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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Masculinity in Advertising Discourse: A Comparative Analysis of French and Uzbek Advertising Slogans

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advertising discourse; masculinity; gender representation; advertising slogans; comparative linguistics; intercultural communication; French language; Uzbek language; discourse analysis; cultural identity.

Abstract

Advertising discourse serves not only as a commercial instrument but also as a cultural space in which social values, identities, and gender expectations are continuously constructed and negotiated. The corpus consists of 120 advertisements (60 French and 60 Uzbek), collected from television broadcasts, social media campaigns, corporate websites, and print media published between 2014 and 2024. Among the various forms of representation employed in advertising, images of masculinity occupy a particularly significant place, reflecting both universal marketing strategies and culture-specific understandings of male identity. This study examines the linguistic and cultural characteristics of masculine advertising slogans in French and Uzbek, with the aim of identifying the ways in which masculinity is represented and communicated across two distinct sociocultural contexts. Drawing on a comparative discourse-analytic framework, the research investigates a corpus of advertising slogans and promotional texts targeting male audiences. The analysis combines descriptive, classificatory, comparative, and cross-cultural methods to explore the linguistic and extralinguistic resources used in the construction of masculine identities. Particular attention is paid to lexical choices, persuasive strategies, cultural references, and gendered representations embedded in advertising discourse. The findings reveal both convergent and divergent patterns in the portrayal of masculinity. French advertising tends to emphasize individuality, sophistication, self-expression, and personal achievement, whereas Uzbek advertising more frequently highlights social responsibility, family values, strength, and collective identity. Despite these cultural differences, advertisements in both languages employ similar persuasive mechanisms that associate masculinity with authority, success, confidence, and social prestige. The study demonstrates that advertising discourse functions as an important site for the reproduction and transformation of gender norms and contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and gender in contemporary communication.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Advertising has become one of the most influential forms of communication in contemporary societies, shaping consumer behavior, cultural values, and social perceptions across linguistic and national boundaries. In the twenty-first century, the omnipresence of advertising is inseparable from the rapid development of mass media, digital technologies, global markets, and online communication platforms. The expansion of color printing, satellite broadcasting, social media networks, and Internet-based marketing strategies has transformed advertising from a simple promotional tool into a complex socio-cultural phenomenon that permeates everyday life.

Despite its current prominence, advertising was not always regarded as a legitimate object of scientific inquiry. For a long time, it remained primarily associated with economics and marketing, where it was examined mainly as an instrument for stimulating consumption and increasing commercial profitability. Over time, however, scholars recognized that advertising extends far beyond its economic function. As a result, it has attracted increasing attention from researchers in linguistics, sociology, psychology, communication studies, cultural studies, discourse analysis, and pragmatics. Contemporary approaches view advertising as a multifaceted communicative practice that reflects and reproduces social norms, ideological values, and cultural identities.

Among the various dimensions explored in advertising research, gender representation occupies a particularly significant position. Advertising discourse frequently relies on socially constructed images of masculinity and femininity, often reproducing culturally embedded stereotypes about the roles, attributes, and behaviors expected of men and women. These representations are not universal; rather, they are shaped by historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts. Consequently, comparative studies of advertising discourse provide valuable insights into how gender identities are constructed and communicated across different societies.

The present study focuses on masculine advertising discourse in French and Uzbek, two linguistic and cultural environments characterized by distinct historical traditions, social values, and communicative conventions. Examining advertising texts addressed to men in these contexts makes it possible to identify both universal and culture-specific mechanisms of gender representation. Particular attention is devoted to the linguistic and extralinguistic resources employed to construct masculine identities, including lexical choices, persuasive strategies, visual symbolism, and culturally salient stereotypes.

The relevance of this research lies in several interconnected factors. First, it contributes to the growing body of scholarship on language and gender by investigating how masculine identities are discursively constructed in advertising. Second, it provides a cross-cultural perspective that enhances our understanding of similarities and differences between French and Uzbek communicative practices. Third, by critically examining stereotypical portrayals of men, the study seeks to encourage more balanced and socially responsible approaches to advertising communication.

