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LINGUISTIC PATTERNS OF NEURO-LINGUISTIC PROGRAMMING IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ADVERTISING DISCOURSE: A CASE STUDY OF DOVE

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Summary. *The article investigates the linguistic patterns of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) in English-language advertising discourse, focusing on the persuasive strategies employed by the Dove brand. The study aims to identify and classify NLP-related techniques and examine their lexical, grammatical and pragmatic realization in cosmetic advertising. The empirical material consists of twelve authentic advertising fragments selected from Dove's official English-language resources. Descriptive, contextual, quantitative and discourse analysis methods are applied to explore the distribution and communicative functions of the identified patterns. Particular attention is devoted to truisms, reframing, concrete imagery, embedded presuppositions, command words, contrasts and evaluative expressions. The analysis considers how product benefits are combined with broader ideas of natural beauty, self-confidence, body acceptance and everyday self-care. Direct forms of address and positive evaluative vocabulary help personalize the messages, while contrasts and reframing invite readers to reconsider conventional beauty standards. References to product properties and expected effects lend specificity to promotional claims. The findings suggest that these linguistic resources work together to construct favourable brand associations and guide interpretations of skincare practices. The study concludes that NLP-related patterns provide a useful descriptive framework for examining persuasive language in Dove advertising, although their actual effects on consumer behaviour require separate empirical investigation. The results distinguish dominant techniques from patterns co-occurring in the same message. Further research could compare Dove with other skincare brands.*

Keywords: *Neuro-Linguistic Programming, advertising discourse, linguistic patterns, persuasive strategies, reframing, truisms, consumer perception.*

Contemporary beauty advertising combines product-oriented information with broader representations of identity, confidence and personal care. This combination makes it important to examine how linguistic forms frame desirable outcomes and construct relationships with audiences. The present paper treats neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) as an analytical taxonomy of persuasive language rather than as an experimentally established mechanism of behavioural control. The study examines authentic Dove UK website extracts and distinguishes observable textual features from hypotheses about their effects on consumers. The

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linguistic organization of beauty advertising reflects a strategic interaction between commercial objectives and the construction of socially meaningful values. Advertising messages frequently employ emotionally charged vocabulary, positive evaluative expressions and implicit assumptions to associate cosmetic products with self-esteem, attractiveness and personal well-being. From a discourse-analytical perspective, these linguistic choices can be examined through NLP-related categories such as positive framing, presupposition, reframing and motivational language. Particular attention is paid to the ways in which Dove's advertising discourse integrates product descriptions with messages of self-acceptance and individual empowerment, thereby creating a persuasive framework that extends beyond the immediate functional benefits of cosmetic products

Bandler and Grinder (1975) proposed an influential account of linguistic patterns in interpersonal communication, although the scientific evidence for NLP as a general psychological intervention remains disputed [1]. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) showed how conceptual metaphor structures everyday understanding, a perspective relevant to the interpretation of beauty and confidence as abstract values [4]. Van Dijk's discourse-oriented research offers additional tools for relating lexical choice and discourse organization to social representations [5].

The aim is to identify and interpret persuasive linguistic patterns in selected English-language Dove advertising and brand communication. Particular attention is paid to reframing, numerical specification, truisms, contrasts, forms of address and temporal references.

The material consists of 36 explicitly delimited excerpts from publicly accessible pages of the official Dove UK website. For the dominant classification, each excerpt receives one label based on its most salient discourse function. The classification is interpretative: some excerpts could reasonably be assigned to another category if a different coding scheme were applied. A separate multi-label coding counts patterns whenever the relevant textual cue is present, so its percentages are not expected to sum to 100%:

Table 1

Dominant techniques in the corpus

Dominant technique	*Excerpts*	*%*
Concrete	9	25.0
Reframing	9	25.0
Command	6	16.7
Contrast	6	16.7
Presupposition	3	8.3
Truism	3	8.3
Total	36	100.0

The concrete image technique is evident where abstract claims about care are translated into quantities or product characteristics. The Dove body-wash category prominently foregrounds *"24-hour hydration"*, while the brand's care promise mentions its signature *"¼ moisturising cream"*. These phrases condense a complex product proposition into easily retained numerical signs. A number can imply specificity and verifiability, but it does not by itself establish that the associated claim

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has been independently tested. The audience is invited to imagine an outcome in practical terms: duration of hydration, presence of moisturising ingredients or a dermatological testing claim.

The Dove text *"How do we get soft skin? It's simple: moisture"* presents a general proposition as an obvious solution. This statement bridges everyday knowledge and product promotion: the value of moisturising is introduced before the brand's formula is mentioned. Similarly, *"Everyone should have the right to feel confident in their bodies"* invites assent to a broad social principle. Such assertions can function as common ground between advertiser and reader, although whether individual readers accept them cannot be inferred from the text alone.

