



Persuasive Strategies In Advertisements on An Online Sales Platform: A Cultural Analysis In The Jordanian Context

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Abstract: This qualitative study investigates the persuasive strategies employed in 100 textual advertisements on OpenSooq, a major online sales platform in Jordan. Guided by Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model of persuasive communication, the analysis examines how credibility, emotional, and logical appeals are discursively realized in Jordanian digital contexts. Using thematic coding supported by ATLAS.ti, the findings show a marked preference for credibility-enhancing strategies (60.4%), followed by emotional appeals (37.4%), whereas logical reasoning (2.2%) remains marginal. These patterns reveal that persuasion in Jordanian online advertising reflects a value-driven communicative culture that prioritizes trust 'thiqa', sincerity, and interpersonal harmony over rational argumentation. By linking rhetorical strategy with cultural pragmatics, the study demonstrates how global persuasive models are re-contextualized within Arabic digital marketplaces, thereby offering new insights into the intersection of language, culture, and persuasion in the Arab world.

Keywords: Persuasive Strategies, Digital Advertising, Beebe and Beebe's Framework, Jordanian Culture, Online Marketplace Discourse

1. Introduction

Persuasion constitutes a fundamental dimension of human communication, operating across linguistic, visual, and contextual modes to influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. As Beebe and Beebe (2013) note, persuasion does not merely seek to alter such orientations but can also serve to reinforce or consolidate them. Within advertising discourse, persuasive strategies are central to communicative design: they represent the rhetorical mechanisms through which advertisers employ carefully crafted language to construct appeal, stimulate consumer interest, and ultimately shape purchasing decisions. These strategies, however, are never culturally neutral. In the Jordanian context, characterized by a collectivist social orientation, advertising discourse is anchored in cultural values such as loyalty, social cohesion, and emotional reciprocity. Consequently, persuasive communication tends to privilege appeals to trust, sincerity, and shared identity over purely logical or evidence-based reasoning. Such patterns reflect how cultural frameworks mediate the linguistic and pragmatic realization of persuasion. Against this background, the present study investigates the persuasive strategies employed in *OpenSooq* advertisements, offering insight into how digital marketing in Jordan's rapidly expanding online marketplace mirrors broader socio-cultural norms. By examining how persuasion is discursively constructed within this medium, the study contributes to understanding the dynamic relationship between language, culture, and consumer behavior in Arabic online commercial communication.

The study of persuasion has long occupied a central position in rhetorical and communication theory, tracing its origins to Aristotle's seminal *The Art of Rhetoric* (1991), where persuasion is defined as the capacity to discern the available means of influence in any given context. Aristotle identified three primary modes of appeal: ethos, logos, and pathos. *Ethos* concerns the credibility and moral integrity of the speaker, emphasizing the persuasive power of trustworthiness and ethical character. *Logos*, literally meaning "the word," refers to the logical structuring of arguments and the provision of evidence to substantiate claims. *Pathos*, by contrast, appeals to the audience's emotions, mobilizing affective resonance to encourage belief or action (Beebe & Beebe, 2013). Although classical in origin, this triadic framework continues to inform contemporary approaches to persuasion and remains foundational to analyses of persuasive discourse.

Subsequent models have expanded Aristotle's rhetorical insights to include cognitive and contextual dimensions. Among the most influential is the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) and later refined by Petty and Wegener (1999). ELM conceptualizes persuasion as an audience-centred process, emphasizing the recipient's role in interpreting, evaluating, and internalizing persuasive messages. It posits two distinct routes of persuasion: a central route, where persuasion results from deliberate elaboration and reasoned evaluation of message content, and a peripheral route, where persuasion occurs through intuitive or affective cues such as tone, confidence, or perceived expertise. For example, a consumer who purchases a data plan after comparing logical features and benefits engages the central route, whereas one persuaded by a confident salesperson's assurance of quality follows the peripheral

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route. The ELM thus highlights that persuasion is not simply a product of message quality but of cognitive engagement, varying according to the listener's motivation and capacity to process information.

While Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) remains a cornerstone of modern persuasion research for its emphasis on cognitive engagement in shaping audience response, it has been critiqued for insufficiently addressing the cultural, relational, and multimodal dimensions of communication (Dillard & Shen, 2013; O'Keefe, 2025). These limitations become particularly salient in non-Western and digital contexts, such as Jordanian online advertising, where persuasion is embedded in social relationships and moral hierarchies rather than operating solely as a cognitive or informational process. To bridge this theoretical and methodological gap, the present study adopts Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework, originally formulated for analysing persuasive strategies in public speaking, as an adaptable heuristic for examining persuasion in online commercial discourse. Although the framework was not designed explicitly for advertising, its conceptual foundations in rhetorical communication, especially its focus on audience-centeredness, credibility construction, and emotional resonance, render it particularly suited to the analysis of persuasive communication in Arabic digital environments. Both public speaking and online advertising hinge on the communicator's ability to establish trust (ethos), evoke emotional engagement (pathos), and deliver coherent, goal-oriented messages (logos) within socially situated contexts. The strength of Beebe and Beebe's model lies in its interactional orientation, highlighting the relational dynamics between message producer and audience, a dynamic that closely parallels the advertiser, consumer exchange in digital marketplaces such as *OpenSooq*. Furthermore, its analytical categories enable a systematic mapping of persuasive techniques across linguistic, pragmatic, and multimodal dimensions, extending its applicability beyond oral rhetoric to encompass the fluid, participatory discourse of online communication (cf. Scollon & Scollon, 2001; Herring, 2010). Through this lens, the present study reconceptualises Beebe and Beebe's model as a cross-contextual analytical tool capable of tracing how classical rhetorical principles are localized, hybridized, and culturally re-contextualized within Jordanian digital communication, where relational credibility often supersedes purely informational persuasion.

