THE USAGE OF ENGLISH IN ROMANIAN ADVERTISING

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Abstract*: The article wants to point out the fact that usage of English became familiar with Romanian television commercials. The advertising, as a part of marketing strategy, is also a channel of communication between social groups and manufacturers of goods. According to each groups' needs the advertiser targets its message so that the subliminal penetration of this message has as final effect the act ogf bying the product. The English language used in such advertisements is an indicator of the social level of the potential clients.*

Keywords: *television, advertising, marketing strategy*

Sociologists, economists and politicians have agreed that the future of economy is no longer a problem of regional development where individual national economies prevail in production and selling of goods but a problem of global economic system which involves multinational corporations. Multinationals do not compete with other corporations on an equal footing , and they are essentially stateless[1] . This means that big companies with holdings and subsidiaries all over the world promote the same organizational concepts with a view to production, sales or employment policies. When coming on new territory it is essential for such a new company to have a clear concept about comapany's **policy of communication** with the groups of people that are targets for the sales of the respective products.

Let's make things clearer. deal In the process of economic communication we have to with the notion of ***group*** of people that intermingles with ***sales*** in economic activity ; this will be a useful tool for further understanding of the transactive process of communication.

Defining the group of people one can provide several definitions making reference to various points of view. For example:

1. 'One can define the group by the existence of a common feature (physical, moral or social) consciously assumed by its members; this leads to the consciousness of identity of the respective group (according to Sartre this is the plurality of solitudes)[2].
2. Groups are formed for several reasons. Some groups originate to fulfill our basic needs for association and community. Others are formed to solve a specific problem, to make a decision, or to gather information[3].
3. A social group is a number of people who feel a common identity and interact in a regular and structured way, on the basis of shared norms and goals[4].

Any business company must look beyond the competitive environment to fully assess its opportunities on a certain ground considering the group(s) target for a certain product. Besides studying political stability or government bureaucracy, a company

[1] Thompson, K., Sociology, *Introduction, McGraw-Hill*, Inc. USA, 1994, p. 239
[2] Belis, M., *Communication, Despremieres Signes a la Telematique*, Eyrolles, Paris, 1988, p. 82
[3] Beebe, S., Masterson, J., *Communicating in Small Groups*, Longman, 1997, p. 15
[4] Thompson, K., *op. cit.*, p.93

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manager must also have in view and pay paricular attention to business behaviour, cultural norms and language that are different from one country to another. [1] Companies must be aware that they have to adapt their long-term planning to accommodate to their foreign potential customers. As all human activities involve people, interpersonal relationships being characterized by **competition** as well as **exchange.** this exchange is the glue of the entire society. If at the beginning of human economic interactions, the exchange was based, according to the Latin principle –Do ut des – on barter system, nowadayds, the exchangge is far more exquisite and involves other values which step by step leads to an increasingly complex marketing system.

'Marketing today is everywhere. The producer, or the consumer, may be a person, a group, a firm, an institution, an organization, a governement'.[2] The product can be a house, a pencil, an idea, an insurance policy, a political campaign but no matter the parts involved or the cultural features the basic marketing principles are valid in any circumstance.

Launching a new product on a market is always a difficult task for the company and it relies on many internal and external variables that are to be taken into account. Besides the legal and economic factors, sociocultural environment directs the marketing strategy for conquering the target. The market research in such process should focus – according to the product envisaged – on several important questions. Is the product appropriate for the chosen market? Is the product acceptable by potential clients? Do they have income and access for the respective product? What is their level of education and sophistication? Etc.

In order to answer these questions, the marketer always uses demographic data in a very tight connection with the set of Wh-questions and the hierarchy of needs provided by Maslows pyramid. This diagram imagined by the famous psychologist help the marketer focus on the right market segment taking into account both D-needs and B-needs[2]. The conclusion is that the basic the product, the larger the market. External determinants such as social environment and culture are also important for market research. As a social being, someone's opinions and behaviour are heavily influenced by those of groups he/she belongs to. Such groups begin maybe with a dyad as the family or a formal groups such as clubs and co-workers. A person may also be influenced by representatives of 'refrence groups' to which he/she does not belong but whom he admires and takes them for guidance for his own attitutdes or ways of acting. Therefore, recognizing the trend-setters and appealing to them is an efficient marketing stratagem.[3]

Sociologists use the term status to describe a position an idividual occupies in society. [4] Still, status does not mean prestige, but any kind of position high or low in society.

