Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine

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Course Paper

”Idioms in Commercials: Pragmatic Aspect”

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Kyiv-2006

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Introduction

The English language provides a great array of means created for the expression and rendering thoughts. In this work we focus on one of the most efficient expressive tool, namely, an idiom. In brief, an idiom is an expression (i.e. term or phrase) whose meaning cannot be deducted from the literal definitions and the arrangement of its parts, but refers instead to a figurative meaning that is known only through conventional use. In linguistics, idioms are widely assumed to be figures of speech that contradict the principle of compositionality. [10; 79]

Idiom is an indispensable part of the language. It helps to create a brighter image, to render concisely an extended idea or create the particular impression with the listener. Many researches are dedicated to the use of the idiom in literary works by poets and prose writers.

However, such a powerful language element could not be also overlooked by the people who search for ways of manipulation and persuasion for their own purpose and in business. Therefore, we will analyze the usage of the idioms in business advertising. With a speedy tempo of contemporary life and high rates at media time the usage of idioms in order to make the commercial advertising more effective becomes more important which brings about the **actuality** of this study.

**The aim** of the researchis basically to define the idiom as a tool of commercial manipulation and underline the pragmatic aspect of this language phenomenon in this respect.

This study sets a row of specific **tasks** to be completed during the research, namely:

* To study and classify the phenomenon of the idiom as a linguistic element,
* To analyze the value of idiom both for the conversational and commercial use,
* To bring out the pragmatic aspect of the idiom in the sphere of commercial advertising.

**The object** of the research paper is the idiomatic phrases and words in English language and their usage.

**The subject** of the study is the use of English idioms in commercial advertising regarding their pragmatic aspect.

The paper consists of the introduction part, two chapters, the conclusion, the reference list of the literature used and a resume.

**Chapter 1. The linguistic essence of idioms**

## Definition of the idiom as a linguistic phenomenon

idiom linguistic commercial advertising

The English language abounds in idioms like any other highly developed tongues. Idioms consist of set phrases and short sentences, which are peculiar to the language in question and loaded with the native cultures and ideas. Therefore, idioms are colorful, forcible and thought provoking.

Idiom is an expression in the usage of a language that is peculiar to itself either grammatically (as no, it wasn't me) or in having a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meanings of its elements.

We can draw a simple classification of the idioms.

**Category and Level**. First, we might wish to group them according to their category and level. Lexical idioms (ignoring mono-morphemic lexical items) can be nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Phrasal idioms can be adjectival ("stark raving mad"). Nominal ("notary public"), verbal ("come a cropper"), prepositional ("in a brown study"), or sentential ("it takes one to know one").

**Function.** For the idioms that are not syntactically dependent on other elements, we could classify them according to their function. Some formulaic expresses accompany acts ("this hurts me more than it hurts you"), some accomplish acts ("I declare the meeting adjourned"), some are comments on the ongoing discourse ("I wouldn't touch that with a ten-foot pole"), some are parenthetical, qualifying what is being said ("you might say"), and so on.

**Sentence Type.** Sentential idioms can be classified according to the sentence type. Some are imperatives ("knock on wood", "shut up"), some are conditionals ("if the shoe fits, wear it"), some are questions ("who knows?", "can the leopard change its spots?"), and some use certain special constructions ("the more the merrier", "the bigger they come, the harder they fall").

**Gaps.** Many idioms are not complete "runs" but have gaps in them. Some such gaps are complete sentences ("it's (about) time [you brushed your teeth]", where the sentence has to be in past tense form), some are verb phrases ("I wouldn't [marry Louise] for all the tea in China"), some are noun phrases ("play second fiddle to [Harry]"). Possessive gaps can be co-referential to the subject, in the case of verbal idioms ("to blow [one's] nose"), or referentially distinct ("to pull [someone's] leg"), and some can go either way ("to cook [(some) one’s] goose").

