

SEMIOTICS OF HARLEY-DAVIDSON ADVERTISING THROUGH STYLISTICS AND PRAGMATICS: THE CONCEPT OF FREEDOM IN CONSTRUCTING TARGET CONSUMER IDENTITY

SEMIÓTICA DA PUBLICIDADE DA HARLEY-DAVIDSON ATRAVÉS DA ESTILÍSTICA E DA PRAGMÁTICA: O CONCEITO DE LIBERDADE NA CONSTRUÇÃO DA IDENTIDADE DO CONSUMIDOR ALVO

SEMIÓTICA DE LA PUBLICIDAD DE HARLEY-DAVIDSON A TRAVÉS DE LA ESTILÍSTICA Y LA PRAGMÁTICA: EL CONCEPTO DE LIBERTAD EN LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA IDENTIDAD DEL CONSUMIDOR OBJETIVO

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Abstract: The article explores the semiotic construction of consumer identity through the stylistics and pragmatics of Harley-Davidson discourse, actualizing semiotic codes of its advertising. The findings provide evidence of the role of metaphorical expressions encoded in slogans and other stylistic devices in actualizing the hermeneutic code of the brand's advertising. The antitheses underlying the juxtaposition of brand values against mainstream ones underlie the symbolic code of the slogans' messages. The actional code relies on directives that stimulate the behavioral model, and implicit commissive acts, promising to fulfill the consumers' needs. The obtained data demonstrate the semiotic function of the key signified Freedom and its derived sub-concepts in constructing the target brand identity.

Keywords: consumer identity; Harley-Davidson; semiotics; conceptual blending; speech acts.

Resumo: O artigo explora a construção semiótica da identidade do consumidor através da estilística e pragmática do discurso da Harley-Davidson, atualizando os códigos semióticos de sua publicidade. Os resultados fornecem evidências do papel das expressões metafóricas codificadas em slogans e outros dispositivos estilísticos na atualização do código hermenêutico da publicidade da marca. As antíteses subjacentes à justaposição dos valores da marca contra os valores *mainstream* fundamentam o código simbólico das mensagens dos slogans. O código acional se baseia em diretivas que estimulam o modelo comportamental e atos comissivos implícitos, prometendo satisfazer as necessidades dos consumidores. Os dados obtidos demonstram a função semiótica do signo chave Liberdade e seus sub-conceitos derivados na construção da identidade da marca alvo.

Palavras-chave: Identidade do consumidor; Harley-Davidson; semiótica; mistura conceitual; atos de fala.

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Resumen: El artículo explora la construcción semiótica de la identidad del consumidor a través de la estilística y la pragmática del discurso de Harley-Davidson, actualizando los códigos semióticos de su publicidad. Los hallazgos proporcionan evidencia del papel de las expresiones metafóricas codificadas en eslóganes y otros dispositivos estilísticos en la actualización del código hermenéutico de la publicidad de la marca. Las antítesis subyacentes en la yuxtaposición de los valores de la marca frente a los convencionales subyacen en el código simbólico de los mensajes de los eslóganes. El código de acción se basa en directivas que estimulan el modelo de comportamiento y actos comisivos implícitos, prometiendo satisfacer las necesidades de los consumidores. Los datos obtenidos demuestran la función semiótica del significado clave "Libertad" y sus subconceptos derivados en la construcción de la identidad de marca objetivo.

Palabras clave: identidad del consumidor; Harley-Davidson; semiótica; mezcla conceptual; actos de habla.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The article discusses the pragmatics and stylistics of slogans of Harley-Davidson (hereinafter - HD) in terms of their impact on semiotic dimension of advertising. In a narrow sense, the semiotics of advertising is associated with the formation of connotations as encoded signs (Dyer, 1982, p. 128) of a secondary semiological system in which any verbal / visual sign is interpreted as a signifier of the brand mythologeme. In a broad discursive sense, the semiotic function of advertising lies in shaping of target consumer identities as a discursive construct through the signified that embody the clients' motivational needs.

The universal concept of Freedom as a key signifier of the HD brand has been chosen for analysis due to its significance in social and philosophical contexts. Freedom embodies the fundamental human aspiration for autonomy, choice, the absence of coercion, the liberty to make one's own decisions, express individuality, and pursue personal fulfillment without undue restrictions. The multifaceted concept of Freedom resonates across cultures and histories, representing a fundamental human value that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. Therefore, it is essential to identify the nuances of the concept's manifestation in specific contexts, such as the semiotic strategies of Harley Davidson branding.