The primary objective of this research is to identify and compare the gender-specific characteristics of advertising texts targeting men in French and Uzbek. To achieve this objective, a corpus of advertising slogans and promotional texts from both linguistic contexts was selected and analyzed. Through a comparative linguistic and cultural approach, the study aims to reveal the dominant representations of masculinity, the persuasive mechanisms underlying their construction, and the extent to which these representations reflect broader socio-cultural values in the two societies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising has evolved from a purely commercial practice into a sophisticated form of social communication that not only promotes products and services but also conveys cultural values, social norms, and ideological assumptions. Contemporary scholars increasingly view advertising discourse as a complex semiotic system through which identities, lifestyles, and gender roles are constructed and disseminated. As Cook (2001) argues, advertising operates within a broader communicative environment where linguistic, visual, and contextual elements interact to shape audience perceptions. Similarly, Goddard (2002) emphasizes that advertising language should be understood not merely as a persuasive instrument but as a cultural text reflecting the values and expectations of a particular society.

The linguistic study of advertising gained prominence through the works of Vestergaard and Schröder (1985), Myers (1994), and Tanaka (1994), who demonstrated that advertising discourse employs distinctive rhetorical and pragmatic strategies to attract attention, create emotional engagement, and influence consumer behavior. McQuarrie and Mick (1996) further showed that rhetorical figures and stylistic devices enhance memorability and persuasive effectiveness, making advertising slogans particularly suitable for linguistic analysis. Within this perspective, advertising slogans are regarded as condensed communicative units in which lexical choice, syntax, metaphor, and cultural symbolism function simultaneously to achieve persuasive goals.

A significant body of research has examined advertising through the lens of discourse analysis. Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (2008) argue that media texts are not neutral representations of reality but social practices that contribute to the reproduction of power relations and ideological structures. Advertising discourse, therefore, serves as an important site where dominant cultural

meanings are created and legitimized. Wodak and Meyer (2016) similarly emphasize that discourse reflects broader social processes and should be analyzed in relation to the cultural and historical contexts in which it is produced. From this perspective, advertising texts reveal not only marketing strategies but also collective assumptions about social identity, status, and gender.

Gender representation constitutes one of the most extensively studied dimensions of advertising discourse. Early investigations by Lakoff (1975) highlighted the relationship between language and gender, demonstrating that linguistic practices often reflect unequal social expectations assigned to men and women. Building on these foundations, Goffman (1979) provided one of the most influential analyses of gender portrayals in advertising, arguing that advertisements frequently rely on ritualized representations that reinforce socially accepted notions of masculinity and femininity. Subsequent scholars, including Tannen (1994), Talbot (2010), and Mills (2008), expanded the discussion by examining how language contributes to the construction of gender identities and social roles.

The concept of gender itself has undergone significant theoretical development. Butler (1990) challenged essentialist understandings of gender by proposing that gender identities are socially and discursively performed rather than biologically predetermined. This perspective has had a profound influence on advertising studies, encouraging researchers to investigate how media texts participate in the continuous production and negotiation of gender norms. Within advertising discourse, masculinity is increasingly viewed as a dynamic cultural construct rather than a fixed social category.

Research on masculinity in advertising has shown that representations of men vary across cultures and historical periods. Courtine (2011) argues that contemporary masculine identities are shaped by changing social expectations concerning authority, success, physical appearance, and emotional expression. Advertising frequently presents idealized models of masculinity associated with power, independence, achievement, and social prestige. At the same time, these representations adapt to local cultural values and societal expectations, resulting in considerable variation across linguistic and cultural contexts.

The relationship between language, culture, and representation has been further explored through cultural and semiotic approaches. Hall (1997) emphasizes that meaning is not simply transmitted but actively produced within cultural systems of representation. Likewise, Williamson (1978) demonstrates that advertisements create symbolic associations that extend beyond the promoted product itself, linking commodities to broader cultural values and identities. Bourdieu's (1991) concept of symbolic power is particularly relevant in this regard, as advertising can be understood as a mechanism through which socially valued meanings and desirable identities are legitimized and reproduced.

Recent developments in multimodal discourse analysis have broadened the scope of advertising research by emphasizing the interaction between verbal and visual elements. Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) and Machin (2007) argue that images possess their own grammatical structures and communicative functions. Advertising messages therefore emerge through the combined effect of linguistic choices, visual design, color symbolism, and cultural references. Machin and Mayr (2012) further note that multimodal resources often contribute to the naturalization of ideological assumptions, including those related to gender.

Despite the growing body of scholarship on advertising and gender, comparative studies examining masculine advertising discourse across different linguistic and cultural environments remain relatively limited. Existing research has focused predominantly on Western contexts, while Central Asian perspectives have received considerably less attention. In particular, comparative investigations of French and Uzbek advertising discourse are scarce, leaving important questions regarding intercultural constructions of masculinity largely unexplored.

