Beyond campaigns: A figurative language approach in Nike's advertisement

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ABSTRACT

In marketing, advertising equals sales. One of the essential aspects of expressing a company's identity and product lies in the language used in advertisements. This comprehensive study explores the use of linguistic strategies for persuasion, focusing specifically on incorporating figurative language in advertisements. Synthesizing theoretical foundations, such as Perloff's (2021) view of persuasion, provides valuable insights into the role of linguistic strategies, particularly figurative language, in creating attractive advertising. Through a qualitative analysis of 80 Nike's print, television, and online advertisements, this study sheds light on the 14 strategic types of figurative language they employ. These include analogy, hyperbole, metaphor, irony, and more, intricately categorized based on Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez's (2022) framework. Nike's skillful use of figurative language emerges as a key theme that contributes to persuasive communication, highlighted by elements of wit, humor, and cultural resonance. By exploring the presence and absence of certain figurative language types in Nike's advertisements, this study offers insight into how Nike's brand distinguishes itself in the marketing landscape. The findings of this study share implications for marketers, advertisers, and scholars interested in understanding the intricacies of persuasive strategy in advertising campaigns.

Keywords: Advertisement; figurative language; linguistic strategies; persuasion

INTRODUCTION

Advertising is a compulsory tool utilized by the marketing team in a company. The key elements of successful ads consist of delivering the company information to the target audience, capturing their attention, persuading them, and finally, generating sales (Anigbogu & Okere, 2021; Rehman et al., 2019; Stoica et al., 2017). One effective way for the company to create advertisements that achieve such goals is by employing linguistic strategies.

Hu et al. (2020) explained that linguistic strategies are the instruments modified by the speakers to mastermind and achieve specific objectives. The notion from Hu et al. (2020) is seamlessly aligned with Perloff's (2021) understanding of persuasion, in which the concept of persuasion often evokes mental images of salespeople and manipulators while also delving into the examination of attitudes and strategies that lead to changes in individuals' perspectives. These linguistic strategies involve skillful language use to encourage individuals to adopt a particular perspective and see the bigger picture of persuasion in any setting (Losi & Rosida, 2022; Tindale, 2022).

With the lens of figures of speech, examining the wider scope of persuasion across various media becomes practical. Harris (2022) underscored that figures of speech have persuasive power derived from their ability to create patterns of attitudes and viewpoints associated with the concepts they intend to emphasize. Therefore, a figurative language approach is needed to employ the appropriate principles of cognitive modeling for a comprehensive grasp and examination of figures of speech that correlates with linguistic strategies (Brown & Miller, 2013; Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). According to Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022), figurative language is divided into 26 distinct types (i.e., *allegory, analogy, anthimeria, anthropomorphism, antiphrasis, antonomasia, banter, hypallage, hyperbole, irony, kenning, merism, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, paradox, paragon, personification, prolepsis, proverbs, sarcasm, satire, simile, synecdoche, synesthesia,* and *zoomorphism*). This section will only explain the three most prominent figurative language types, as the other types can be found in the discussions:

a) **Hyperbole** is the type that involves exaggeration or overstatement. It is known for its direct and powerful impact rather than subtle implications.
b) **Metaphors** work by connecting different ideas, helping to see things in a new way by comparing one thing to another.
c) **Personification** is the term used when humanly features appear as if they were non-human entities.

While the number of figurative language categories differs from one scholar to the other, several previous studies investigated linguistic strategies of persuasion with various focuses. The aforementioned Anigbogu and Okere (2021), Stoica et al. (2017), and Losi and Rosida (2022) adapted persuasive language strategies in their studies. Stoica et al. (2022) provide an overview of the linguistic strategies used in food advertising, including visual strategies and linguistic characteristics. Meanwhile, Anigbogu and Okere (2021) and Losi and Rosida (2022) use a descriptive qualitative method to study a more contemporary focus, the persuasive language used in Stanbic IBTC and Access Banks' online advertisements and Starbucks advertisements on Instagram posts. Figurative language such as metaphor, simile, and hyperbole their studies drew the role of attractive and persuasive language from aligning one's perspective with others to capturing the attention of potential buyers and even bringing sponsorships (Anigbogu & Okere, 2021; Losi & Rosida, 2022; Stoica et al., 2017). Similarly, Auliya and Hastuti (2022) studied persuasive techniques in Maybelline New York Instagram captions using Lamb's theory (2014) and incorporating Bonnaci's theory to discourage colloquial writing. The data used in their study consists of 60 captions posted on Maybelline New York's official Instagram account in 2021. It was found that Maybelline New York used 11 persuasive techniques in their Instagram captions, including simile, hyperbole, and analogy.

