

Rhetorical Syllogism in the English and the German Language of Automobile Advertising

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ABSTRACT

The language of advertising has a powerful impact on the branding of automobiles and sustaining its customer's loyalty. This study aims to identify the arguments used in advertisements; particularly on its claims, warrants and data to influence the automobile buyers in a diverse international market. It analyses the rhetorical devices and language equivalence used in the English and German print advertisements. A contrastive analysis of three cars' print advertisements, namely Mercedes Benz, BMW and Volkswagen from the German and Malaysian English dailies was carried out using Toulmin's model to identify the arguments and the rhetorical devices used in the advertisements. The study reveals two main similarities, particularly in the arguments put forth as well as the stylistic approach of the advertisements. The BMW and Mercedes Benz focused on their technological superiority and advancements, while the Volkswagen focused on its affordability. The German adverts were more persuasive and directed the buyers for action compared to the English adverts that provided more data and warrants. The BMW adverts also utilised a closed form compound adjectives such as "ConnectedDrive" to sustain the "hybrid concept" stylistic in line with the contemporary automobile advancement that focuses on hybrid cars. The use of figurative language was more prevalent in the English adverts compared to the German adverts to portray its internationalisation status of the car. These elements contribute to the pedagogical implications of teaching and learning foreign language; particularly for diverse writing purposes as well as planning business language for the different genres.

Keywords: automobile; arguments; claims; rhetorical devices; Toulmin model

INTRODUCTION

With the current global marketing phenomenon, language has become the linchpin for various organisations, multi-national companies and industries to advertise their products in different countries to meet their organisation's global needs and market diversity. The language of advertising influences the purchasing behaviour of its customers by providing information and persuading them to buy a certain product. Generally, the adverts make specific claims to influence the customers. For example, Herald (2008) noted that customers purchase automobiles either for functional needs, psychological needs or as a status symbol.

However, studies on advertising language generally centre on the effectiveness of advertising language (McQuarrie & Mick, 1996); perception and attitudes on brand product (Ahluwalia, 2008; Nicol, 2001); conceptual and lexical levels of representation (Peracchio & Levy, 2005); use of language mix (Wu & Chan, 2007) as well as the use of foreign language structure in local adverts (Martin & Nakayama, 2005). Little is probed into the comparative analysis of the automobile advertising rhetorics. A study by Burns, Ferrel and Orrick (2005) on claims by automobiles examined on the accurate and inaccurate claims made by the automobile industry but the study did not analyse the rhetorical aspect of the language in making claims for the various automobile industry. This study, therefore seeks to understand the rhetorics of advertising language that is used in the automobile industries, particularly in making various claims and warrants to convince their customers. As language communicates meanings, it also evokes one's curiosity if two different advertisements from the same automobile company produce the same messages for their customers in the different parts of the world. Based on a random selection of BMW, Mercedes Benz and Volkswagen advertisements in two languages, this study aims to identify the claims and warrants asserted in the English and the German adverts rhetorically.

The study also analyses the rhetorical devices in the content and form to identify the language equivalence in the Malaysian and German automobile print advertisements. This study however, is limited to the use of rhetorical device only and does not encompass elements of culture as in the context of German and Malaysian culture. The authors seek to answer the following questions in the study:

1. Do international automobile companies produce the same arguments for their customers in the different countries?
2. What type of diction, tone, stylistic and meanings are associated with the advertisements portrayed in the automobile advertisements?
3. What are the similarities or differences present in the use of rhetorics in the automobile advertisements?

PAST STUDIES ON PRINT ADVERTISEMENTS

Language is a powerful tool used to evoke the readers appeal to make the necessary response. The appeals may differ according to different needs, context, writing styles or genre and encapsulate both formal and non-formal written output in the professional and non-professional context. In the language of advertising for example, a variety of attention seeking device (Goddard, 1998) is utilised to evoke the responses. Every element of code utilised in the written form signifies a certain element in the context that is presented. Parina (2010) in his study of email discourse, for one has demonstrated how codification in non-formal writing is linked to the three different sensorial, emotive and intellectual values. He also featured how codification helps to understand that people in different culture write in different styles. While the language of advertising needs to be concise and manifest a great impact, every element used via the codification also portrays the different styles in putting forth a message creatively. Hence, it is pertinent to understand how language is used creatively and skillfully to evoke a variety of response from the readers and presented to a variety of readers in different settings. Messages, particularly in advertisements should leave a winning impact on the readers.

In the context of advertisements, research has been ascertained to the analyses of print adverts; mainly of consumer perception and brand attributes in magazine adverts (Gustav, Pierre, Michael, 1999) print advert and cross-cultural study (Hatzithomas et al., 2011) the use of figures of speech in prints (Leigh, 1994) language-mixing in print advertising (Martin, 2008) cross-cultural advertising strategies in global market (Agarwal et

al., 2010) gender issues in advertising language (Okanlawon, & Oluga, 2008) as well as in nutrition comparative analysis in adverts (Pratt, Charlotte, Pratt, 1995). However, little literature is available in the language of automobile advertising, particularly as a contrastive analysis between two languages.

While argumentation has been analysed in the academic writing process (De Ryker & Ponnudurai, 2011) as well as in writing skills of business communication (Leong, 2001), little is researched on the use of argumentation on print adverts. This study therefore, contributes towards analysing the rhetorics of language via advertisements in terms of advertisement claims. The comparison made between two languages also helps language learners to understand how language is adapted in two different cultures for the purpose of marketing and branding. The study itself provides a guide to analyse how the advert is constructed using claims, data and warrant with suitable rhetorics and how it is linked up to the emotional appeal to persuade the different target groups.