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[1] Demazet, B.,Labrosse, P., Oullet, R. , Engleza Comertului Exterior, Metoda Larousse, Teora, 1999, p.164.

[2] According to Maslow, human needs can be divided into D-needs: physiological , safety, social and esteeem needs and B-needs concerning self-actualization. These internal determinants are essential for a marketer's establishing the target clients.

[3] Rein, D., op. cit. p.47

[4] Thompson, K., op.cit. p.76

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Thus, as clients, people can stay on any level of the pyramid of needs. Irrespective the social status is achieved or ascribed[1], in normal conditions, people will always tend to step up from one level to a higher one.

Internal and external determinants of consumer behaviour establish a pattern of understanding the potential domestic or foreign market. As all people have needs , motives, and perceptions and are members of groups societies and cultures, the marketer's task is 'to know the buying pattern of specific groups of consumers and to match his products to their needs.'[2]

The climax of the manufacturer-purchaser relation is the promotion of the product when the product is advertised in such a manner that it appeals to potential clients to become actual buyers. Promotion strategy is based on **advertising** . Technically speaking, competitional economy employs advertising as a **communicational device.** Adveritisng is thus, defined as ' the art of addressing to a public with he purpose of being listened to and getting the desired result; is the art of proposing something and working for this proposition be accepted; moreover is the art of presenting an offer or an enquiry and receiving a positive response.[3] Commercial advertising is in fact the means of activating human's attention for the actualization of an inner desire, doubled by the voluntary will of getting the product advertised. According to the social level, the income or education, advertising directs the potential customer towards a certain product and focuses on a certain group of people as would-be clients[4].

As in any communicational pattern the two main elements, the emitter and the receiver must have a common language so that the advertiser be sure that the message he transmits is understood by the receiver. In accordance with the type of the product and the group targeted the message of an advertisement may be more or less complex. For example the basic needs on Maslow's pyramid are always advertised in a very clear and straight manner while esteem needs are advertised in a more subliminal and coded manner.

At the level of daily communication as well as at the level of artistic communication – advertising – the reception of the message is determined categorically by various factors. There are well-known Jackobson's functions of communication but beyond the established factors there is everyone's cltural education. 'To talk means to make the world be common for everybody'. [5] But in this process of construction the speaker creates some marks while the hearer creates some symbolic meanings. Such marks derive from each person's education and can exist as long as both the emitter and the receiver become aware of them. The act of textual elaboration can be manifest in simbolic area or gets there unconsciously, but the linguistic symbolism is dependent on the **cultural code** employed.

Advertising is a symbolic level of communication. 'Symbolism transforms the phenomenon into an idea, the idea into an image, so that the idea could always remain

[1] Thompson explaines that achieved status means any status attained through personal efforts while assigned status is a status ascribed at birth or at any different stages of the life cycle.
[2] Rein. D., op. cit., p.48
[3] Ange, L., Manual de publicitate, Tipografia Ziarului ,Universul', Bucuresti, p.16
[4] Todoran, D., Psihologia reclamei, Editura Tritonic, 2005, p.40
[5] Levinas, E., Totalitate si infinit,Editura Polirom, 1999, p. 58

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inside the image, infinitely efficient and inaccessible, and even if it is uttered in all languages still remains inexpressible'.[1]

The advertising message is intended for a specific audience and delivered through various media, television being the medium with the greater impact nowadays. That is why, this article focuses on this main aspect of advertising on television.

As multinational companies are present in our country now, there is an increasing advertising message for foreign products. Advertising must deal with cultural differences so that the message conveyed by the the ad should get in peoples'minds and penetrate them. If the advertiser comes on a ground with a deep cultural difference – the Far East and the Western societies are even opposite - then the message must be changed according to the target cultural and linguistic approach.. If on the contrary, the new market is at least at a certain level, similar to the manufacturer's then it would be possible for the manufacturer to use the same advertising campaigns as elsewhere.

