (Sriram et al., 2021), and how the emotional content in the slogans creates a good connection with an individual.

Through advertisements, ideologies are conveyed over a period using certain words and images, and in due course, persuade the consumer to adopt them as their own. However, the negative impact of slogans exposure can lead to a wide spreading of neoliberalism, as d'Agnese (2022) argued that there needs to be an awareness among educators to educate students in becoming more critical when exposed to slogans, as evidenced by how commercial products' slogans now resemble institutional slogans. Since different cultures may interpret slogans differently and that Shahriari et al. (2023) call for further studies to examine the effects of slogans in a particular country, this leads to the need for a study on the use of English in car slogans in Indonesia, a non-English-speaking country. Hence, this present study attempted to fill the gap in the literature on slogans' syntactic forms by examining how phrases and clauses are used in slogans. Thus, two research questions arise:

1. What are the syntactic forms and illocutionary acts of car slogans in car advertisements?
2. How are fantasy and hedonism conveyed through slogans using particular syntactic forms and illocutionary acts in car advertisements?

This research incorporates some theoretical frameworks: syntactic forms (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002), illocutionary acts (Searle, 1979), and customer value (Holbrook, 2006). The first and second frameworks are to analyze syntactic forms and illocutionary acts of slogans in the data. The third framework is a basis of analysis to examine fantasy and hedonism embedded in car slogans. The findings of the present study can shed light on how linguistic strategies are employed to emphasize the persuasive effect of slogans in advertisements. Understanding how slogans are created by examining their linguistic features helps in decision-making to prevent consumers from falling into a trap of unnecessary hedonistic behavior.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section draws on previous research examining the linguistic features of advertising slogans, the use of English in slogans targeting non-English speakers, and the portrayal of fantasy and hedonism in slogans.

2.1 Syntactic Forms and Illocutionary Acts

Advertising slogans often take the form of incomplete sentences, whether through dependent clauses or phrases, while fully conveying a complete idea. A phrase is defined as a syntactic unit 'which consists of one or more words' (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 43) and is characterized based on the head, which can be from word classes such as a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, and a preposition. There are five different categories of phrases: noun phrase, verb phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase, and prepositional phrase (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Other than in the form of a phrase, a slogan can also be in the form of a clause, which is a section of a sentence that can stand on its own as a full notion (Huddleston, 1984). Ghadessy (1988) argued that advertising English has pervasive tendencies, one of which is the common use of 'disjunctive' syntax and unfinished sentences, with noun phrases rendered orthographically as independent sentences. Syntax in advertising language often appears ungrammatical; thus, play and manipulation of sentence structure in advertising language and the normative usage of syntactically ungrammatical sentences regardless of standard grammar rules (van Niekerk, 2020). The frequent use of the noun phrase as an independent clause in advertising English is a significant distinction between standard English grammar and advertising English (Rush, 1998). Moreover, Rush (1998) proposes two distinctive qualities of the noun phrase: its complex and unusual internal structure and its ability to operate as an independent clause at the sentence level.

Slogans can signify an action, which is often referred to as an illocutionary act. Illocutionary acts are ways in which speakers use language to perform speech acts, such as delivering a statement, asking a question, giving an order, or making a request (Searle, 1969). It is the core

part of a speech act where the speaker's intention and the conventional force of the utterance come together to perform a particular function in communication. Considering that the nature of slogans is short, but should convey a complete idea, illocutionary acts become paramount to be embedded in slogans. Illocutionary acts can be representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarative (Searle, 1979). A representative illocutionary act is one to describe a situation. A directive illocutionary act is intended to entice its receiver to act requests. A commissive illocutionary act signifies a speaker's commitment to the speaker to do something, where its degree is higher than a directive illocutionary act. An expressive illocutionary act is used to convey the speaker's emotional state. Lastly, a declaration is an expression to change the status of an entity. In relation to advertisements, an illocutionary act can be found within a slogan, as it is the defining textual feature of an advertisement. A previous study by Shariq (2020) has highlighted how stylistic aspects as linguistic tools present in slogans, and pragmatic studies on the illocutionary acts of slogans remain an area worth exploring.