However, only a few scholars have discussed figurative language in the advertisement context in their studies using types that usually appear in classic literature and poetry. Angraini (2015) explored the stylistic analysis of Russian advertising slogans in her use of linguistic elements, including rhetorical devices, such as antiphrasis. On the other hand, Al Khanaifsawy (2023) mentioned how proverbs are significant in advertisements, but only focused on this particular type. Types like irony, oxymoron, and synecdoche have also begun to appear in the advertising context (Fazlitdinovna, 2021; Kim & Kim, 2018; Salim & Purwaningtyas, 2023). Still, there needs to be more diversity in categories, with studies often focusing on a limited range of one to four types in each sample. Only one aspect that can be drawn from these scholars is the shared understanding; employing figurative language in modern advertising captivates attention more effectively, and it leaves a lasting impression on the audience through bright and surprising effects.

Based on the abovementioned studies, it becomes evident that more attention needs to be given to examining linguistic persuasion strategies using a figurative language approach, especially those literary-based types that have been rarely or have not yet discussed in the context of advertising. This prejudice is particularly relevant for renowned creative brands such as Nike as it allows for a broader understanding of persuasion across different industries and the exploration of the intricate relationship between various figurative language types. Therefore, this current study seeks to bridge the gap by identifying the linguistic strategies of persuasion and the approach to which figurative language is employed in Nike's advertisements. This inquiry is grounded in the enduring theories derived from Aristotle's rhetorical framework, adapted and enriched by contemporary scholars and academics, including Perloff (2021) and Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022).

METHOD
Research Design
In keeping with Hennink et al.'s (2020) suggestion that qualitative research is ideally suited for comprehending complex processes, such as decision-making, job negotiations, and business management, this study employed a qualitative research design to offer an insightful understanding of the nuances, details, and contextual aspects of persuasion. Furthermore, Silverman and Patterson (2021) believe that the accessibility and transparency of qualitative data enable researchers and the public to examine the study's objective closely. Therefore, this study finds the qualitative research design suitable, given its use of qualitative data, including visual materials, which facilitates a comprehensive analysis of Nike's strategic use of language in their advertising campaigns.

Research Context
The data for this study comprised a collection of Nike advertisements from diverse media platforms, which cover print, television, and online marketing. Meanwhile, the study context contains various product lines, target audiences, and advertising formats, targeting to capture the extensive range of linguistic strategies employed.

Data Collection

The data collection process involved the extraction and documentation of textual content from Nike advertisements to affirm whether the text matches the criteria of the 26 figurative language types. The total data used for identifying the types is 80 texts from various sources online. The identification focused on the ads published in the 70s-90s since present ads mainly consist of more call-to-action and literal expression. Additionally, contextual information related to the advertisements, such as the publication context and accompanying visual elements, were documented to provide detailed and enriched information on each data.

Data Analysis

The data analysis focused on systematically categorizing the linguistic features in the Nike advertisements based on the 26 figurative language types identified by Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022). The goal of the analysis was to identify and report the instances of each figurative language type present in the textual content of the advertisements by counting the frequency of each of the 26 types of figurative language, decoding the results, making inferences based on the findings, and drawing conclusions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data in this study were analyzed using Pea-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibánez's (2022) theory of figurative language. As stated in the introduction, figurative language is classified into 26 types. The data were gathered from numerous sources, including Nike's Instagram, Nike's website, and Pinterest. It was found that 14 out of 26 types were used in Nike's advertisement. The distribution of figurative language used in their advertisements is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Figurative Language in Nike Advertisement

No	Figurative Language	Data found
1.	Allegory	0
2.	Analogy	2
3.	Anthimeria	0
4.	Anthropomorphism	0
5.	Antiphrasis	5
6.	Antonomasia	0
7.	Banter	0
8.	Hypallage	0
9.	Hyperbole	7
10.	Irony	4
11.	Kenning	0
12.	Merism	3
13.	Metaphor	9
14.	Metonymy	3
15.	Oxymoron	2
16.	Paradox	4
17.	Paragon	0
18.	Personification	8
19.	Prolepsis	0
20.	Proverbs	2
21.	Sarcasm	0
22.	Satire	0
23.	Simile	3
24.	Synecdoche	2
25.	Synesthesia	1
26.	Zoomorphism	0
	Total	**55**

The data interpretation from the advertisements is discussed in greater detail below. To ensure clarity and conciseness, findings from a subset of 14 types of identified ads are discussed with only one of the identified ads used to explain each category.

