

## LEXICAL EXPRESSIVE MEANS AND STYLISTIC DEVICES IN THE LANGUAGE OF ADVERTISEMENT

*Valentina SINGHIREI, Oleg DONEȚ\**

*Catedra Limba Engleză*

*\*Centrul de Dezvoltare Economică, Afaceri Publice și Parteneriat în Învățământul Superior, Chișinău*

Articolul de față este dedicat cercetării științifice și metodice în discursul limbii engleze din publicitate. Limbajul de reclamă este o sursă importantă pentru lingviști de diferite domenii. Stilistica este domeniul unde limbajul de reclamă poate să găsească caracteristici noi care vor adăuga datele necesare pentru înțelegerea mai aprofundată a reclamei. De asemenea, limbajul de reclamă are propria menire în formarea de bază a percepției limbii. Autorii au studiat limbajul reclamei în limba engleză sub aspectul interacțiunii sensului cuvântului în dicționar și în context. În fine, ei prezintă analiza stilistică a textului de reclamă bazată pe mijloacele lexicale ale limbajului de reclamă în limba engleză.

It is known that words in a context may acquire additional lexical meanings that are called *contextual* meanings. On the basis of on the relationship between a dictionary lexical meaning and a contextual one are based *lexical stylistic* devices that serve to create additional *expressive, evaluative, and subjective* connotations. In fact, we deal with the intended substitution of the existing names approved by long usage and fixed in dictionaries, prompted by the speaker's subjective original view and evaluation of things. Each type of intended substitution results in a stylistic device called also a trope. We have taken an attempt to investigate the interaction of different types of lexical meaning in the discourse of modern advertisements in English, in most cases in slogans. In our factual data we have singled out the cases of the use of the stylistic devices based on the interaction of dictionary and contextual logical meanings such as **metaphor, metonymy, irony, zeugma, interjections, epithet, comparison, and simile comparison, hyperbole, and allusion**. The aim of the article is to analyze the language of advertising in English from the point of view of stylistics in order to estimate the expressiveness of the advertising genre and to establish the role of lexical expressive means and stylistic devices in the language of advertisement.

We have noticed that the proper use of a **metaphor** in a slogan can make the advertising words vivid. Through the figurative comparison of the advertised product or service with the thing with similar feature, the characteristic of the product or service is vividly stressed, and it is easily understood and remembered by consumers, for example:

e.g. **Fresh food and fresh air. The perfect recipe for a healthy life.** Have chosen. It's Candy.

In the advertisement of the refrigerator, "fresh food and fresh air" is compared to the perfect recipe for a healthy life, which is lively and vivid.

There are other examples of metaphors in slogans:

e.g. Your **Magical Gateway to the World** – TURKISH AIRLINES (a brand slogan)

e.g. **Glade Air Freshener Tropical Mist**

**The slogan:** A refreshing scent that will bring a **warm, tropical breeze** into your home. – GLADE AIR PERFUMERY

e.g. "**Breakfast of Champions**" – Wheaties, 1935, Blackett-Sample-Gummert (later "The Breakfast of Champions" into the 1990s)

e.g. BODDINGTONS. **THE CREAM OF MANCHESTER.** – Boddingtons

e.g. **A BREATH OF FRESH AIR** – AIR CANADA

e.g. Makes **molehills** out of **mountains**. – TEFAL (The slogan from the advertisement on the Tefal iron).

e.g. **SAY CHEERS TO A NEW ARRIVAL.** – CRUICSHANK & Company Ltd. "A new arrival" is the metaphor for a new drink.

e.g. KANYON, **THE HEART-OF-THE-CITY THAT CONNECTS PEOPLE...**

**AT WORK, AT HOME, AT PLAY...** - KANYON (The Trade Center) In this slogan we can see not only the metaphor but also two cases of aposiopesis expressed by the period after the words "people" and "play".

Also, there is the case of polysyndeton. Polysyndeton is the stylistic device of connecting sentences or phrases or syntagms or words by using connectives (mostly conjunctions and prepositions) before each component part. In our example there are three cases of the use of the same preposition “at” in front of three successive nouns “work”, “home”, and “play.”