The use of Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model too, contributes to the existing gap of knowledge in creative writing whereby the effective persuasive messages that are supported by logical arguments leave a desired effect on the reader. Thus, this study is significant in two ways; it provides methods for language learners to hone their writing skills using arguments for an engaging communication as well as to enable the language learners to accomplish their writing task diversely using the suitable language rhetorical devices.

TOULMIN'S ARGUMENTATION MODEL

Advertisers have used language as a ubiquitous, contemporary and creative medium of persuasion to affect the intellect (logos), conscience (ethos) and the emotions (pathos); either by using Aristotelian or Plato's philosophy of rhetoric. The Aristotelian view posits that rhetorics is used to identify the faculty which enables a possible means of persuasion while the latter leads and influences the mind into believing something. In the marketing industry, rhetorics ultimately aims at influencing consumer behaviour with the intention of selling a product as well as sustaining the brand loyalty. As such, the arguments made in the selling-message of the advertisement is pertinent in sustaining a long-term impact on the customers' appeal. This is because the data and warrants that support the claim will influence the customer's choice. Generally, the Rogerian (1951), Toulmin (1958, 2003) and the Classical Models of argument are used to frame the analysis of arguments as well as to persuade and influence one's belief system. The Rogerian (1951) argument, for example emphasises the negotiating strategy; Toulmin's (1958, 2003) arguments provide evidence and make inferences to arrive at a claim while the Classical arguments incorporate five elements of discourse to arrive at a persuasion. As Rogerian (1951) and Classical arguments generally lay down the common ideas and beliefs between two parties, it is deemed unsuitable for the purpose of this study due to its limited scope as this study excludes customer perception and response. Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model, on the other hand, emphasises the diversity of purpose and task that is relevant to this study. In order to convince the reader on a statement that he should respond to, the advertisers need to prove its claim on the product that they promote to avoid biased opinion and skepticism.

Argumentation is defined as an attempt to justify statements (Connor, 1996; Douglas, 1996). Toulmin's (1958, 2003) argument begins by articulating a claim in the form of an assertion, preference, view or judgment. The claim is then substantiated with data that supports the claims. The data can be explicated in the form of experience, statistics or occurrences. The warrant, likewise refers to the hypothetical statement or justification which upholds the claim and data of the advert. In simple words, people buy luxury cars because of their quality (warrant). Hence, advertisers claim that they should choose their car brand

because of the various reasons and specifications (data) provided to further strengthen their claim. The claims, warrants and data put forth further strengthens the arguments. Toulmin's model is inclusive of backing, qualifiers and rebuttal too. However, this study is limited to claims, warrants and data variables as these are the main component of the Toulmin's model for this study. The claims, warrants and data are however, dependent on the linguistic features present in the text. As such, the study include elements of stylistics analysis as illustrated in the methodology of the study. Rebuttal, qualifiers and backing may provide counter argument or a negation to an argument and is usually put forth by the opponent. This strategy is considered an unethical strategy in the advertising industry. Historically, the concept of argument was used in Toulmin's model for the courtroom argument. The rhetorical syllogism of the study is based on Aristotelian theory of syllogism that emphasises deductive arguments. It is made up of two premises and a conclusion (Smith, 2012). The premises consist only of a major and minor premise which leads to the final conclusion. To illustrate the case of automobile advertisement, the advertisers may possibly focus on the superior features (major premise) and the advanced features (minor premise) of a car that contributes to a high performance of a car (conclusion). Based on the literature above, a summary of the study is illustrate in the figure below:

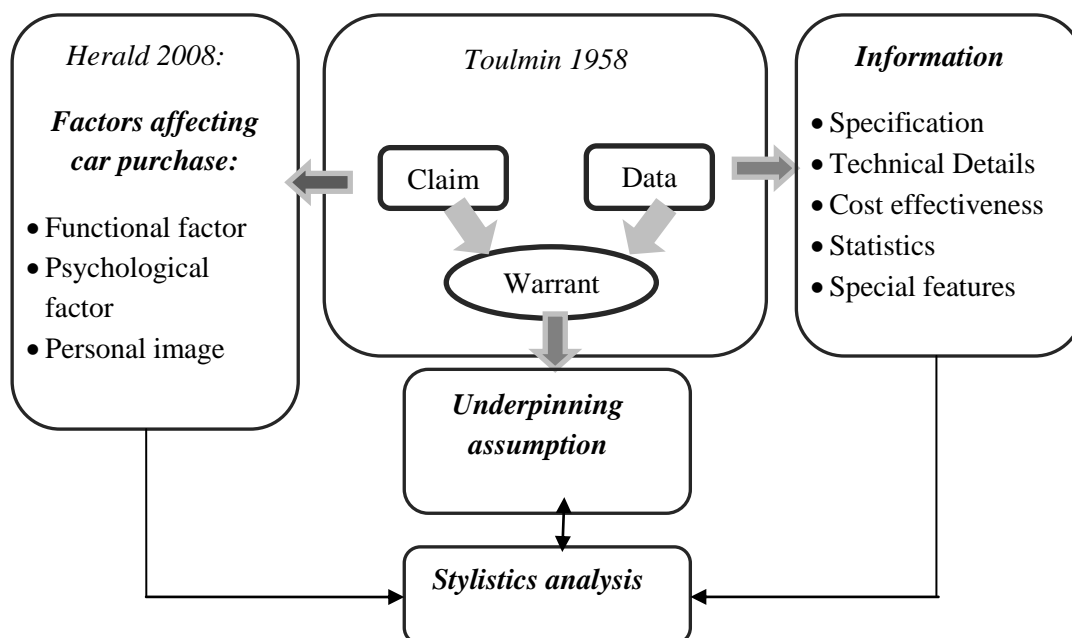


FIGURE 1. Conceptualising the study design

METHOD

Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model is employed as a guide for framing arguments for this study to gain an insight on how advertisers convince customers and advance their persuasive arguments. The model focuses on identifying the basic parts of an argument based on the claims, data, and warrants. Through claims, the author tries to prove an assertion. The assertion may be the superiority of the cars in the aspect of functional aspect such as technology superiority; psychological needs of the consumer such as comfort or economical features as well as its superiority status symbol (Herald, 2008). This uniqueness is then substantiated with relevant facts, information and details pertaining to their claim. This is categorised as data. The element of warrant include the presuppositions that underlie the argument. Generally, the link between the data and claim is signified in the warrant. So,