Analogy

Analogy is a figure of speech based on the relationship of partial and entire structure similarities between two concepts or ideas (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). It involves altering a form to resemble another, with irregular ones often adjusted to make them more akin to regular forms (Brown & Miller, 2013). Bringing forward the use of analogy through the sample presented below:

Our running shoes can tell a lot about our tennis shoes

The phrase above involves a form of analogy in drawing a comparison between two different types of shoes to make a point. Moreover, the phrase suggests a connection or correlation between the characteristics, preferences, or experiences associated with Nike's running shoes and those associated with their tennis shoes. In alignment with the present study, Auliya and Hastuti (2022) share a comparable perspective on emphasizing the role of analogy in contrasting complex subjects or proving arguments. They specifically note that an analogy involves comparing two items. Illustrating this concept in their research, they examined the statement, "*Our #flasieslashlift mascara is perfect for long lifted lashes and that fresh from the salon look!*" (p. 26) as a persuasive strategy. This example highlights the use of analogy to convey that applying the product can create similar results to professional salon makeup.

Antiphrasis

Antiphrasis is often seen as using words in senses that contradict their usual meanings, often with an ironic or humorous intent (Dupriez, 1991, as cited in Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022, p. 248). See following sample to exemplify antiphrasis:

Don't talk about it, be about it

In this context, the phrase suggests that actions speak louder than words and emphasizes the importance of taking concrete steps rather than merely discussing or planning. It encourages individuals to demonstrate their commitment through their actions, highlighting the value of tangible effort and dedication. A study from Anggraini (2015) showed a similar finding regarding antiphrasis in "*Here could be your body*" (p. 87) on a billboard that refers to the word '*body*' appositively as a dead body, not an advertisement.

Hyperbole

As defined by Brown and Miller (2013), hyperbole is about exaggeration or overstatement. As observed in the accompanying sample:

Gravity will never be the same

The phrase above is considered hyperbole because it does not explicitly affirm its surface proposition but simulates as if expressing such a statement (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). In this case, the statement suggests a change in the concept of gravity, an exaggeration to emphasize a significant impact or transformation made by the advertised Nike product. This finding aligns with the conception and discovery of hyperbole in the previous study by Losi and Rosida (2022), exemplified in "*The oat milk brown sugar drink at Starbucks is so good I'm close to tears*" (p. 60). The phrase "*I'm close to tears*," aims to emphasize the significance of an issue or the focal point of the topic, which is the oat milk brown sugar drink from Starbucks. Another similar finding from Auliya and Hastuti (2022) also seems to indicate the equivalent appeal of hyperbole, showed in the introduction of a new product of Maybelline Sky-High Mascara shade Cosmic Black caption "*Lashes so long they're in another UNIVERSE!*" (p. 60). However, in Anigbogu and Okere's (2021) study, the use of hyperbole, as in "*Grab your share of the ₦50,000 prize money*" (p. 45), seems slightly different from the present and the mentioned findings from previous studies. Nevertheless, if the statement represents unrealistic and impossible factors with implicit promises or big claims, it is considered hyperbole (Anigbogu & Okere, 2021; Auliya & Hastuti, 2022).

Irony

As per Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022), irony stands as an instance of figurative language that leads to a misleading truth to give an as-if scenario and humor sense to the target readers. Harris (2022) agreed that irony is related to humorous effect. However, Taemin Kim and Okhyun Kim (2018) argue that humor and ironic

advertising are subtly different. Have a look at this example below:

When your sons play the tuba, no one wins

The phrase above proves that understanding ironic ads relies on viewers' intellectual abilities to grasp messages, while humor ads usually do not require the same level of intellectual engagement. Regarding the dynamics of persuasion, Perloff (2021) emphasized that nowadays, persuasive communication is marked by indirect and subtle appeals, which is in line with the concept of irony. This strategy adopts a soft-sell approach and occasionally carries a slightly devious undertone. Therefore, when we consider ideas about irony from the four scholars above, the phrase "When your sons play the tuba, no one wins" becomes an example of irony. It combines the intellectual abilities to understand the meaning of the advertisement and the unexpectedness and incoherent elements of someone's son playing tuba and advertising a Nike kid's soccer shoe.