The present study seeks to address this gap by comparing masculine advertising slogans in French and Uzbek. By examining the linguistic and cultural mechanisms through which masculinity is represented in these two languages, the research contributes to a deeper understanding of the relationship between discourse, gender, and culture. Furthermore, it expands current scholarship on advertising communication by providing an intercultural perspective on the ways masculine identities are constructed, negotiated, and communicated within contemporary media environments.

3. CORPUS AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study is based on a comparative corpus of advertising texts targeting male consumers in two distinct linguistic and cultural contexts: French and Uzbek. The corpus consists of advertisements published between 2014 and 2024 and collected from a variety of media platforms, including television broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, outdoor advertising, corporate websites, and social media networks. To ensure thematic diversity and representativeness, advertisements were selected from several sectors traditionally associated with male-oriented marketing, including automotive products, men's cosmetics, fashion, technology, sports equipment, and luxury goods.

The selection of the corpus was guided by two principal criteria. First, the advertisements explicitly addressed male audiences either through linguistic markers, visual representations, or product categories. Second, the selected materials reflected contemporary advertising practices within their respective cultural environments. The final corpus provides a basis for examining both universal and culture-specific representations of masculinity in advertising discourse.

Methodologically, the research adopts a qualitative comparative approach grounded in discourse analysis and intercultural communication studies. The analysis combines descriptive, interpretative, and comparative procedures to investigate the verbal and non-verbal mechanisms through which masculine identities are constructed and communicated. Particular attention is devoted to four analytical dimensions:

- representations of masculinity, including social roles, behavioral expectations, physical attributes, and emotional characteristics;
- linguistic strategies, such as lexical choices, evaluative expressions, imperatives, and gender-marked terminology;
- rhetorical and persuasive techniques employed to attract and influence male consumers;
- intercultural similarities and differences in the discursive construction of masculine identities.

To enhance analytical consistency, a coding framework was developed to identify recurrent linguistic markers, visual signs, gender stereotypes, and discursive patterns. This framework made it possible to categorize representations of masculinity and to compare their frequency and communicative functions across the French and Uzbek datasets. The methodological design therefore combines close textual interpretation with systematic comparative analysis, enabling a nuanced understanding of how advertising discourse reflects broader cultural conceptions of masculinity.

4. Advertising as a Discursive and Cultural Phenomenon

Advertising occupies a unique position at the intersection of economics, communication, culture, and language. Although traditionally associated with commercial promotion, contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes advertising as a powerful form of social discourse that participates in the production and circulation of meanings, identities, and cultural values. Advertising not only informs consumers about products and services but also communicates symbolic messages about lifestyles, aspirations, social status, and gender roles.

From a marketing perspective, advertising is generally defined as a paid and non-personal form of communication intended to promote goods, services, organizations, or ideas to a specific audience (Kotler et al., 2019). Such definitions emphasize the strategic and persuasive functions of advertising, highlighting its role in influencing consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Within this framework, advertising is viewed primarily as an instrument of market communication designed to create awareness, stimulate demand, and encourage consumption.

However, limiting advertising to its commercial function overlooks its broader social significance. Sociolinguistic and cultural approaches conceptualize advertising as a form of discourse that reflects and reproduces dominant social values, ideologies, and systems of representation (Bourdieu, 1991). Through repeated exposure to particular images, narratives, and linguistic patterns, advertising contributes to the normalization of specific social identities and behavioral expectations. Consequently, advertisements do not merely reflect society; they actively participate in shaping social perceptions and cultural norms.

This dual nature of advertising—as both an economic tool and a cultural practice—is particularly evident in representations of gender. Advertising discourse frequently relies on recognizable gender stereotypes to facilitate rapid communication and audience identification. These representations often associate men and women with distinct social roles, personality traits, and behavioral models, thereby reinforcing culturally established understandings of masculinity and femininity.

Within the French tradition of advertising studies, rhetorical analysis has played a central role in understanding persuasive communication. Adam and Bonhomme (2007) identify three major rhetorical orientations commonly found in advertising discourse. The epideictic function emphasizes praise and positive evaluation, presenting products as desirable and exceptional. The deliberative function encourages action through advice, recommendation, or persuasion, inviting consumers to make particular choices. The judicial function, although less frequent, appears when advertisements implicitly or explicitly contrast a product with competing alternatives. In practice, these rhetorical dimensions often coexist within the same advertising message, contributing to its persuasive effectiveness.

More recent approaches have expanded the study of advertising beyond rhetoric to include discourse analysis, semiotics, and gender studies. Scholars increasingly investigate how linguistic and visual resources interact to construct social identities and communicate cultural meanings. In this perspective, advertising is understood as a multimodal discourse in which verbal language, imagery, color, typography, and symbolic references work together to create persuasive messages.