Alongside the metaphor another expressive means and stylistic device based on the interaction of different types of lexical meaning, **metonymy**, is widely used in English advertising, for example,

e.g. "I'd rather die of thirst than drink from **the cup of mediocrity**" - Stella Artois

e.g. **The value of efficacy** - Sant'ANGELICA (a brand slogan)

e.g. TO LIFT YOUR FEET ABOVE THE ORDINARY, GIVE THEM **WINGS**. – INDIAN FOOTWEAR

e.g. With **a touch of** Angora. – Luxurious Lambswool

e.g. Drakkar Noir: Feel **the power** – Guy Laroche, Paris (The advertisement of Eau de toilette pour homme)

e.g. Pino Silvestre

**men's line** by Vidal Venezia. – PINO SILVESTRE

e.g. **Trekking on water** from KAS to Kekova. – GEZI TRAVEL

The word “**to trek**” has its denotation as “to hike”, “to wander”, and “to go on foot”. In this example the word “trekking” receives the stylistic connotation “to move in the free style or manner on the surface of water in light canoes in the direction of the town of Kekova”.

**Metonymy** is a very useful and effective stylistic device, for it compresses much into a single word or a short noun phrase. Writers of advertisements use the stylistic device frequently, because a metonymy can express briefly and effectively what would otherwise require a whole clause or sentence. Brevity, vividness and concreteness are its chief virtues.

There are cases of **zeugma**, the stylistic device based on interaction of primary and derivative logical meanings, for example:

e.g. If you want your business **to pick up, pick up the phone**. - AT&T

Here there is the appeal to use phone services of the company in order to increase success in business and to support business contacts.

Another stylistic device that is very close to zeugma, **pun**, is used in English advertising. The pun makes words implicit, humorous, conspicuous, and it can arouse people's association, which will make a deep impression on consumers, for example:

e.g. She's the **nimblest** girl around. **Nimble** is the way she goes. **Nimble** is the bread she eats. Light, delicious, **Nimble**. - Nimble

In this slogan, the word "nimble" as an adjective means “clever”, and as a proper noun, it also means the name of the product. So it has two meanings, forming a pun, which can arouse consumers buying desire.

One more example of the pun in the slogan from the UK advertisement is the following:

e.g. "Whenever you shop at **Four Square** you'll like **the Change**." (changing to Four Square for your grocery shopping will be enjoyable and the cheaper prices there will mean you will get more change when you pay for your shopping) or "Cobb & Co delivers the male." (Cobb & Co were originally a stage-coach mail company that delivered the mail throughout New Zealand. Now it is a restaurant chain where you (a female) can meet a man (male)).

e.g. The short **cut** to big savings. – SHARPS BEDROOMS . This pun is in a catchy phrase serving as a slogan in the advertisement on the sale with the coupon for the discount. The word “cut” means here as “a cutting of the coupon” and as the “the decrease of spending money on the purchase”.

e.g. The **Silk Sense** – Mangal Silks (a brand slogan)

The pun “**silk**” has a double meaning or a connotation. The recognized meaning of “**silk**” is the name of fabric, but in the combination with the noun “sense” it has a connotation of pleasure and comfort.

e.g. Some **controls** give **more control** than others. – GAS STOVES

We have also found the cases of **maxims** or **aphorisms**, in adverting including slogans, for example:

e.g. Powerful can be efficient. - Audi

**Interjections** as the words that we use when we express our feelings strongly can be used in the advertising slogans, too, for example:

e.g. **Oh!** London!

Roompam Winterwear...

for the warmest moments of your life! – ROOMPAM CLOTHES

The interjection "Oh!" used at the beginning creates the emotive tone in which the address "London" is pronounced and later in the same emotive tone the information on the goods is rendered, namely "Roompam Winterwear". Then another stylistic device is used, that is *aposiopesis* marked with the period, and by the end of the text we read the epithet "warmest". The highly emotive atmosphere is supported by the picture of a young embracing couple. The reader is receiving the message "In order to be happy in London you should buy our goods!"