At the same time, it is important to situate this study within broader traditions of discourse and media analysis. Alternative frameworks such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Genre Analysis have been widely employed to explore advertising and media communication, particularly in relation to socio-cultural positioning, ideological framing, and communicative purpose (Tahmasbi & Kalkhajeh, 2013; Fahad, 2016; Muhtarogullari, 2021; Alalya et al., 2024). While these approaches have yielded valuable insights into how advertisements reflect power structures and cultural ideologies, the present research diverges in its rhetorical orientation. Unlike CDA, which conceptualizes discourse as a site of ideological struggle, or Genre Analysis, which privileges structural regularities and communicative conventions, this study views persuasion as a performative, interactional, and audience-driven process. By positioning Beebe and Beebe's rhetorical framework within the digital marketplace, the analysis foregrounds how classical persuasive principles are refracted through the Jordanian cultural lens, producing hybrid communicative forms where relational trust, ethical self-presentation, and communal ethos outweigh purely logical or data-driven appeals.

Within Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model, persuasion operates through three interrelated strategic dimensions: establishing speaker credibility (ethos), appealing to logic and evidence (logos), and eliciting emotional engagement (pathos). Among these, emotional appeal, which corresponds to Aristotle's notion of pathos, is particularly potent in shaping audience response, as it mobilizes affective alignment rather than rational deliberation. Persuasion, in this sense, transcends logical reasoning, transforming emotional identification into a motivational force that sustains attention, trust, and action. Each of these major strategies comprises multiple sub-strategies operating at linguistic, cognitive, and relational levels to reinforce persuasive impact. These sub-components, as delineated by Beebe and Beebe, provide a systematic basis for the present analysis. Drawing on this tripartite framework, the study investigates how credibility, logical appeal, and emotional resonance are linguistically realized and culturally mediated within Jordanian online advertisements. In doing so, it addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the most prevalent persuasive strategies that are featured in *OpenSooq* advertisements?
2. In what ways do cultural factors influence the persuasive strategies used?

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 introduces Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model of persuasive strategies and provides an overview of the *OpenSooq* platform as the study's data source. Section 3 presents a critical review of the literature on persuasion in advertising discourse, emphasizing how existing models have overlooked cultural contextualization in online settings. Section 4 outlines the methodological framework, detailing the research design, data sampling and selection procedures, and analytical processes. Section 5 reports the results of the analysis, illustrating the identified persuasive strategies through representative examples from the dataset. Section 6 offers a discussion of the findings in light of the theoretical framework and relevant cultural dimensions. Finally, Section 7 concludes the paper by summarizing the key findings and highlighting implications for intercultural communication and digital marketing, followed by recommendations for future research.

2. Setting the Scene

This section sets the conceptual and contextual foundation for the study by outlining the theoretical framework and the communicative environment in which the analysis is situated.

2.1. Beebe and Beebe's (2013) Persuasive Strategies

Following Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework, it is necessary to discuss their persuasive strategies in more depth. The first strategy is *enhancing credibility*, which centers on the speaker's perceived *credibility* and the effectiveness of their persuasive speech. In other words, the more credible the audience perceives a speaker to be, the more persuasive the speaker is. This strategy includes three elements: *competence*, *trustworthiness*, and *dynamism*. To be a *competent* speaker is to be fully informed about the subject matter. This involves anticipating potential questions your audience may ask and being ready to answer them clearly. For instance, if a speaker tries to persuade people to undergo a yearly medical checkup just by merely stating that it is "going to be good for their health, the message might not be sufficiently persuasive. However, if the speaker supports their argument with credible evidence, including medical statistics, the likelihood of persuasion is going to increase significantly, as

they would believe it is fact-based and authoritative. Therefore, *enhancing credibility* reflects *competence*, which in turn contributes to more effective communication. Secondly, *trustworthiness* refers to conveying honesty and sincerity during speech. For example, an audience is more likely to trust recommendations on reducing travel expenditure to Europe by someone who has personally experienced such constraints rather than heard such information from a tour guide. This sub-strategy underscores experiential credibility as a means for establishing trustworthiness and, therefore, *credibility* with the audience. The final aspect of *credibility* is *dynamism*, which is a characteristic manifested through a speaker's energy. Charisma is one of the significant representations of *dynamism*. A charismatic speaker exhibits charm, talent, and magnetic qualities that are naturally appealing to the audience and enhance *credibility*, Beebe and Beebe (2013).

The second persuasive strategy is *using logic and evidence*. The foundation of this strategy lies in providing empirical evidence, such as facts and statistics, while adhering to a formal system of logical rules, allowing the audience to make logical inferences from the discourse. This strategy encompasses three types of reasoning: *inductive*, *deductive*, and *causal reasoning*. *Inductive reasoning* is arriving at a general conclusion through specific examples, i.e., it begins with particular instances and ends with general conclusions indicating probability rather than certainty. The goal of this type of reasoning is to discover novel insights. For instance, to reach a general conclusion that foreign cars are unreliable, one must provide multiple instances of mechanical failures in several foreign cars occurring across various users and circumstances in order to persuade the audience of this point of view.

Conversely, *deductive reasoning* operates in the opposite direction. *Deductive reasoning* begins with a general statement and proceeds towards a specific conclusion, indicating that something is definitively true or false. The goal of this sub-strategy is to reach precise conclusions by applying established knowledge where the certainty of the conclusion is drawn from the validity of the general statement. Structurally, deductive reasoning requires a major premise (the overarching statement), then a minor premise (a specific example related to the major premise), and a conclusion derived from these premises. For example, if someone asserts that the establishment of a large discount store in a small town, will lead to the failure of all the small business merchants in that town (major premise), and a particular large discount retailer intends to establish operations in a specific small town (minor premise), then the conclusion follows that permitting this establishment will inevitably result in the failure of local businesses..

The third type is *causal reasoning*, which is an interplay of cause and effect that concludes that a phenomenon occurred as a result of the other. This type of reasoning operates in two ways: from cause to effect and from effect to cause. In cause-and-effect reasoning, one moves from a known fact to a predictable result, exemplified by weather forecasts that predict future conditions according to the current atmospheric data. Conversely, effect-o-cause reasoning starts with an observed phenomenon and retrospectively identifies its probable cause, as when a major earthquake is attributed to a shift in a fault line in order to explain that event, for example (Beebe and Beebe, 2013).