warrants in this study encompass the assumptions and interpretation made based on the claims and data. In each analysis of the claim, data and warrant, the language analysis is carried out to detect the diction, word choice, tone, style and syntax as a tool of comparison to identify the way language is used contrastively in both the German and English advertisements.

Just as in any industries, the automobile industry also has to manage great competition. The luxury cars too, need to remain competitive in the global market so that they do not lose loyal customers to different car manufacturers. Hence, the advertisers need to argue on hard facts and reasoning to sustain or change peoples' purchasing behaviour.

In analysing advertisements, the cultural consideration that the advertisers embed in the advertisements need to be given serious consideration also. Culture by definition commonly encompass shared values, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, norms and material objects (Brislin, 1990; Triandis, 1995; Rogers & Steinfatt, 1999; Neuliep, 2003; Martin & Nakayama, 2005). In the global advertising industry, cultural communication is presented in many forms. Samli (1995) explains that the consumer's attitudes, awareness and behaviour are largely driven by the framework of their own culture. This communication also forms and modifies the communication among the people of a society. Although this study is not aimed specifically at identifying the cultural integration in the advertisement, yet the discussion on the German cultural element in its global advertising is included as partial understanding of the global advertising context. This is deemed necessary as it is identified that the German car manufacturers have integrated the German cultural elements in the sample adverts selected in a varied way.

Using Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model on identifying basic parts of arguments, six advertisements were analysed from the elements of claims, data and warrants in the English language and the German language BMW, Mercedes Benz and Volkswagen car advertisements. This study employed a qualitative descriptive analysis of three cars' print advertisements that were obtained randomly from the German newspapers and Malaysian English dailies. Two equivalent adverts were selected from each manufacturer; in the German language and in the English language. The German adverts were obtained from the German embassy. Due to limited copies of dailies, selection of adverts were based on the nearest equivalent advertisement accessible in the local English daily. The English advertisements were obtained from the newspapers. Several criteria guided this study. The English and German advertisements for the three cars were from the same manufacturing company. The advertisements have a similar advert and contain textual script in the advertisement.

The German language advertisements were translated for the message and content and compared with the English advertisements. The adverts displayed similar automobiles from Bavarian Motor Works, Daimler and the Volkswagen Group, however there were limitations to the exact features of the export model. The study identifies how the claims, data and warrant of the advertisements varied in the two languages within the framework of Toulmin's (1958, 2003) model of arguments. It also looked at the stylistics variations in terms of tone, style and syntax as a tool of comparison. The rhetorics of the adverts in this study was analysed from the frequency of the four general devices present in the advert; the tone shift, style, sentence structure and the presence of figurative language. The AP Rhetoric and Writing Resources was used as a guide, to interpret the language used in the arguments of the adverts. A tone shift, for example is signalled by the use of transitional tags (but, yet, nevertheless, however, although) or by the use of punctuations. The divisions and changes in the sentence length in different lines and stanzas also denotes the tone shift. The choice of diction and syntax denotes the style while the sentence structure comprise the various types of sentences and the different length of sentence used. A telegraphic sentence for example comprise of five words in length or less while a medium sentence comprise of approximately

18 words in length while a long sentence may have 30 or more words. The structure, as provided in the AP Rhetoric and Writing Resources also focuses on the patterns (declarative, imperative, interrogative, exclamatory) or on the type of sentence (simple, compound, or complex). The presence of figurative language is also another aspect that was analysed in the adverts.

The frequency of punctuation appearance in the adverts were enumerated manually by detecting their presence in each words, phrase and sentence as the frequency of punctuations contributed to the stylistic variation. The punctuation marks that appeared on each adverts was recorded and the percentage of their frequency was identified. The analysis was made on the most and the least used punctuation marks; including the special punctuation features utilised in the words, phrase and the sentence. Similar analysis was also carried out on the types of words.

The sample adverts are as seen below:



Image Source: Die Zeit, 6 September 2012, no.37, p.7

FIGURE 2: BMW advertisement in the German daily

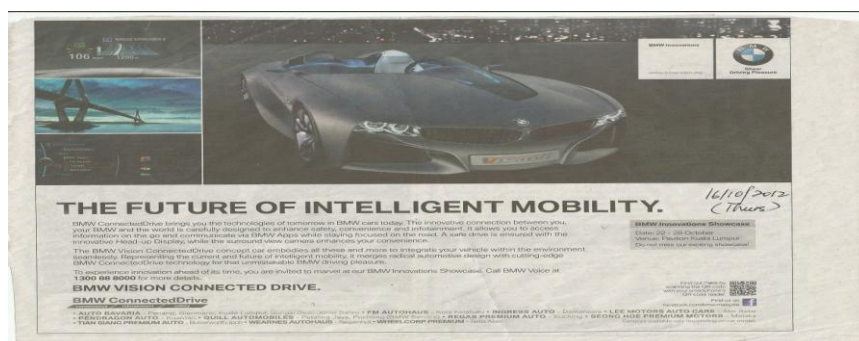


Image Source : The Star, 16 October 2012

FIGURE 3: BMW advertisement in the English daily



Image Source: Die Zeit, 6 September 2012, no.37, p.25

FIGURE 4. Mercedes-Benz advertisement in the German daily

DISCUSSION

The discussion looks into two aspects; firstly on the claims, data and warrants presented by the three automobile advertisements and the secondly on the discussion of the rhetorical syllogism that focused on the diction, tone, stylistics and meanings in the advertisements.