In selecting HD for analysis, we aimed to explore the brand's distinctive use of semiotic elements in conveying the concept of Freedom within its advertising discourse. HD has established itself as an iconic brand associated with a lifestyle that embodies liberation, self-expression, and adventure. The brand's advertising campaigns consistently utilize powerful linguistic cues to evoke a sense of freedom on the open road. Furthermore, Harley Davidson's unique cultural significance make it a compelling subject for semiotic analysis. By delving into the specific signifieds employed by Harley Davidson, we seek to unravel the nuanced layers of meaning

embedded in the brand's communication, shedding light on how it constructs and reinforces the concept of Freedom within the realm of consumer identities.

In this context, the analysis of the Harley Davidson brand from the perspective of stylistic and pragmatic techniques is defined by their significance as mechanisms of the second level of signification. Stylistic techniques underlie connotative meanings that are associated with discursive key concepts and sub-concepts. The pragmatics of slogans form models of behavior for target consumer identities, promising to satisfy their motivational needs or calling for specific actions.

2 BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW

The article is based on Roland Barthes' (1957) idea of distinguishing between *langue naturelle* (natural language) and *métalangage* (metalanguage). In this context, the meanings of signs denoting the brand, products, or services become signifiers connoting values and ideas (signifieds) (Kravchenko & Yudenko, 2023). The semiotic function of advertising lies in constructing specific myths for consumer identities (Bamberg et al., 2011; Kravchenko et al., 2021), with the logic of legend and belonging to it (Baudrillard, 2002). Product advertising aims to evoke emotions or feelings, appealing to the motivational needs of target consumers and thus constructing these very identities. In this regard, research on secondary semiotics and mythology in advertising intersects with studies of identities from a discursive-semiotic perspective, which considers identity as a discursive construct, created through discursive values (Bamberg et al., 2011; Hammack, 2008, p. 2), directed towards the motivational needs of target identities. In the creation of such identities, brands use archetypes as a brand's most valuable and priceless attribute (Mark and Pearson, 2001, p. 8-10), drawn upon for unique brand positioning (Gutjahr, 2015, p. 139). Due to the fact that archetypes tap into "bridges" to the subconscious (Kravchenko & Shanaieva-Tsymbal, 2023), companies use these psychologically motivated mental models to enhance the emotional factor and evoke feelings in customers. An archetype expresses meaning in a way that customers build relationships with and care about the brand (Mark and Pearson, 2001, p. 20-22). Therefore, archetypes are more than just brand marketers' constructs (Caldwell et al., 2010, p. 93-94). While not being inherently semiotic resources, they nevertheless influence the semiotic construction of brands and their target identity. In particular, in the semiotic aspect, the role of archetypes in the process of construction of the consumer identity of the Apple brand is thoroughly examined in the study by Kravchenko et al. (2021). Our research utilizes the taxonomies of archetypes, borrowed from archetype psychology (Jung, 1971; Mark & Pearson, 2001), and "neo-archetypal theory" (Faber & Mayer, 2009).

The construction of consumer identity relies on the mechanism of creating a second connotative-based level of semiotics, for which R. Barthes (1957) introduces the term "mythological concept." The combination of such concepts constructs the mythology of certain brands as one of the "possible worlds", positioning the modeled reality as objective and non-alternative" (Kravchenko et al., 2020, p. 315-316).

Taking into account that the discourse of any brand is based on the main value that ensures the brand uniqueness, and on the subvalues of specific advertising campaigns, we propose some alterations to the traditional understanding of the signified (concept), using the terms "discourse-generating concept" (Zhykharieva & Stavtseva, 2022; Kravchenko, 2022) and sub-concepts.

The second part of Barthesian (1974) theory, equally significant for the theoretical foundation of the article, pertains to the identification of semiotic codes: (a) an actional

code that shapes actions and is associated in slogans with the directive illocutionary force – calls to action or changes in behavior; (b) a semantic code that embodies connotations and is used in advertising to create second-level meanings aimed at naturalizing values rather than products; (c) a hermeneutic code related to meanings, "encoded" by metaphorical slogan; (d) a symbolic code of the symbolic values of the brand in opposition to values that are "alien" to it; (e) a cultural code that includes historical, social, or literary references and bases on intertextual allusions to American values.