The growing interest in gender-oriented advertising reflects broader academic concerns regarding the relationship between language and social identity. Since the early twenty-first century, researchers have increasingly explored how advertising contributes to the construction of gendered subjectivities and how these constructions vary across cultural contexts. Masculinity, in particular, has emerged as an important area of investigation due to changing social expectations concerning male identity, authority, consumption, and self-presentation.

From this standpoint, advertising directed at men represents a particularly valuable site for linguistic and cultural analysis. Such advertisements reveal not only marketing strategies but also broader social assumptions regarding what it means to be a man within a given society. By examining these representations in French and Uzbek advertising discourse, the present study seeks to illuminate the cultural mechanisms through which contemporary masculinities are articulated, legitimized, and communicated.

5. Corpus Analysis

Gender has long been recognized as a significant variable in linguistic and communicative practices. Contemporary scholarship, however, increasingly emphasizes that gender should not be understood merely as a biological category but as a socially and culturally constructed system of meanings that is continuously negotiated through discourse (Butler, 1990; Talbot, 2010). From this perspective, advertising represents one of the most influential discursive spaces in which gender identities are created, reproduced, and legitimized.

Early sociolinguistic research highlighted differences in the communicative behaviors traditionally associated with men and women. Lakoff (1975) argued that language use reflects broader social structures and power relations, while later studies demonstrated that communicative styles are shaped not only by gender but also by cultural norms, social expectations, and situational contexts (Holmes, 2013; Tannen, 1994). Rather than viewing masculine discourse as an inherent linguistic category, contemporary researchers examine how specific representations of masculinity are strategically constructed in media and advertising texts.

The analysis of the French and Uzbek corpora reveals that advertisements targeting men frequently mobilize culturally recognizable models of masculinity. Although the linguistic forms differ, both advertising traditions tend to associate masculine identity with authority, confidence, determination, competence, and social success. Such representations correspond to what Goffman (1979) described as ritualized gender displays, in which advertising simplifies social reality by presenting idealized versions of masculine behavior.

One of the most prominent findings concerns the lexical choices employed in male-oriented advertising. In both languages, slogans frequently contain semantic fields related to strength, power, performance, prestige, leadership, and achievement. Consider the following examples:

Citroën: *De l'audace naît l'excellence.*
("Excellence is born from audacity.")

BYD Tang: *Kuch va qudrat mujassamligi.*
("The embodiment of strength and power.")

Despite their linguistic differences, both slogans rely on a similar rhetorical strategy: the association of the advertised product with culturally valued masculine attributes. The vehicle is not merely presented as a means of transportation but as a symbolic extension of masculine identity. Such representations are consistent with previous studies showing that automobile advertising often links consumption with social status, authority, and self-realization (Williamson, 1978; Schroeder & Borgerson, 2005).

Another significant feature of masculine advertising discourse is the preference for concise and highly memorable slogans. Elliptical constructions, nominal phrases, and brief declarative statements are particularly common. Their communicative efficiency lies in their ability to convey symbolic meanings without extensive explanation. As Adam and Bonhomme (2007) observe, advertising discourse frequently relies on linguistic economy, allowing a small number of words to evoke complex cultural associations.

The analysis further demonstrates that masculinity is constructed not only through verbal language but also through visual and multimodal resources. In French advertisements, male characters are frequently portrayed as elegant, autonomous, sophisticated, and emotionally self-confident. Luxury brands, automobile manufacturers, and cosmetic companies often employ visual narratives emphasizing refinement, personal success, and individual distinction. Such representations correspond to broader cultural values associated with self-expression and aesthetic sophistication within contemporary French consumer culture (Hall, 1997; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2021).

By contrast, Uzbek advertising tends to emphasize collective values alongside individual achievement. Male characters are frequently represented as responsible family members, protectors, community leaders, or successful professionals whose achievements contribute to family well-being and social stability. This observation reflects the importance of communal values and social responsibility within Uzbek cultural traditions. Consequently, masculine identity is often portrayed through narratives of duty, reliability, and social respectability rather than through individual self-actualization alone.

These differences suggest that while masculinity functions as a universal marketing category, its discursive realization remains strongly shaped by local cultural contexts. In the French corpus, masculinity is commonly associated with individuality, prestige, and personal freedom. In the Uzbek corpus, masculinity is more frequently connected to responsibility, honor, family commitment, and collective belonging. Similar observations have been reported in intercultural studies of advertising discourse,

which demonstrate that global advertising strategies are often adapted to local systems of cultural values and symbolic meanings (Tanaka, 1994; Torresi, 2010).