ADVERTISEMENT CLAIMS, DATA AND WARRANTS.

BMW ADVERTISEMENTS

Both the English and German versions of the BMW adverts made three similar claims which focused on their superiority of power, futuristic technology advancement and efficiency of the automobile. The three main claims made by the BMW adverts include:

English Advert:

“The future of intelligent mobility”,

“BMW ConnectedDrive brings you the technologies of tomorrow in BMW cars today.”

German Advert:

*“Fahrfreude ohne Kompromisse dank des vielfach ausgezeichneten
Technologiekompakts BMW EfficientDynamic”; and*

(Thanks to the multiple award-winning technology package - BMW EfficientDynamic for the maximum driving pleasure.)

*“Entdecken Sie minimalen Verbrauch bei maximaler Fahrfreude –mit dem BMW 320d
EfficientDynamics Edition”.*

(Discover a minimum of consumption at a maximum driving pleasure- with the BMW 320d EfficientDynamics Edition).

To support these claims, the English adverts warranted the extra features of the car; the merge of radical automotive design and its futuristic design. Both these combinations are claimed to provide driving satisfaction. The German adverts likewise, emphasised on a guaranteed driving pleasure via its highly recognised technology in addition to its economical fuel consumption. The warrants are depicted below:

English Advert:

“Representing the current and future of intelligent mobility, it merges radical automotive design with cutting-edge BMW ConnectedDrive technology for that unmistakable BMW driving pleasure.”

German Advert:

Kraftstoffverbrauch in l/100 km (innerorts/außerorts/kombiniert): 5,2/3,5/4,1. CO₂-Emission in g/m (kombiniert): 109. Als Basis für die Verbrauchsermittlung gilt der ECE-Fahrzyklus. Effizienzklasse A.

(Fuel consumption in l/100 km (in-town/out of town/combine): 5,2/3,5/4,1. CO₂ emission in g/m (combined): 109. The basis of calculation of the fuel consumption is the ECE-driving cycle. Efficiency Class-A.)

The *future of intelligent mobility* is a phrase taken directly and conveys the rhetorical realisation of the claim. The warrants gave added value for the purchase of the car. While both adverts had similar claims, the underlying theme of the advert contrasted in their automobile superiority versus customer satisfaction theme. The English adverts' emphasised

on technology, appealed to the customers who are more interested in high-performing cars, while the German adverts provided an emotional appeal to customers who might have prior consideration in purchasing a value for money automobile with its environmental-friendly features. The claims were backed up by data supporting the economic fuel consumption and its minimal level of carbon dioxide emission as stated in:

“...(Fuel consumption in l/100 km (in-town/out of town/combine): 5,2/3,5/4,1.
CO₂ emission in g/m (combined): 109...”

MERCEDES-BENZ ADVERTISEMENTS

Both the Mercedes adverts made similar claims on their ultimate superiority in being the best and ultimate luxurious car;

English Advert: “*With great power, comes great luxury*”
German Advert: [*Das Beste oder nichts*] - “*the best or nothing*”

The Mercedes adverts focused on the superior position in leading the future generation in the automobile advancement. The focus was placed on the luxury and its cutting edge technological features for the new generation of cars.

English Advert: “... *It's not just a car but a statement*”....
 “*the car will keep you at the top*”.
German Advert: [*Der Pulsschlag einer neuen Generation*]
 “*The pulse of the new generation*”

Both the adverts claimed the cars to be the epitome of luxury, based on the extraordinary AMG technology that has an advanced and international features. However, the claims contrasted in the use of language and the positioning of the driving experience in the international arena. For example, the English version used ‘driving experience in Melbourne or Queenstown’ to depict the international use of the car. The German advert, on the other hand utilised a play of words and mixture of English language into the German language; ‘*Pure Dynamik*’, ‘*Generation*’, ‘*engineered by AMG*’. The German advert also focused hastening the desire to purchase the car and portrayed it to be the most sought after car. As such, a persuasive appeal is made to prepare the buyers to react quickly by providing data for the release date of the new model. This implies that the first owners are automatically privileged to be the owners of the car; a prestige equating the exclusiveness of the ownership with the superiority of the car. The English advert on the other hand, enticed the buyers with tour packages to Melbourne and Queenstown and offered additional privileges for the buyers to enjoy the AMG performance test drive upon the booking of the car. Even the rewards were equated to a high-status symbol, with business class flight tickets and international travel to two foreign destinations. Although the themes for both the adverts were based on the superiority of their technology and design, the German advert noticeably used straightforward rhetorics as in ‘*the best or nothing...*’ compared to the English advert that focuses more on convincing their consumers, ‘*With great power, comes great luxury*’. The additional data was also included to further strengthen their claims. The German adverts were more pronounced on its economical fuel consumption and environmental-friendly features while the English adverts focused on the car safety features.

VOLKSWAGEN ADVERTISEMENTS

The claims made by both the English and German adverts for the advertised car differ particularly as the adverts portrayed a different model. The English advert focused on the car's sporty features and speed while the German advert claimed the provision of vast space. However, the English advert creatively made a connection of the car's speed to the speed taken in reading the first sentence of the advert.