The last persuasive strategy in Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework is *using emotional appeals*. This strategy encompasses multiple sub-strategies. First of all, *using concrete examples*, which allows an audience to visualize the described scenarios, thereby evoking their emotions by describing how a certain city looked after a tornado destroyed it. In the second place, *using emotion-arousing expressions*. This technique entails using emotionally loaded words like freedom or slavery to arouse emotional responses from the audience. In the third place comes *using nonverbal behavior and visual images*, wherein the audience is to experience an emotion by using paralinguistic features such as voice and body language, like gestures. Besides nonverbal expressions, visuals of emotionally evoking scenes can be used to trigger emotions. In the fourth place is *using appropriate metaphors and similes*. For instance, when a speaker says that "life is a quilt where we stitch the pattern of our character, they are employing a metaphor to conceptualize life in a relatable way. Similarly, similes can achieve a similar effect through the use of comparison markers such as 'like' and 'as'. Sopyry and Dillard (2002) argue that metaphors and similes can enhance a persuasive strategy by adding an emotional resonance. Fifth, as Beebe and Beebe (2013) suggest, *using appropriate fear appeals* can be a powerful motivator if used appropriately. Warning listeners against the consequences in case they do not follow a certain recommendation can lead to behavioral change. Sixth, *appealing to a variety of emotions* such as hope, pride, courage, and reverence can enhance the persuasive tone. For instance, evoking reverence by referring to sacred traditions or religious texts can reinforce audience behavior, especially when the appeal resonates with their deeply held beliefs.

Finally, invoking shared myths, namely cultural beliefs collectively held by members of a community, can serve as a powerful persuasive strategy, as it demonstrates alignment with the audience's worldview. Examples of such myths include the Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus. Such myths include the Tooth Fairy and Santa Claus. Table 1 summarizes Beebe and Beebe's (2013) primary persuasive strategies and their sub-strategies.

Table 1: Beebe and Beebe's (2013) persuasive strategies

Number	Persuasive Strategy	Sub-strategies
1.	Enhancing credibility	a. Competence b. Trustworthiness c. Dynamism
2.	Using logic and evidence	a. Inductive reasoning b. Deductive reasoning c. Casual reasoning
3.	Using emotional appeals	a. Using concrete examples b. Using emotion-arousing expressions c. Using nonverbal behavior and visual images d. Using appropriate metaphors and similes e. Using appropriate fear appeals f. Appealing to a variety of emotions g. Invoking shared myths

Source: By the author

This study draws upon the persuasive strategies outlined by Beebe and Beebe (2013) to investigate how persuasion is constructed on *OpenSooq* and how it is shaped by cultural factors. To this end, it is necessary to explain what *OpenSooq* is, as discussed in the following subsection.

2.2. OpenSooq

OpenSooq is one of the largest online marketplaces in the MENA region, offering a platform where individuals can buy and sell products and services. Accessible via a website and an application, with over 60 million downloads as of December 2024, *OpenSooq* facilitates peer-to-peer commerce without requiring users to be licensed merchants or affiliated with registered businesses. This feature significantly contributed to *OpenSooq*'s popularity, enabling anyone to make a profit from the convenience of their homes. Besides merchandise, individuals buy and sell services such as house cleaning. Additionally, the platform has an employment section allowing users to advertise and apply for jobs in various job sectors.

Consider the scenario in which a user would like to sell their furniture using the *OpenSooq* platform. The process is simply taking pictures of the items, posting them on *OpenSooq* with a description, and indicating the price. After that, an interested buyer can browse the platform, view the advertisement, and contact the owner in order to inquire about the items and make a purchase. This way, users can sell their belongings without having to pay for an advertisement, wait for a long time to find a buyer, or struggle to find a merchant to purchase the items.

The platform offers a wide range of features in its design, such as filtering options, visuals, descriptive texts, and possible direct communication between the sellers and buyers, which encourages employing persuasive strategies. Normally, sellers often frame their listings in ways that highlight benefits, establish credibility, or evoke urgency and emotion. In doing so, users try to increase the likelihood of engagement with their advertisements.

E-commerce platforms have become very popular in the last 20 years. Purchasing items online is more convenient and even faster than having to go to a store to buy them (Sahney et al., 2013; Almajali, 2021; Trawnih et al., 2021). Having more than 8.7 million internet users in Jordan (Statista, 2019; Almajali and Masa'deh, 2021), online shopping platforms have become very popular. *OpenSooq* is the first mobile classifieds marketplace based in Amman, Jordan. In 2021, *OpenSooq* announced that it had raised \$24 million in an investment round. That deal was led by the Saudi Jordanian Investment Fund (SJIF) with the participation of FJ Labs and iMENA. The platform was founded in 2012 and kept growing to become the largest mobile-based classifieds market in the region. The platform has over 65 million customers and business owners using its web and mobile apps, with more than 20 million guests visiting the website alone each month. Reports say that the annual value of items sold on the platform exceeds \$30 billion and that a deal is completed there every 13 seconds across all of the countries that *OpenSooq* operates in, one of which is Jordan (Paracha, 2021).

Aboalganam et al. (2024) argue that *OpenSooq* is an organization that provides many services, among which is advertising, through online platforms. Both *OpenSooq*'s app and website allow buyers and sellers to contact one another directly. The platform allows customers to create their own accounts in order to shop for, advertise, sell, or buy different items. Users of *OpenSooq* are both businesses and individuals wishing to buy or sell goods across different countries in the Middle East. Having explained the main concepts in the study, it is fitting to discuss studies related to the topic under investigation. The following sub-section includes studies on persuasion in advertisements.

