

INFORMING OR PERSUADING TRAVELLERS: THE LANGUAGE OF AIRLINES ADVERTISEMENTS

Informar o persuadir a los viajeros: el lenguaje de los anuncios de las líneas aéreas

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RESUMEN: En el mundo de la publicidad elegir un tipo de lenguaje adecuado es crucial a la hora de conducirnos por el camino del éxito, puesto que el uso de determinado vocabulario y estructuras concretas es fundamental cuando se quiere persuadir al cliente. En este estudio se tendrán en cuenta muchas variables desde el discurso publicitario al discurso turístico teniendo presente también el hecho de que vivimos en un mundo globalizado donde encontramos la percepción del consumidor, que se presenta como un elemento esencial en el proceso publicitario, donde se analizarán características discursivas y otras propiamente lingüísticas. En este artículo nos centraremos en las estructuras más frecuentes que aparecen en los anuncios de diversas compañías aéreas internacionales, todos ellos publicados en la revista *Time*, y examinaremos si el uso del lenguaje empleado consigue el efecto persuasivo en el cliente.

PALABRAS CLAVE: turismo, discurso publicitario, lenguaje persuasivo.

ABSTRACT: In the advertising world choosing the right kind of language can lead us to becoming a successful company or not, since the choice of different kinds of words and different structures is crucial when trying to persuade people. In this paper many variables will be taken into account, from the characteristics of advertising English to those specific from Tourism English bearing also in mind the globalized world around us and consumer perception, which is an essential element in the advertising process, analyzing discursive and linguistic features. In this study we will focus on the most frequent structures in the advertisements published in the *Time Magazine* about some international airline companies and will examine whether the language used can achieve a persuasive effect on the potential customer or not.

KEYWORDS: tourism, advertising discourse, persuasive language.

1. Introduction

LANGUAGE IS IMPORTANT IN ANY CONTEXT and in any situation but it is undoubtedly the most important driving force in the field of tourism, since in this area companies offer their products and services and they try to persuade potential clients and make them actual consumers of the products and services offered. On the other hand, advertising is a phenomenon present in our everyday lives so that nowadays we cannot imagine our life without advertising. Companies spend huge amounts of money on this aspect of their business, because if you sell a product and do not make the potential customers aware of its existence you are not going to sell it. The tourism industry is a very important field since almost everybody is a tourist in the 21st century; tourism is, and has been for many years an emerging industry. In Spain tourism rose in 2010 in spite of the economic crisis worldwide, which is why different companies still invest much money to advertise their products and services. At present there are many advertising texts (including webpages) related to touristic products and services but in this paper we are going to pay attention to a very specific kind of texts, which are the advertisements used by several airlines from different countries all over the world. All ads have been taken from the printed version of *Time*, which is a well-known magazine printed first time in March 3rd, 1923.

2. Advertising English – Tourism English

We have to take into account that we are dealing with advertising English and with Tourism English as well. Advertising English presents a series of linguistic and pragmatic features that make it different from other kinds of language. In fact, Cook (1992) considers advertisements as a discursive genre. Advertising discourse is usually persuasive because the intention of any kind of advertising is to touch the target market and make that market aware of the excellent characteristics that a product can offer. Fairclough (1994: 254) understands genre as «the language associated with a particular socially ratified type of activity, such as a job interview or a scientific newspaper *and* conventional ways of producing, interpreting and producing texts within that activity type». In fact, advertising is around us constantly, which is why Fairclough (1994: 254) goes on saying that many aspects in our daily life are ‘colonized by *advertising genre*’. Therefore, the language of advertising could be considered a genre in itself but the language of tourism is also said to be another genre; hence, we will analyse how these print ads combine to get special effects on customers. Moreover, English is the language of international tourism worldwide (Graddol, 1997) but it is also the language of advertising, since there is a tendency not to translate ads from English to other languages, *cf.* slogans and whole texts. As González Fernández *et al.* (2010) highlight, English is the lingua franca for the international tourism service.

