

PROMOTING TOURISM THROUGH THE LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISING

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Abstract: *The paper defines tourism-related concepts such as marketing, advertising, and tourism advertising, before analysing the language used in tourism advertising at three levels - micro-linguistics, macro-linguistics and other linguistic branches. At micro-linguistics level, tourism advertising is analysed from the perspective of phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics; at macro-linguistics level, from the perspective of sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and anthropological linguistics; at the level of other linguistic branches, from the perspective of lexicology alone. The analysis is supported by examples from both tourism and agri-tourism advertisements. The conclusion of the analysis is that the language of advertising in tourism is extremely complex and, therefore, worth studying as an important marketing tool.*

Key words: *promotion, tourism, communication, language of advertising, linguistics*

INTRODUCTION

Successful marketing and advertising largely depend on the choice of language to convey specific messages with the intention of influencing people.

Promotion is defined, in marketing, as "the advancement of a product, idea, or point of view through *publicity* [a type of promotion that relies on public relations effect of a news story carried usually free by mass media] and/or *advertising* [the activity or profession of producing information for promoting the sale of commercial products or services]" [3]. Advertising is seen as the most important marketing tool [13]. Promotion includes „advertising, personal selling and other forms of communication” [37]. Advertising cannot exist without communication, defined as a "two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which participants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, ideas, and feelings but also create and share meaning" [3] or communications, defined as „all means of symbolic or verbal communication (newspapers, mail, email, telephone, television, radio, etc.) that people and machines use to make contact and share information” [3,23].

According to [42], advertising is "commercial or paid communication using one or more media" such as: *broadcast* (movie theatre commercials, local radio station, television) [5]; *electronic* (computer websites, telephone marketing), considered most suited for effective marketing [5, 34]; *print* (catalogues, direct mail literature, information brochures at hotels and visitor centres, visitor information guides, magazine advertisements, \$2 off coupons in the local newspaper advertisements) [5]; *signs* (in-store displays, outdoor billboards or road signage); *specialty advertising* (ads on blimps, brand names/symbols on merchandise, free merchandise, premiums, sky-writing).

According to the same author, tourism advertising may be categorized into five types: „*image advertising only*, advertising that attempts to build a three-way association among the behaviour being advertised, one or more benefits and target market customers, and that usually includes both an illustration and an ad copy” [42]; *image advertising with a linkage-advertising offer* („Call...for a full-colour brochure or visit..."); *offers focused on linkage-advertising* are mall-space, classified ads that are mailed to inquirers free of charge; *linkage-advertising materials* are of two types: „detailed information on how to go about buying and using the tourism product or service or a brochure of photographs with

sparse information; *direct-response advertising* are communications that include an offer to sell a product or service within the ad itself” [42].

Some specialists [8, 14, 16, 29, 30, 39, 40] point out the importance of advertising as a manipulation tool that can act both ways – positively and negatively.

All these types of advertisement relying on the media mentioned above use both verbal and non-verbal language to reach their goal.

In agribusiness, advertising is synonym for „telling people about the services available at your business to increase public interest” [34] and a must [37]. Food, accommodation, and farm-related activities are advertised in agri-tourism [12,25,26].

The issue of language use in advertising tourism is related to foreign language skills (usually, young people speak a foreign language), to the language used on signs (the most spoken foreign language in the area, the replacing of words by pictures for children and people that cannot read the sign) [16,21].

Farmers add ”descriptive and alluring terminology to their advertisements for their enterprises to attract the desired type of guest” [5].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method used is *analytical*. We analysed the most important aspects of the language used in advertising at three levels-micro-linguistics, macro-linguistics and other linguistic branches.

The material used consists in *books, articles, BA, Master and PhD theses* on the language advertising in the promotion of tourism (*agri-tourism* is not yet very popular on the Internet- [2]), materials published all over the world in the last two decades and made available to the wide public via the Internet.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Most literature on the language of advertising, in general, tackles the issue of English advertisements [9, 17, 23, 31, 32, 33, 35], but there are also articles on advertising in Arabic [10], Lithuanian [38], Dutch [11], Bulgarian [1], in American English [6], in Kiswahili and Ekegusii [24], and Indonesian [41].

The most important aspects of the language used in advertising were analysed at three levels-*micro-linguistics, macro-linguistics* and *other linguistic branches*.

1. *Micro-linguistics*

Micro-linguistics is about *phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics*.