3. Literature Review

Advertising constitutes one of the most influential domains in which persuasion is deployed, to the extent that persuasion may be regarded as the very foundation upon which the success of an advertisement depends. Whether disseminated through traditional media or digital platforms, advertisements employ rhetorical and linguistic strategies designed to influence consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviors. Numerous studies have investigated the persuasive mechanisms employed in advertising discourse (Armstrong, 2011; Tutaj & Van Reijmersdal, 2012; Labrador et al., 2014; Popova, 2018; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Miksa & Hodgson, 2021; Al-Subhi, 2022; Diez-Arroyo, 2023; Braca & Dondio, 2023; Sattorov, 2024). Despite this rich body of scholarship, no study to date has examined advertisements through the lens of Beebe and Beebe's (2013) comprehensive framework of persuasive strategies. Consequently, our understanding of how credibility, emotional appeal, and logical reasoning interact within culturally embedded contexts remains incomplete. This absence is particularly significant because Beebe and Beebe's framework delineates a set of fourteen detailed sub-strategies organized under three major dimensions (credibility enhancement, logical reasoning, and emotional engagement), allowing a more systematic and culture-sensitive analysis of persuasive discourse.

3.1. Classical Rhetoric and Its Contemporary Revisions

A substantial portion of advertising research has been grounded in Aristotle's rhetorical framework (Aristotle, 1991), which conceptualizes persuasion as the art of identifying the available means of influence in any communicative situation. Aristotle's triadic appeals: ethos (credibility and moral character), pathos (emotional engagement), and logos (reasoning and evidence) have long structured analyses of persuasive communication (Armstrong, 2011; Labrador et al., 2014; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Braca & Dondio, 2023; Sattorov, 2024). For instance, Armstrong (2011) underscored the centrality of logos by advocating for evidence-based advertising, criticizing intuition-driven promotional discourse that neglects rational substantiation. Similarly, Labrador et al. (2014), adopting Swales's (1990, 2004) move-step model, examined the rhetorical structure of online advertisements, emphasizing message organization and argumentative coherence. Romanova and Smirnova (2019) explicitly applied Aristotelian rhetoric to analyze how commercial advertisements construct persuasive ethos, while Braca and Dondio (2023) proposed ways to design effective persuasive messages by integrating ethos, pathos, and logos. Building on these classical insights, Sattorov (2024) combined Aristotle's rhetorical triangle with Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) to explore how emotional appeals shape persuasive efficacy.

While these works have significantly contributed to rhetorical theory and advertising research, their primary focus remains structural and message-centric, giving limited consideration to the socio-cultural conditions that shape how persuasion is enacted and interpreted. Molina and Spicer (2004) aptly argue that Aristotle's framework provides a moral dimension often

missing in purely scientific models of communication, yet even this humanistic orientation remains largely universalist, treating persuasion as a cognitively stable process rather than a culturally contingent one.

3.2. Linguistic and Pragmatic Perspectives on Persuasion

A second research trajectory has focused on the linguistic realization of persuasive strategies, examining how specific language choices and discourse markers index persuasion (Popova, 2018; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Al-Subhi, 2022; Braca & Dondio, 2023; Diez-Arroyo, 2023). Popova (2018), employing Issers' (2006) speech strategies framework, analyzed online social advertisements as communicative events composed of intentional speech actions aimed at achieving the advertiser's goal. Although informative, this framework is overly broad, classifying persuasive discourse under general categories (persuasion, warning, and argumentation) without detailed differentiation. Similarly, Al-Subhi (2022) drew on Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse model alongside Kumpf's (2000) visual metadiscourse to examine engagement and attitude markers in social-media advertisements. These models illuminate surface-level linguistic and visual markers but do not adequately explain when and why particular persuasive choices are contextually appropriate (Price, 2008; De Groot, 2008).

Other pragmatic frameworks, such as Relevance Theory (RT) and Epistemic Vigilance (EV), have also been applied to advertising. Diez-Arroyo (2023), for instance, used these theories (Mascaro & Sperber, 2009; Sperber et al., 2010) to analyze the inferential mechanisms underlying online tea advertisements. Yet, as Yuan et al. (2019) note, RT often fails to account for how speaker identity and cultural assumptions influence interpretation, while Gierth and Bromme (2020) highlight that EV functions primarily as a monitoring device sensitive to potential deception, not as a model of culturally embedded persuasion. Similarly, Ta et al. (2021) emphasize that purely linguistic analyses, though revealing in terms of style and register, are limited in explaining how social and cultural factors interact with linguistic form to construct persuasion.

3.3. Experimental and Cognitive Approaches

Experimental studies have sought to operationalize persuasion by measuring audience responses to specific advertising variables (Tutaj & Van Reijmersdal, 2012; Miksa & Hodgson, 2021). Tutaj and Van Reijmersdal (2012) tested participants' reactions to different advertisement formats, examining how awareness of persuasive intent affected perception. Miksa and Hodgson (2021) similarly explored persuasion knowledge in Instagram advertisements, manipulating content to assess consumer sensitivity to persuasive techniques. While these studies offer empirical precision, they conceptualize persuasion primarily as a psychological outcome, largely divorced from the discursive and cultural processes through which meaning and trust are negotiated. As Mertins (2016) observes, experimental designs alone are insufficient for linguistic inquiry because they overlook the contextual and semiotic dimensions of communicative acts.

3.4. Contrasting Findings and Emerging Gaps

Collectively, these diverse approaches have yielded inconsistent findings. Some research underscores the primacy of logical reasoning and evidence in advertising success (Armstrong, 2011; Labrador et al., 2014), whereas others identify credibility and trust as the most influential factors (Diez-Arroyo, 2023; Braca & Dondio, 2023). Still others highlight emotional appeal as the dominant persuasive force (Popova, 2018; Romanova & Smirnova, 2019; Sattarov, 2024). Al-Subhi (2021) further notes that advertisements often lack interactive metadiscourse markers, focusing instead on affective engagement. Experimental studies, meanwhile, point to advertisement format and persuasion knowledge as determinants of persuasive success (Tutaj & Van Reijmersdal, 2012; Miksa & Hodgson, 2021). Although each framework provides valuable insights, none offer a comprehensive account of how cultural orientation mediates the interaction between credibility, emotion, and logic in digital persuasive contexts.