3 METHODOLOGY

The methodology of the article employs speech act analysis and tools from the theory of conceptual blending as its primary methods (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002). Speech act analysis (Austin, 1970; Kravchenko, 2017; Kravchenko et al., 2021; Sadock, 2004; Searle, 1969) is chosen due to the characteristics of advertising slogans, which always contain a direct or indirect call to purchase the product (directive act) and an implicit promise to satisfy one's motivational needs through it (commissive act). Therefore, to determine the types of speech acts used and differentiate them into direct and indirect, the article employs the concepts of illocutionary force (Austin, 1970) and indirect speech acts. Such acts combine a secondary, literally uttered act and a primary illocutionary act that is not performed literally (Searle, 1969, p. 178) and is reconstructed based on implicature (Kravchenko, 2017, 2017a), considering the context of the brand discourse. For example, an indirect act expressed in the slogan "As close to heaven, as someone will ever come" (<https://benextbrand.com/harley-davidson-brand-slogans/>) does not contain structural markers of either directive or commissive illocutionary forces. However, in the context of the brand's values, it is interpreted as a commissive promise – to experience flight thanks to HD, as well as an implicit directive call to action – to purchase a product promising such sensations.

Since secondary signifieds in HD advertisements often rely on metaphors, the article employs the method of conceptual integration theory (Fauconnier & Turner, 2002, p. 283–304). The method involves reconstructing the metaphor as a four-space model, which includes:

- (a) source and target input spaces,
- (b) a space of shared elements, selected from input spaces,
- (c) a blended space in which the meaning of the metaphor is reconstructed through the alignment of shared features with the background knowledge of the advertising audience. Considering the specificity of advertising discourse, the blend further evolves into a scenario – an implicit call to purchase the product. Consequently, in the blend's elaboration stage, the conceptual integration method is complemented by the speech acts analysis.

For example, the source space of the metaphor "Live cage-free" (<https://benextbrand.com/harley-davidson-brand-slogans/>) is the conditions where animals live without any restrictions or confinement; the target space is the experience of riding an HD. The space of shared features includes the liberating feeling of riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, akin to the idea of living without confinement. The blended space is "a sense of liberation, freedom on the open road, and an unconstrained way of living for HD riders." In the elaboration stage of the blend, this meaning unfolds into an implicit promise of freedom without constraints with HD and an associated call to acquire freedom by purchasing the brand's product.

Due to the fact that secondary signifieds in HD advertisements are based not only on metaphors but also on other stylistic devices, the article additionally employs stylistic analysis (Kravchenko et al., 2021; Simpson, 2014) to identify stylistically marked connotative meanings associated with the brand's motivational value.

The research algorithm comprises four stages. The first stage aims to identify interpretational hypotheses and focuses on the stylistic analysis of slogans, as well as the analysis of metaphors within the framework of conceptual integration theory. In the second stage, primary attention is given to identifying and interpreting the pragmatic features of slogans, taking into account their stylistic aspects. In the third stage, pragmatic and stylistic features are interpreted in terms of the semiotic codes of the brand's advertising and the actualized subconcepts - signifiers of the second level. The fourth stage is aimed at explaining the function of subconcepts in building the target consumer identity.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pragmatics and stylistics of HD slogans are determined by the discourse-forming concept of Freedom as the brand's core value aimed at constructing the target consumer identity. By placing Freedom at the forefront, we aim to underscore its centrality in shaping the brand's narrative and fostering a comprehensive understanding of the subsequent concepts introduced in the analysis. Freedom, for the brand, encapsulates not only a physical state but also a profound sense of individuality, self-expression, and the pursuit of adventure, thus setting the frame for a deeper exploration of the derivative subconcepts such as Self Expression, Overcoming one's own boundaries, Rebel, Personal uniqueness, Overcoming, "True American" and Flight.

The key concept is infrequently represented in the brand's slogans in a lexicalized form, such as in "Reclaim your freedom" and "The great American Freedom machine". As a rule, it is objectified implicitly, unfolding in subconcepts - structural components of the conceptual space of "Freedom" in the discourse of brand as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 - The subconceptual structure of the concept "Freedom": constructing target consumer identity.

Discourse-generating concept	Sub-concepts	Correspondence to the hierarchy of human needs (based on Maslow's pyramid)	The brand archetypes that underlie identities
Freedom	Self-expression Rebel Personal uniqueness Overcoming Flight "True American"	self-actualization (5 th level) belongingness (3 rd level)	Rebel archetype Archetypal motif of magical transformation

Source: The authors.