1.1. *Phonology*

The most important phonological aspects of the language of advertising are:

- *Alliteration*, „the commencement of two or more words of a word group with the same letter” [4]: „*For the men in charge of change*” (an ad for the magazine „Fortune”);
- *Assonance*, „rhyme in which the same vowel sounds are used with different consonants in the stressed syllables of the rhyming words” [4]: „*The Ice Cream Dream*” (an ad for the „Mini Melts” ice cream);
- *Graphic aspect of the text*: „*Beanz Meanz Heinz*” (an ad for the „Heinz” baked beans);
- *Homophone*, „a word pronounced the same as another but different in meaning, whether spelled the same way or not” [4]: „*Meat us here!*” (an ad for a restaurant in Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia);
- *Rhyme*, „identity in sound of some part, especially the end, of words or lines of verse” [4]: „*A nose in need deserves Puffs Plus indeed.*” (an ad for the tissues „Puffs Plus”);

- *Rhythm*, „metrical or rhythmical form” [4]: „*Beanz Meanz Heinz*” (an ad for the „Heinz” baked beans);
- *Transliteration*, „changing (letters, words, etc.) into corresponding characters of another alphabet or language” [4]: „*KouKou kole*” (meaning „happiness in the mouth”) in Chinese (an ad for „Coca Cola”).

1.2. Morphology

The most important morphological aspects of the language of advertising are, according to:

- *Adjectives*, „any member of a class of words that modify nouns and pronouns, primarily by describing a particular quality of the word they are modifying” [4]: „*Irresistible*” (an ad for the „Grater’s” ice cream);
- *Collocations*, „the arrangement, especially of words in a sentence” [4]: „*More flavour, more fun*” (an ad for the „Baskin Robins” ice cream);
- *Foreign words* [4]: „*Luzării de pe Electrolizei*” (an ad for a short TV-cartoon);
- *Formation of new words and phrases* „extracting secret information from a colleague by getting them drunk” [4]: „*Beerboarding*” (an ad for a trade mark of beer);
- *Idiomatic constructions*, „constructions peculiar to or characteristic of a particular language or dialect” [4]: „*All that glitters is style*” (an ad for Škoda Fabia);
- *Intertextuality*, „the way that similar or related texts influence, reflect, or differ from each other” [4]: „*We taxes don’t pay.*” (Yoda style in an ad for Vodafone);
- *Noun phrases*, „a construction that functions syntactically as a noun, consisting of a noun and many modifiers” [4]: „*The art of Swiss Ice Cream*” (an ad for the „Movenpick” ice cream);
- *Numerals*, „a word, letter, symbol, or figure, etc., expressing a number” [4]: „*Change the World, One Scoop at a time*” (an ad for the „Ben & Jerry’s” ice cream);
- *Verb phrases*, „a group of words including a verb and its complements, objects, or other modifiers that functions syntactically as a verb” [4]: „*Have yourself a Blue Bell country day*” (an ad for the „Blue Bell” ice cream).

1.3. Syntax

There are two important syntactic aspects in the analysis of the language of advertising:

- *Sentence type*:
 - *Declarative*, „the kind of sentence that makes a statement or ‘declares’ something” [4]: „*Homemade Root Beer, the Pop That’s Actually Good for You*” (an ad for the Joybilee Farm – to notice the *jubilee* – *joybilee* pun);
 - *Interrogative*, „the kind of sentence that asks a question and uses a question mark” [4]: „*Is it Prepping or is it Homesteading?*” (an ad for the Joybilee Farm);
 - *Imperative*, „the kind of sentence that gives instructions or advice, and expresses a command, an order, a direction, or a request” [19]: „*Make Handmade, Give Handmade, Buy Handmade, Live Handmade*” (an ad for the Joybilee Farm);
 - *Exclamative*, „the kind of sentence that makes exclamations” [7]: „*[This is a] Lively Run Dairy!*” (an ad for the „Lively Run Dairy” agri-farm);
- *Sentence structure*:
 - *Schematic*: „*GoRural*” (an ad for an Italian agri-tourism farm);

- *Elliptic*: „Lively Run Dairy” (an ad for the „Lively Run Dairy” agri-farm);
- *Incomplete*: „Bunătăți din fermă... [Goodies from the farm....]” (an ad for the agri-tourism farm in Lelești, Bihor County).

