SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVES ON NOWADAYS ROMANIAN ADVERTISING

OLGA BALANESCU
University of Bucharest
Communication and Public Relations

Abstract: The present study is meant to investigate how semiotics, the discipline which considers itself above all those concerned in social communication, gets in touch with advertising. Specific ways of communication in both semiotics and advertising have been scientifically approached, in order to overemphasize the existing similitude between the two of them. The theoretical principles taken as starting points were those belonging to Saussure, Ogilvy and Jacob Mey.

Key-words: sign, shifters, advertisement, headline, body-text, slogan, logo.

Preliminaries

As far as we know, semiotics is centuries old. The first study traces back in 1637, and it is connected with Rene Descartes` name. While advertising is quite new (in the way it is perceived today). Yet, the two of them have something in common, and we how much of the domain of communication they share together.

Advertising is not only a relative new discipline of study, but it also claims its importance for our contemporary fellow, as it offers not only information for getting a better life, but it also tries to help him to improve his style of life.

There have been heard voices [1] against the importance of advertising in society, moreover, against advertising by all means. Here are their reasons: it manipulates people, it induces unreal desires, making the consumers buy something which they do not necessarily need, it has a negative impact on younger generations, making them aggressive and superficial. Some other voices [2] strongly plead for the necessity of advertising nowadays. We could not simply conceive our lives without seeing the advertising banners in the streets, without finding ads in almost every single magazine or newspaper, without the well-known advertising breaks during our TV shows or movies. It seems to be part of our usual life.

As it always happens, the truth is somewhere in the middle to be found. The fizzy pop-ups and pop-under (which we keep on seeing whenever we open up our computer) got to be part of our everyday life, after all.

Semiotic research [3] proved how huge the domain of semiotics is. It gets in touch with all the disciplines of communication: ideologies, musical communication, pragmatics, socio-linguistics, rhetoric, as all of them provide `signs` specific to a certain type of communication. These `signs` are meant to establish the strong and undeniable link between the real surrounding items, and the abstract concepts able to depict them.

Ferdinand de Saussure mentioned the relationship between the **signifie** and **signifiant** as he called them. [4]

We should also point out that the semiotic process is the one which expresses the above mentioned link.

Under such considerations, the main interest of semiotics is the **logic of sign.** During the process of communication, it is not the **object** which is brought out into strong relief, but the **relationship** between the interlocutors and their responsibility towards one another.

Thus it can be stated that the main feature of the cultural phenomenon is the mediation between man and culture. When we mention this aspect, we should keep in mind **the theory of communication** made by **Emile Benveniste**. He considers that there are two major **communicative instances** in a conversation: I and you. They can take the place of each other, fact which enable

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

them to be **shifters.** They establish a type of relationship between man and the outer world in terms of time and space.

The perspective on time and space is theirs, so if **I** an **you** consider time from their own point of view, this Is the fact that should put its fingerprint on the whole conversation.

Ex. How big should we write for you to see that we practise the smallest prices?
(Daewoo Motorcar Romania)

The verbal intervention belongs to the Emitter (producer) who also initiates **the conversational act** because he wants to welcome the consumer with his possible and probable needs, and to satisfy them, too. One of these needs is the one referring to price. Who would not like to purchase something at the lowest price ever?

Ex.: From now on, I`ll be using only SENSODYNE (the patient declares to her dentist, as she is visibly content with the results she has got after using this toothpaste.)

Benveniste also introduces the concept of **indirect locator** , namely the person who does not take an active and direct part in the conversational act, but is over there present by all means because the proper speakers mention his name, talk about him, think that he is responsible for what has just happened or what is going on. This should be another `sign` which is worth being taken into serious consideration.