Merism

Merism contains differentiating factors that result from combining different concepts (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). As seen in the sample below:

From B-ball courts to the streets

The phrase integrates different types of places, such as basketball courts and streets, to represent the versatility of the Nike Blazer shoe. If we adopt the merism concept proposed by Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022), combining diverse locations such as basketball courts and streets signifies a broad range of places. This use of merism mirrors the concept of combining several situations related to a common scenario (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). A similar illustration can be found in the case of marriage vows, where the spouses promise to love each other in whatever circumstance: "*for better for worse*," "*for richer for poorer*," "*in sickness and in health*" (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022, p. 174). Therefore, the phrase "*From B-ball courts to the streets*" essentially demonstrates the use of merism.

Metaphor

Metaphor compares one thing to another to create a new perspective (Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). In this sample below:

You can take the superhero out of her costume, but you never take away her superpowers

Metaphor is evident because it involves a comparison between A and B. The phrase suggests that the '*her*' has abilities or qualities similar to those typically associated with superheroes. On the contrary, in Anigbogu and Okere's (2021) study, where they analyzed the

phrase "*Time to be a Hero!*," the metaphor of '*hero*' does not involve comparing A to B as in Nike's example above. Nike emphasizes Serena's strengths, talents, or integrity by using her picture in the background to highlight her contribution to tennis, which parallels superhero characters in terms of their contribution to saving people or doing good deeds.

Meanwhile, Anigbogu and Okere (2021) pointed out in their study that the metaphor of '*be a hero*' does not mean anything substantial and is merely a way to make products and services sound upright without much substance behind it. When it comes to persuasion dynamics, metaphors have the power to influence attitudes, boost mental perception, and encourage people by arousing their emotions. As a result, they increase the likelihood that an advertisement will be successful and help the audience relate to the message more (Perloff, 2021; Stoica et al., 2017).

Metonymy

According to Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022), metonymy is when one thing is used to represent something else that is related. Consider this sample:

McEnroe swears by them

In the context of the phrase above, McEnroe, an American former tennis player, is used as a substitute for something related to him, which is the preference of using Nike shoes when playing tennis. The phrase suggests that McEnroe strongly supports or endorses the shoe because when this ad ran in 1981, McEnroe won Wimbledon simultaneously (Burgoyne, 2018). This conception and finding of metonymy are similar to what Stoica et al. (2017) found in their study. They understand metonymy as a figure of speech wherein the name of a characteristic or object is interchanged with the actual entity. Moreover, they added that metonymy is commonly found in advertisements where the product is associated with a person or environment. This view confirms the phrase "*McEnroe swears by them*" metonymic, similar to Stoica et al.'s example in their study (2017) from the Diet Sprite ad, "*Nothing lighter than zero*" (p. 196). Moreover, employing metonymy seems to boost the effectiveness of advertisements in reaching the target audience. For instance, substituting the term '*lippies*' for '*lipsticks*' in "*Get ready for new lippies*" (Metonymy Language Style Section, para. 1) appears to be a strategic choice. This adaptation is designed to resonate more effectively with teenagers or the younger generation, who may be more familiar with the word '*lippies*' (Salim & Purwaningtyas, 2023).

Oxymoron

Oxymoron is one of the examples of semantic absurdity and cross-domain contrast commonly utilized to highlight a specific perspective or concept (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). As can be seen in the sample below:

Affordable Sweat

The word '*affordable*' suggests low cost or accessibility juxtaposed with '*sweat*,' which typically conveys effort or hard work. The combination creates a thought-provoking contrast, as the word '*sweat*' is not generally associated with affordability but instead with exertion or labor. Furthermore, Fazlitdinovna (2021) shows an insightful finding of an oxymoron in advertising. She argues that oxymorons are commonly employed in advertising as a highly effective attention-grabbing tool because of their brightness, surprise factor, and easy-remembering characteristics. When illustrating her examples of oxymorons from famous book and TV show titles, such as "*True Lies*," "*CatDog*," "*Pretty Ugly*," and "*Big Little Lies*" (p. 116), she asserts that an oxymoron can be true in a figurative sense but not in a literal sense because it contains only a few contradictory words paired together, rather than a complete statement of ideas.