2.2 Linguistic Characteristics of Advertisements

Slogans are considered as one of the defining characteristics of advertisements (Krishna & Ahluwalia, 2008). The impression of information in advertisements is generally more positive when it is communicated or presented in a simple manner, as opposed to a complex manner (Markowitz, 2023). Moreover, a study by Hodges et al. (2024) confirms how shorter slogans, containing no brand name, but containing frequently used, perceptually distinct, and abstract words are more fluently processed by consumers. These studies prompt further analysis of the syntactic form of a slogan, i.e., whether they tend to use phrases that are generally shorter than clauses. In terms of language choice for a slogan, English can be used for a range of items not often associated with a particular location of origin, in addition to those originating in an English-speaking nation. Using a foreign language often has the benefit of blocking automatic processing, which keeps audiences' attention longer than monolingual, native-language advertising (Piller, 2003). This advantage is made possible by synthesizing sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives in slogan creation (Hornikx & Mulder, 2015). These studies may explain the reason behind the use of English as slogans in advertisements of products marketed in non-English speaking countries, where this study aims to examine within the context of English slogans used for the Indonesian target market.

Slogans should not be limited to describing a product as short as possible, but also to ensure that they can aid in marketing strategy that converts to sales. Zjakic et al.'s (2017) research on Facebook advertising discovered that imperative forms in Internet advertising have become a marketing strategy to create a sense of closeness between the brand and the customer, even though imperative language may initially appear unfriendly. Even though the aim is to persuade potential customers to use or buy their product or service, imperatives in online advertising serve a guidance function by giving customers information about their products or services that will be beneficial to the reader (Zjakic et al., 2017).

2.3 Selling Fantasy through Advertisement

More often than not, advertisements involve imagination, which Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) defined as having a 'Three F' principles of 'fantasies, feelings, and fun'. These principles serve to counterbalance rational economic decision-making and can prompt the purchase of products that customers may not necessarily need (Holbrook, 2006). People are not actually after the products themselves but the fulfilling experiences they provide; they purchase a product because they anticipate the valuable experiences these products will enable (Abbott, 1955). Emotional processing is proven to consistently help the target audience in the semantic processing of advertisement (Zhang et al., 2024), which emphasizes the importance of a particular linguistic strategy to provoke a specific fantasy. Advertisements often adopt an intimate approach and personalized word choices to attract target customers. Some advertising's persuasive intent is

rather vague (Ananda et al., 2019). This is why slogans need to be as subtle, but as persuasive as possible, and linguistics strategy plays a part in making this possible.

The creation of advertisements often considers adhering to the principle of customer value, which is defined by Holbrook (2006) as an ‘interactive relativistic’ preference experience that involves customers as the subject and a product as the object involving subjective hierarchical preferences based on personal situation-specific product comparisons. Holbrook (2006) proposed four types of customer value: economic value, social value, hedonic value, and altruistic value. Economic value is where a product or an experience of consuming something fulfills a personal objective, such as an emphasis on efficiency or concrete quality. Economic value is self-oriented and extrinsic. Social value is where consuming a product evokes a response from other people or social surroundings. Social value is other-oriented and extrinsic. Hedonic value emphasizes the pleasure of consumption for oneself, such as aesthetic enjoyment. Hedonic values are self-oriented and intrinsic. Altruistic value is when a consumption affects others in a noble manner, i.e., ethical purchases. Altruistic value is other-oriented and intrinsic. These values can be embedded in slogans syntactically and pragmatically.

2.4 Hedonistic Advertisement

In revolutionized luxury markets, the most significant drivers of consumers’ luxury purchase intention are hedonism, escapism, conspicuousness, quality, and usability (Ostovan & Khalili Nasr, 2022). Hedonism is a way for consumers to personalize their lives with an element of luxury (Atwal & Williams, 2009). Most definitions of luxury revolve around excellent products sold at high prices, and the general idea of luxury remains oriented on social exclusivity signaling the wealth of their customer (Han et al., 2010; Ko et al., 2019). Yet, there has been a rise in interest in luxury as a consumer experience, including how customers enjoy ‘little luxuries’ through indulgences (Bauer et al., 2011). However, the luxury experience can also be hedonic; while hedonism is important, it is insufficient to be considered a ‘moment of luxury’ (Holmqvist et al., 2020). Most advertisements provoke consumers to dream of having a sensation of buying rather than enjoying the product (Uncu, 2020), which can be an indicator of a hedonistic value. The assurances made in hedonistic advertisements are far removed from the realities of life. Its purpose is to sell a consumer a fantasy that is beyond reach. Therefore, effective advertisements must target customer desires (Uncu, 2020). These studies suggest that luxury product advertisements subtly instill hedonistic values, emphasizing emotional over functional appeals.