Who actually plays the part of the `indirect character` in an advertisement? We will view the most significant aspects of the issue in the following examples taken out from our Romanian nowadays advertising.

a. he can be the product itself which `speaks` to the target with self-confidence because it is sure of its high quality.
   Ex.: Mr. Muscle. He does perform the dirty job you hate. (referring to cleaning the dishes).
   By focusing his whole attention on it, the advertiser wants to activate AIDA principle (attention, intention, desire, action). Thus the promoted product will be looked at as if it were the best one of this kind in the market.
b. he can be the lucky consumer who has just enjoyed the beneficial advantages of the product and is ready to share his opinions with us, with the view to informing us about `the best product in the market`:
   Ex.: Winterfresh. Cold-ice breathing.
   The youngsters in the print have their breathing `as cold as ice` and they make the others be envious on them for this reason. The others would also want to be charming and successful in front of their partners as well as the above mentioned youngsters are.
c. he can be the would be beneficiary. This technique is successfully used both in commercial marketing and in social marketing, as well. The social campaigns use to place the so-called `victims` in the shoes of the `indirect speaker, indirect character`. As it is the victim it is all about; this victim being either the abused woman or child, or the inexperienced teenager ready to try `a bit of grass` for fun, or the racially discriminated people, or the diseased, the homeless, the refugees.

The `indirect character` functions, under such circumstances, as a `sign` standing for the cultural and anthropological features of the community the Emitter (namely, the advertiser) belongs to.

We can conclude that in advertising the sign is a real symbol which can be decoded by means of all the possible cultural means of perceiving life: language, religion, arts, science.

Classification of Signs

Specialists [5] agreed on identifying two major categories of signs:

a. natural signs;

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

b. man-made signs.

We focus our attention on those created by man as it is this very category where we will find theoretical approaches between semiotics and advertising. Here they are:

a. graphical signs (represented by texts, we will take into account the aesthetic text which is semiotic relevant);
b. audio signs (the radio message);
c. iconic signs (posters, banners, advertisements, postcards, journalistic cuts);
d. material signs (this category is represented by those specific buildings which stand for a certain civilization and spirituality: the pyramids, the Japanese pagoda, our wooden churches in Maramuresh. Under the same category, the folk costume enters, too. It is emblematic not only for a specific region (a `sign` for the Northern Moldavia, or for the Southern Dobrogea), but also for the civil status: it can be a `sign` for the unmarried young woman, for the newly married women, or for the woman married for many years, as well as for the divorced and single one).

We may thus conclude that a clear **media semiotics** can be distinguished within the generous field of semiotics: the media semiotics refers to the `signs` in all forms of media: newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, new media.

The advertisement – an aesthetic text

The advertisement is and has to be an aesthetic text because it deeply implies (as any other literary text does) a special creative effort.

Specialists in advertising [6] have even considered that it is more difficult to write a good and efficient advertisement than ten poor poems. The creative artistic work brings along a new **code of deciphering** the message which is the **poetic connotative code.**

The reader will thus have a new vision about life which reflects the own perspective of the publisher on reality.

I will prove all these things by means of concrete examples taken from our Romanian advertising. It should be mentioned that the advertisements below mentioned are newly created (between 2008 and 2009).

Ex. Negrul seduce (The black seduces you).
Negrul se duce (the black colour loses its intensity).

The iconic sign is relevant. The first text is printed under the image of a black, fashionable frock. The dress is shinning black and obviously, new. So, it impresses even stronger the feminine audience (thinking that each and every single woman would like to be the centre of attention in a party **owing to her stylish look)**. The second text is printed under the image of the same dress. But this time, the frock has lost its shinny black, it is almost grey, and looks old and shabby as if it had been worn out and implicitly for many, many times. The frock is no longer fashionable now.

The publisher induces the idea that the abluent used by the lady made the dress lose its intense colour.

The artistic effect works out only in Romanian language and it is based on **homophony:** `seduce` and `se duce`.