English advert

"The Golf GTI takes precisely 6.9 seconds, to reach 100 km/h, the same amount of time it takes the average reader to make their way to the bottom of this sentence..."

German advert

"IMMER OPTIMALE PLATZVERHÄLTNISSE. DER GOLF PLUS MATCH."

[Always an optimum of space]

The English Volkswagen advert on the other hand, provided data to support its claim about the award-winning, high-technology features as well as the different amenities that provided comfort to the driver. The advertisers warranted for a visit to (entice the buyers to visit) the showroom so that the buyers would be able to test-drive and experience the claims made by the advertisers. The English adverts also claimed that the car is 'only for the advanced', implying the exclusiveness of the car for a particular group. In this context, 'the advanced' referred to the buyers who are skillful drivers and people who belong to the high-performing car enthusiast. The spirit of camaraderie for this group is further linked to the facebook address advertised on the page. Another warrant made in the English advert is the 5-year warranty and 5-year mobility assurance.

DICTION, TONE AND STYLISTICS AND MEANINGS IN THE ADVERTISEMENTS

From the rhetorical perspective, all the three advertisements utilised more adjectives and nouns in both languages to highlight the car superiority. However, both the BMW and Volkswagen adverts in the English and German versions were presented in an informal and personalised conversational style. The Mercedes Benz' word choice, tone and the rhetoric use for both languages were very formal and factual. Some of the examples are provided in the table below:

TABLE 1. Rhetoric use examples in the advertisements

BMW		Mercedes Benz		Volkswagen	
English	German	English	German	English	German
Intelligent mobility	minimalen Verbrauch	Isn't just a car ... is a statement	neue A-Klasse pure Dynamik	takes precisely	Optimale platzverhältnisse
innovative connection	maximaler Fahrfreude	multicontour seats	außergewöhnliches Design	award winning	Maximaler Preisvorteil
technologies	EntdeckenSie	finest leather	Pulsschlag	comes with creature comforts	Unverbindlichen Preisempfehlung
convenience	Staunen Sie	splitview display	Generation		Fairplay-Vorteil
safety vehicle	Leistung Kompromisse	pre-safe brakes		only for the advanced	Auto
environment	monatlich	unparalleled care		test drive the Volkswagen ... yourself	offiziell

There was generally a similar pattern of full stops, comma and colon utilisation in all the adverts. However, the usage of commas was greater in the English adverts as the adverts utilised more complex sentences. Likewise, the use of colons in the German adverts was more prevalent (refer to Table 1 and Table 2) while the usage of full stops was present all through in both the adverts. The use of comma and colon creates an impact on the tone shift as it builds an informal rapport with the customer while the sentence is read out. The use of colon for example, emphasises the speciality of the car that is being introduced because readers need to pause to pay more attention to it. For example, in the German BMW advert, the tagline builds an informal rapport from the beginning of the advert;

JETZT: ENTDECKEN. STAUNEN. EINSTEIGEN.

[Now: discover. Be astonished. Get in.]

TABLE 2. Types of words and their frequencies of appearance in the English and German advertisements

Type of Word	BMW				MERCEDES-BENZ				VOLKSWAGEN			
	English		German		English		German		English		German	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Abbreviation	-	-	17	7.4	-	-	4	7.3	-	-	2	2.5
Adjective	7	6.5	16	7.0	31	19.9	10	18.2	19	16.5	9	11.3
Adverb	5	4.6	6	2.6	4	2.6	-	-	4	3.5	1	1.2
Car/Brand Name	22	20.4	13	5.7	16	10.3	2	3.6	14	12.2	6	7.5
Conjunction	-	-	5	2.2	4	2.6	1	1.8	2	1.7	5	6.3
Def. Article	8	7.4	15	6.6	7	4.5	6	10.9	8	7.0	8	10.0
Indef. Article	1	0.9	3	1.3	10	6.4	2	3.6	3	2.6	1	1.2
English Words	-	-	22	9.6	-	-	3	5.5	-	-	7	8.8
Noun	22	20.4	53	23.1	36	23.1	14	25.5	27	23.5	18	22.5
Numbers & Figures +Units	1	0.9	34	14.9	7	4.5	8	14.5	7	6.1	8	10.0
Indefinite Pronoun	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.8	-	-	-	-
Personal Pronoun	6	5.5	2	0.9	8	5.1	-	-	6	5.2	-	-
Possessive Article	5	4.6	1	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Preposition	11	10.2	31	13.5	18	11.5	2	3.6	9	7.8	13	16.3
Verb	19	17.6	10	4.4	14	9.0	1	1.8	13	11.3	1	1.2
Website	1	0.9	1	0.4	1	0.6	1	1.8	3	2.6	1	1.2
TOTAL (words)	108	100	229	100	156	100	55	100	115	100	80	100
Punctuation	14	-	54	-	20	-	21	-	9	-	20	-
TOTAL (words + punctuation)	122	-	283	-	176	-	76	-	124	-	94	-

TABLE 3. Types of punctuations and their frequencies of appearance in the English and German advertisements

Type of Punctuation	BMW				MERCEDES-BENZ				VOLKSWAGEN			
	English		German		English		German		English		German	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Asterix	-	-	2	3.7	-	-	1	4.8	-	-	-	-
Brackets	-	-	3	5.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5.0
Colon	-	-	12	22.2	-	-	4	19.0	-	-	2	10.0
Comma	3	21.4	3	5.6	5	25	1	4.8	3	33.3	1	5.0
Dash	-	-	1	1.9	1	-	-	-	1	11.1	2	10.0
Exclamation mark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	11.1	-	-
Full Stop	11	78.6	18	33.3	11	55	6	28.6	4	44.4	8	40.0
Hyphen	-	-	6	11.1	3	20	3	14.3	-	-	1	5.0
Quotation marks	-	-	1	1.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5.0
Semicolon	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4.8	--	--	-	-
Slash	-	-	8	14.8	-	-	5	23.8	-	-	2	10.0