The analysis of the corpus of material showed that each of the designated subconcepts of 'self-expression' is a secondary signified for a group of slogans of a specific advertising company.

4.1 SUBCONCEPT "SELF-EXPRESSION"

This subconcept is a secondary signified in slogans (1) "The song isn't born to be status quo" (<https://www.ebay.com/itm/234908210058>) and (2) "Just add ego and go" (<https://www.ebay.com/itm/194163087409>).

The interpretive hypothesis in (1) is based on a metaphorical model: Riding a Harley Davidson (target space) is Creation/Song (source space). The generic space includes such common features of the input spaces as a special state, characteristic both for creativity and for high-speed riding on a motorcycle - a huge emotional uplift, ease of movement (of a motorcycle and thoughts and images), novelty, improvement, development. Strengthening the metaphorical meaning in the rhematic part of the slogan is achieved by antithesis - the opposition of creativity as self-expression to following the mainstream and the state of stagnation.

In the blended space, the interpretive hypothesis is developed with the involvement of the cognitive context of the brand's values, related to the discourse-forming concept of "freedom": Harley Davidson gives you a sense of freedom, inspiration, continuous development, creativity, like creative inspiration when writing music. The connotations-based interpretation of the metaphor corresponds to the slogan's semantic code, while the identification of the antithetical meaning relates to the symbolic code that reveals the opposition of the brand's values to mainstream ones.

In terms of its pragmatics, the slogan can be considered as an indirect directive speech act with a two-component illocutionary force, as it (a) conveys the explicit statement of fact or belief underlying assertive illocution and (b) contains an implicit urging to change yourself and your lifestyle through purchase of HD, which can become a tool for expressing individuality and nonconformity. However, thanks to the metaphor, the assertive illocutionary force also splits into a lexicalized illocution based on a literal interpretation of the statement (convincing that the song is something opposite to the established state of affairs) and an illocution-expander (Kravchenko, 2017) based on the metaphorical implicature. The interpretation of the slogan as an implicit urging-directive act contributes to the actional code that shapes the motivational attitudes and actions of the target consumer.

From the perspective of the principle of cooperation, the slogan, with its metaphorical and implicit call to action, violates the maxim of transparency of information by prompting the restoration of its unambiguousness. The implicature based on the illocution-expander and illocutionary force of implicit directive, is further developed in the optimally relevant context of the brand's values: loyalty to the brand is the key to your freedom, individuality, and nonconformity. However, in the realm of brand mythology, Harley Davidson motorcycles are perceived not only as a means of expressing individuality and nonconformity, but also as a symbol of freedom and autonomy, which corresponds to the cultural and historical connection of the brand with the biker subculture. Thus, the call for a change of lifestyle through Harley Davidson motorcycles expands to the level of socio-cultural identity, rather than just the individual level.

The slogan "Just add ego. And go", which embodies the subconcept of "self-expression," contains ostensive stimuli such as metaphor, pun, and parcellation. The interpretive hypothesis is based on blended space of the metaphor "Harley Davidson is a Manifestation of your Ego". Attributes of the target space, individuality and self-awareness, and attributes of the source space (HD - unique style, freedom of self-expression, charisma) are blended together to convey the idea that HD can help

individuals express their ego and move forward in both literal and figurative senses. In addition to the metaphor, the slogan is a pun based on the correlation of the paronyms "ego" and "go," and it uses parcellation. Intentional disruption of sentence structure detaches the thematic part "And go" into a separate phrase, which acquires additional spatial connotations - impulses not only towards movement but for action, directed forward in a literal sense of overcoming physical space, as well as figuratively - as self-development. In this way, the interpretive hypothesis receives contextual reinforcement by linking the motorcycle with the expression of one's own ego: Harley Davidson will express your ego, helping you move forward both literally and metaphorically.