3.5. Toward a Culturally Embedded Model of Persuasion

While Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model is rooted in Aristotelian rhetoric, it advances beyond classical theory by systematically integrating cultural, cognitive, and relational dimensions into the study of persuasion. The framework's tripartite structure, enhancing credibility, appealing to logic and evidence, and using emotional appeals, provides both conceptual clarity and analytical flexibility, supported by fourteen sub-strategies that detail how persuasion unfolds in authentic communicative settings. Unlike other models, Beebe and Beebe conceptualize persuasion as a context-sensitive, interactional process rather than a purely cognitive one, aligning closely with the relational and collectivist orientation of Jordanian communication culture.

Applying this framework to online advertising is particularly significant for three reasons. First, *OpenSooq* advertisements are produced by individual users, not corporate entities, allowing for an examination of persuasion in peer-to-peer commercial discourse. Second, Jordanian culture emphasizes trust (*thiqa*), honor (*sharaf*), and generosity (*karam*), which are values that directly correspond to Beebe and Beebe's ethos-based strategies. Third, this approach enables exploration of how global rhetorical principles are localized and hybridized in the Arab digital marketplace. In this way, the framework not only bridges theoretical gaps between rhetoric and culture but also offers an analytical model capable of tracing persuasion across linguistic, cognitive, and social dimensions.

3.6. Summary and Research Gap

Despite extensive scholarship on advertising and persuasion, the literature reveals several key gaps. First, most previous studies analyze structured, corporate advertisements rather than the informal, user-generated texts characteristic of online marketplaces like *OpenSooq*. Second, while previous research has examined credibility, emotional appeal, and evidence as separate factors, their interplay with cultural orientation has rarely been addressed. Third, although frameworks such as CDA and Genre Analysis (Alalya et al., 2024; Fahad, 2016; Muhtarogullari, 2021; Tahmasbi & Kalkhajeh, 2013) have explored Middle Eastern media discourse, none have analyzed peer-to-peer advertising as a site of relational persuasion embedded in local culture. Fourth, earlier models of persuasion (classical, pragmatic, or experimental) remain insufficiently equipped to capture how cultural and relational factors shape linguistic realization in digital settings.

Accordingly, the present study addresses these gaps by applying Beebe and Beebe's (2013) comprehensive model to analyze persuasive strategies in *OpenSooq* advertisements produced by Jordanian users. This approach enables the study to identify the dominant persuasive strategies used in online advertisements, and explore how these strategies are culturally

mediated through the values, norms, and relational expectations that characterize Jordanian communication. By linking persuasion to its cultural and pragmatic foundations, the present research contributes a localized rhetorical–cultural perspective on digital persuasion in Jordan. In doing so, it complements rather than duplicates existing CDA and genre-based studies, positioning persuasion as both a linguistic performance and a cultural act that reflects the moral economy of communication in the Arab world.

4. Methods

This section outlines the study’s qualitative–quantitative design, data sources, and analytical procedures. It explains the integration of thematic analysis with descriptive statistics (4.1), details data collection and sampling from *OpenSooq* (4.2), presents the analytical framework based on Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) model (4.3), and describes the coding process using ATLAS.ti alongside measures for reliability and triangulation (4.4). Ethical considerations guiding the analysis are addressed in 4.5.

4.1. Research design

The present study adopts a qualitatively oriented mixed-method design, combining thematic analysis with descriptive statistical reporting. Thematic analysis was employed as the principal analytic method to identify and interpret patterns of persuasive strategies across the textual corpus of advertisements. This approach aligns with Braun and Clarke’s (2021) model of qualitative thematic inquiry, allowing for both inductive theme development and deductive alignment with Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) tripartite framework. Descriptive statistics were then used as supplementary data to indicate the relative frequency of each major persuasive strategy and its sub-strategies, serving to highlight dominant rhetorical tendencies rather than to generate generalizable quantitative claims. In this sense, numerical reporting was not an independent analytic component but rather an illustrative extension of the thematic findings, enhancing the interpretive depth of the qualitative analysis.

4.2. Data collection and sampling

A total of 100 textual advertisements were collected from *OpenSooq*, an online marketplace widely used in Jordan. The sample was drawn across a variety of product categories, including vehicles, electronics, furniture, and services, to ensure representativeness. Data were gathered over a three-month period to capture a cross-section of typical user-generated content. Only textual components of the advertisements were analyzed. Visual data, such as product photographs, were excluded for two reasons. First, *OpenSooq*’s visual elements are largely limited to literal depictions of items for sale (e.g., cars, furniture, and appliances) and thus lack symbolic or culturally embedded meaning relevant to the study’s focus on rhetorical persuasion. Second, the analytical emphasis on text aligns with the study’s objective to explore linguistic realizations of persuasive strategies, in line with the rhetorical underpinnings of Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) framework. While Beebe and Beebe acknowledge the role of nonverbal and visual cues in persuasion, the current analysis prioritizes verbal strategies as the primary communicative mode in this digital context. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) argue, multimodal meaning-making varies according to context and communicative purpose; in *OpenSooq*, persuasion operates largely through linguistic appeals to trust, honesty, and relational proximity, aligning with Jordanian cultural communication norms. Thus, while a multimodal perspective would enrich future analyses, the textual emphasis adopted here provides a focused lens on the linguistic construction of persuasion, the principal semiotic mode through which sellers negotiate credibility and influence potential buyers in this digital marketplace.

4.3. Analytical Framework

The analysis was guided by Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) model of persuasion, which categorizes persuasive discourse into three overarching strategies: (1) enhancing credibility, (2) using logic and evidence, and (3) using emotional appeals. Each main strategy includes several sub-strategies (fourteen in total) that operationalize specific linguistic and pragmatic techniques of persuasion. These categories provided a coding schema for systematically identifying the presence, form, and interaction of persuasive strategies in the dataset.