Superscript	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	10.0	
TOTAL	14	100	54	100	20	100	21	100	9	100	20	100
(Punctuation)												
Percentage of punctuation use per no. of words	13.0		23.6%		12.8		38.2%		7.8		25.0%	

BMW ADVERT

The choice of diction, tone and stylistics are mainly personalised and informal with a telegraphic to medium length syntax. The use of personal pronouns; mainly ‘you’ in the English adverts and possessive articles (4.6%) as in ‘your’ and ‘our’ in the English version was comparatively greater and it sets the tone to connect the buyers to the car purchase. A similar pattern was also seen in the use of frequent verbs (17.6%) in the English version; mainly with the use of imperative verbs such as ‘call’, ‘book’ and ‘choose’ whereby the buyers are instigated to take action. However, the German version presented fewer repetitions of car brand (5.7%) compared to the English version (20.4%). The German advert also employed English words (EfficientDynamic, leasing).

One similarity that was present in both the BMW adverts was the use of closed form compound adjectives ‘EfficientDynamics’ and ‘ConnectedDrive’- a stylistic feature that resembles the hybrid concept of the car. These compounds are not singled out but conjoined to coin a new terminology to suit the contemporary concept of hybridicity in the automobile industry. The hybrid vehicle concept uses two or more distinct power sources for a more advanced mobility. ‘Efficient’ in this context refers to the efficient and economic fuel consumption while the word ‘Dynamic’ refers to the intensity and force behind the advanced make of the car. When combined together, Efficient Dynamic evokes and projects a broader concept of sustaining its fortified condition. The advertisers have embedded the hybridicity concept of the car into the language to captivate the readers’ attention instantly and consolidate the superior characteristics of the car as the greater model among the luxury car. The advertisers are cognizant to leverage on the concept of hybridicity and utilise the words in a creative context.

Compared to the English advert, the German BMW advert, showed a higher presence of tone shift with a greater use of full stops (33.3%) and colons (22.2%). The language use for the English adverts was also presented in a more factual pattern as the focus was on the specification of the car. The German advert on the contrary, was more persuasive, personalised and included a call for action with an invitational tone. This is present in the tagline whereby the effective use of verbs was more immediate and concurrent compared to the English tagline that was more descriptive to the claim of being the advanced and smart form of transformation.

English Tagline:

THE FUTURE OF INTELLIGENT MOBILITY.

German Tagline:

“JETZT: ENTDECKEN. STAUNEN. EINSTEIGEN”

[Now: discover. Be astonished. Get in].

The use of inverted order sentence in the English advert gave an essence to the stylistic impact of making the claim. The claim is highlighted in the beginning of the sentence not only to give emphasis on the claim but also to portray and rebrand the automobile as a genesis of the future automobile.

English advert:

“Representing the current and future of intelligent mobility, it nurtures radical automotive design with cutting-edge BMW ConnectedDrive technology for that unmistakable BMW driving pleasure.”

The use of figurative language was more prevalent in the English advert compared to the German language that employed semi-imperatives. The use of figurative language in the English advert evoked a feeling of the presence of the symbiosis of the car’s power and the human desire to be on the go at all time. This was present in the choice of adverb use such as ‘seamlessly’ while the emphasis on the future was reiterated by the repetition of the word ‘tomorrow’. In conclusion, the German advertisement drew the buyers by calling for action at the beginning part of the advert while the English advert focused more on the advanced technology of the automobile to make an appeal to own the car. The use of figurative language completed the claim with a persuasive appeal.

MERCEDES-BENZ ADVERT

The choice of diction, tone and stylistics are more formal for both the Mercedes-Benz advertisements. However, the German advert was more brief where telegraphic and declarative phrases and more incomplete sentences were used. Catchy phrases were apparent, particularly (*Der Pulsschlag einer neuen Generation*) ‘The pulse of a new Generation’. This is probably because the German readers are more familiar with the local, German-made cars and they do not need extensive publicity. The English advert, likewise used longer and complete sentences which were informative in nature. This is necessary as the English advert functioned as a promotional exercise to capture the international market. Similar to the German advert, the English advert claimed that owning the Mercedes will add superiority to the buyers with the phrases; ‘you are at the very top’ and the car also ‘will keep you there!’.

The use of personal pronouns in the English version (5.1%) was used more regularly compared to personal pronouns in the German adverts. The presence of verbs was also comparatively higher in the English advert (9.0%) compared to the German advert (1.8%) due to the use of complete sentences in the English advert. A slight increase was present in the use of nouns in the German advert (25.5%) compared to the English (23.1%) as more key words regarding the automobile information was presented in the German version. The German advert utilised colons (19%) in a higher frequency but the English advert has used the dash in a significant way (...all part of a statement that tells the world – you are at the very top) to assert its claim. The German advert indicate affirmative statements with the use of colons while the use of the dash allows for a pause that continues with an anticipation; a stylistics which created an intense suspense. In brief, both the adverts were making calls for the “available-buyers” to grab the new model so that they would be “up-to-date” with the new technology and the buyers would stand ahead of the rest.