There are different aspects marketers bear in mind when they think of advertising their products. Thus, many features have to be taken into account when developing a new product and trying to market it. Advertising is often the primary way that most businesses reach out to existing and potential customers. One important concept in marketing since 1925 is ‘AIDA’, which points to the fact of capturing Attention, maintaining Interest, creating Desire and getting Action from potential customers. Consequently, advertising is one of the most significant issues to consider since, as

somebody stated some years ago, creating a product without advertising is like winking at somebody in an elevator in the darkness (that is, nobody will be aware of it), which is why when creating an advertisement there are many variables to consider:

First of all, everything is important as far as layout is concerned: the image or pictures used are crucial but also how everything is organized, i.e., the colours, the symbols, the format, the imagery, etc. since the visual impact on the potential customer is what first will attract him or her. Visual content and design have a considerable impact on tourists and advertisers often use provocative images in order to draw the customer's attention towards their product; other times they use shocking images or even testimonials by famous people, which is the reason why when Velasco Sacristán (2006: 67) makes reference to the images used in advertisements, she states that «advertising English incorporates [...] social and emotive use of language in many of the images it uses».

In the second place, the language used is basic when writing an advertisement. It is fundamental to create well-written ads, which is not an easy task since writing good advertisements could be considered a skill. I will analyse the use of different structures and different kinds of language and how these words influence readers and the effect copywriters look for when designing an advertisement. Everything has to be taken into account when dealing with advertising, which is why Velasco Sacristán (2006: 67) points to 'verbal and non-verbal codes' in advertisements.

The third aspect is associated with the previous one, since one important issue to consider is the target market, that is, the potential customer. Depending on whom we are addressing our advertisement to, we will use one kind of language or another. The target market to bear in mind in this kind of advertisements is potential tourists or 'would-be tourists' (term introduced by Maci, 2007: 63). Nowadays there are many kinds of tourists; many new products and services are luxury ones and not everybody can afford to buy or hire them. Here we will focus only on promotional texts addressed to the general public, not to specialized people in the tourist field, which could make a difference when dealing with ad layout as well as the language used.

3. Tourism Advertising, Globalization, Consumer Perception and English

For several decades now, tourism has become a significant source of income for many countries. Nowadays everything takes place within a global scale and this also influences advertising: texts in advertisements tend to become simpler so that they reach all kinds of potential customers. On the other hand, Salazar (2006: 833) defines globalization as «the process of growing worldwide interconnectedness and interdependency, adds extra layers of complexity to the way touristic representations are created and circulated». According to Dörnyei & Csizér (2005), globalization affects many aspects of our everyday life and many tourists nowadays travel on an international level. But the process has to be simplified if advertisers want to get to the general public, which is why Pierini (2007) refers to globalization as the business process of making a product available for sale in many countries. In the same vein, Leslie (1995) mentions the concept of standardized campaigns. Therefore, it can be stated that globalization and English are two related concepts. In fact, Piller (2003) thinks that English has become the language of modernity, progress and globalization and it is true that all companies, including those operating within the touristic sector, want to be modern, global and appealing to customers.

In this globalized world, one of the important aspects to consider when promoting and advertising a new product, whether it is in the tourism industry or in any other field, is the *packaging* of the product. We should keep in mind that the way of presenting a product is crucial in attracting new customers. When dealing with print ads, marketing experts have to learn to resort to different linguistic and non-linguistic devices in order to attract the potential tourist's interest. The role of advertisers is to influence people's ideas and decisions so that they become real clients, real tourists choosing a specific product or service. Hence, the function of advertisers is to transmit a specific vision of the world, a distinguishing and special idea of a particular product or service. In fact, as Djafarova & Andersen (2008: 293) remark, «Advertisers promoting a product do not just communicate its qualities and characteristics, but try to communicate what these qualities and characteristics mean to the customer». The features associated to a specific product are important but another important aspect is the consumer perception of the product. Consumer perception is an approximation to reality, that is, to real products but depending on how these are presented, potential customers will either be immediately attracted or not very interested in the product due to the way of presenting it. Consumer perception is crucial since the success of your business and advertising lies on your ability to attract and retain customers. One of the maxims in advertising in general is expressing a genuine interest in the customer and hence an important way to influence them.

So far we have dealt with the characteristics of a specific product; we have mentioned the packaging of the product but using the same word we also have to refer to the 'packaging' of information (Blanco Gómez, 2010: 47), that is, what kind of language is used in different advertising texts. As Goddard (1998: 5) points out, advertising is «a system of language use». In fact, language has been considered as a means to achieve certain marketing objectives, and advertising language tries to get to the target market as easily as possible, which is why we will study in detail the different structures that can be found in this particular kind of advertising text in tourism.