The feminine target in influenced to purchase a specific type of abluent (the promoted product, of course), in order to keep her stylish look at parties, in order to be, all in all, glamorous. Homophony is made use of with the view to producing psychological effects: the target, the consumer will thus purchase the product not only for its primary qualities (it washes out clothes), but also for the secondary benefits it brings along: it (the promoted product) may help you be more beautiful and successful in a party.

Tell it to a woman (to almost any woman, actually!) and she will buy it on the spot of the moment.

The message rendered by the aesthetic advertising text is **self-reflexive** and **suggestive**. These are considered to be `signs`. These `signs` are built at the following linguistic levels:

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

a. phonological and lexical levels (the words used by the advertiser are not to be found as such in language, they have their own meaning detached from the context; sometimes these words are original creations which do not offend the spirit of the language. They are the `sign` of the nonconformist and rebellious attitude of the target. By using idioms belonging to the language of the target, the advertiser identifies himself to the consumer, pretends to be one of them, and acts as such:

Ex. Be Bambucha! (the target is represented by the youngsters for whom FANTA soft drink is promoted.

Slang may be also used. For the relevance of meaning I will give the example in Romanian language:

Ex.: Sa fii curat nu-i destul.

Fii cool! (Head and Shoulders shampoo)

Another `linguistic sign` is **clipping** the last segment of the word out of the everyday need of expressing faster your own thoughts. The process is proper to colloquial language and thus very frequently used:

Ex.: PUB(licity)

PROMO(tion)

syntactic level

Interesting types of semiotic representations can be detected at syntactic level.

Ellipsis is one of them. It represents the omission of one or more words which must be supplied by the listener or reader in accordance with his general knowledge. I will also illustrate this figure of speech in Romanian, because only in Romanian the spirit of the ad can be preserved (ellipsis being associated with **rhyme)**:

Ex.: Ciuc. Inca una si ma duc.

The message sounds like being uttered by the beneficiary himself. Thus its authority (the authority of the message) is much increased and it will have a stronger impact on the consumer.

The psychological factor enters the stage again. Which message is more credible? The one coming from someone who does not know the product, or the one coming from the very person who has just experimented it? The latter, of course!

Pun (quibble) should also be mentioned. It is a play on words, sometimes on different meanings of the same word. It is based on **homophony, antonymy, polysemy.** The illustration will be also Romanian in order to perceive the whole expressivity of language:

Ex.: Relaxare nu inseamna deconectare. Relaxare inseamna CONECTARE (ad promoting CONNEX Comnpany).

The consumer is induced the following idea: only being in CONTACT with the people around, you may have the feeling of safety. CONNEX Company can offer you (together with its specific services) this special necessary feeling.

Argot is using those idioms by which one can identify the type of the speaker (the category to which the speaker belongs). Examples will be also Romanian to reflect better this tendency:

Ex.: Sa fii curat nu-I destul.

Fii COOL!

(ad promoting HEAD &SHOULDERS shampoo)

Apposition is placing side-to-side two coordinate elements, the second of which serves as an explanation or modification of the first one.

Ex.: Vrei rufe albe, impecabile? Alege noul DERO SURF.

Arrangement (tautology) is a special placement of the parts of a sentence. The same word has different syntactic functions within the same utterance. It is also called a syntactic accident.

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

Ex.: Connex Go. Ce-i al tau, e-al tau!

Asyndeton is often used in advertising. It consists in the omission of conjunctions between words, phrases or clauses (being thus opposite to polysyndeton).

a. stylistic level

Although this level is abundantly represented by lots of `signs` in the advertising text, we will depict only the most frequent and representative ones. The examples will be given again in Romanian because having been built in Romanian and having made use of the specific expressivity of the Romanian language, we could spoil the artistic effect by translating them. After all, Benedetto Croce once said; "Traduttore tradittore."

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial consonant sound in order to create imitative euphonic effects:

Ex.: Galina Blanca, bul, bul! (advertisement promoting Galina Blanca instant soup)

Coyness is a form of irony in which a person feigns a lack of interest in something that he/she actually desires. It helps AIDA principle develop and make the advertisement more efficient. It certainly draws the attention of the target and increases its interest in the promoted product, inducing the idea that the product is absolutely necessary for life.