The notion of focusing on ideas associated with a product rather than the product itself is prevalent among luxury brands. A luxury brand’s individual value is rooted in self-identity; its use can enhance or extend a consumer’s sense of self (Hennigs et al., 2012). Luxury brands have a hedonic value associated with sensory pleasure, aesthetic beauty, and emotional transport, the capacity to take the consumer from the commonplace into the brand’s fantasy world (Dion & Arnould, 2011). The key notion in selling fantasy through advertisement lies beyond the product; it offers a status that comes with the product. Status is a complicated concept, as status consumption attempts to satisfy both the individual’s need for self and other’s recognition, and by engaging in the luxuries that people with high status enjoy, consumers attempt to satisfy their desire for status gains (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). Pimenta and Piato (2016) revealed that the most crucial chain in car advertisements is design-psychological comfort-hedonism, linked to the values of hedonism, stimulation, safety, and power. These suggest that how cars are marketed lies beyond the product’s functionality; it is an ascribed status that comes with it, which often results in car advertisements emphasizing luxury aspects and hedonistic values.

3. METHODS

A textual qualitative analysis was applied by incorporating (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002) classification of syntactic structure, and Searle’s (1979) classification of illocutionary acts to answer the first research question and conducting an interpretative analysis based on Holbrook’s

(2006) classification of customer values to answer the second research question. The instrument of data collection in this study involved a review of textual materials, i.e., extracting slogans of car advertisements in Indonesia. This study's primary data, namely qualitative data, are in the form of clauses and/or phrases in slogans, with secondary data in the form of frequency.

3.1 Data Source and Data Collection

The data source for this study was obtained from online advertisements of cars in the form of digital files. Prior to collecting the data, a convenience sampling (Rasinger, 2013) was conducted, which was through selecting nine automotive brands having the highest annual sales volume (Gaikindo, 2022) which country of origin are Japan, Korea, and Germany. These nine brands are Toyota, Suzuki, Mitsubishi, Daihatsu, Honda, BMW, Mercedes Benz, Hyundai, and KIA. The car types included in the data were all passenger cars that were publicly marketed for Indonesian consumers in 2022. The results from this stage were 87 digital brochures downloaded from each brand's official website to be extracted in terms of their slogans as the primary data for this study. The data were then classified into two major categories: low-priced cars, i.e., cars priced under Rp. 500.000.000, and expensive cars, i.e., cars priced above Rp. 500.000.000. These classifications were based on the report provided by Gaikindo (2022) which showed that the highest sales volume of cars were ones priced below Rp. 500.000.000. Thus, this price point could be considered more suitable for Indonesian consumers' purchasing power, as opposed to cars priced above Rp. 500.000.000 that had lower sales volume and were more segmented to upper-class consumers.

3.2 Data Analysis

The analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the syntactic form of each slogan was examined and categorized according to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002), focusing on phrases (noun, verb, adjective, and prepositional) and clauses. Second, the illocutionary acts present in each slogan were analyzed, addressing the first research question. While typically analyzed at the clause level (Searle, 1979), this study followed Rush (1998) in analyzing illocutionary acts at the phrase level, reflecting the specific characteristics of English advertising. This two-stage analysis revealed the syntactic forms and illocutionary acts present in both low-priced and expensive car advertisement slogans. Finally, the frequency of each syntactic form and the illocutionary act were calculated to identify language patterns within the data.