From the viewpoint of pragmatics, the slogan compromises the maxims of quality and transparency of information through the use of metaphor and pun, and the maxim of quantity as the reference to HD is made only associatively through the verb of movement. The discursive implicature triggered by the violation of the maxim relies on the metaphorical blend and the associated directive illocution: Reveal your identity through riding on HD. The slogan, in its illocutionary structure, represents a direct directive act with a two-component illocutionary force with a lexicalized illocution – an encouragement to embrace one's individuality in the sense of self-development, and an expander illocution - an invitation to amplify your unique identity with HD. The slogan can also optionally be interpreted as an indirect commissive act, promising to enhance the individuality of the motorcyclist through HD. The interpretation of the illocutionary act reveals the actional code that shapes motivation towards the development (which is marked by "go" - with a forward movement vector) of one's individuality through HD. The interpretation of the "add ego and go" metaphor as an expression of one's individuality through HD contributes to the hermeneutic code, since it "encodes" meanings violating the maxim of transparency. The displacement of the denotative meaning of the word "motorcycle" as a vehicle with the connotations "self-expression" and "individuality" underlies the semantic code.

4.2 SUBCONCEPT "OVERCOMING ONE'S OWN BOUNDARIES"

This subconcept is a secondary signified in slogans (3) "Go beyond 3D with H – D" (<https://www.ebay.com/itm/134068510387>), (4) "Freedom ain't quiet" (<https://www.deviantart.com/harleyfreedomrider19/art/HARLEY-DAVIDSON-FREEDOM-AIN-T-QUIET-498479509>) and (5) "Even cows kick down the fence once in a while" (<https://www.ebay.co.uk/itm/404145765326>).

Slogan (3) is linked to the subconcept of "overcoming one's own boundaries" through three interpretative hypotheses, which are substantiated by complex double metaphors, hyperbole and puns as ostensive stimuli as presented in Table 2.

Table 2 - "Go beyond 3D with H-D": ostensive stimuli – interpretation - relevant hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Devices	Interpretation
Hypothesis 1 (based on blend space 1)	Metaphor 1	<i>target space 1</i> : the real world <i>source space 1</i> : 3D graphics <i>generic space 1</i> : three dimensions - length, width, and height both in 3D graphics and the physical world, and the perception/image of objects as volumetric <i>Blend Space 1</i> : The world is ordinary (the same of "mundanity").
Hypothesis 2 (based on blend space 2)	Metaphor 2; hyperbole	<i>target space 2</i> : the experience of riding a HD in contrast to regular motorcycle <i>source space 2</i> : 3D in contrast to multidimensional perception. <i>generic space 2</i> : extraordinary feelings, emotions, and perception of the world <i>Blend Space 2</i> : the experience of riding a Harley-Davidson will change your perception of the world
	Pun – based on graphic paronyms 3D and H-D	a contextually dependent reinforcement of Hypothesis 2
Hypothesis 3 (optional interpretation)		links the idea of going beyond 3D to the use of advanced technology, making Harley Davidson technologically ahead of other motorcycle brands.

Source: The authors.

In terms of stylistic-pragmatic correlation, the implicature based on blend space 2 is triggered by metaphors and hyperbole that violate the maxim of quality and transparency of information – since it is not transparent, what is meant here by 3D, and remains unclear how motorcycles take a rider beyond the bounds of the three-dimensional world. The implicature underpins two directive calls in a causal connection: (a) go beyond the ordinary world into another world without usual spatial coordinates; (b) try the experience of riding a HD, which will open up a non-three-dimensional world. Both calls reveal the actional code embedded in the slogan. The slogan also contains the illocutionary force of an indirect promise, suggesting that by purchasing HD you will see the world in a transformed way. In addition, the double metaphor encoding the meaning of the slogan relates to the hermeneutic code, and the attribution of HD connotative characteristics, intended to become the signified of the brand, correlates with the semantic code.

The slogan "Freedom ain't quite" is an indirect speech act with a two-component assertive-directive illocutionary force. The illocutionary force of a direct assertive gives the slogan the features of a sentence expressing a philosophical meaning and relates to the hermeneutic code: Freedom is not complete or ideal, because it is regulated by a certain social culture that imposes its own restrictions on it. The illocution of an indirect directive, associated with the actional code, calls to "go beyond the bounds of ordinary freedom with Harley Davidson."