**Personification** is a stylistic device that gives life and personal attributes to inanimate objects. In advertising English, a personification gives life or personal attribute to commodity, and makes the commodity advertised full of feelings so as to strengthen its affinity, for example:

e.g. To the ends of the earth, and to the top of the world. Only two of us have made it... It's the only thing that's been on all the trips with me and it's never once let me down...

In this slogan the advertised product, a kind of watch is personified. The use of the word "us" makes both the human and the watch become alive beings, accompanying each other.

We have thoroughly analyzed the stylistic devices used often in the advertising English slogans and their characteristics, which make us find their frequency and importance in advertising English and that each stylistic device has its own form and characteristics and its own way of achieving good effects. Other examples of personification in slogans are the following:

e.g. Keep **hunger locked up** till lunch – Shreddies

e.g. And all because the lady loves **Milk Tray**. - Cadbury's Milk Tray

e.g. ...**bringing** Indians and **India closer**. – Indian Airlines (a brand slogan)

e.g. Let your **fingers do the walking**. - Yellow Pages, 1964, Geers Gross

e.g. **Ahava**: Ahava Mind Melt contains 100% Dead Sea salt blended with pure essential oils. **Soak your cares away** with stabilizing Cedarwood, uplifting Clary Sage, and balancing Vetiver.

**The slogan**: Let the Dead Sea's unique mineral mix **melt your muscles** while the harmonious blend of essentials replenishes your soul.

e.g. "**Intel Inside**" - Intel

e.g. **NOKIA**

**Connecting People** – NOKIA

e.g. **E45 comes out to play**. - E45

e.g. **THE HIGHEST INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION NATURALLY DESERVES A NEW INTERNATIONAL SYMBOL.** –

TRIBHOVANDAS

BHIMJI ZAVERI

e.g. **IT'S YOUR WATCH THAT TELLS MOST ABOUT WHO YOU ARE.** - SEOKO

**Epithet** is of special significance in advertisement slogans expressing some quality of a company, product, idea or phenomenon; it serves to emphasize a certain property or feature. There are some examples of the use of epithet in the advertising slogans:

e.g. Real people selling **great** cars – ONTARIO TOYOTA DEALERS

e.g. **Vibrant** variety of fabrics from NTC – NATIONAL TEXTILES SHIRTINGS

e.g. **Great** Fabrics. **Great** Prices. – NTC (a brand slogan)

e.g. **Perfect** Sleeper. – Serta (Mattress company)

e.g. **Exclusive** impact-resistant RAM-X™ hull and deck – SAM'S CLUB™

e.g. America's **number one** nail protection. – Sally Hansen®

e.g. The world's **favorite** airline. – BRITISH AIRWAYS

Geoffrey N. Leech, a famous British linguist, said that advertising words must be vivid, conspicuous, and impressive, with high readability and the force to promote sales<sup>1</sup>. The language of advertising is, of course, very emotive, and adjectives are used at an unusually high degree, conveying emotions with especially such adjectives as "shining", "luxury", "elegant", "smooth" etc. Adjectives are important in an advertising slogan for they are used to add prestige, desirability and approval for the customer. The results of the study of epithets used in advertising slogans have shown in the descending order in Table:

<sup>1</sup> Leech G.N. The Language in Advertising [MJ]. - London: Longmans, Green and Co. LTD, 1966, p.27-30.