4.4. Data Coding and Use of ATLAS.ti

The data collected for this study were analyzed using Braun and Clarke’s (2021) reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) approach, which encompasses six steps for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative data. Here is an outline of the steps:

- Familiarization: In this initial stage, the advertisement was read thoroughly in order to eliminate duplicate advertisements or advertisers and replace them.
- Coding: A deductive coding approach was adopted in this study, whereby each advertisement was assigned a previously set code (Braun and Clarke, 2021). The codes were named after Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) sub-strategies of persuasion (see section 2.1).
- Theme development: Once coding was complete, the codes that belonged to the same overarching persuasive strategy were grouped together.
- Reviewing themes: The themes were reviewed to ensure they represent the collected data precisely and reflect the core persuasive strategies used.
- Defining and Naming Themes: The themes were named after Beebe and Beebe’s (2013) main persuasive strategies (*enhancing credibility, using logic and evidence, or emotional appeals*) and were defined according to their framework. As a result, the analysis produced three overarching themes occurring in the data.
- Reporting: The results were reported in the form of descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages of each persuasive sub-strategy and main strategy occurrences. Moreover, the most commonly used theme and its sub-strategies were interpreted in light of relevant cultural aspects that may explain their prevalence in the data.

To ensure analytical rigor and reliability, the process of coding and assigning each code to its corresponding theme was conducted using the computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) ATLAS.ti. All textual data were imported into the computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) ATLAS.ti, which facilitated systematic coding and

retrieval. Codes were first assigned manually based on preliminary readings, followed by iterative refinement through constant comparison across data segments. The software's memo and co-occurrence tools were used to track patterns and ensure coding consistency. Each advertisement was coded for the dominant persuasive strategy and its corresponding sub-strategies, with overlapping instances noted where multiple strategies co-occurred. The use of ATLAS.ti thus enhanced analytic transparency and traceability, allowing for reproducible categorization of qualitative data. To further ensure reliability, a second coder with expertise in discourse and persuasion studies independently reviewed a representative sample of the coded data. Coding discrepancies were discussed until full consensus was reached, thereby enhancing inter-coder reliability. Moreover, the emergent themes were compared against established frameworks in persuasion and discourse analysis (Beebe & Beebe, 2013; O'Keefe, 2025) to achieve theoretical triangulation. This iterative and collaborative process ensured that the themes identified were both empirically grounded and conceptually coherent, reinforcing the validity and trustworthiness of the findings.

4.5. Ethical Considerations

All advertisements analysed were publicly available on the *OpenSooq* platform, with no private or identifiable user information retained. The study complies with research ethics standards for digital discourse analysis, respecting participant anonymity and data protection principles.

5. Results

5.1. Overview of Main Persuasive Strategies

The thematic analysis of 100 *OpenSooq* advertisements revealed three dominant persuasive strategies corresponding to Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework: (1) enhancing credibility, (2) using emotional appeals, and (3) employing logic and evidence. Table 2 summarizes their frequency and proportional distribution.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of main persuasive strategies in *OpenSooq* advertisements

Ranking	Persuasive strategy	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Enhancing credibility	84	60.4%
2.	Emotional appeals	52	37.4%
3.	Using logic and evidence	3	2.2%
Total		139	100%

Source: By the author

As shown in Table 2, enhancing credibility emerged as the dominant persuasive strategy, accounting for more than half of all occurrences (60.4%), followed by emotional appeals (37.4%), while logic and evidence appeared only marginally (2.2%). This distribution indicates a clear rhetorical hierarchy in *OpenSooq* advertisements, where trustworthiness and affective resonance outweigh rational or data-driven persuasion. The prevalence of ethos- and pathos-based strategies reflects a culturally embedded preference for interpersonal trust and emotional alignment as primary means of influence within Jordanian digital marketplaces.

5.2. Distribution of Sub-Strategies

Building on the analysis of the main persuasive strategies, a finer-grained examination was undertaken to determine the frequency and distribution of individual sub-strategies, thereby offering deeper insight into how specific persuasive techniques operate either independently or in conjunction with others. Table 3 summarizes the occurrences and relative proportions of each persuasive sub-strategy identified in the *OpenSooq* advertisements.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage of persuasive sub-strategies in *OpenSooq* advertisements

Persuasive Strategy	Sub-strategies	Frequency	%
Enhancing credibility	a. Competence	60	37%
	b. Trustworthiness	38	23%
	c. Dynamism	4	2.5%
Using emotional appeals	Using emotion-arousing expressions	35	21.5%
	Appealing to a variety of emotions	12	7%
	Using concrete examples	10	6%
	Taping into shared myths	1	1%
	Using nonverbal behavior and visual images	0	0%
	Using appropriate metaphors and similes	0	0%
Using logic and evidence	Using appropriate fear appeals	0	0%
	Inductive reasoning	2	1%
	Causal reasoning	1	1%
	Deductive reasoning	0	0%
Total		163	100%

Source: By the author

As Table 3 illustrates, the most frequently employed sub-strategies fall under enhancing credibility, particularly those emphasizing competence (37%) and trustworthiness (23%), confirming advertisers' strong orientation toward establishing reliability and expertise. Within emotional appeals, emotion-arousing expressions (21.5%) and appeals to a variety of emotions (7%) are also prominent, underscoring the affective dimension of persuasion in *OpenSooq* discourse. In contrast, logical reasoning sub-strategies (inductive and causal) appear only marginally, together constituting less than 2% of the data. This distribution highlights a persuasive style in which ethos and pathos prevail over logos, reflecting a communication ethos grounded in relational trust and affective resonance rather than argument-based reasoning.

5.3. Illustrative Examples

Example 1: Credibility through Competence and Trustworthiness. Sample advertisement from *OpenSooq* (Translated from Arabic)

Dell Core i5 computers, packaged with new screens. The description are Cpu Coer I5 3300, Ram 8GBSSD 256GB. Super DVD, Intel Hd 3000, LED 22 IPS Full Hd, Windows Pro 10 64bit, Wireless, Keyboard, Mouse, and Speakers with 6 months guarantee with receipt retained, and the delivery is available to all areas in Jordan (Collected from *OpenSooq*, 2024). In this advertisement, the primary persuasive strategy used is enhancing credibility, particularly through the sub-strategies of competence and trustworthiness as outlined by Beebe and Beebe (2013). Competence is demonstrated through the detailed listing of technical specifications, which positions the seller as knowledgeable and reliable. Trustworthiness, in turn, is conveyed by offering a six-month guarantee and emphasizing transparency through a retained receipt, which are moves that reduce uncertainty and foster confidence in a peer-to-peer digital marketplace such as *OpenSooq*.