The **brand** and the **logo** of the product are sometimes enough for certain potential clients to accept the the product as a quality one. But on the other hand the cultural variations on the target market and different cultural levels of various potential clients claim sometimes some special measures such as **translation** of the text of the advertisement.

The translators know that the essence of an advertising text[1] does not mean only the translation[2] of words, but also, the conotation of the appropriate concepts; these concepts may vary from one culture to another. [3] this conotation or symbolic representation consists not only in dynamism but also in the capacity of evoking subtlely the first significance.[4]

One of the most difficult barriers in delivering significant messages is the **language.** 'Language can prove an insurmountable obstacle to marketing on an international scale if firms are not sensitive to different languages and to different interpretations of common terms.'[5]

Making an analysis of advertisements on television one can easily notice that some of them promote the products through **English language**. That is why, people working in advertising always take into consideration the following elements[6]:

- the brand names and their conotations in the target groups; the target groups are not only foreigners but also co-nationals as within the same language and native language speakers the conotations are different;
- the same problem is for the metaphorical meaning of the words as sometimes dictionaries can offer literary meanings but exclude the metaphorical ones;
- the idiomatic or special contructions are also to be taken into account mainly because they are specific to spoken language;
- polysemy is especially 'exploited' in advertising but sometimes it can suggest unintentional conotations;

[1] Rusti, D., Mesajul subliminal in comunicarea actuala, Editura Tritonic, 2005, p. 59
[2] That part of a text in an advertising message is called ,copy' irrespective the channel of distribution of the respective text.
[3] Goddard, A., Limbajul Publicitatii, Editura Polirom, 2002, p.120
[4] Rusti, D., op. cit. p.67
[5] Damazet, B.,Labrosse, P., Ouellet, R., op. cit., p.166
[6] Goddard, A., op. cit., p. 121-127

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- the symbolism of sounds is a means of creating meanings, especially in English where various consonants appear in various names of products (the fricatives, for example, [f], [v] are frequently used for cleaning products).

Using English for advertising products involves a certain interaction between the manufacturer and the potential buyer. At first sight, the presence of a wide-spead language as means of communication for commercials could suggest that the respective products are internationally recognized and the logo-s are highly quoted brand names. But there are another two aspects to be taken into account: the first, the nature of the products which mostly belong to social and esteem needs and the second the target groups for these products.

Examples of social and esteem needs are various; they generate certain desires which can be satisfied by certain products existing on the market. Such products are numberleess but we are interested in those advertised in English. On Romanian market the products advertised in English are generally personal care products , house-keeping products, cars, mobile telephones manufactured and distributed by multinational companies. The usage of English in advertising by such companies has, maybe, its roots in the teory of cultural imperialism.[1] Powerful nations use their language to impose their cultural patterns but it is obvious that any advertising text does not depend only on emitter. It had to be decoded and accepted by the receiver and the message itself becomes the object of negotiation between its representation and the receiver's background.

As advertising uses a mixture of images, symbols, ideas, phrases, we can make an analysis of communicational message from the point of view of the functions of the language[2] and notice that conative function prevails as the advertising discourse has as main function **the persuation**. But at the same time the new social dimension that advertising implies also develops the metalinguistic component of the communication. [3]

Thus, the receiver – in our case the target group of potential consumers – must be acquanted to the language of the advertising message so that he/ she could decode the message and analyse if the representation of the advertised products suits his/her own needs. Diffentiation of potential customers is therefore, a matter of personal capacity of using the English language in the process of semiotical communication through advertising.

The manner in which advertisements use English in Romanian commercials on television is rendered as follows[4]:

1. Names of products which involve English words (sometimes the logo of the company) but the text of the advertisement is Romanian. The products advertised belong to various market segments and fields:

[1] This theory was exposed by Herbert Schiller in *Mass Communication and American Empire*. According to Schiller, powerful nations communicate their values to less developed nations through advertising and this trasgression of models leads to hybrid cultures. A very interesting analysis of Schiller's point of view is rendered by oposition with other theories by Dorin Tudoran in *Comunicare si Publicitate*, p.44-51.