Table

## Distribution of Epithets in the Body of a Slogan

№/order	Epithet	Number of examples
1	great	65
2	better/best	62
3	shining	57
4	luxury	54
5	elegant	53
6	rich	52
7	advanced	48
8	free	46
9	fresh	44
10	delicious	42
11	full	41
12	smooth	39
13	sure	37
14	styling	36
15	wonderful	35
16	fashionable	33
17	special	29
18	crisp	26
19	fine	24
20	big	23
21	beautiful	22
22	real	20
23	easy	20
24	bright	20
25	smart	20
26	extra	20
27	chic/ultrachic	19
28	perfect	18
29	safe	18
30	firm	18
31	quick	15
32	essential	15
33	best-selling	14
34	smooth	14
35	colorful	12
36	spectacular	12

e.g. A **great** place for successful business and **relaxed** meetings - INTERCONTINENTAL

e.g. Discover a **delicious** meal – CANYON CREEK Chophouse

e.g. Canada's **Best Selling** Minivan – Dodge Caravan

**Oxymoron** is frequently used in the advertising slogan, for example:

e.g. Pay monthly unlimited free calls to MUM (Orange UK Calls)

“**Pay monthly unlimited free calls**” is one example of a pattern familiar here - that suggests that the product has two things that the audience may think to be normally contradictory or oxymoronic (the idea of "having your cake and eating it"). Sometimes the opposition is of price and quality (as in the claim those calls cost nothing at Orange UK Calls).

Similarly the advertisement for NicoBloc combines the idea of efficaciousness (it works) with that of its not being too difficult for the would-be non-smoker to stop smoking.

e.g. Helps reduce and overcome smoking at your own pace. (NicoBloc)

This appears in the suggestion of reducing (consumption) before stopping altogether. The verb "**overcome**" has connotations of victory in battle, rather than the breaking of a habit or a simple change in behaviour. This is probably very apt, since the target audience for this advertisement may well have an extreme view, and see the attempt to stop smoking as akin to a great military action. (The advertisement comes from Healthy Times a magazine distributed, free to readers, by the retail chemists UniChem - so the audience has already been targeted. Advertisements for products that help people stop smoking do of course appear in more general contexts, as in TV advertising.)

This same contrast also appears in the Renault Clio advertisement - but here the lexis is more explicitly making the distinction, in diesel and Va Va Voom.

e.g. It only takes a few seconds to realize a diesel can have Va Va Voom. (Renault Clio)

The adjective "**diesel**" has immediate denotations of the known properties of this engine type - the engine has a longer life, is more dependable and gives better fuel economy, but takes longer to reach high speeds. The advertiser wants to suggest that the car nonetheless has a combination of style, flair, power and youth appeal (not normally associated with diesel engines). Rather than use any of these words, Renault has invented its own compound abstract noun - Va Va Voom. This is alliterative, and has an interesting sound - being quite memorable. The advertisers develop the image by association with, for example, the soccer player Thierry Henry - who is French, but lives and works in England, and is exceptionally talented and athletic. At the same time, M. Henry is shown in situations that suggest a caring and feminine side - with pets, sitting at home among soft furnishings, for instance. In this way the advertisements appeal to potential drivers of both sexes, and are highly specific to one make and model of car. By inventing the word, the advertisers are able to adapt it so that it carries exactly the suggestion they wish to make to the audience - it should have no prior negative connotations. One of the advertisements playfully suggests that the new term is part of the standard English lexicon by asking what is the French for Va Va Voom?

**Comparison** is a common phenomenon in our everyday life. It is human to make comparison and to choose the better at the same price. That is why the ad writers take it into account while composing the text for an advertising slogan. The comparison introduced in the slogan with the accent on the semantical center of the utterance will deliver the message "Our product is better", compare:

e.g. **They make Cappuccino and Espresso faster than you can make coffee.** - Philips

The slogan is in the foreground of the picture of the advertised kitchen utensils. The reader receives from the slogan an emotive message "It is fast, and it saves your time. If you are persuaded, you should buy."