4. The Language of Airlines Advertisements

In advertisements in general we detect attempts to inform, recommend, persuade or warn potential clients about different situations and products. In the advertising world, there are many experts involved in the process of promoting a product: we can find from marketing experts and copywriters to sociologists and sociolinguists¹ as well as psychologists, but the function of all of them is to make all the possible efforts in order to try to convince and persuade the would-be customer to become a real tourist or in the case we are going to analyse, to become a real airline user. Dann (1996) remarks that the language of tourism is one of persuasion and seduction and he goes on saying that

¹ The book by JAWORSKI & PRITCHARD (2005) contains a detailed analysis on the part of discourse analysts and sociolinguists, since in tourism language a sociolinguistic perspective has to be taken into account as well.

Via static and moving pictures, written texts and audio-visual offerings, the language of tourism attempts to persuade, lure, woo and seduce millions of human beings, and, in so doing, convert them from potential into actual clients (Dann, 1996: 2).

What Dann mentions at the end is the goal of any company, get real clients in the end. During the second half of the 20th century we have observed an important variation in the tourism industry as well as in the techniques used within this field. When advertising a touristic product or service, there are many kinds of published texts, texts such as brochures, leaflets, catalogues, posters, etc., but we will focus on the print advertisements of some airline companies published in the *Time Magazine*. Hence, we will be dealing with promotional texts addressed to the general public (i.e., to potential tourists), not to experts in the tourism industry. In fact, all readers are exposed to many commercial messages when reading a newspaper or magazine.

In advertisements we can find the special features that characterise the language of tourism. The vocabulary employed is important but the structures used are also crucial when trying to understand the ad intention. As Goti (2003) highlights, textual patterning is something we have to pay attention to. The analysis of discourse advertising in the tourism sector can reveal interesting issues in the use of language in tourism. According to Bhatia (2005: 224),

Advertising has turned the process of writing into an art form, where writers constantly compete for attention getting by not only innovative use of language but also by the creative use of traditional expressions and clichés, which are often shunned by good writers in other forms of discourse.

Writing ads could then be considered an art, but something has to be highlighted, the persuasive function this kind of text has.

4.1. *Persuasive Language*

The word ‘advertising’ comes from the Latin verb *advertere*, to turn towards, which is what slogans are for, they are usually short in nature and a maxim of slogans is that they have to be catchy, that is, they mainly have to grab the reader’s attention by surprising them or by using any other technique. As mentioned before, advertisements are part of our everyday life since we are constantly exposed to advertising and its language. Bhatia (1993: 45-6) refers to different communicative functions in advertising: (a) to be persuasive, b) to catch the reader’s attention and c) to be short and effective, that is, easy to remember.

Advertisements are persuasive in themselves; therefore, we could expect some kind of persuasive language. However, when the advertising world started, its first function was to inform the potential customer about the different features that a product offered but with the passing of time, the advertising discourse has become highly persuasive. Scholars in general wonder whether advertisements and advertising in general could be considered informative or persuasive texts and some authors (Fuertes-Olivera *et al.*, 2001) have described advertisements as something similar to a *continuum* of different functions between informing the potential customer and persuading (i.e. manipulating) him. As in many other aspects of language, in

advertisements we also find a continuum of distinct functions within our globalized world where tourists and consumers in general are exposed to many messages in different languages but one crucial element in all advertising is slogans.

4.1.1. Slogans

Slogans are essential since people tend to glance over slogans or headings of advertisements rather than to read the texts, which is one of the reasons why ads are usually quite visual, trying to use catchy slogans and appealing words in order to attract potential customers. Slogans are associated to the company logo; in fact, the slogan usually appears beside or beneath the logo of a specific company and it usually stands out from the rest of the text in some way. Sometimes different type faces are used to highlight it from the rest. What is true is that we are surrounded by advertising slogans and we have to pay attention to the fact that the words in effective slogans should be memorable. We are going to see different slogans from airlines:

THAI AIRWAYS

- (1) Reach out as never before (*Time* May 1, 2006)
- (2) A touch above business. Fly Royal Silk (*Time* July 24, 2006)
- (3) THAI, Smooth as Silk (*Time* June 27, 2011)
- (4) Perfection every time I fly (*Time* October 3, 2011)

TURKISH AIRLINES

- (5) A Business Class for Stars (Also for business stars) (*Time* Feb 7, 2011)
- (6) Globally yours (*Time* August 29, 2011)

QATAR AIRWAYS

- (7) *You* always come first. That's why *we* are number one (*Time* Sept 26, 2011)

IBERIA

- (8) When travelling for business becomes travelling for pleasure (*Time* June 26, 2006)
- (9) Smile, you are in Spain. Smile, you are in Iberia (*Time* July 3, 2006)

AUSTRIAN AIRLINES

- (10) With all *your* senses (*Time* June 26, 2006)

In slogan (1) we can see two features typical of this kind of language: an imperative in the first place followed by a comparison (as never before) so that the potential customer realizes that he has not used a better airline before. In (2) again we find another imperative but in (2) and (4) we come across a noun followed by some post-modification. In (3) we can also see another comparative structure 'smooth as silk', pointing to a nice experience and a perfect one, as we can see in (4): Perfection every time I fly. Therefore, the image that Thai Airways wants to create in the potential customer is that if they hire their services, they will have no problems and they will live an unforgettable experience.

Together with slogans (5) and (6), Turkish Airlines shows us a picture of some players of the Manchester United team. In (5) we find again a noun group made of very positive words: you can consider yourself a star (basketball player), a leading person (businesspeople), or a genius in general, creating a positive feeling in the customer. In (6) we also see that globalization is an important issue nowadays, 'globally yours' and this slogan is addressed to the very customer 'yours'. In (8) Iberia wants to transmit the idea that being a businessman is not bad since you can turn work into pleasure (use of words with positive connotations again).

When dealing with Qatar Airways we find a common strategy used in advertising which Dann (1996) labelled as ego-targeting, that is, the special use of personal pronouns since the use of some words can be 'ego-enhancing', as we can see in (7) and also in the following examples:

- (11) Is it *our* network that takes *you* to more than 190 cities around the world? [...] Next time, fly with Europe's best airline and discover it *for yourself* (Turkish Airlines, *Time* August 29, 2011)
- (12) *You*'ll find these new seats on board all *our* long-haul flight right now (Iberia, *Time* June 26, 2006)
- (13) All globally *yours* (*Time* May 9, 2011)

In the previous examples we can observe a kind of dialogue between the company ('our, we') and the customer ('you, yours, for yourself'), which points to a kind of fluent conversation between the customer and the airline. In this sense Fairclough (1994: 255) refers to the 'direct address', that is, the use of 'you' or 'we', as another characteristic of the advertising genre. In the same sense, Alcaraz (2000) refers to the fact that persuasion focuses on the receiver in a subjective way, and this is done through the use of 'you' and sending the message directly to the reader, i.e. potential customer. In (9) Iberia is once again addressing the would-be customer by using an imperative, but a very positive verb 'smile' and they want us to associate Spain and Iberia as a nice experience since Spain is a sunny place with good cuisine, good beaches, good art, etc. This is directly associated with the idea by Salazar (2006: 836), who states that «there are "touristified" identities and cultural views that are created» for people, for tourists in general.

As we can see in the previous slogans the image an airline wants to create in their customers is that of the perfect airline with much comfort and punctuality and trying to make the most out of your flying experience with them. So far we have seen mostly slogans but when we go on analyzing all kinds of texts that appear in this type of ads, we come across other characteristics we are going to mention now.

4.2. *Discursive Features*

Reference to the persuasive force of the message conveyed by a slogan was made before, but there are other discursive features that have to be taken into account in this kind of discourse.

We have mentioned imperatives, but the use of questions is also another technique to create the impression that communicative immediacy (Pierini, 2007).