[2] Jackobson, R., Essai de linguistique generale, Paris, 1963

[3] Dancu, V., Comunicarea simbolica, Arhitectura discursului publicitar, Editura Dacia, Cluj-Napoca, 2001, p.148-150

[4] This presentation relies on T. V. commercials displayed on various television broadcasts during the period 1rst February-1rst March 2007

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Cosmetics and perfumes: Nivea -Dnage- Cell Renewal, Nivea Hair Care, Nivea Good-Bye Cellulite, Braun-Sik-epil Johnson's Baby Shampoo/ Oil, Avon Solutions, Head and Shoulders-Lasting Colour, Max-Factor-Age-Renew, Always-Fresh, Darling (by Kylie Minogue),
House-keeping products and detergents: CIF Super Power Cream, On & On, Mr. Musculo, CIF Power Cream, Locktite-Super Bond, Ajax-Professional Double Power, Ariel-Mountain Spring
Food and drink: Selected cu Fresh System, Lays Paprika, Nescafe, Red Cup, Fanta Pink/ Lemon, Burn Intense Energy
Cars: Skoda Roomster, Citroen Ice Pack,
Services: Cosmote Internity, Alpha Bank – Alpha-Housing, Cosmote Internity, Vodafone broad band,; Internet, the clik way; Zapp on line; UPC

2. The slogan of an advertising campaign is in English:

Darling, My Fragrance, by Kylie Minogue;
Sony-Bravia, Colour like no other;
Seat- Power to the family,
C-Thru, Priceless like you;
Juicy Fruit, Go get it!; Do the Dew, Mountain Dew!
Airwaves, Feel the Kick!
Clicknet, Innovate your life!;
Nissan –Naturally capable;
Kia – The power to surprise;
Schauma – Professional hair care for you!
Antonio Banderas – A new fragrance – Pure seduction;
Fiat Albea – Nice and easy;
Citroen – Driven by Innovation;
Seat-Power to the family; Heiineken –Shaped by style;

3. The slogo[1] is in English :

LG- Life's Good!;
Orange- The future's bright, the future's Orange;
Pepsi – Dare for more!;
Johnson's – A family company;
Carlsberg –Probably the best beer in the world;
Skoda- Simply clever
Cosmote, In touch with life.

Besides this formal taxonomy, there are ads which use English songs (tunes and words) against Romanian texts – for example, Alintaroma campaign, Peroni-Italy, Johnson's-Pronto, Finetti – or stories with the entire text in English.

A good example is Pepsi-Light campaign: (husband)"A Pepsi-light, Please', (wife)'This tastes too good to be light', (husband to his wife) 'That's because they don't

[1] Guy Cook use two distinctive terms. The slogo is that type of phrase used in advertising in any campagn of a company; it is a part of the brand. The slogan is that phrase used in a certain advertising campaign. Which sresses the characteristics of that particular product (apud. Angela Goddard, op.cit.)

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speak English here'; (husband to the bartender)' Excuse me, my wife asked a Pepsi-light. You know.. Light.. Like a bird in the sky…" (the bartender to both of them) 'I hope you enjoyed your Pepsi-light'. The same story-pattern applies to Fanta-Bamboocha, Pepsi-Max, Fiat Albea. In such campaigns the spots are brought together with the product and together make a package to be sold on the market. In some other above enumerated examples, the slogan is pronounced uttered by the initial speaker in the advertisement while in others the translation of the text is rendered by a Romanian English speakers.

Taking into account that the instruments of nowadays culture are the languages he most common and efficient ways of using them are media and through media, the advertising. Through international English advertisements, the words and messages are accepted world-wide and become a communicational device employed unconciously by everybody. Communication is thus, the field where interpersonal relations get in touch with technological innovations, the economic-political stimulents and socio-cultural ambitions. And through such communicational interactions the human relations transcend borders.

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