Paradox

A paradox occurs when there is an internal conflict between default interpretations of different statement aspects (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022).

Still fresh after 30 years

Evident from the sample provided above, the phrase characterized a self-contradictory statement that, upon closer examination, reveals a truth that reconciles the contradictions (Stoica et al., 2017). In addition, Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022) and Fazlitdinovna (2021) demonstrate a shared notion of the similarity between paradox and oxymoron. They agreed that paradoxes require critical thinking to make sense, which often involves shifting frames of reference. Meanwhile, oxymorons differ by contrasting and reframing terms representing objects or their properties rather than predictions or propositions. Therefore, "*Still fresh after 30 years*" involves a paradox by emphasizing the durability and enduring appeal of something usually associated with freshness. It is a complete statement rather than collective terms, as in the previous "*affordable sweat*." Moreover, the contradiction between "*still fresh*" and "*30 years*" tests the predictable understanding of freshness as being related to newness by suggesting that the subject has maintained its freshness over a long period.

Personification

Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022) define personification as the use of figurative language to make human traits or actions seem like non-human entities, whether actual or imagined (e.g., natural or artificial items). Tindale (2022) agrees that personification targets abstract concepts using human entities as the source. Illustrated in the example below, it becomes apparent that the phrase attributes human-like qualities, which is the ability to receive or benefit from a hug to the non-human entity of feet.

Give your feet a hug

Moreover, the use of personification in Nescafé's slogan "*Optimism wakes up with Nescafé*" (p. 197) from Stoica et al.'s (2017) study employed a similar personification scheme as this present study, with the phrase "*wakes up*" being attributed to human-like qualities. They also underscored that using personification in advertising is common because it stimulates products to create drama, interest, appeal, and familiarity for potential customers, which creates a sense of relatability to the ad.

Additionally, a notable distinction arises between this present study and Stoica et al.'s (2017) studies versus Anigbogu and Okere's (2021). The example of personification they provide, "*You've got needs. It's got powers!*" (p. 43) is somewhat ambiguous. The phrase needs more clarity, particularly with '*It is*,' as it is left unexplained without context, image, or additional details. While the overall phrase can still be recognized as personification, with '*powers*' embodying a human-like quality, the inclusion of '*It is*' introduces an element of oddity and absurdity.

Proverbs

According to Brown and Miller (2013), proverbs are memorable sayings that articulate recognized truths or moral lessons. As indicated by the sample below, the ad that contains proverb shared the conviction nuances for the reader (Al Khanaifsawy, 2023).

To the most prepared, go major results

Following Perloff's (2021) emphasis on decision-making, which highlights the tendency to ignore conflicting perspectives and instead focus on reaffirming the wisdom of the chosen option, the Nike ad proverb above gains significance. It vividly illustrates how proverbs, as carriers of societal beliefs, provide valuable insights into human behavior, shedding light on the inclination to affirm decisions and seek reinforcement (Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022; Perloff, 2021). Moreover, this finding on the proverbs type seems interesting since other related previous studies have not yet discovered this type of figurative language.

Simile

Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022) explained that simile is employed by explicitly calling for comparison. The simile is demonstrated in the following sample from Nike's ACG (All Conditions Gear) lineup, Blazerboat shoes:

Strut like a fish

In a paragraph of the ad, Nike further describes simile as the movement of someone walking confidently using the Blazerboat shoes to associate its quick-dry feature with the smooth and purposeful movements of a trout fish when they use their gills in the water. This paragraph indicates Nike's intention to guide the audience in recognizing similarities between two ideas: the Blazerboat shoe features and a trout fish. The purpose is to use one idea as a basis for reasoning about the other, without conflating their roles but rather understanding one idea in terms of the other (Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022). The use of similes is also often found in previous studies from Stoica et al. (2017), Auliya and Hastuti (2022), and Salim and Purwaningtyas (2023). In their illustrations, such as "*Stop staring at me like I'm some piece of meat Big Mac*" (p. 196), "*Doing your makeup in a rush counts as cardio, right?*" (p. 26), and "*the perfect nude brown color that goes on as light as water and feels like nothing at all*" (Simile Language Style, para. 1), clearly utilized the simile keywords '*as*' and '*like*,' identically to the instance above presented in this current study. These collective findings from the previous studies also align with their understanding of simile features, emphasizing their role in highlighting positive attributes of the promoted product and creating a vivid mental image in the audience's imagination for a simplified visualization of the product.