At the rhetorical level, both corpora employ persuasive strategies designed to establish an emotional connection between the product and the consumer's self-image. Rather than describing technical characteristics alone, advertisements construct aspirational identities that consumers are invited to adopt. As Bourdieu (1991) argues, symbolic consumption frequently involves the acquisition of social meanings rather than merely material goods. In this regard, the advertised product becomes a marker of identity, status, and belonging.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that national identity plays a significant role in the construction of masculine advertising discourse. References to cultural traditions, national values, historical symbols, and collective memory appear more explicitly in the Uzbek corpus, whereas French advertisements tend to employ cultural references through aesthetics, lifestyle symbolism, and notions of refinement. In both cases, however, masculinity is embedded within broader narratives of cultural identity and social legitimacy.

Overall, the comparative analysis demonstrates that masculine advertising discourse in French and Uzbek shares a common tendency to associate men with strength, confidence, authority, and success. Nevertheless, important differences emerge in the cultural interpretation of these attributes. While French advertisements emphasize individuality and symbolic distinction, Uzbek advertisements place greater emphasis on social responsibility, family values, and collective belonging. These findings confirm that advertising discourse not only reflects cultural perceptions of masculinity but also actively participates in their production and circulation.



Figure 1. A Man Seeking Self-Care



Figure 2. A Man Who Is Always Attentive

(Reproduced for research purposes under fair academic use.)

Figure 1. - *Source:* Somatein advertising campaign, France, reproduced from the authors' corpus of advertising materials (2014–2024).

Figure 2. - *Source:* Rengalin advertising campaign, Uzbekistan, reproduced from the authors' corpus of advertising materials (2014–2024).

The visual and lexical elements employed in advertisements targeting men consistently emphasize an image of the male body as active, healthy, disciplined, and capable. Such representations extend beyond the commercial purpose of promoting a product and participate in the broader cultural construction of masculine identity. As Goffman (1979) argues, advertising frequently relies on idealized gender representations that simplify social reality and provide audiences with recognizable models of behavior and self-identification.

The analysis of the French and Uzbek corpora reveals a recurring association between masculinity and notions of strength, protection, confidence, and personal effectiveness. In both linguistic contexts, advertising discourse draws upon lexical fields related to performance and self-improvement. Expressions such as *skin perfecter*, *hydrating optimizer*, *solution to your problem*, and *seven-day protection* establish a direct connection between the advertised product and the enhancement of the consumer's physical or

psychological well-being. In this respect, the product is presented not merely as a practical commodity but as a symbolic resource through which desirable masculine attributes may be achieved or reinforced (Williamson, 1978).

At the linguistic level, male-oriented advertisements in both languages favor concise, direct, and function-oriented messages. The slogans tend to avoid excessive emotionality and instead foreground efficiency, reliability, protection, and results. This tendency corresponds to broader persuasive strategies frequently observed in masculine advertising discourse, where authority and competence are often privileged over emotional appeal (Cook, 2001; Goddard, 2002).

Nevertheless, important cultural differences emerge in the ways masculinity is represented. French advertisements often construct masculine identity through notions of individuality, self-expression, refinement, and personal fulfillment. The male consumer is addressed as an autonomous individual capable of making informed lifestyle choices. The persuasive force of the advertisement frequently derives from aesthetic sophistication, symbolic distinction, and subtle cultural references. Such findings align with Hall's (1997) observation that contemporary Western consumer cultures place significant emphasis on individuality and symbolic self-representation.

In contrast, Uzbek advertisements tend to frame masculinity within a more collective and relational framework. Male characters are frequently portrayed as responsible family members, reliable partners, and socially respected individuals. Advertisements often highlight practical benefits and emphasize the consumer's ability to fulfill social obligations and family responsibilities. As a result, masculine identity is represented not only through personal achievement but also through commitment to others and social stability. These findings reflect the enduring influence of cultural values that prioritize communal relationships, social cohesion, and collective well-being.

Another noteworthy aspect concerns the representation of emotional expression. Traditional advertising frequently portrayed men as emotionally reserved and primarily associated with authority and physical strength. However, the contemporary advertisements analyzed in this study suggest a gradual diversification of masculine representations. The French advertisement depicting a man seeking care and acknowledging personal needs illustrates a form of masculinity that accommodates vulnerability and self-care. Rather than undermining masculine identity, the recognition of personal well-being is presented as a legitimate and desirable characteristic of the modern man.