However, from the perspective of the cooperative principle, the slogan violates the maxim of clarity of information since it is ambiguous - the phrase can be interpreted by the audience in the sense that freedom can have unpredictable consequences. In this case, the slogan actualizes the meaning of "control and caution when riding a motorcycle", which conflicts with the subconcept "freedom without restrictions". Accordingly, the innovativeness of the slogan may reduce its effectiveness due to the

possibility of meanings not intended by the brand. When interpreting the slogan literally, the maxim of quality of information is violated, as the statement about the insufficiency of freedom is not valid. A metaphor "HD is Freedom" generates an implicature "HD will make you free", which underpins the interpretation of the assertive act as an indirect commissive promise. The metaphor encoding the discourse-forming concept of "freedom" relates both to the hermeneutic code and the semantic code - by solidifying the conventional connotation associated with HD. An alternative interpretation of the slogan can also be based on the paronymy of the words "quite" and "quiet" and the implicit antithesis of the latter with the noise of a roaring Harley Davidson. This hypothesis brings forth the metaphor "Harley Davidson (whose sound is not quiet) is Freedom."

When analyzing the slogan "Even cows kick down the fence once in a while", two possible interpretations arise, reinforced by the use of metaphor, metaphorical allegory, and intertextual allusion as presented in Table 3.

Table 3 - "Even cows kick down the fence once in a while": ostensive stimuli – interpretation - relevant hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Ostensive stimuli	Interpretation
Hypothesis 1 (based on blend space 1)	Metaphor	<i>target space 1</i> : going beyond the established standards <i>source space 1</i> : kicking down the fence <i>generic space 1</i> : Protest, disobedience <i>blend space 1</i> : breaking free from established norms together with HD.
	Intertextual allusion to Orwell's Animal Farm	
Hypothesis 2 (based on blend space 2)	Metaphorical allegory	<i>target space 2</i> : passive and indecisive person <i>source space 2</i> : obedient domestic animal <i>generic space 2</i> : indifference, passivity, patience <i>blend space 2</i> : the integration of Blend 1 with mental spaces 2 – overcoming passivity and indecisiveness to try something new, breaking free from established standards with Harley Davidson.

Source: The authors.

Decoding the metaphor "Demolishing fences" - "Going beyond the limits" and the allusions to Orwell's novel are consistent with the hermeneutic code. The metaphor receives independent extratextual reinforcement due to existing conventional metaphors «to break the mould», «break free», «break with tradition», etc. At the same time, the metaphorical allegory with optional association of cows with the passive and inert persons may activate derogatory connotations for a part of the audience, which reduces the effectiveness of the slogan. Due to the ambiguity of interpretation, the maxim of transparency is violated. However, for that part of the target audience that does not identify itself as passive and inert, the slogan can be interpreted as irony, which is one of the positive politeness strategies, reducing the distance between the brand and its customer. The actional code is based on the illocutionary force of an indirect directive, grounded in metaphorical implicature (blend space 1) and calling for breaking free from established boundaries together with HD. The semantic code embodies connotations between HD and its secondary level signified, which is "overcoming one's own boundaries."

4.3 SUBCONCEPT “TRUE AMERICAN”

This subconcept is a secondary signified in slogans (6) “This country wasn’t founded on the declaration of bending” (<https://benextbrand.com/harley-davidson-brand-slogans/>) and (7) “The great American Freedom machine” (<https://rollingthunder.co.nz/blogs/harley-nz-news/the-great-american-freedom-machine>).

In (6) the interpretive hypothesis “To be a true American along with HD, symbolizing dedication to fundamental American values” relies on ostensive stimuli such as the allusion to Declaration of independence of the USA and implicit antithesis, contrasting the idea of freedom, on which the USA is founded, with subordination – semantic components of the lexeme “bending”. In addition to the absence of product naming, these stylistic devices violate the cooperative maxims of relevance, quantity, and transparency of information since the associations with the brand are not supported by any explicit information that establishes a logical and semantic connection between HD and the Declaration of Independence. Violation of the maxims serves as a trigger for implicature, which fill in gaps in information and metonymically equates HD and the associated lifestyle with the symbol of freedom and refusal to compromise - in accordance with the principles on which the country was founded.

Decoding information through implicature inference correlates with hermeneutic code, as it requires the recipient to decrypt the meaning and intentions that are implicitly present in the text. Intertextual allusions reveal the cultural code. The stylistics of the slogan contributes to its semantic code, creating enduring connotations about the brand's association with American values. The semantic code is intertwined with the actional code as the slogan serves as an implicit directive illocution, urging to “be a true American” together with HD, symbolizing freedom, and unwavering commitment to its values.