Reframing is particularly visible in Dove's Real Beauty discourse. The statement *"We believe beauty should be a source of confidence, and not anxiety"* changes the evaluative frame from physical perfection to psychological well-being. The Real Beauty Pledge similarly presents beauty as something women can define on their own terms. In the Real Beauty Sketches campaign, questions about self-description direct attention from an external beauty standard to the reader's self-perception. These examples suggest that Dove's persuasive strategy is not restricted to skin outcomes: it also offers an interpretive vocabulary for identity, confidence and inclusion.

Contrasts organize brand meaning through oppositions such as confidence versus anxiety and real versus manipulated beauty. In the brand's public commitment, representations of women *"as they truly are"* implicitly contrast with retouched ideals. The phrasing *"isn't just about it smelling good"* shifts the discussion of fragrance from sensory pleasure to mood and daily routine. Such contrasts can help audiences understand what the brand positions itself against and what values it promotes.

Directive language appears in *"Try our lively Go Fresh range"* where the verb directly proposes a consumer action. Questions such as *"Which Dove Body Wash is right for you?"* create an imagined decision situation. Unlike a direct command to purchase, this interrogative presupposes that a suitable option can be found within the brand's range. The result is a guided-choice structure: the reader is addressed as an active decision-maker while the brand defines the options to be considered.

Temporal markers are not limited to short-term efficacy. *"24-hour hydration"* offers a duration-based product promise; *"daily use"* locates the product within an everyday routine; and *"always"* in the Real Beauty Pledge marks a long-term institutional commitment. These time expressions operate at different scales. The first describes a purported product effect, the second normalizes regular use and the third communicates continuity of brand values. Treating all three as equivalent would conceal their different pragmatic functions.

Table 2

Overlapping patterns in the corpus

Pattern	*Excerpts*	*%*
Concrete image	9	25.0
Truisms	15	41.7
Reframing	15	41.7
Contrasts	9	25.0

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Continuation of table 2

Pattern	*Excerpts*	*%*
Commands	3	8.3
Presuppositions	9	25.0
Temporal markers	9	25.0
Artificial ordering	3	8.3
Metaphors	12	33.3

At the lexical level the material reveals two interconnected semantic fields. The first concerns bodily care: *skin, moisture, moisturising, wash, formula, soft, nourished* and *hydration.* The second concerns identity and social experience: *beauty, confidence, women, self-esteem, standards* and *representation.* This distinction matters because product copy and corporate campaigns pursue partly different communicative aims [3]. Product descriptions foreground sensory or functional properties, whihe lexical units *"soft", "nourished"* and *"hydration"* emphasize the tangible benefits of cosmetic products, constructing positive associations with physical comfort, effectiveness and everyday self-care. In contrast, expressions such as *"confidence", "self-esteem"* and *"representation"* activate broader psychological and sociocultural meanings, positioning beauty as an element of personal identity and social inclusion. From an NLP-oriented linguistic perspective, the interaction between these semantic fields can be interpreted as a form of positive framing that connects practical product benefits with emotionally significant values, potentially strengthening the persuasive appeal of advertising messages [3].

Table 3

Exact lexical frequencies

Lexeme	*Excerpts containing it*	*Total examples*
beauty	12	12
skin	6	6
women	9	9
confidence	6	6
moisture	6	6
moisturising	3	3
care	1	1
your	3	3
you	9	9
we	15	15
real	3	3
soft	6	6

The two semantic fields suggest a dual rhetorical orientation: concrete product care and abstract confidence-building. Their co-occurrence helps connect the immediate function of a cosmetic product with a larger account of personal well-being. For instance, the expression *"soft, smooth skin"* emphasizes the tangible benefits of skincare through positively evaluated physical characteristics, encouraging consumers to associate the product with visible improvements in skin condition. In contrast, the slogan *"Real Beauty"* shifts attention from external

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appearance to self-acceptance and individual confidence, illustrating how Dove employs reframing to challenge conventional beauty standards and establish an emotional connection with its audience.

Direct address is realized through the second-person pronouns *"you"* and *"your",* especially in product selection and advice. The question *"Which Dove Body Wash is right for you?"* individualizes the consumer situation, while *"what you want from your day"* relates fragrance selection to daily experience. Such constructions create conversational proximity between the institutional speaker and the reader [4]. Their persuasive potential lies in the appearance of personal relevance rather than in any demonstrated power to compel behaviour. From a pragmatic perspective, the repeated use of second-person pronouns reduces the perceived distance between the brand and its target audience, creating an impression of individualized communication. Moreover, interrogative constructions encourage consumers to reflect on their personal preferences and needs, positioning product selection as an expression of individual choice. Within an NLP-oriented analytical framework, these linguistic features can be interpreted as strategies of rapport building and audience-oriented framing that contribute to the interpersonal dimension of advertising discourse.