To answer the second research question regarding the conveyance of fantasy and hedonistic values through slogans, an interpretative analysis of the meanings within low-priced and expensive car slogan categories was conducted, drawing on Holbrook's (2006) classification of customer values. The findings from the first analysis, concerning patterns in syntactic forms and illocutionary functions, were also considered to further illuminate the tendencies toward fantasy and hedonistic values within each category.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first stage of analysis classified the data into two categories, low-priced (under Rp. 500.000.000) and expensive cars, resulting in 36 low-priced and 51 expensive car slogans. Next, the syntactic form of each slogan was analyzed. Overall, slogans tended to be phrases rather than clauses. However, the most frequent phrase type differed between the two categories.

4.1 Syntactic Forms and Illocutionary Acts of Slogans

Table 1 presents the syntactic forms of slogans for both low-priced (36 slogans) and expensive (51 slogans) car categories. Because of the differing sample sizes, the data within each category is presented from most to least frequent.

Table 1. Syntactic forms of car slogans.

Category	Syntactic forms	Subtotal
Low-priced	Clause	21
	Noun phrase	10
	Adjective phrase	4
	Verb phrase	1
Expensive	Noun phrase	23
	Clause	14
	Adjective phrase	12
	Verb phrase	1
	Prepositional phrase	1

Table 1 shows that low-priced car slogans frequently take the form of clauses, while expensive car slogans more often use noun phrases. Adjective phrases appear considerably more often in expensive car slogans. Prepositional phrases are used only in the expensive car category.

4.1.1 Noun phrase

A noun phrase slogan helps in the construction of a distinctive and powerful message for a product or brand and can also help to distinguish the product from others on the market by emphasizing its distinguishing qualities or benefits. These slogans often employ predeterminers (quantifiers, possessives, adjectives, or other noun modifiers) placed before the head noun.

- (1) *The Real Perfection* [Daihatsu Sirion]
- (2) *The New Tough Crossover* [Suzuki New SX4 S-Cross]

Data (1) and (2) illustrate noun phrase slogans from the low-priced car category. In (1), the Daihatsu Sirion slogan uses the adjective ‘real’ to modify the head noun ‘perfection’. Similarly, the Suzuki New SX4 S-Cross slogan (2) uses the adjectives ‘new’ and ‘tough’ to modify the head noun ‘crossover’. Of the ten noun phrase slogans in this category, most employ figurative language in the head noun, as in Data (1), rather than literal descriptions of the car, as in Data (2).

- (3) *Grand Accommodations* [BMW X7]
- (4) *Prestige Elevated* [Toyota New Corolla Altis]

Data (3) and (4) illustrate noun phrase slogans from the expensive car category. In (3), the BMW X7 slogan uses the adjective ‘grand’ to modify the head noun ‘accommodation’, which here refers literally to the car. Conversely, the Toyota New Corolla Altis slogan (4) uses the noun ‘prestige’ figuratively. As with the low-priced car category, most head nouns in the expensive car category’s noun phrase slogans are used figuratively, representing abstract concepts rather than literal car features.

4.1.2 Adjective phrase

An adjective phrase consists of an adjective and any modifiers, including adverbs and prepositional phrases (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). It can be placed either before or after the noun it modifies to convey more information about the noun’s size, shape, color, age, or other attributes.

- (5) *Exceptionally Impressive* [Honda All New HR-V]
- (6) *Engineered Beyond Tough* [Mitsubishi Triton]

Data (5) and (6) illustrate two of the four adjective phrase slogans found in the low-priced car category. In (5), the adverb ‘exceptionally’ modifies the head adjective ‘impressive’. In (6),

the head adjective ‘engineered’ is followed by the postmodifier ‘beyond tough’. Most adjectives in this category describe literal attributes, with (5) being the sole exception, employing the figurative adjective ‘impressive’.

(7) *Larger than Life* [Hyundai Staria]

(8) *Designed for wilderness, enjoyed in the city* [Mercedes- Benz GLA200 AMG Line]

A key difference between the two categories is the prevalence of adjective phrase slogans, with the expensive car category using them far more frequently, as seen in Data (7) and (8). In (7), the head adjective ‘larger’ is used figuratively, while in (8), ‘designed’ is used literally. However, across all 14 adjective phrase slogans in the expensive car category, figurative adjectives are more common than literal ones, contrasting with the low-priced car category.