Table 1. Comparative Representation of Masculinity in French and Uzbek Advertising Discourse

Analytical Dimension	French Advertising	Uzbek Advertising	Common Features
Dominant Masculine Image	Independent, sophisticated, self-confident man	Responsible, family-oriented, socially respected man	Strong, reliable, successful male figure
Primary Values Promoted	Individuality, elegance, self-expression	Family responsibility, social stability, commitment	Confidence, achievement, responsibility
Communication Style	Indirect, symbolic, emotionally nuanced	Direct, informative, practical	Persuasive and audience-oriented
Persuasive Strategy	Seduction through aesthetics and lifestyle	Persuasion through utility and credibility	Product linked to masculine identity
Lexical Characteristics	Excellence, audacity, prestige, vitality	Power, protection, solution, reliability	Strength, performance, confidence
Emotional Representation	Acceptance of vulnerability and self-care	Caring husband, responsible partner	Positive masculinity and emotional maturity
Cultural References	Art, luxury, personal success	National values, family traditions, social respect	Cultural legitimacy of masculine roles
Consumer Ideal	Self-actualized and distinguished individual	Reliable provider and community member	Successful and socially valued man

Source: Authors' comparative analysis of French and Uzbek advertising corpus (2014–2024).

Similarly, the Uzbek advertisement portraying an attentive and caring husband highlights emotional responsibility within intimate relationships. Although the representation remains embedded within culturally accepted family roles, it nevertheless broadens the conventional image of masculinity by incorporating empathy, care, and relational commitment. Such representations support

recent theoretical perspectives that conceptualize masculinity as a dynamic and evolving social construct rather than a fixed set of behavioral traits (Butler, 1990; Talbot, 2010).

The findings further demonstrate that visual resources play a crucial role in communicating gendered meanings. Images, body posture, facial expressions, clothing, and interpersonal interactions function alongside verbal language to produce coherent representations of masculine identity. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2021) note, visual communication possesses its own grammar through which social meanings are encoded and interpreted. In both corpora, visual and linguistic elements work together to create persuasive narratives that position the consumer within culturally recognizable models of masculinity.

Overall, the comparative analysis indicates that French and Uzbek advertising discourses share a number of common representations of masculinity, including strength, confidence, competence, and responsibility. However, these shared attributes acquire different cultural meanings within each context. French advertisements tend to emphasize individuality, self-development, and symbolic distinction, whereas Uzbek advertisements place greater importance on social responsibility, family commitment, and collective values. These findings suggest that while globalization has contributed to the circulation of certain universal masculine ideals, local cultural traditions continue to shape the ways in which masculinity is represented and communicated in advertising discourse.



Figure 3. Representations of Prestige and Masculine Success in French and Uzbek Perfume Advertising (*Reproduced for research purposes under fair academic use.*)

Source: Authors' corpus of French and Uzbek advertising materials (2014–2024).

Advertising messages frequently employ advisory and directive forms that encourage consumers to undertake specific actions associated with self-care, health, and personal well-being. Examples from the corpus include:

- *Revitalize your skin with the power of nature. Regenerating hydration for skin full of vitality.*
- *Stay sweat-free even in the hottest weather with Eco Dry! (cosmetic advertisements).*

These examples demonstrate how advertising discourse positions the male consumer as an active agent responsible for maintaining his physical appearance, health, and overall well-being. Contemporary representations of masculinity increasingly incorporate self-care practices, reflecting broader social transformations in the understanding of male identity. Rather than presenting personal care as incompatible with masculinity, such advertisements frame it as an essential component of confidence, vitality, and social success.

From a linguistic perspective, these advertising messages frequently rely on imperative constructions and direct forms of address. Verbal forms such as *revitalize* and *stay sweat-free* function as persuasive directives that establish a direct communicative relationship between the advertiser and the consumer. According to Cook (2001), imperative structures are among the most effective persuasive devices in advertising because they create a sense of immediacy and encourage audience engagement. Similarly, Goddard (2002) notes that direct address strategies contribute to the personalization of advertising messages and strengthen their persuasive potential.

The analysis of both French and Uzbek advertisements indicates that health-related and cosmetic products are often promoted through discourses of prevention, protection, and optimization. The male consumer is invited not only to solve existing problems but also to improve his physical condition and maintain an idealized version of himself. In this regard, the language of advertising extends beyond product promotion and participates in the construction of desirable masculine lifestyles.