Example 2: Combining Credibility and Emotional Appeals. Sample advertisement from *OpenSooq* (Translated from Arabic)

Natural local honey- Authentic and guaranteed inshaa' Allah (God willing) from our beehive. In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and the Most Gracious. From whom do we seek help? With all gratitude to Allah for his generosity and grace, our beehives offer you with 100% natural local authentic honey guaranteed, God willing, citrus honey, spring honey, mountain honey, Sidr honey, honey with its comb, natural bee pollen, honeycomb, local royal honey, *natural therapeutic mixtures for the elderly and for strengthening immunity*, propolis, and propolis. Our honey is authentic, tested in the labs of the Jordan University of Science and Technology. It is also guaranteed until the last drop of it. You can test and return it in case it is proven otherwise, Allah forbid. Free delivery is available to most areas in Jordan. (Collected from *OpenSooq*, 2024)

This advertisement exemplifies the interplay between *credibility* and *emotional appeal*. Credibility is established through references to laboratory testing and authenticity, while emotional appeal is realized through the invocation of religious expressions ("God willing," "In the name of Allah") and references to health and family care. These elements evoke trust, reverence, and communal belonging, which are values deeply rooted in Jordanian cultural discourse. The combination of strategies amplifies persuasive force by aligning moral integrity with affective resonance.

Example 3: Emotional Appeals through Urgency and Affiliation. Sample advertisement from *OpenSooq* (Translated from Arabic)

Available at the exclusive agent of Hitachi in Jordan. The device is original; beware of the fake ones. A real exclusive offer for a limited time, and at the lowest price. Only for 250 JOD instead of 320 JOD. World-class surveying devices, Level SETL AL-32, One whole year warranty, One of the best surveying devices currently on the market. (Collected from *OpenSooq*, 2024). This example foregrounds emotional appeals through expressions of urgency ("limited time offer") and exclusivity ("exclusive agent"), triggering feelings of excitement and scarcity. Such emotionally charged language is particularly effective in collectivist cultures where relational credibility and emotional immediacy shape consumer response.

Example 4: Logical Appeal and Reasoned Persuasion. Sample advertisement from *OpenSooq* (Translated from Arabic)

Chevrolet 2019- Like new, Chevrolet Bolt, first class edition, 2019 model, Down payment of 3500JOD through financing facilitators or companies Or 5000JOD through a bank using an ID card, with the total price depending on the number of years, No guarantor is needed for bank financing or a family guarantor for facilitator companies financing, without the need for salary proof, Runs 550 km per charge and the good thing about this Korean car is that it preserves battery life and charges efficiently during long drives, ensuring great value. To be honest, I envy whoever owns this car. Available in the free car market or in Irbid or anywhere for serious buyers. For any inquiry, trust comes first. (Collected from *OpenSooq*, 2024). Here, the advertiser employs inductive reasoning, presenting specific features (battery life, efficiency, and financing options) to support the general claim that the car is desirable and cost-effective. Although rare, such reasoning demonstrates awareness of the buyer's practical and social motivations.

Taken together, the results highlight a clear persuasive hierarchy in *OpenSooq* advertisements: credibility-driven strategies dominate, emotional appeals serve as complementary affective tools, and logic-based persuasion remains peripheral. The examples reveal that advertisers rarely rely on one persuasive strategy alone; instead, they skillfully layer ethos and pathos to create a relationally grounded discourse of trust, sincerity, and moral credibility. This linguistic pattern mirrors the high-context nature of Jordanian communication, where persuasion depends on implicit values and shared assumptions rather than explicit argumentation. Having established the empirical patterns and their textual realizations, the following section discusses these findings in relation to Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework, prior literature on advertising discourse, and the broader cultural dynamics that shape persuasive communication in Jordanian digital contexts.

6. Discussion

The results of this study corroborate and extend earlier scholarship on persuasive communication by situating Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model within a culturally embedded digital marketplace. While Aristotle's rhetorical triad (ethos, pathos, logos) and Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) have long guided persuasion research, both frameworks have been critiqued for underrepresenting the cultural and relational dimensions of communicative practice (Dillard & Shen, 2013; O'Keefe, 2025). By applying Beebe and Beebe's framework, which integrates classical rhetorical appeals with interactional and ethical considerations, the current study highlights how persuasion in Jordanian online advertising reflects collectivist orientations that privilege interpersonal trust and affective engagement over logical argumentation. This finding confirms the premise established in the introduction that persuasion is culturally mediated and value-driven rather than purely cognitive or message-centred. It also validates Beebe and Beebe's notion that effective persuasion is audience-dependent, operating through credibility and emotional identification rather than formal reasoning, a claim strongly supported by the observed predominance of ethos and pathos strategies across the corpus.

The prominence of *enhancing credibility* (60.4%) affirms the centrality of ethos in Jordanian persuasive discourse. This aligns with previous findings emphasizing trust and perceived integrity as decisive factors in consumer engagement (Aboalghanam et al., 2024; Almajali, 2021). Beebe and Beebe (2013) argue that credibility extends beyond professional expertise to encompass ethical commitment and relational authenticity, which are qualities that resonate deeply in a collectivist culture where *thiqa* (trust), *sumfa* (reputation), and *wajh* (face) form the moral foundation of communication (Suleiman, 2011). Advertisers on *OpenSooq* thus perform credibility through both informational and moral cues: providing detailed product specifications (competence) and assurances such as warranties or religious invocations (trustworthiness). These practices echo Armstrong's (2011) claim that persuasion succeeds when credibility intersects with audience beliefs and cultural expectations. The study thereby extends Armstrong's insight by demonstrating that credibility in the Jordanian context functions not merely as an informational guarantee but as a moral performance anchored in social obligation and communal honour.