VOLKSWAGEN ADVERT

From the rhetorical perspective, informal conversational language was used for both the adverts. The German advert also used English words [*match*] and [*fairplay*] - terminologies from soccer sports to highlight the world wide recognition of the Volkswagen as the ‘official partner of the German Football Federation Cup’. These words also connect the advertisers closer to the people via the football theme to create a sense of camaraderie. The German advert emphasised the phrase ‘PLUS MATCH’; an indication for a perfect match of economical fuel consumption and environmental-friendly features of the car. It also accentuated the reasonably priced automobile and connected the people’s choice with the

football theme (*Offizieller Partner des DFB-Pokals.*) – a favourite sports preference among the Germans. According to the German language, Volkswagen depicts ‘the car for the people’; (*Volk*) means (folk); (*wagen*) means (wagon). This connotes ‘the car for the people’ while (DFB-Pokal] refers to ‘the favourite sports of the people’. This connotes the car as being a favourite means of transport for the general public. The emphasis is depicted with the use of upper case caption (FAIRPLAY-VORTEIL) with a maximum use of blank spaces and minimal use of words in the advert. One significant element was the method in which the rhetorics were minimised in the German advert to focus on the spatial concept equating it to the sizable area of a football field. There was more blank space depicted in the German advert to highlight the spatial concept. The advert also provided the facebook address to build a social connection and create an additional platform for promoting the car.

The use of sentences in the English adverts are mainly compound sentences which are declarative and semi-imperative in nature. The English advert, however utilised the trademark (™) and registered (®) symbols as authorization to support their claims at the international level compared to the German advert which utilised more of full stops and a variety of other types of punctuations ranging from quotation marks, superscripts, slashes, and hyphens. The presence of verbs in the English advert (11.3.0%) was also comparatively higher than in the German advert (1.25%). This is due to the use of complete sentences in the English advert as present in the English Mercedes-Benz advert.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we have attempted to refine our understanding of the arguments put forth by the three different automobile print adverts with the use of rhetorical syllogisms. Although all the automobiles highlighted the technological superiority and advancement claim, two main findings of the study were identified. Firstly, all the three adverts in both the English and German languages moved their arguments from a general premise to a specific argument and substantiated the claims and warrants with substantial data to justify their arguments. One element that was unique, is the method in which the rhetorical association was used in making the claim. The claim of speed in the Volkswagen advert, for instance, was creatively associated to the text with the use of time taken in reading the claim. As such, the use of rhetorics was skillfully planned to influence and adapt the reader to the theme of speed according to the targeted high-income younger generation and the drivers who preferred high-speed cars. The rhetorics used in the BMW and Volkswagen adverts were associated to the Aristotelean view whereby the advertisers provide more avenues for exploration and discovering of possible means to convince and persuade the readers. Likewise, the Mercedes adverts utilised rhetorics by minimising their data compared to BMW and Volkswagen adverts. The low use of rhetorics implies an ultimate claim that requires less warrants and data. The assumption underlying the minimal use of data is that the readers do not need further explanation. The superiority of the automobile is a known fact – it is the ultimate in the automobile industry. The Mercedes automobiles are widely regarded as the world’s first automobiles and is part of the three big three German luxury automobile makers. Hence, the automobile is known for its superiority. Only necessary specifications of the car was presented. The language use in the Mercedes adverts for both languages were also more formal and direct compared to the BMW and Volkswagen advert which were more informal, ‘customer-friendly’ and utilised a more invitational tone. As such, the Mercedes advert had a greater preponderance towards leading the minds of the readers to a belief which is already present about the existing luxury brand and the potential buyers simply had to be informed of the new model.

Secondly, the use of loan words and newly constructed terminology as in the words 'ConnectedDrive' and 'EfficientDynamic' infuse stylistic vigour and consolidates the persuasive appeals in the advertisements. In addition, the use of English loan words consolidated the international status of the car and added further credentials to the owning of the car. Such advancement in creating taglines with a different twist in rhetorics, is deemed necessary to keep abreast the advancements in the automobile industry. Consumers are always attracted to innovation; as such newly constructed terminologies capture the attention as well as add to the revitalisation of the rhetorics in language; making the language use in the advertisement more sophisticated and contemporary. The automobile industry innovates new presentations of their car models. As such, the neologism in business language that is presented in a creative way captures the readers interest.

Several rhetorical patterns were also identified in the language use in the two languages. For example, the use of repetitions, dashes and commas was more prominent in the English language adverts compared to the German adverts. Thus, the English adverts displayed a higher tone shift in the language use compared to the German adverts. Likewise, the use of em-dash is prominent in the German adverts. This is purportedly used to create a pause and as an indication of an overwhelming thrilled feeling. The unfinished statement demarcates a break of thought and elaborates further on the claims of its maximum driving pleasure. Such rhetorical variance is pertinent in understanding how rhetorical devices are presented in different cultures in order to evoke a particular interest in the readers.

This analysis is pertinent for language study and the significance is threefold; particularly in the comprehension of language learning; in the teaching of language; as well as the practical use of rhetorics for the business communication. The language learners, particularly L2 learners and foreign language learners can utilise the cross-cultural rhetorical variation as a guide to enrich their understanding of language use in different contexts and obtain a better comprehension of how the rhetorical syllogism can be utilised for various aims. In this context of advertising language for example, the L2 learners need to persuade, influence and convince the readers and not merely provide information of products. As such, the advertising language needs to possess the extra edge to incite the practical thoughts of a varied segment of society with diverse interest, preference and needs to make a rational choice. As in this study, the automobiles are luxury automobiles. Hence, to convince the readers, the language used must be able to assert arguments that will be able to convince the readers that they will be making a rational and correct choice in purchasing the automobile. This assertion too must not be open to objectionable views.