Ex.: I would not like such a car! (says a young lady looking curiously at it while another young lady gets out of the car. The first one is obviously angry with not having it, but would not recognize it anyway. The advertisement belongs to SKODA Company, and it promotes Skoda Fabia car.

Allusion is a brief, usually indirect reference to a person, place or event, real or fictional. It is often used in advertising, going hand in hand with irony. It implies a common universe of knowledge owned by the two interlocutors (advertiser and target). If the they share the same information, it is implied that they belong to the same world. Thus the advertiser pretends to be a friend with the consumer as he knows the same things, amuses himself in the same way, laughs at the same jokes. A sort of positive complicity is built, fact which represents a strong part of an advertisement, because the credibility of the message is thus much increased, and the target, easier persuaded.

Ex.: Would you not like to have a single one for ever? The same one to join you at home and downtown as well? In entertainment, on holydays and at work, too? (ad for promoting AUDI car)

The allusion is clearly directed towards the well-known masculine duality of having an affair which "improves" his life, while his wife is patiently waiting for him at home.
The qualities of the car – AUDI- are overemphasized: it is both serious and resistant able to drive to the countryside (allusion to that serious girl preferred by the boy`s parents) and fancy, spectacular as to make its owner feel good during his holiday.

Anadiplosis is the repetition of the last word of the line or clause to begin a new sentence or clause:

Ex.: Your beauty starts with a nice skin. A nice skin starts with a special soap:
LUX.

Anaphora is the repetition of the same word or phrase at the beginning of successive clauses. The main idea is thus brought out into strong relief:

Ex. A fi în siguranță, a fi fericit, a fi prosper înseamnă AFI. (promoting an Insurance, Financing and Investment Company).

Epiphora is a repetition of a word or idiom at the end of several clauses. It is a textual sign of drawing the attention of the target, and thus of achieving the AIDA principle of building an advertisement (attention, interest, desire, action). Certain words are repeated at the end of the clause, and they function as key words because it is their persuasive power which is meant to action upon the consumer.

Ex.: It looks like a soap, it washes like a soap. But it is no soap at all.
*(*promoting DOVE soap)

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

Antonomasia is the substitution of a title, epithet, or descriptive idioms for a proper name (or a personal name for a common name) to designate a member of a group or class. It is a textual sign which makes the promoted product be placed in front of other similar ones in the market. This textual sign is the basis on which a well-known marketing strategy is built: positioning the promoted product/service. It has the advantage that it will not mention that the respective product is the best in the market, but will induce this idea. The public will not feel like being manipulated, but will consider that the decision is theirs: they have decided that it is the best product in the market.

Ex.: BMW. The wild beast of highways.

The advertiser wanted to create a substitution in the mind of the consumer. Instead of saying BMW, he could simply utter the sintagm `wild beast of highways`, and his interlocutors could easily understand what he is talking about.

Crot is the verbal bit or fragment used as an autonomous unit without transitional devices. It is usually used when the trade mark is implied and when the advertiser intends to put the consumer in contact with the promoted product (more exactly, with the trade mark) from the very first words.

Ex.: Acolo jos cineva NE Iubeşte (advertisement promoting NEI vacuum cleaner)

Encomium is a tribute in prose (or verse) glorifying people, objects, ideas or events. It is a very frequent figure of speach in advertising which corresponds to the advertiser`s need of associating the main quality of a product with some extra spiritual advantages. It has been established that the consumer would be happier to know that the purchased product may bring him along some aditional benefits like : good looking, sex appeal, personal glamour and shine, success. As it has been noticed, the extra benefit belongs to the personal look field.