Moreover, male-oriented advertising combines verbal and non-verbal signs to create coherent representations of masculinity. Lexical choices, visual imagery, body posture, clothing, and facial expressions work together to communicate particular social meanings. The male figures represented in the corpus are commonly portrayed as successful professionals, confident decision-makers, responsible family members, or physically active individuals. Such representations correspond to what Hall (1997) describes as cultural systems of representation through which societies construct and circulate socially valued identities.

An important characteristic of masculine advertising discourse is its close connection to domains traditionally associated with public life and social influence. Unlike many advertisements directed toward women, which have historically emphasized domesticity or interpersonal relationships, advertisements targeting men frequently draw upon themes related to business, leadership, technology, sports, politics, and achievement. These thematic preferences reflect culturally embedded expectations regarding masculine social roles and reinforce the association between masculinity and public visibility, competence, and authority.

The visual materials analyzed in this study further confirm that representations of men are often situated within contexts associated with professional success, prestige, economic power, and social recognition. Whether portrayed as athletes, entrepreneurs, professionals, or caring partners, male characters are consistently positioned as active participants in society. Such representations contribute to the construction of an idealized masculine identity that combines physical capability, emotional control, social responsibility, and personal accomplishment.

Therefore, the findings suggest that masculine advertising discourse in both French and Uzbek contexts is characterized by a strategic combination of directive language, symbolic imagery, and culturally meaningful representations. While the specific forms of expression vary across cultures, both advertising traditions seek to persuade consumers by linking products to socially valued models of masculinity. In doing so, advertising functions not only as a commercial tool but also as a powerful cultural mechanism through which masculine identities are produced, negotiated, and disseminated.



Figure 4. Representations of Professional Success and Social Status in French and Uzbek Advertising (*Reproduced for research purposes under fair academic use.*)

Source: Authors' corpus of French and Uzbek advertising materials (2014–2024).

Table 2. Linguistic and Discursive Features of Male-Oriented Advertisements

Feature Category	French Examples	Uzbek Examples	Discursive Function
Strength and Power Vocabulary	excellence, audace, performance	kuch, qudrat, himoya	Construction of authority and competence
Health and Self-Care Vocabulary	hydratation, vitalité, optimisateur	yechim, himoya, sog'lom	Promotion of well-being and self-improvement
Imperative Forms	Désaltérez votre peau	Terlamang!	Direct consumer engagement

Concise Slogans	De l'audace naît l'excellence	Kuch va qudrat mujassamligi	Memorability and persuasion
Professional Success Markers	prestige, leadership, distinction	tadbirkor, muvaffaqiyat	Association with achievement
Family-Oriented References	caring partner representations	attentive husband representations	Social responsibility and commitment
Visual Symbols	Luxury products, elegant appearance, premium lifestyle	Businessman, family man, successful entrepreneur	Reinforcement of masculine stereotypes
Dominant Advertising Appeal	Aspirational and symbolic	Informative and practical	Enhancement of masculine identity

Source: Authors' analysis based on selected advertising materials from France and Uzbekistan (2014–2024).

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that masculine advertising discourse in both French and Uzbek contexts is structured around a relatively stable set of gendered representations. Across the corpus, male-oriented advertisements predominantly employ lexical and visual elements associated with responsibility, achievement, confidence, strength, adventure, and social status. These recurring themes contribute to the construction of culturally recognizable models of masculinity and reinforce particular expectations regarding male identity.

Table 3. Distribution of Masculinity Representations in French and Uzbek Advertising Corpus (N = 120)

Masculinity Category French (n=60) Uzbek (n=60)

Strength & Authority	20 (33.3%)	24 (40.0%)
Professional Success	17 (28.3%)	18 (30.0%)
Family Responsibility	9 (15.0%)	21 (35.0%)
Self-Care & Well-being	18 (30.0%)	8 (13.3%)
Adventure & Risk	12 (20.0%)	10 (16.7%)

Source: Authors' content analysis of French and Uzbek advertising materials (2014–2024).

The analysis demonstrates that advertisements targeting men rely heavily on symbolic nominations and descriptive attributes that reflect socially valued masculine characteristics. Concepts such as family commitment, friendship, professional success, leadership, protection, and personal accomplishment appear frequently in both linguistic contexts. These representations correspond to broader cultural narratives through which masculinity is associated with competence, reliability, and social influence. As noted by Goffman (1979), advertising often simplifies complex social identities into easily recognizable symbolic forms, allowing consumers to identify with idealized versions of themselves.