4.1.3 Prepositional phrase

A prepositional phrase begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun, known as the object of the preposition (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Only one car slogan is a prepositional phrase, as seen in Data (9), which belongs to the expensive car category.

(9) *In top form all round* [Mercedes Benz C300]

The syntactic structure of the prepositional phrase ‘In top form, all round’ consists of the preposition ‘in’, the object of the preposition ‘top form’, and a modifier ‘all-round’ that provides additional information about the noun ‘top form’.

4.1.4 Verb phrase

A verb phrase consists of the main verb and any auxiliaries, modifiers, or complements and does not include a subject (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002). Data (10) is a slogan taking on the form of a verb phrase. from the expensive car category:

(10) *Cares for what matters* [Mercedes-Benz S450 4MATIC Luxury]

Only two verb phrase slogans were found in the syntactic form of a verb phrase from the data, one of them can be seen in Data (10). The head verb ‘care’ is followed by the postmodifier ‘for what matters’. This is classified as a verb phrase because it lacks a subject, either explicit or implied.

4.1.5 Clause

Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) define a clause as a grammatical unit containing at least a subject and a predicate. Clauses can be independent (standing alone as sentences) or dependent/subordinate (part of a larger sentence). Clause-form slogans are more common in the low-priced than in the expensive car category.

(11) *Freedom Starts Here* [Toyota New Rush]

(12) *Intelligence is getting exciting* [Mercedes-Benz E200 Avantgarde Line]

Data (11), a low-priced car slogan, illustrates a clause form. It expresses a complete, independent thought. Similarly, Data (12), an expensive car slogan, also takes the form of an independent clause, with ‘intelligence’ as its subject.

4.1.6 Illocutionary acts

Following the syntactic form analysis, the present study proceeds to analyze the illocutionary acts of slogans and discovers that there are only two types of illocutionary acts found in our data: representative and directive.

Table 2. Illocutionary acts in slogans.

Category	Illocutionary act	Subtotal
Low-priced	Representative	20
	Directive	16
Expensive	Representative	39
	Directive	12

Table 2 shows that both low-priced and expensive car slogans primarily use representative illocutionary acts, outnumbering directive acts in both categories.

4.1.7 Representative illocutionary acts

Representative illocutionary acts are predominant in both low-priced and expensive car slogans. These acts aim to make a statement about the product, expressing ideas through verifiable facts, opinions, or other information intended to inform consumers. In car advertisements, representative acts seek to build connections and trust with consumers, establishing a shared understanding.

(13) *Your Better Half* [Honda Mobilio]

(14) *An Extraordinary Sedan* [BMW The 7 Series]

Data (13) and (14) illustrate representative illocutionary acts in low-priced and expensive car slogans, respectively. The slogan in (13) positions the Honda Mobilio as a ‘better half’, a reliable companion, reflecting the brand’s desired consumer perception. Data (14) asserts that the BMW 7 Series is more than just a ‘sedan’, but an extraordinary vehicle. Neither slogan directs consumer action; instead, they establish common ground, allowing consumers to interpret and decide independently. This elusive persuasion strategy empowers the audience to form their own judgments without feeling pressured.

4.1.8 Directive illocutionary acts

Directive illocutionary acts are the second most frequent type in both low-priced and expensive car slogans. Through these acts, brands attempt to encourage or persuade consumers to take action, using requests or commands to elicit specific reactions.

(15) *Forget ordinary, Live Extra* [KIA Sonet]

(16) *Enjoy every edge* [BMW The 4 Series Convertible]

Data (15) and (16) illustrate directive illocutionary acts in low-priced and expensive car slogans, respectively. While both slogans use direct commands, their semantic meanings differ. The slogan in (15) uses a more abstract command, focusing on the feeling the consumer will experience (‘live extra’) rather than a specific car attribute. This type of abstract command is common in directive slogans for low-priced cars. Conversely, the slogan in (16) emphasizes a specific action related to the product (‘enjoy every edge’), with ‘edge’ referring literally or figuratively to the car. Directive illocutionary acts aim to enhance product impact through a demanding or persuasive tone. While structured as commands, (15) and (16) lean toward persuasive encouragement rather than overt demands.