Ex.: The New GARNIER – Repair and Shine. Mirror shine. Cashmir touch.
(promoting GARNIER Shampoo)

By means of this `textual sign`, the promoted product/service is thus accompanied by an extra advantage which is additional to the main, basic and inherent one. The shampoo you buy will not only wash your hair, but make you irresistible, too. Or think of a new car you buy. It will offer not only speed and safety for you and for your family, but it will also make you more successful in life and carreer.

This figure of speach is normally accompanied by **epideictic** language, which is a special type of message which highly praises or bitterly blames something. In advertising it is only about praising.

Hyperbole is an extravagant statement. The use of exaggerated terms for the purpose of emphasis or heightened effect works well in advertising. It has a strong impact on the target because it activates the well known AIDA principle.

The opposite `sign` (as a figure of speech) is litotes, which consists of an understatement in which an affirmation is expressed either by negating its opposites, or by diminishing the effects.

*Ex.: ARCTIC – we freeze even the Ecuator(*hyperbole associated with personification)

Formula is represented by those non-linguistic elements of communication (non-linguistic signs) such as ciphers, numbers, mathematical formulae, meant to increase the scientific authority of the message, hence the credibility of the promoted product. The consumer will trust it more, and it will be more likely for him to purchase it as long as he is given scientific data related to the product. The information is complete, his curiosoty is satisfied. This `sign` is usually made use of in promoting expensive cosmetics, new types of food stuff, medicine, cars.

Ex.: Dove – ¼ moisturing and softning cream.

Intertextuality is the technique which mixes two different addressing registers with the view to getting discourse effects. Some time ago, DIALOG mobile phone Company made

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

use of it. The company promoted its services as if they belonged to a restaurant. Words like `menu`, `on the house` were inducing this idea as it is pretty well known that a restaurant is the place about which all of us think of happily. It is the place where we celebrate something, where we have a nice time, a romantic dinner, a special event. The services offered by DIALOG were thus associated with that classy and refined reality a restaurant may offer its clients.

Ex.: DIALOG menu.
It makes your communication... apetite stronger!

Anaphor is an implied comparison between two unlike things taht actually have something important in common.

*Ex.: Dove – a gift to every single touch (*in praesentia type)
*Fa – it swings you on the waves of freshness (*in absentia type)

Metonimy is a `sign` (figure of speach) in which one word/idiom is substituted for another with which it is closely associated (such as `crown` for `royalty`). It is often used in advertising as it is meant to associate the promoted product with a specific quality or concept. Thus the consumer will identify the product by the concept which represents it. The advertiser wants the consumer to think in terms of a simple mathematic equivalence: product X means health, product Y means success, product Z means glory, ans so on and so forth.

Ex.: PALMOLIVE – the shine of healthy hair.

Personification is another `sign` in which an inanimate object or abstraction is endowed with human qualities or abilities. Advertisers usually make great of this figure of speech as it is a way of getting the promoted product closer to the target. Thus the product is not a mere object, but a `friend` who makes part of the consumer`s life.

Ex.: Culoarea care te prinde! Parul tau a avut intotdeauna o stralucire frumoasa.
Dar in vara asta e timpul sa traiesti blondul la maxim. Blondul plin de viata!
Te prinde! (Wellaton)

Many other figures of speech could be mentioned here: erotesis, epiphora, paradox, oxymoron, iscolon, irony, place, tetracolon, climax, rhetorical question, prolepsis, zeugma, polyptoton. They all contribute to creating special discourse effects in advertising and thus in presenting a new and better side of everyday life which is able to generate a positive state of mind.

The consumer will be more trustful in himself and in life, will be more content with what life has to offer him, will focus his attention on improving his condition, and will better .

Specific `signs` of the advertisement

There are also `signs` which belong only to advertisements, in the sense that simply cannot be found elsewhere (as hyperbole, for instance, which can be found in everyday talk, or `plain talk` [7] **in conversational implicatures.**

These `signs` stand for the specific structural composition of the printed advertisement **.** Some of them could be also found in audio or video advertisements (I mean TV or radio commercials now), but under different forms of expression, and triggering some other different ways of building.