Furthermore, the study reveals that masculine advertising discourse is characterized by a strategic combination of lexical, visual, and rhetorical resources. The verbal component frequently employs concise slogans, imperative constructions, and vocabulary associated with performance, effectiveness, and self-improvement. Simultaneously, visual elements reinforce these messages through images of physically fit, professionally successful, and socially respected men. The interaction between verbal and visual signs creates coherent narratives that position the advertised product as a means of achieving desirable masculine qualities.

A comparative perspective highlights both similarities and differences between French and Uzbek advertising traditions. In both contexts, masculinity is represented through notions of confidence, capability, and social value. However, the cultural meanings attached to these qualities differ significantly. French advertisements tend to emphasize individuality, elegance, personal fulfillment, and symbolic distinction. The consumer is often portrayed as an autonomous individual whose identity is expressed through lifestyle choices and aesthetic preferences. Uzbek advertisements, by contrast, place greater emphasis on collective values, family responsibility, professional reliability, and social respectability. Masculinity is frequently linked to the ability to contribute to the well-being of one's family and community.

Another important finding concerns the evolving nature of masculine representation. While traditional stereotypes of strength, authority, and competitiveness remain visible, contemporary advertisements increasingly incorporate themes of self-care, emotional responsibility, and interpersonal sensitivity. The presence of caring husbands, attentive partners, and men concerned with health and personal well-being suggests a gradual diversification of masculine identities. These findings support contemporary gender

theories that view masculinity as a dynamic and socially negotiated construct rather than a fixed set of behavioral traits (Butler, 1990; Talbot, 2010).

Overall, the results demonstrate that advertising functions not only as a commercial communication tool but also as a cultural mechanism through which gender identities are produced and disseminated. The representations identified in the corpus reveal how masculine ideals are continuously adapted to changing social expectations while remaining embedded within specific cultural traditions. Consequently, advertising discourse serves as an important site for understanding the interaction between language, culture, and gender in contemporary society.

7. CONCLUSION

This study examined the representation of masculinity in French and Uzbek advertising discourse through a comparative analysis of male-oriented advertising texts and visual materials. The findings confirm that the male character occupies a central position in advertisements directed at male consumers and functions as a key persuasive resource in the communication process.

Although French and Uzbek advertisements share several common representations of masculinity, including strength, confidence, competence, and social responsibility, they differ considerably in the ways these characteristics are culturally articulated. French advertising discourse tends to emphasize individuality, sophistication, personal achievement, and symbolic distinction, whereas Uzbek advertising places greater importance on family values, social responsibility, collective identity, and professional reliability. These differences illustrate the extent to which cultural context influences the construction and communication of masculine identities.

The study further demonstrates that male-oriented advertisements rely on a combination of linguistic and visual strategies. Concise slogans, persuasive lexical choices, imperative structures, and culturally meaningful imagery work together to create idealized representations of masculinity. Products are frequently associated with qualities such as power, prestige, success, protection, and self-improvement, thereby transforming consumption into a symbolic expression of identity.

At the same time, the analysis reveals a gradual shift away from exclusively traditional models of masculinity. Contemporary advertisements increasingly portray men as individuals who engage in self-care, express emotional responsibility, and participate actively in interpersonal relationships. Such representations suggest that advertising discourse is responding to broader social transformations in the understanding of gender roles and masculine identity.

The principal contribution of this research lies in its comparative examination of two distinct linguistic and cultural environments. By highlighting both universal and culture-specific representations of masculinity, the study contributes to ongoing discussions in discourse studies, sociolinguistics, gender studies, and intercultural communication. Future research may expand the corpus, incorporate quantitative methods, and explore additional media platforms in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how contemporary advertising shapes and reflects changing models of masculinity across cultures.

8. DECLARATIONS

Author Contributions

Sohiba Yunusova conceptualized the study, collected and analyzed the corpus, conducted the comparative discourse analysis, interpreted the findings, and prepared the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable. This study is based exclusively on publicly available advertising materials and does not involve human participants, personal data collection, or experimental procedures.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study consist of publicly available French and Uzbek advertising materials collected from television broadcasts, print media, corporate websites, and social media platforms published between 2014 and 2024. Additional information regarding the corpus is available from the author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with accepted academic and research ethics standards. All advertising materials analyzed in this research were obtained from publicly accessible sources and were used exclusively for scholarly and educational purposes. Any reproduced images are included under fair academic use for research, criticism, and analytical discussion.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

No generative artificial intelligence tools were used to generate the research data, conduct the analysis, or formulate the study's conclusions. Any language-editing assistance, if used, did not influence the intellectual content, interpretation, or findings of the research.

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