- (14) *Fly THAI to 4 cities in Japan, any day of the week (Time June 27, 2011)*
- (15) *Fly with the World's Best Airline and experience our award-winning service to over 100 destinations worldwide (Qatar Airways, Time September 26, 2011)*
- (16) *Relax onboard and enjoy the privacy and comfort of Iberia BUSINESS PLUS throughout your flight (Time June 26, 2006)*
- (17) *Make the space all your own. So, please, sit back, relax, and enjoy your flight (Time June 26, 2006)*
- (18) *Click. Enter. Return (British Airways, Time May 1, 2006)*
- (19) *Make a hasty business decision. Avoid the queues at the airport by checking-in online at ba.com (British Airways, Time May 1, 2006)*
- (20) *Experience the Austrian Way of Flying (Austrian Airlines. Time June 26, 2006)*
- (21) *When travelling [...] reward yourself with a comfortable night's sleep in the new Austrian Business Class on a seat that transforms into a lie-flat sleeper seat (Austrian Airlines. Time June 26, 2006)*
- (22) *Can you recognize the traveller who has 280,000 people looking after them? We can (Star Alliance, Time September 27, 2004)*
- (23) *Is it our network that takes you to more than 190 cities around the world? Is it our hub, Istanbul, the world's most attractive city to connect Europe to the world? Is it our globally awarded cuisine? Is it our warmhearted welcome on board? Is it our sponsorship of the world's best teams and athletes? Most likely all. Next time, fly with Europe's best airline and discover it for yourself (Turkish Airlines, Time August 29, 2011)*

As we can see, the imperative is found in a high percentage of airline advertisements, but the use of imperative is not rude in these cases since its function is not to give order but to stimulate to buy or hire the products and services that are offered; moreover, the imperative is usually combined with other 'nice' words, as in (16), 'relax and enjoy' or (20) 'experience', pointing once again to the idea of transmitting that using any of the airlines will turn out to be a memorable experience, which is why flying and touristic destinations should be presented as different from our everyday problems, that is, as something enjoyable, relaxing, with no stress at all; in short, something similar to paradise. In (17) we even find the use of the word 'please' before the infinitive form. Offering the potential customer a unique experience will really attract him to the product. In fact, we could connect this idea with Bhatia's (2005) idea of offering specific incentives. In the same vein, Wang (1999) mentions the importance of an authentic experience and tourism ads try to offer the possibility of living an experience as 'authentic' as possible. Wang (1999: 365) states that «the pleasure of tourism exists not only in seeing exotic things, but also in sharing and communicating this pleasure with other tourists who are seeing the same sights together».

Questions are another way of establishing a relationship with the potential traveller. Sometimes we find questions and answers, where the reader gets the best solution for them. In the questions used in (22) and (23) we also come across some positive vocabulary: *looking after* the customer, *attractive city*, *warmhearted welcome*, etc. There are other examples that contain these kinds of words as we can see now:

- (24) *The gracious, personal warmth of Thai hospitality is unique throughout the world (Time May 1, 2006)*

- (25) I always fly *in comfort* in my *private shell seat*, indulge in *world-class cuisine*, *savour the finest wines*, enjoy a *wide variety of entertainment* and relax in a *truly tranquil ambience* (THAI, *Time* October 3, 2011)

We have seen some discursive features that characterize the language of advertising but we are going to see some frequent linguistic features in advertisements as well.

4.3. *Linguistic Features*

The use of some morpho-syntactic forms is relatively restricted: we have seen the use of ‘we’ and ‘you’, the use of the imperative and as far as tenses are concerned, the most commonly used tense in ads is the present tense.

4.3.1. The Present tense

- (26) We *are* globally yours (Turkish Airlines, *Time* May 10, 2011)
(27) Every year Skytrax [...] *announces* the best in the airline business (Turkish Airlines, *Time* August 29, 2011)
(28) You always *come* first (Qatar Airways, *Time* September 26, 2011)
(29) Your seat *reclines* and *extends* to form a bed in a personal space up to 190 cm (Iberia, *Time* June 26, 2011)
(30) Throughout the world we have hundreds of thousands of employees (Star Alliance, *Time* September, 27, 2004)

The present is the tense used to convey the idea that something is true, which is what all these airlines are looking for: they want to transmit the idea that to a certain extent, they can make your dream come true. Another linguistic feature typically used is the use of short and simple sentences as well as Noun Groups. Sometimes noun groups have a simple structure and sometimes we find a noun preceded and followed by many other elements, as we will see next.