Table 3. Syntactic forms and illocutionary acts in slogans.

Category	Syntactic forms	Representative	Directive
Low-priced	Clause	6	15
	Noun phrase	10	0
	Adjective phrase	4	0
	Verb phrase	0	1
Expensive	Noun phrase	23	0
	Clause	2	12
	Adjective phrase	12	0
	Verb phrase	1	0
	Prepositional phrase	1	0

Table 3 demonstrates a correlation between syntactic form and illocutionary force. Clause-form slogans in both categories primarily employ directive acts. Similarly, noun phrase and adjective phrase slogans in both categories are predominantly representative. The single-verb phrase slogan in the low-priced car category uses a directive act, while the single-verb phrase slogan in the expensive car category uses a representative act.

The higher frequency of phrases in car slogans supports [Markowitz's \(2023\)](#) finding that simplicity is favored in advertising. Phrases offer both simplicity and abstraction, conveying stronger messages that require greater cognitive engagement, thus potentially targeting a more sophisticated audience. The greater use of phrases in expensive car slogans, compared to the more frequent use of clauses in low-priced car slogans, suggests that phrases may resonate more effectively with middle-upper-class consumers, who are generally more educated.

Indonesian car slogans in English tend to be phrases rather than clauses and more often employ representative than directive illocutionary acts. A key difference between low-priced and expensive car slogans lies in their syntactic form. Expensive car slogans lean towards shorter, noun phrase constructions, while low-priced car slogans tend toward longer, clause-based structures. Shorter slogans, while seemingly direct, may still contain significant information. Therefore, a deeper semantic analysis, presented in the next section, is crucial to fully understand the information conveyed within these slogans.

4.2 Fantasy and Hedonism in Car Slogans

To address the second research question, this study examined how fantasy and hedonism are conveyed in car slogans with varying syntactic forms and illocutionary acts, using [Holbrook's \(2006\)](#) classification of customer values. The type of fantasy evoked in the slogans varies by car category, ranging from realistic depictions of basic car functions to symbolic representations of the fantasy associated with car ownership.

4.2.2 Fantasy and hedonism in low-priced cars slogans

Based on the findings regarding syntactic forms and illocutionary acts, several low-priced car slogans with specific forms were selected to illustrate how they convey fantasy and/or hedonism, as shown below.

(17) *Built for Greater Experience* [Toyota Hilux]

(18) *Live All the Playgrounds* [Toyota New Sienta]

(19) *Driving Redefined* [Honda BR-V]

Data (17), a low-priced car slogan, uses an adjective phrase with a representative illocutionary act. Consistent with other findings in this category, fantasy is conveyed through the noun 'experience', which is rooted in the reality of car driving. The adjective 'great' is not hyperbolic. The slogan in (18), with a directive illocutionary act, creates the fantasy that the car enables access to all 'playgrounds', a figurative term for various road types. While fantastical,

this image relates to a basic car function, demonstrating diverse terrains. Low-priced car slogans tend to convey economic value, which is self-oriented and extrinsic. This aligns with the previous finding that these slogans less often use adjective phrases, instead prioritizing nouns, which better communicate economic value. The fantasy induced by both representative and directive acts remains realistic. Because low-priced car slogans create close-to-reality fantasies, they do not primarily focus on Holbrook's (2006) hedonic value of self-image and social status. Therefore, hedonism is not a prevalent theme in this category.

4.2.3 *Fantasy and hedonism in expensive cars slogans*

The fantasy created in car slogans may trigger hedonism in the consumers' lifestyle. The degree of hedonism evoked is related to the type of fantasy created in the slogan (Richard & Habibi, 2016). While low-priced car slogans emphasize economic value, expensive car slogans appeal to hedonic values.