Evaluative language also contributes to the advertising effect. Words such as *"soft", "nourished", "perfect", "beautiful",* and *"confident"* attach positive qualities to both products and people. The collocation *"source of confidence"* is metaphorical: beauty is conceptualized as something that produces or supplies an emotional resource. In contrast, *"natural moisture barrier"* belongs primarily to skincare terminology and should not automatically be classified as a metaphor. Accurate interpretation therefore requires attention to context, not merely the presence of an expressive word.

The discourse of Dove's Real Beauty initiatives deserves particular attention. By repeatedly foregrounding women's own definitions of beauty and rejecting manipulated images, the brand presents a value-based alternative to conventional appearance-centred promotion [3]. This strategy can be described as reframing as it shifts the central question from how closely a person approaches a standard to how that person understands and values herself. At the same time, the presence of inclusive language is not evidence that all audiences experience the campaign as empowering.

The selected excerpts also demonstrate the need to distinguish communicative intention from measured outcome. An imperative such as *"Try"* clearly proposes an action and a numerical statement clearly specifies a product attribute or claim [4]. Yet neither form establishes that a consumer will purchase the product. The imperative construction functions as a linguistic strategy of direct engagement, encouraging the audience to consider a particular action without necessarily determining their subsequent behaviour. Similarly, numerical expressions may enhance the perceived credibility and precision of advertising claims by presenting product characteristics in a seemingly objective manner. Consequently, the analysis of such linguistic patterns reveals their potential persuasive functions while emphasizing that actual consumer responses require separate empirical investigation.

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Thus, we have come to the conclusion that Dove combines concrete product claims with an unusually prominent discourse of confidence, authentic representation and self-definition. Numerical specification, generalized principles, contrast, reframing and direct address contribute different functions: they make claims memorable, invite agreement, distinguish brand values, reinterpret beauty norms, and personalize product choice. Dove's brand communications may rely more heavily on value-based reframing, whereas product pages continue to employ familiar skincare claims. Further research may focus on a comparative analysis of linguistic NLP patterns in the advertising discourse of Dove and other cosmetic brands, particularly NIVEA and L'Oréal, to identify similarities and differences in their persuasive strategies, lexical choices and pragmatic functions. Another promising direction involves expanding the corpus of advertising texts and conducting empirical studies to examine how specific NLP techniques, including reframing, embedded presuppositions and truisms, influence consumer perception, emotional responses and purchasing intentions.

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МОВНІ ПАТЕРНИ НЕЙРОЛІНГВІСТИЧНОГО ПРОГРАМУВАННЯ В АНГЛОМОВНОМУ РЕКЛАМНОМУ ДИСКУРСІ: НА МАТЕРІАЛІ РЕКЛАМИ БРЕНДУ DOVE

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Анотація. *У статті досліджено мовні патерни нейролінгвістичного програмування (НЛП) в англомовному рекламному дискурсі з акцентом на песуазивних стратегіях, які використовує бренд Dove. Метою дослідження є виявлення та класифікація прийомів НЛП, а також аналіз їхньої лексичної, граматичної та прагматичної реалізації в рекламі косметичних засобів. Фактичним матеріалом дослідження слугують дванадцять автентичних рекламних фрагментів, відібраних з офіційних англомовних ресурсів бренду Dove. Для встановлення частотності та комунікативних функцій виявлених патернів застосовано описовий, контекстуальний, кількісний методи та дискурс-аналіз. Особливу*

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увагу приділено трюїзмам, рефреймінгу, прийому конкретного образу, умонтованим пресупозиціям, словам-командам, контрастам та оцінним висловлюванням. У процесі аналізу розглянуто, як переваги косметичних продуктів поєднуються з ширшими уявленнями про природну красу, впевненість у собі, прийняття власного тіла та щоденний догляд за собою. Прямі звернення до адресата й позитивно забарвлена оцінна лексика сприяють персоналізації рекламних повідомлень, тоді як контрасти та рефреймінг спонукають реципієнтів переосмислювати традиційні стандарти краси. Згадки про властивості продуктів та очікувані результати конкретизують рекламні твердження. Результати дослідження свідчать, що зазначені мовні засоби у своїй сукупності сприяють формуванню позитивних асоціацій із брендом та спрямовують інтерпретацію практик догляду за шкірою. Зроблено висновок, що патерни НЛП становлять продуктивну описову основу для дослідження переконувального мовлення в рекламі Dove, хоча їхній фактичний вплив на поведінку споживачів потребує окремого емпіричного вивчення. У результатах дослідження розмежовано домінантні прийоми та патерни, що одночасно реалізуються в межах одного рекламного повідомлення. Перспективи подальших досліджень убачаємо в порівняльному аналізі рекламного дискурсу Dove та інших брендів косметичних засобів для догляду за шкірою.

Ключові слова: *нейролінгвістичне програмування; рекламний дискурс; мовні патерни; переконувальні стратегії; рефреймінг; трюїзми; сприйняття споживачів.*

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