A **simile** as a stylistic device which makes a comparison between two unlike elements having at least one quality or characteristic in common is used very often in English advertising, for example:

e.g. Breakfast without orange juice is **like a day without sunshine.** - ORANGE JUICE

In this advertisement, "breakfast without orange juice" is compared to "a day without sunshine", to stress the importance of the product advertised — orange juice. It is very vivid, and it impresses readers.

e.g. The airline that treats you **like a Maharajah** – AIR-INDIA

e.g. **As** fresh and flowery **as** the first blush of Spring - Courant

e.g. Because nobody understands a girl **like we do.** – SUPERBRA

e.g. **Hard-As-Nails - Sally Hansen®**

**Hyperbole** is the deliberate use of overstatement or exaggeration to achieve emphasis. Businessmen and manufacturers use the stylistic device to advertise their goods in such an attractive way as possible, so as to induce customers to buy their products, and thereby, increase sales. When they describe their products in advertisements, it is not enough for them to say they are simply "good", they must be "perfect, spectacular, out-of-this-world, superb, fantastic, etc.

e.g. Nobody cares for eyes more than Pearl!

Here "Pearl" is a glasses brand. It is obvious that the advertisement is exaggerated.

To make the copy more emotive for the reader the ad writer uses an oxymoron in the heading and the hyperbole as the part of a brand slogan, as follows:

e.g. ORANGE (the phone company):

The heading: **Pay monthly unlimited free calls** to MUM (MUM is the abbreviation of the phone service, Magic Numbers) (the oxymoron).

A *brand* slogan: **ORANGE™ the future's bright** (There is a case of the hyperbole for the emotional impact on the reader. At the bottom of the copy the reader reads "18 month minimum term contract. Terms apply." The contract is likely to be some benefit for this phone company.)

Another example of the hyperbole in a brand slogan:

e.g. **The world's local bank** – HSBC

e.g. **Thank Crunchie it's Friday** - Crunchie

e.g. **An ocean of styles** – CLIFF

e.g. **'Always Coca-Cola'** - Coca-Cola

An *allusion* as an indirect reference, by word or phrase, to a historical, literary, mythological, biblical fact or to a fact of everyday life made in the course of writing has certain important semantic peculiarities. The primary meaning of the word or phrase which is assumed to be known (i.e. allusion) serves as a vessel into which new meaning is inserted. So here there is also a kind of interplay between two meanings.

Here is the slogan in which an allusion is made to the hero named Romeo from Verona from the tragedy by W. Shakespeare the setting of which was in Italy. The allusion in this slogan is intensified by the definite article in front of the proper name, Romeo, that gives the cue for the concrete personality named Romeo, an Italian by origin.

e.g. Parmesan brings out **the Romeo** in him. – Galbani (Italian cheese).

e.g. **GO BEYOND** – LAND-ROVER (a brand slogan) This is a hint on the capacity of the trucks to overcome obstacles on the road and to move forward.)

To sum up, the choice of words in advertising is very cautious and skillful in order to make the information accessible to audience effectively. The aim of the advertiser is quite specific. He wishes to capture the attention of the members of a mass audience and by means of impressive words to persuade them to buy a product or behave in a particular way, such as going to Hawaii for all their holiday term. Both linguistic and psychological aspects are taken into consideration in the choice of words.

An advertising slogan is one of the essential parts of the printed advertisement which alongside with the brand name conveys an important message to the consumer.

The headline, if it is presented in the advertisement, is, as a rule, stylistically colored, but not obligatorily. As far as the slogan concerns, in most cases it is stylistically colored because it bears the semantical accent of the whole advertisement. The general purpose of any advertisement is to persuade to buy the advertised product or service. The ad writers know perfectly well their target readers, namely their age, income, style of living, preferences, and priorities, that is why they try to touch emotions of the people for whom his advertisement is addressed.

The reader should be satisfied with the supply of his desired products and services and should receive the emotional satisfaction because it is "the best", "most fashionable", "elegant" and so on and so forth. A close analysis of English and advertising texts shows that the detected feature of English advertising is, as follows: the extensive use of metaphoric language based on the interaction of dictionary and contextual meanings of a word, such as simile, metaphor, personification, allusion, rhetorical question, epithets, simile, and humor. These lexical expressive means and stylistical devices appear in advertising slogans, it being especially common. The use of various lexical expressive means and stylistical devices make the language of English advertising more accurate, striking, vivid and forceful.