1.4. Semantics

The most important figures of speech in the language of advertising are [17,20,22]:

- *Antithesis*, „the placing of a sentence or one of its parts against another to which it is opposed to form a balanced contrast of ideas” [4]: „#FreezeTheJoy” (an ad for „Cadbury Dairy Milk Ice Cream”);
- *Homonymy*, „a condition in which two words, phrases, or concepts have the same meaning or connotation” [4]: „Mum’s taking us to Legoland. She’s an absolute brick.” (an ad for Legoland);
- *Hyperbole*, „an extravagant statement or figure of speech not intended to be taken literally” [4]: „Doorway to Heaven” (an ad for „Glacé – Artisan Ice Cream”);
- *Metaphor*, „a figure of speech in which a term or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable in order to suggest a resemblance” [4]: „Life is a bowl of Perry’s” (an ad for „Perry’s Ice Cream”);
- *Metonymy*, „a figure of speech that consists of the use of the name of one object or concept for that of another to which it is related, or of which it is a part” [4]: „All Agriculture Was Organic” (an ad for „Oregon Wines”);
- *Personification*, „the attribution of human nature or character to animals, inanimate objects, or abstract notions, especially as a rhetorical figure” [4]: „Crazy Good Ice Cream” (an ad for „The Comfy Cow” ice cream);
- *Polysemy*, „a condition in which a single word, phrase, or concept has more than one meaning or connotation” [4]: „Moving home? Let us lighten the load. We can redirect your mail for up to two years. That’s one thing sorted ...” (an ad for „Royal Mail”);
- *Simile*, „a figure of speech in which two unlike things are explicitly compared” [4]: „Like That. But Better.” (an ad for laptops).

2. Macro-linguistics (Applied Linguistics)

Macro-linguistics or Applied Linguistics is about *sociolinguistics*, *psycholinguistics*, *neurolinguistics*, *anthropological linguistics*, and *language acquisition*. Only three of them are related to the language of advertising in tourism.

2.1. Sociolinguistics

From a sociolinguistics approach, languages can be analysed from the perspective of *communicative interaction*, *languages in contact*, and *variation in language* (language varieties). As far as advertising in tourism is concerned, only the effects of *languages in contact* can be considered here, as shown by the calques (loan translations) below: *agricultural tourism/agritourism/agri-tourism/agro-tourism* „agroturism”, *farm holiday/farm holidays* „vacanță la fermă”, and *farm tourism* „turism la fermă”, most frequently met in agri-tourism ads in Romania. A similar approach is that of [27], who analyses identity constructions in multilingual advertising (with reference to German and English) [27], and advertising as a site of language contact [28].

2.2. Psycholinguistics

„Every linguistic element of an advertisement’s text is now chosen based on intricate psycholinguistic models of human language processing” [18].

2.3. Anthropological Linguistics

Anthropological Linguistics „the study of language in relation to culture, including the recording and analysis of the languages of nonliterate societies” [4] is a possible

approach in the analysis of tourism advertising since the latter is about communication, which is largely based on language. Given that English is the *lingua franca* of the 3rd Millennium, it is not surprising at all that tourism is promoted using, besides Romanian, English phrases such as:

- „*Bike & Brunch. Fă mișcare și mănâncă local*” (an ad for the „Sana Terra Farm. Permacultură în Voivodeni”);
- „*Piața Urbană prezintă Farmers Market*” (an ad for a green market in Bucharest);
- „*V for Verde. Local market*” (an ad for a green market in Bucharest).

3. Other Linguistic Branches

Lexicology and *Comparative Historical Linguistics* belong to the category Other Linguistic Branches, but only *lexicology* is related to the language of advertising in tourism.

Lexicology is „the study of the formation, meaning, and use of words and of idiomatic combinations of words” [4].

Studies of vocabulary („a list or collection of the words or phrases of a language, technical field, etc.”- [4]) in advertising found the most commonly used adjectives and verbs in order of frequency [15, 36]:

- „*Adjectives: new, good, free, fresh, delicious, full, sure, clean, wonderful, special, crisp, fine, big, great, real, easy, bright, extra, safe, rich*”: „*So good, you won't know it's healthy!*” (an ad for „Arctic Zero – Low Calorie Ice Cream”);
- „*Verbs: make, get, give, have, see, buy, come, go, know, keep, look, need, love, use, feel, like, choose, take, start, taste*”: „*Fortunately, Ice Cream Makes It All Better*” (an ad for „Creamies” Ice Cream).

CONCLUSIONS

Following the approach taken by us, in this scientific paper, we summarize the main conclusions:

The language of agri-tourism advertising is little studied compared to the language of tourism *advertising*;

- The *English of tourism advertising* has been studied extensively in English-speaking countries;
- The *English of tourism advertising* has also been studied in non-English-speaking countries, but references are mainly English;
- The *English of tourism advertising* has been studied extensively from phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic perspectives;
- The *language of tourism advertising* has been less analysed from sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics and anthropological linguistics perspectives;
- The *English of tourism advertising* has been studied extensively from a lexicological perspective;
- *Advertising slogans* in the *language of tourism advertising* have been analysed extensively [11, 15, 17, 31, 35].

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