The same actional code is embodied in the slogan “The great American Freedom machine”. The semantic code is based on the use of the hypernym “machine” instead of the hyponym “motorcycle,” intended to evoke connotations of power and strength that resonate with the HD image. The interpretative hypothesis “HD, symbolizing freedom as a fundamental American value, makes you feel like a true American” is reinforced by the allusion to significant American values, which indirectly connect the brand and its products with the symbol of freedom. Additionally, the metaphor of “machinery” in the slogan suggests that freedom is a driving force that propels American society forward.

The connotations of power, strength, and freedom associating HD with America and its values are based on implicatures, as the slogan deviates from the maxim of information transparency from the perspective of the cooperative principle. The maxim violation is triggered by (a) the epithet “great” that can apply to both America and HD products, (b) the term “machine” that can be interpreted both literally and as a metaphor for the American way of life, assuming that freedom drives American society forward, (c) the polysemous lexeme “freedom,” whose interpretation in the socio-political discourse (such as freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly, freedom from discrimination, etc.) differs from the meaning of the word for motorcycle enthusiasts, which signifies the freedom of the open road, the thrill of speed, and so on.

From a pragmatic perspective, the slogan represents an indirect speech act, possessing secondary illocutionary force of assertion (making an implicit statement about HD) and primary illocutionary force of directive, which contributes to the formation of an actional code - inviting individuals to become supporters of HD and, in

doing so, contribute to the advancement of American society. Slogans that link the values of a brand to American values expand the brand's target consumer identity, which is constructed not only by motorcycle enthusiasts but also by anyone who shares a sense of patriotism and allegiance to the historical values of the United States.

4.4 SUB-CONCEPT "FLIGHT"

This subconcept serves as the secondary signified in the slogan (8) "The nearest thing to flying" (<https://www.desertcart.com.pa/products/73091445-the-nearest-thing-to-flying-harley-davidson-hydra-glide-motorcycle-ad-1951>), the interpretation of which involves two hypotheses that are grounded in the blend space created by metaphors, as illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4 - "The nearest thing to flying": ostensive stimuli – interpretation - relevant hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Means of actualization	Interpretation
Hypothesis 1 (Based on blend space 1)	Metaphor 1	<i>target space 1</i> : Riding <i>source space 1</i> : Flying <i>generic space 1</i> : speed, movement, the association between the wings of a motorcycle and the wings of a bird, a state of euphoria <i>blend space 1</i> : Riding a HD physically and emotionally feels like floating in the air.
Hypothesis 2 (Based on blend space 2)	Metaphor 2	<i>target space</i> : Riding HD <i>source space 2</i> : Freedom <i>generic space 2</i> : similar sensations of freedom during flight and fast driving. <i>blend space 2</i> : Riding a HD makes you free.

Source: The authors.

Blended space 2 relies on the blend of the metaphor 1 and developed through independent contextual reinforcement due to conventional metaphors that connect flight with freedom – "Freedom is the flight of the soul", "Free as a bird". The slogan violates the maxim of quantity of information - by ellipting the name of the advertised product, and quality of information - through metaphor and hyperbole as it is not possible for a person to fly on a motorcycle. The slogan also flouts the maxim of relevance - the logical-semantic connection between the concepts "The nearest thing" and "flying", which form an implicit antithesis, because the flight is associated with something distant and unattainable, while "the nearest thing" connotes proximity and accessibility.

The implicature triggered by the violation of maxims coincides with the blend 2, and in the context of the brand's values, it expands to an additional meaning: loyalty to the brand is the key to your sense of freedom. The discursive implicature "HD as a tool to achieve freedom" corresponds to the hermeneutic code and forms the basis for interpreting the actional code that determines the future actions of the target audience, driven to attain a sense of freedom through HD. In this regard, the slogan, in addition to the explicit assertive illocution, contains an indirect directive and can also be interpreted as an indirect commissive, as it promises the sensations associated with flying and the attainment of freedom.

An examination of slogans that replace the brand name with the concept of "freedom" has revealed a relationship between the stylistic and pragmatic aspects of these slogans, and provide insights into how these devices interact with the semiotic codes of the brand's discourse. These interfaces are further explored in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5 - Stylistics-pragmatics interface

Stylistic devices	Cooperative maxims	Discursive implicatures
metaphors and hyperboles	Disregard of the maxim of informational quality	loyalty to the brand is the key to your sense of freedom, and HD is the tool for achieving freedom and satisfying your motivational needs, transitioning from the modality of "wanting" to the modality of "being."
explicit or implicit antithesis and puns	Ignoring the maxim of relevance	
intertextual allusions, metaphors, puns	compromising the maxim of transparency	
ellipsis of the product name or other key structural elements of the slogan	Ignoring the maxim of informational quantity	

Source: The authors.