The second major finding related to the extensive use of emotional appeals (37.4%) further illustrates how persuasion in *OpenSooq* draws upon shared affective and cultural scripts. As Romanova and Smirnova (2019) observe, emotional engagement in advertising serves to minimize the distance between advertiser and audience. In Jordanian discourse, this affective proximity is achieved through religious expressions ("in the name of Allah," "God willing") and appeals to familial and communal solidarity. These linguistic forms are not peripheral embellishments; they constitute culturally coded acts of affiliation that signal sincerity and moral alignment. Moreover, emotional appeals often overlap with credibility appeals, creating hybrid messages that are simultaneously affective and ethical. This fusion reinforces what Beebe and Beebe (2013) describe as the "relational turn" in persuasion, where emotional resonance supports credibility and deepens audience identification. At the same time, the results suggest a potential tension: overreliance on affective rhetoric, as noted in the dataset, can dilute credibility and foster scepticism, an issue also raised by Tutaj and Van Reijmersdal (2012) regarding audience responses to emotionally saturated digital advertisements.

The minimal use of logic and evidence (2.2%) in *OpenSooq* advertisements reflects a communicative culture where persuasion is more narrative and relational than analytic. While a few cases employed inductive or causal reasoning, these were typically embedded in broader ethos- or pathos-based frames rather than presented as stand-alone arguments. This supports Beebe and Beebe's (2013) assertion that the persuasive force of logic is contingent upon cultural expectations of discourse style and audience processing preferences. From a socio-pragmatic standpoint, the scarcity of logic-driven persuasion may also relate to varying levels of digital literacy and marketing awareness among users. As Mertins (2016) argues, linguistic persuasion cannot be fully understood through experimental logic alone; it requires theoretical models sensitive to pragmatic and cultural meaning. The Jordanian data underscore this point, showing that logical persuasion loses salience when not embedded in culturally resonant moral and emotional appeals. The findings collectively affirm that persuasion in Jordanian digital contexts operates within a *cultural ecology* of communication, an interwoven system of ethical norms, relational expectations, and affective codes. High-context communication (Hall, 1976; Hofstede, 2001) shapes how users interpret digital messages: trust and emotional authenticity outweigh analytical evidence, and relational positioning substitutes for explicit argumentation. In this sense, online commercial interaction mirrors offline communicative traditions rooted in *karam* (generosity), *sulh* (social harmony), and *?ird* (honour).

This study, therefore, bridges the theoretical gap identified in the literature review by demonstrating how Beebe and Beebe's (2013) model, originally designed for public speaking, can be successfully adapted to analyse digital discourse in collectivist cultures. Unlike CDA or Genre Analysis, which foreground ideological or structural aspects (Fahad, 2016; Muhtarogullari, 2021; Tahmasbi & Kalkhajeh, 2013), this framework illuminates the *rhetorical-cultural* interplay through which persuasion functions as a moral and relational act. The results expand the framework's analytical reach beyond Western or institutional settings to encompass peer-to-peer online communication in Arabic contexts, contributing to a more global understanding of persuasive discourse. By recontextualizing Beebe and Beebe's tripartite model within Jordanian online advertising, the present study advances the argument that persuasion is inseparable from cultural orientation. The dominance of credibility and emotional appeals, and the near absence of logical reasoning, reveal a communicative ethos where moral integrity and affective alignment supersede rational deliberation. This observation not only aligns with but also extends Beebe and Beebe's audience-centred perspective, emphasizing that effective persuasion in collectivist societies depends on relational credibility, not argumentative structure. Ultimately, the study reinforces the notion that digital persuasion in Jordan should be read as a culturally inflected discourse practice. By revealing how ethos and pathos intertwine within online commercial spaces, it contributes to broader cross-cultural scholarship on rhetoric, advertising, and digital communication, positioning Beebe and Beebe's framework as a powerful heuristic for mapping persuasion across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study examined the persuasive strategies employed in peer-to-peer advertisements on the Jordanian *OpenSooq* platform within Beebe and Beebe's (2013) framework. The analysis revealed a clear rhetorical hierarchy in which *enhancing credibility* (60.4%) was the most frequently used persuasive strategy, followed by *emotional appeals* (37.4%), while *logic and evidence* appeared only marginally (2.2%). At the sub-strategy level, *competence* (37%), *trustworthiness* (23%), and *emotion-arousing expressions* (21.5%) were the most recurrent features. These findings illustrate that persuasion in Jordanian digital discourse is deeply rooted in cultural values privileging trust, sincerity, and affective resonance over rational deliberation.

Beyond its descriptive contribution, the study holds theoretical and practical significance. By situating Beebe and Beebe's audience-centred model within a collectivist, high-context communication culture, it expands our understanding of persuasion as both a rhetorical and cultural act. The results underscore how ethos and pathos interact dynamically in Jordanian digital advertising to construct credibility and emotional alignment, revealing persuasion as a practice grounded in *moral personhood*, *social cohesion*, and *shared belief systems*. In this way, the study contributes to intercultural communication research by demonstrating how classical rhetorical frameworks can be reinterpreted in non-Western contexts, highlighting the cultural contingencies of persuasive discourse.

From a digital marketing perspective, the findings provide insight into how peer-to-peer persuasion operates outside the corporate sphere, showing that consumers in Jordan respond more favourably to interpersonal authenticity and affective sincerity than to rational or data-driven appeals. These results carry implications for digital branding, influencer marketing, and

cross-cultural advertising strategies, where understanding culturally specific norms of credibility and emotion can enhance audience engagement and trust-building.

Looking forward, future research could undertake comparative analyses across Arab societies to explore how regional variations in cultural values, such as collectivism, honour, or religious expression, shape digital persuasion. Moreover, incorporating a multimodal perspective that examines the interaction of textual, visual, and auditory elements would yield a more holistic understanding of persuasive communication in online spaces. As digital economies expand and intercultural contact intensifies, studying persuasion at the intersection of culture, rhetoric, and technology remains a vital path for both theoretical advancement and applied communication research.

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