Synecdoche

Synecdoche applies when a part of something represents the whole thing or vice versa (Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022).

If you need a reason to dream crazy, here's eleven

In the phrase above, Nike represents the word '*eleven*' to the entire women's soccer team, with each player representing a part of the collective whole. Using the number of team members, the phrase implies that each player contributes to the team's overall strength and success as a reason to dream big. This result substantiates Peña-Cervel and Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez's (2022) viewpoint on synecdoche, which includes any domain-subdomain relationships and transfer of meaning within figurative language. Moreover, Salim and Purwaningtyas (2023) found that using synecdoche in advertising has the advantage of

quickly capturing the reader's interest, resulting in a rapid increase in sales for a company. In their study, the synecdoche from @*dazzleme_id* on Instagram, "*Now you know why everyone loves Dazzle Me Mousse Lip Cream*," (Synecdoche Language Section, para. 1) clearly expresses the whole population to express a part. It uses the word '*everyone*' to claim that the advertised product is publicly loved, even though it might not be accurate and proven. Their example of synecdoche is similar to this present study regarding using indefinite pronouns. '*Everyone*' is an indefinite pronoun representing all people who significantly share a wide range of perspectives appreciating the product. Meanwhile, '*eleven*' is an indefinite pronoun representing a more extensive set of reasons to imply that there are even more reasons beyond the mentioned eleven.

Synesthesia

In synesthesia, one sense is explained using words that typically describe a different sense (Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez, 2022).

Hit the ball as loud as you can

The phrase above combines the sense of touch, "*hit the ball*," with the sense of hearing, "*as loud as you can*," which creates a cross-sensory experience by suggesting that the impact of hitting the ball can be equated to a sound, even though hitting a ball does not produce a sound loud enough to be heard. Likewise, Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022) provided an example of synesthesia as in the present study, where it is implied that one sense is described in terms of the other sense. They used the '*Inferno*' of Dante's "*Divine Comedy*" (p. 163), where it is depicted as the region in which *the sun is silent*. This image links the senses of vision (the sun) and hearing (silence) to be used alternately. Therefore, the phrase "*Hit the ball as loud as you can*" can be interpreted within the same concept of synesthesia as in the example of '*Inferno*' provided by Peña-Cervel & Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez (2022). The finding of this synesthesia type also brings a noteworthy aspect to this study, especially considering that earlier related studies have not yet disclosed this particular form of figurative language.

Derived from the analysis above, it becomes evident that a key factor in Nike's advertising recognition stems from their effective use of figurative language. Nike employs diverse figurative language types to serve as a persuasive strategy, effectively capturing and influencing their audience.

CONCLUSION

This study discovered the Nike's application of 14 types of figurative language (i.e., analogy, antiphrasis, hyperbole, irony, merism, metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron, paradox, personification, proverbs, simile, synecdoche, and synesthesia), with each type contributed strategically in showcasing brand's ability to convey messages with wit, humor, depth, and cultural resonance.

The no-show of references in the merism, proverbs, and synesthesia types also proves Nike's competence in distinguishing their brand from competitors. Meanwhile, the other 12 types (i.e., *allegory*, *anthimeria*, *anthropomorphism*, *antonomasia*, *banter*, *hypallage*, *kenning*, *paragon*, *prolepsis*, *sarcasm*, *satire*, and *zoomorphism*) are considered to be more contextual to use in advertising since it mainly appeared in literary works. Moreover, with today's trend of soft-selling advertisements, Nike uses more literal and call-to-action expressions because the samples are mainly their advertisements from the 90s.

As Nike continues to innovate in their advertising campaigns, the findings above serve as a foundational framework for future explorations in the ever-evolving landscape of marketing communication. Reflecting on the communitive perception that Nike is one of the benchmarks of sports brands globally, it is intriguing how their language plays a role in their advertisement. The premise of language as simply a communication tool is defeated by Nike's creativity in creating advertisements with the nuance of figurative language that is simultaneously worth digging deeper into.

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