This paper is meant to overemphasize the specific structural `signs` of printed advertisements, so that, here they are:

a. headline;
b. body text;
c. slogan;
d. logo;
e. trade mark.

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

The headline was considered to be [8] the very first linguistic contact of the advertisement with the target (from the textual point of view).

It is meant to produce the main quality of the promoted product/service in the market, to distinguish it from other similar ones. The headline induces `the idea` of the advertisemnt. It will help you recognize a great idea if you ask yourself five questions:

1. did it make me gasp when I first saw it?
2. do I wish I had thought of it myself?
3. Is it unique?
4. Does it fit the strategy to perfection?
5. Could it be used for 30 years?

You can count on your fingers the number of advertising campaigns that run even for five years. These are the superstars, the campaigns that go right on producing results through boom and recession, against shifting competitive pressures, and changes of personnel. The Hathaway eyepatch first appeared in 1951 and is still going strong. Every **Dove** commercial since 1955 promised that:

Dove doesn`t dry your skin the way soap does.

The American Express commercials `*Do you know me?*` have been running since 1975. And Leo Burnett`s **Marlboro** campaign has been running for 30 years.

The product itself should be made a hero of the advertisement and presented from the very beginning. Some advertisers are afraid of the so called `dull products`. Actually, there are `dull product`, but `dull writers`. Specialists agree that [9] ewhenever the advertiser himself is not interested in the product, he will not be able to `deliver` an interesting hedline, as he himself does not have anything to say.

A problem which confronts agencies is that so many products are no different from their competitors`. Manufacturers have access to the same technologies; marketing people use the same research procedures to determine consumer preferences for colour, size, design, taste, and so on. When faced with selling `parity` products, all you can hope to do is explain their virtues more persuasively that your competitors do, and to differentiate them by the style of your advertising.

This is the `added value` which advertising contributes, that extra benefit which the consumer might have suppose he purchases the product. Thus, the shampoo he bought will not only clean his hair, but will also make him sexy and successful.

This approach to advertising parity products does not insult the intelligence of consumers. Who can blame you for putting your best foot forward?

A good hedline may be repeated until it stops selling. Scores of good advertisements have been discarded before they lost their potency. Research shows that the readership of tan advertisemnet does not decline when it is run several times in the same magazine. Readership remains at the same level throughout at least four repetitions.

Practice has proved that the headline is not an absolutely structural element in an advertisement. We could easily devide advertisements into two categories:

1. highly important products/services for everyday life (medicine, motor cars, etc)
2. ordinary products (soap, beer, juice, shampoo, etc).

The first category needs a headline to get in touch with its target. For the second category, the headline may be substituted with the slogan as well.

The body text offers the most important details concerning the promoted product. It is the core itself of the advertisement. Technical information, performances of the product, ways of using it in everyday life or conditions for subscribibing to different services may be included in here. Yet there is the problem of its length. How long should it be, while it is well known that people should not rest more than several seconds on a newspaper or magazine page to read an advertisement . There are, rather, enough situations when the advertiser has to give many pieces of information. It is the case of the products and services belonging to the first category (mentioned above).

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

Who will buy a vacuum cleaner without being sure of all its technical performances? Under such circumstances, the advertiser may make use of a journalistic procedure: he may divide the body text into several fragments, each of them containing one single main idea, one obvious advantage brought to the consumer. The consumer will thus be more attentive to every single part of the body text as he understands that each segment has its own meaning and importance for the whole ad, namely for the product.

This part of the advertisement is based of the referential function of the language: plain and clear information is offered, the language is accessible.

You cannot bore people into buying your product, but you can interest them in buying it. Therefore short sentences and short paragraphs are needed. No esoteric words will be necessary. David Ogilvy gave us his good piece of advice: `*When copywriters argue with me about some esoteric word they want to use, I say to them: `Get ona bus. Go to Iowa. Stay on a farm for a week and talk to the farmer. Come back to New York by train and talk to your fellow passengers in the day-coach. If you* still *want to use word, go ahead!*`.