(20) *King of the World* [Toyota All New Land Cruiser]

(21) *Stronger than time, enthroned above it all* [Mercedes-Benz AMG G63]

(22) *The wealth of independence* [Mercedes-Benz - Maybach GLS600]

(23) *Stay in your comfort zone* [Mercedes-Benz C200 Avantgarde Line]

Data (20), an expensive car slogan in noun phrase form, positions the car as a status symbol, evoking the fantasy of becoming 'king of the world', an image unrelated to the car's practical function. While in slogan (21), a verb phrase, mentions a car attribute ('stronger'), it also creates a hedonic fantasy through the word 'enthroned'. Most expensive car slogans embody Holbrook's (2006) hedonic value, which is self-oriented and intrinsic. They frequently employ abstract nouns and persuasive adjectives related to prestige and social status, qualities beyond a car's basic functionality, thus evoking hedonism. The slogan in (23), a noun phrase with a representative act, emphasizes 'wealth', a strong indicator of hedonic value. While Data (20), (21), and (22) use representative acts, Data (23), a clause with a directive act, leans toward economic value due to the term 'comfort'. Hedonistic values are prominently featured in car slogans, often through representative illocutionary acts, regardless of syntactic form.

These findings on fantasy and hedonistic values in car slogans align with Holmqvist et al. (2020), who argue that temporary escapism is central to luxury experiences. Product use is as important as, if not more so than, purchase. While cars are typically bought for functionality, their intrinsic value is also a key consideration. Car manufacturers use slogans to shape consumer perceptions and segment target markets. This study reveals that car slogans tend to be representative rather than directive. These concise phrases and clauses communicate the intrinsic value of cars, functionality, status, or both.

In Indonesia, a non-English speaking country, the automotive industry uses English car slogans. This study demonstrates that English slogans carry underlying meanings: low-priced cars emphasize functionality, while expensive cars emphasize luxury and hedonistic values. These findings correlate with syntactic form. Adjectives, particularly those related to lavish lifestyles, are more common in expensive car slogans. Directive illocutionary acts (commands) are more frequent in low-priced car slogans, suggesting that brands are less likely to directly instruct upper-class consumers regarding their car purchases. This study shows that language is crucial in creating car value, which is determined not only by price but also by associated fantasies. These linguistic choices reflect targeted marketing strategies aimed at specific consumer demographics. Eventually, the language of car advertisements plays a significant role in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions.

5. CONCLUSION

This study illustrated how linguistics can strengthen the persuasiveness of English advertising. In an attempt to discover the syntactic forms and illocutionary acts of car slogans, this present study found that slogans of low-priced cars are relatively shorter, and they take on the form of phrases, meanwhile, slogans of expensive cars are longer and mostly take on the form of clauses. While there is a difference between the syntactic form of slogans in these two categories, the nature of car slogans is similar in terms of their illocutionary acts. In terms of slogans' illocutionary acts, they tend to carry representative illocutionary acts rather than directive illocutionary acts to inform target consumers about a product, build rapport with them, or establish the brand's reputation. While directive illocutionary acts may be seen as more persuasive, they can also be perceived as imperative or forceful, which may evoke a negative impression among customers.

This study further extends the significance of the linguistic aspect of slogans, in a way that slogans can be studied beyond the sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics perspectives as they can also be analyzed in terms of their syntactic aspect. Moreover, the present study attempted to reveal how fantasy and hedonism are conveyed in slogans using a particular linguistic strategy. It was discovered that the fantasy created in car slogans relates to the degree of provocation of hedonism, where the slogans of low-priced cars offer close-to-reality fantasies and minimize the use of adjective phrases. and the provocation of hedonism in them is not as strong as the slogans of the expensive cars, which offer more symbolic fantasies. The provocation of hedonism in expensive cars' slogans encourages indulging oneself with comfort, luxury, and independence, which can be carried out through both phrases and clauses with representative and directive illocutionary acts.

However, the current study is limited to examining car slogans marketed in the Indonesian automotive market that use the English language instead of the Indonesian language as the native language of the target market. Thus, more studies can be done to examine the use of slogans with native language of other countries. In addition, the data used for this research is also limited to investigating syntactic forms and illocutionary acts of slogans. Therefore, further studies can explore other linguistic features of advertisements beyond slogans, such as code-mixing in advertisement features and language characteristics in product descriptions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was funded by Universitas Gadjah Mada under the scheme *Program Peningkatan Academic Excellence Tahun 2023* Universitas Gadjah Mada Number 7725/UN1.P.II/Dit-Lit/PT.01.03/2023.

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