4.3.2. Noun Groups

The use of noun groups is a way to convey more or less high degree of information density. In the tourism industry we are constantly exposed to specific texts (e.g. brochures, advertisements, notices, etc.) that contain a lot of compressed information, which is also the case of print advertisements and the kind of ads that occupy us in this paper.

- (31) A star alliance member (Thai, *Time* June 27, 2011)
(32) To romantic rendezvous: Pop and class love songs (*Time* July 4, 2011)
(33) To couture shopping spree: Runway collection preview show (Thai, *Time* July 4, 2011)
(34) ... a spa treatment... gourmet cuisine selection, fully-reclined privacy options, and the latest entertainment choices (Thai, *Time* July 4, 2011)

- (35) I always fly in comfort in my private shell seat, indulge in world-class cuisine (Thai, *Time* October 3, 2011)
- (36) New Royal Silk Class seats available on A340, B777-200 (Thai, *Time* October 3, 2011)
- (37) Skytrax, the world's civil aviation audit and service benchmarking programme, announces the best in airline business (Turkish Airlines, *Time* August 29, 2011)
- (38) World's 5-star airline (Qatar Airways, *Time* September 26, 2011)
- (39) Go to www.staralliance.com for details on how to join one of our member airline's frequent flyer programmes (Star Alliance, *Time* September 27, 2004)
- (40) STAR ALLIANCE, THE AIRLINE NETWORK FOR EARTH (*Time* September 27, 2004)

In this not so extensive corpus we have come across many noun groups, some of them are quite simple (*spa treatment*) and some others (*member airline's frequent flyer programmes*) are more complex. The reason why readers encounter so many noun groups is, as Rush (1998) states, that noun groups have the ability to operate as an independent clause in all areas of an advertisement. In advertising a single word may not be very specific. However, if we add some others, such as pre-modification and post-modification (33, 34, 36), we can add many new nuances. What is also true is that when an adjective precedes a noun the noun group is easier to process than when a reader faces a noun compound or a long or complex noun group. The difficulty lies in the fact that in complex noun groups there are no prepositions or other grammatical words that establish relationships between the different nouns in the noun group. The more complex a noun group is, the more difficult it will be to process. This aspect is also taken into account by Alcaraz (2000: 45) when he remarks the following: «Los sintagmas nominales largos, que buscan una gran precisión, se caracterizan por su gran intensidad debido al elevado número de semas o notas conceptuales que poseen». By 'intensión' he means «el conjunto de rasgos semánticos [...] que constituyen la unidad denotada» (Alcaraz, 2000: 45).

In the ads we have dealt with, the number of complex noun groups is not extremely high and this is probably due to the fact mentioned by Nilsson (2001), since he argues that the noun phrases whose subject matter is most closely related to tourism and travel to be more heavily modified than noun groups with a more general content. Depending on text types, the structure of the noun group varies, and he draws the conclusion that the most complex noun groups are found in travel guides and not in tourist brochures or travel articles, which is why in these kinds of ads very heavy pre-modification or post-modification is not very common. Heavy pre-modification in noun groups makes the text more difficult to understand sometimes but it saves space, something which is frequently limited in advertisements. Sometimes (40), we find a noun group apposition in order to define another noun. In short, we could stick to the words written by Djafarova & Andersen (2008: 293), which are as follows:

The advertiser searches for a way to provide enough information to convey the qualities of an advertised product in a short form. They create methods to provide a large amount of information in a clear and accurate way.

This is exactly the effect achieved by making use of noun groups, especially the complex ones in advertisements, as we have seen in the previous examples.

4.3.3. The modals ‘will’ and ‘can’

The use of ‘will’ suggests the idea of possibility and certainty and the use of ‘can’ that of possibility. When travellers consider a possibility, that means that it can come true and when we deal with the idea of certainty, the service offered will satisfy the real traveller, as it is suggested by the following examples:

- (41) A unique Thai hospitality that *will* carry you effortlessly around the world to over 70 cities in 5 continents (*Time* July 24, 2006)
- (42) Turkish Airlines *will* enjoy the pride of being the official airline of both the world’s greatest football teams (*Time* May 10, 2011)
- (43) With the Star Alliance network there *will* always be someone looking after you (*Time*, September 27, 2004)
- (44) Sometimes I’ll indulge in a spa treatment there as well (Thai, *Time* July 4, 2011)
- (45) There’ll be no surprises. You’ll find these new seats on board all our long-haul flights right now (Iberia, *Time*, June 26, 2006)
- (46) Now you *can* enjoy it throughout the world (Thai, *Time* May 1, 2006)
- (47) *Can* you recognize the traveller who has 280,000 people looking after them? We can (Star Alliance, *Time* September 27, 2004)
- (48) Best of all, you *can* earn and redeem miles and build status across all member airlines to 755 airport destinations around the world (Star Alliance, *Time* September 27, 2004)

4.3.4. Comparatives and Superlatives

A way of highlighting a service is by comparing it with others. Comparatives and superlatives are common structures in advertising. This use is also associated with evaluative adjectives as well as with nouns with positive connotations, as can be observed in the following examples:

- (49) Tokyo and all of Japan are *more convenient than* ever on THAI with direct flights to 5 airports in 4 Japanese cities (*Time* June 27, 2011)
- (50) ... making sure your connections are *as smooth as* possible (Star Alliance, *Time* September 27, 2004)
- (51) THAI, *Smooth as Silk* (*Time* May 1, 2006)
- (52) *More than* 170 cities to fly to for Berbatov and Anderson (Turkish Airlines, *Time* February 7, 2011)
- (53) Servicing *more than* 170 destinations via Istanbul on our brand new A330-300 and B777-300 ER aircraft (Turkish Airlines, *Time* May 9, 2011)
- (54) THAI’s new route between Bangkok and New York is now *the fastest and most sumptuously comfortable service* from Southeast Asia (*Time* May 15, 2006)
- (55) And *the latest* entertainment choices (Thai, *Time* July 4, 2011)

- (56) No matter who wins the title, Turkish Airlines will enjoy the pride of being the official airline of both *the world's greatest* football teams (*Time* May, 2011)
- (57) Europe's *best* airline (Turkish Airlines, *Time* August, 2011)
- (58) ... along with *the latest* in-flight technology in cabins (Iberia, *Time* June 26, 2006)

The lexis used in advertisements is usually emphatic and highly evaluative, as we have seen with all these comparative and superlative forms in examples 49-58. When comparing our company with others, in advertising our company is definitively the best one, an effect which is achieved by means of a high use of comparatives and superlatives.

4.3.5. Conditional sentences

Conditionals are another common structure that can be found in this type of discourse because we are given one or several alternatives and in this case the airline offers us the solution, as we can see in the following examples:

- (59) Or *if* you prefer just to unwind, choose from one of the dozens of restful positions, to get your head, legs and arms truly comfortable (Iberia Business Plus, *Time* June 26, 2006)
- (60) *Should* you wish to check your e-mails or even watch live TV onboard, our new Business Class is the right choice (Austrian Airlines, *Time* June 26, 2006)

In (60) we find the first conditional, which points to real facts, that is, our new Business Class is the answer to all your requests in case you are a demanding businessperson, again highlighting the idea that this airline can make your dream or wish come true.

5. Conclusion

Advertising is very important nowadays due to the competitive and changing market conditions and its language has to be adapted to these conditions. Language has a very strong influence over people, over customers and their behaviour, which is the reason why using a compelling message is crucial in the text of advertisements as well as in slogans. On the other hand, offering customers the best possible experience is one of the maxims used in advertising, especially in the tourism industry, where they are going to have a nice experience by themselves; this fact is in turn associated with using persuasive language.

Moreover, all advertisements look for some understanding and tangible action on the part of the customers, that is, the purchase of a product or a service. In tourism we come across specific choices, whether they are syntactic or textual and all these features from the language of tourism on the one hand, together with those specific to the language of advertising on the other, create a distinguishing kind of discourse, which is what we find in airlines advertisements. According to Bhatia (2005: 214),

«advertising is one of the most dynamic and versatile genres of public discourse today»; advertisers search for effective advertising, and this effect is achieved through the use of specific structures in English, some of which have been dealt with in this study, since it is true that the use of some words can be memory sustaining but the use of specific structures are typical in persuasive discourse and these structures will contribute to persuade the potential customer and make him a real user of an airline company.

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