The body text should, under no circumstances, be an essay. It should be in the form of a story able to tell the reader what the product will do for him or her, and tell it with specifics.

Testimonials may be included in the copy, but made more credible . Testimonials from high celebrities get great recall scores. But sometimes readers remember the celebrity and forget the product. What is more, they assume that the celebrity has been bought , which is usually the case. On the other hand, testimonials from experts (the dentist, for instance) can be persuasive.

Most copywriters believe that markdowns and special ofers are boring, but consumers do not think the same. They are above average in recall.

It is advisable to include the price, too. Think how many times you saw something interesting (but perhaps expensive, a necklace in a jeweler`s window, for instance), but you did not consider buying it because the price was not shown , and you were too shy to go in and ask.

An interesting tendency is to be noted nowadays. (in European advertising, and we could proudly remark it in our Romanian advertising creations, too). It refers too cutting the body text, as an individual textual segment, out of the print. What about the necessary details, you might ask. They are not omitted at all, but inserted inside the label of the product, the way they look like when we visualize the product on a shelf in a supermarket. So, the copy is nothing but the very label of the product, thing which enrich its persuasive power and make the message more credible to the target.

Actually, the information which comes directly from the producer, namely the very label is considered to be more credible than the body text created by the cleverest copywriter, isn`t it?

This is generally going for promoting food staff, alcohol, cosmetics. Thus the page `breaths` easily, the consumer will not feel being aggressed by too much text, and the product will sell good.

The slogan is the very key of the product. It is a memorable construct, in the sense that it is worth being remembered, and it is also easy to be kept in mind. Under such circumstances, the slogan is almost always associated by the consumer with the product. Actually, this is the very hint the copywriter has in his mind: to make his product an object of interest for the consumer.

The slogan is thus always accompanied by the trade mark, and by the **logo**, too. The consumer will have a better representation of the promoted product/service in this way.

Wether the other `signs` of the advertisement may be lelf out (we saw many good advertisements without any headline, or body text), the slogan may not be omitted. In concequence, the trade mark and the logo are present, too. And it is obvoius to be so as long as they are the very elements which identify the product from among other similar ones in the market.

Placed either at the bottom of the page (as we refer to print advertisements), or in its very middle, the slogan will guide the consumer in purchasing the products he/she needs. It is associated with the best benefit it brings along.

There are products (perfumes, for instance) when the slogan is the single textual segment in the whole advertisement, including the trade mark in it. The reason is simple: the product

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

addresses to the soul of the consumer, and not to its mind. Thus it is meant to impress, to create a certain spiritual attitude rather than to offer information. This is why no body text or headline are to be found in this type of advertisements.

There are also situations (when the product is well known in the market owing to the prestige of the producing company) when the advertisement contains one single textual element, too: the slogan. We could mention all those life-long promoting campaigns. The consumer already knows Coca-Cola soft drink. He does not need any further information. Everything that the publisher wants to say is concentrated in a single textual segment, the slogan.

The slogan insures the discourse cohesion (compatibility between text and icon) by means of the poetic and affective functions of of the language it develops.

At the end of this study, we could utter: here is a brief proof of the existence of certain specific `signs` of print advertisements. They express a good deal of information which is transmitted to the reader. They are equally important for the process of persuasion in advertising, and identify this type of discourse from among the other contemporary ones.

The set of chosen examples overemphasize that semiotics and advertising have pretty much in common, as they both share the domain of `signs`.