The understanding of rhetorics too, will enable the learners to self-correct their language use. From the writing aspect, the language learners would be able to use claims, data and warrants aptly to construct their arguments convincingly. The language teachers, likewise can utilise the use of rhetorics for developing writing skills, particularly in persuasive and argumentative essays and a variety of text. While there may be many approaches to writing arguments, using Toulmin's (1958) analysis can be considered a simple approach in guiding the writing task. Although Toulmin's (1958) model was developed based on his experience in court, it is suitable to be used in language teaching as it provides a more systematic and analytic framework in teaching argumentative writing by analysing the separate elements of arguments, compared to the general method of identifying topic sentence and providing evidence or justification for the points mentioned.

Finally, understanding the use of rhetorical syllogism is pertinent for the business players who mainly focus on the advertising and marketing sector. This is because the language of advertisements affects both product information search as well as product purchase decision. As the language of advertising remains a pertinent tool for organisations' marketing purpose to provide information, it is equally important for advertisers to position

their brand image and consolidate their customer's loyalty. The business communication practitioners, particularly in the international arena need to be familiar, knowledgeable and skillful in utilising the rhetorics for contemporary business purposes in various consumer context. Sustaining the philosophy and tradition of the organisations such as maintaining environmental-friendly standards need to be retained to position the brand image as well as consolidating the loyalty of the customer across the international worldview. A holistic understanding of the use of language in a variety of context can be exemplified by understanding the rhetorical syllogism and its use in various context.

In conclusion, this study has identified that the international automobile companies produce the same arguments for their customers in the different countries but the message is portrayed in a variety of ways. The selection of diction, tone, stylistics and meanings in the advertisements are suited accordingly to the target audience although some cascading implications of cultural rhetorical transfer from the original text in German to the English language is prevalent. Understanding rhetorical syllogism of various language across different genres enhances ones proficiency in putting forth their arguments more convincingly and effectively within certain context.

This study has led to several suggestions that warrants future research. First, having the exact export car model and specification would shed more light to more interesting findings. Secondly, the analysis of the rhetoric would provide more insights into the cross-cultural understanding of audience research particularly in the field of business communication. Moreover, it is unclear if the language structure difference between the German language and the English language structure leaves an impact on the effective use of rhetorics in the English adverts selected. Although the authors were aware that the main advertisements originated in the German language and were reproduced in the English language for the international market, it would be interesting to derive more findings pertaining to how language is constructed functionally to meet the desired claims and warrants in various fields of study.

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APPENDIX A

TABLE 1. Types of words and their frequencies of appearance in the English and German advertisements

Type of Word	BMW				MERCEDES-BENZ				VOLKSWAGEN			
	English		German		English		German		English		German	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Abbreviation	-	-	17	7.4	-	-	4	7.3	-	-	2	2.5
Adjective	7	6.5	16	7.0	31	19.9	10	18.2	19	16.5	9	11.3
Adverb	5	4.6	6	2.6	4	2.6	-	-	4	3.5	1	1.2
Car/Brand Name	22	20.4	13	5.7	16	10.3	2	3.6	14	12.2	6	7.5
Conjunction	-	-	5	2.2	4	2.6	1	1.8	2	1.7	5	6.3
Def. Article	8	7.4	15	6.6	7	4.5	6	10.9	8	7.0	8	10.0
Indef. Article	1	0.9	3	1.3	10	6.4	2	3.6	3	2.6	1	1.2
English Words	-	-	22	9.6	-	-	3	5.5	-	-	7	8.8
Noun	22	20.4	53	23.1	36	23.1	14	25.5	27	23.5	18	22.5
Numbers & Figures +Units	1	0.9	34	14.9	7	4.5	8	14.5	7	6.1	8	10.0
Indefinite Pronoun	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.8	-	-	-	-
Personal Pronoun	6	5.5	2	0.9	8	5.1	-	-	6	5.2	-	-
Possessive Article	5	4.6	1	0.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Preposition	11	10.2	31	13.5	18	11.5	2	3.6	9	7.8	13	16.3
Verb	19	17.6	10	4.4	14	9.0	1	1.8	13	11.3	1	1.2
Websit	1	0.9	1	0.4	1	0.6	1	1.8	3	2.6	1	1.2
TOTAL (words)	108	100	229	100	156	100	55	100	115	100	80	100
Punctuation	14	-	54	-	20	-	21	-	9	-	20	-
TOTAL (words + punctuation)	122	-	283	-	176	-	76	-	124	-	94	-

APPENDIX B

TABLE 2. Types of punctuations and their frequencies of appearance in the English and German advertisements

Type of Punctuation	BMW				MERCEDES-BENZ				VOLKSWAGEN			
	English		German		English		German		English		German	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Asterix	-	-	2	3.7	-	-	1	4.8	-	-	-	-
Brackets	-	-	3	5.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5.0
Colon	-	-	12	22.2	-	-	4	19.0	-	-	2	10.0
Comma	3	21.4	3	5.6	5	25	1	4.8	3	33.3	1	5.0
Dash	-	-	1	1.9	-	-	-	-	1	11.1	2	10.0
Exclamation mark									1	11.1		
Full Stop	11	78.6	18	33.3	11	55	6	28.6	4	44.4	8	40.0
Hyphen	-	-	6	11.1	4	20	3	14.3	-	-	1	5.0
Quotation marks	-	-	1	1.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5.0
Semicolon	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4.8	--	--	-	-
Slash	-	-	8	14.8	-	-	5	23.8	-	-	2	10.0
Superscript	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	10.0
TOTAL (Punctuation)	14	100	54	100	20	100	21	100	9	100	20	100
Percentage of punctuation use per no. of words	13.0		23.6%		12.8		38.2%		7.8		25.0%	

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