Table 6 - Semiotic codes via stylistics and pragmatics

Stylistic and pragmatic devices	Semiotic codes
Stylistic devices	semantic code
Antithesis	symbolic code
Implicatures	hermeneutic code
Speech acts	actional code

Source: The authors.

Building a brand mythology becomes the basis for forming a target audience and creating a unique consumer identity. The HD brand is associated with a certain lifestyle and freedom, and using this brand's motorcycle becomes not only a means of transportation, but also a symbol of belonging to a group of independent, confident, free, and creative people. This allows the brand to attract not only those who are looking for a means of transportation, but also those who want to express their individuality and belong to a certain culture and way of life. In this vein, the purchase and use of the motorcycle is positioned by the brand as a fundamental condition for acquiring the specified characteristics, blurring the line between "want" and "be". Connotations and associations with the brand are metonymically transferred to its buyer, who, depending on the updated subconcepts, values freedom, independence, individuality, going beyond norms and conventions, and is committed to American values.

The impact of the brand's slogans is strengthened by the use of archetypes as complementary framework that aids in the process of understanding the semiotic construction of HD identity. In particular, the brand uses (a) the archetype motif of magical transformation (Kravchenko & Shanaieva-Tsymbal, 2023, p. 39) as Harley-Davidson is attributed with almost magical properties in its ability to miraculously change a person's worldview and life, and (b) the archetype of the Rebel - the rule-breakers, the boundary-pushers and unconventional thinkers. In the framework of Maslow's levels of motivations, the Harley Davidson brand is most associated with self-actualization, which is the highest level in the hierarchy of human needs. This is because Harley Davidson has been marketed as a brand that allows individuals to express their individuality, pursue their own dreams, trying new things instead of

sticking to safe paths in order “to become everything one is capable of becoming” (Maslow, 1987, p. 64), which are all values that are closely linked to self-actualization. At the same time, in constructing a target identity, the brand also appeals to the psychological need of people for group affiliation and belongingness, by actualizing the cultural and historical connection of the brand with the American values and biker subculture. In such a brand value projection, the motivational appeal satisfies the needs corresponding to the third level of Maslow's hierarchy - the need for belongingness and love.

CONCLUSION

The pragmatics and stylistics of Harley Davidson slogans are determined by the discourse-generating concept of "freedom" with sub-concepts such as "self-expression," "personal uniqueness," "independence," "overcoming one's own limits," and "commitment to American values" as second-level meanings, signified by all signifiers associated with the brand and its products.

The article reveals the interplay of pragmatics and stylistics in Harley Davidson slogans. Through metaphors and hyperbole, the slogans defy the maxim of informational quality, while ellipsis of the product name or other key structural elements of the slogan contributes to the violation of the maxim of quantity. Ignoring the maxim of relevance, which entails logical and semantic coherence of meanings, is based on explicit or implicit antithesis and puns. The maxim of transparency is compromised through intertextual allusions, metaphors, puns, and so on.

The implicatures arising from the violation of maxims form the basis of two connotative meanings: loyalty to the brand is the key to your sense of freedom, and HD is the tool for achieving freedom and satisfying your motivational needs.

From the perspective of Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, stylistic means that connote the values of HD contribute to the semantic code. The identification of antithetical meanings underlying the opposition of brand values to mainstream values relates to the symbolic code. The inference of discursive implicatures, interpreting the identified connotations in the context of brand mythology, corresponds to the hermeneutic code. Simultaneously, the implicatures support the actional code, determining future actions and the behavioral model of the target audience.

Thanks to the inherent call to action in the slogans, urging a change in behavior and lifestyle with Harley Davidson, all slogans are polycomponent in their illocutionary force, forming three main patterns: explicit assertive statements combined with an implicit directive with extended illocutionary force, encompassing a call to change and do so by acquiring HD; a directive with an elaborate illocution, incorporating both lexicalized and expanding illocution, linking the realization of the action with a call to be with the brand and use its products; an assertive or directive act combined with an indirect commissive, promising the satisfaction of motivational needs through the brand and its products.

Brand values construct its target consumer identity with the motivational needs of self-actualization and belongingness.

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