READING LIST

1. BENVENISTE, Emile, *Problemes de lingvistique generale*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966.
2. CAUNE, Jean, *Cultura si comunicare. Convergente teoretice si locuri de mediere*, Editura Cartea Romaneasca, Bucuresti, 2000.
3. CRONIN, Anne, M., *Advertising Myths. The Strange Half-lives of Images and Commodities,* Routledge, Taylor&Francis Group, London, 2004.
4. ECO, Umberto, *Tratat de semiotica generala,* Editura stiintifica si enciclopedica, Bucuresti, 1982.
5. GRICE, H.P. *Logic and Conversation,* in Cole, P.Morgan J.L. (eds), 1975; *Further Notes on Logic and Conversation,* 1978.
6. KAPFERER, Jean Noel, *Caile persuasiunii: modul de influentare a comportamentelor prin mass-media si publicitate,* Editura Polirom, Bucuresti, 2007.
7. LOTMAN, J., *Studii de tipologie a culturii,* Editura Univers, Bucuresti, 1974.
8. OGILVY, David, *Ogilvy on Advertising,* Prion Books, 2006.
9. MEY, Jacob, *Pragmatics – an Introduction,* Blackwell, Oxford University Press, UK, 1996.
10. TODORAN, Dimitrie, *Psihologia reclamei. Studiu de psihologie economica,* Editura Tritonic, Bucuresti, 2004.
11. O`SHAUGHNESSY, Hohn, O`Shaughnessy, Nickolas Jackson, *Persuasion in Advertising,* London, Routledge, 2004.
12. WHITE, Roderick, *Advertising,* Mc Graw Hill Publishing Company, Cambridge, 2000.

REFERENCES:

[1]. Jean Noel Kapferer, *Caile persuasiunii: modul de influentare a comportamentelor prin mass-media si publicitate,* Ed. Polirom, Bucuresti, 2007; John O`Shaughnessy, Nicholas Jackson O`Shaughnessy, *Persuasion in Advertising,* London, Routledge, 2004.

[2]. Roderick White, *Advertising,* Mc Graw Hill Publishing Company, Cambridge, 2000; Dimitrie Todoran, *Psihologia reclamei. Studiu de psihologie economica,* Editura Tritonic, Bucuresti, 2004; David Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising,* Prion Imperial Works, Perren Street, London, 1999; Anne M. Cronin, *Advertising Myths. The Strange Half-lives of Images and Commodities,* Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, London, 2004.

[3]. Emile Benveniste, *Problemes de linguistique generale,* Gallimard, Paris, 1966; Jean Caune, *Cultura si comunicare. Convergente teoretice si locuri de mediere,* Editura Cartea Romaneasca, Bucuresti, 2000; Umberto Eco, *Tratat de semiotica generala,* Editura Ştiintifica şi Enciclopedica, Bucuresti, 1982.

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)

[4]. Le signifie designe le concept, c`est-a-dire la representation mentale d`une chose. Contrairement a une idée repandue, la langue n`est pas un repertoire des mots qui refleteraient les choses des concepts preexistant en y opposant des etiquettes. Le continue (le signifie) est un concept defin negativement du fait de l`existence ou de l`bsence dans une langue d`autres concepts qui lui sont opposables.
Le signifiant designe l`image acoustique d`un mot. Ce qui importe dans un mot , ce n`est pas sa sonorite en elle-meme, mais les differences phonique qui le distinguent des autres. Par semiotique ou semiologie, il entend la science sociale qui etudie les signes et symbols de maniere generale. In *Ecrits de linguistique generale*, Paris, Bibliotheque de philosophie, Gallimard, 2002.
[5]. J.Lotman, *Studii de tipologie a culturii*, Editura Univers, bucuresti, 1974; Jean Caune, op.cit.
[6]. David Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising*, Prion Books, 2006.
[7]. Grice, H.P., *Logic and Conversation*, in Cole, P. Morgan J.L. (eds), 1975: *Further notes on Logic and Conversation, in* Cole P. (eds), 1978.
[8]. David Ogilvy, *Ogilvy on Advertising.*
[9]. Idem, page.18-27.

BDD-A20399 © 2011 Valahia University Press
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-29 04:17:27 UTC)