**Collocations.** Collocations are phrase made up of two or more words, in some grammatical relation to each other, where it appears that one or both of the words is has some special conventional association with the other. In some cases, one of the word only, or almost only, occurs in the phrase in question (the "blithering" of "blithering idiot", the "aspersions" of "cast aspersions"), sometimes each word occurs frequently elsewhere but the combination has a special sense or a special frequency of occurrence ("spontaneous combustion", "manual labor", "consenting adult"), and so on. [1; 62]

In many cases a dependent or modifying word fulfills a necessary function in respect to the other word, such as that of intensifying: "broad daylight", "dark red", "fancy footwork", "vast majority", etc.

In the case of sentential idioms, it is important to distinguish between the conventional meaning that a construct built on them might have and the kind of reasoning that is involved in cooperative conversational interaction. If a mother says, "I wonder who could have left their dirty socks on the middle of the floor", she probably expects her intended addressee to take this as a sarcastic request to pick the socks up and put them where they belong. A lot has been written about the mechanisms for this kind of reasoning; one reasonable view is that the mother expects what she says to be taken as the first part of a potentially continuing conversation that, given the relationships that hold between speaker and hearer, is going to lead to a specific conclusion; the cooperative child can anticipate this path and act on the inference without requiring the whole conversation to be played out. [1; 63]

But now consider certain negative "why" questions, in particular, questions such as those exhibited here:

"Why don't you try again tomorrow?"

"Why don't you just memorize your Social Security Number?

"Why don't you visit me some time?"

"Why don't you be the leader?"

An attempted pragmatic reasoning explanation for these sentences might follow some such train as train as this: if someone asks me to explain a state of affairs that I am involved in, it might be that she thinks there's something wrong about that state of affairs, and making that inference might lead me to doing something to change it. Such reasoning will perform quite well with certain kinds of questions, but I will claim that it doesn't work in the case of these sentences.

If you hear, "Why aren't you wearing your shoes?", your natural inclination might be to think that the speaker finds this situation questionable and is suggesting you should put your shoes on. Such an inference, however, does not depend on the question being negative in form: it would be called on just as well if the question had been "Why are you going barefoot?". [1; 86]

The argument that the first group of negative "why" questions make up a special construction, even though constructs built on it closely resemble ordinary questions, includes the following points:

(1) "Real" questions with "why" can generally be paraphrased as something like "situation S exists; explain that". Thus, "You are not wearing shoes; explain yourself." The "why" questions that are taken as suggestions cannot. "Why don't you be the leader?", for example, cannot be paraphrased as "You don't be the leader; explain!".

(2) Instances of the construction can use "do" with "be", true also of imperatives (obligatory, in the negative "don't be obtuse" and optional in the affirmative, as in the gushy "do be careful"). Notice the difference in interpretation between "Why aren't you the leader?" and "Why don't you be the leader?". The first of these does permit the two-part paraphrase. ("You aren't the leader; tell me why").

(3) "Real negative "why" questions are generally negative polarity contexts negative-why-question suggestions are not. In the following two sentences, notice the difference between the suggestion, with "something", and the ordinary question, with "anything.

"Why don't you try something new?"

"Why don't you (ever) try anything new?"

Our conclusion, using the preceding observations and a few others, will have to be that there exists in English a way of expressing suggestions that has the form of a negative "why" question and has some of the internal trappings of a positive suggestion. [13;26]

## Basic features of idioms

All English idioms possess basic common features.

Non-compositionality: The meaning of a collocation is not a straightforward composition of the meaning of its parts. For example, the meaning of kick the bucket has nothing to do with kicking buckets. (Kick the bucket means to die.)

Non-substitutability: One cannot substitute a word in a collocation with a related word. For example, we cannot say kick the pail instead of kick the bucket although bucket and pail are synonyms.

Non-modifiability: One cannot modify a collocation or apply syntactic transformations. For example, John kicked the green bucket or the bucket was kicked has nothing to do with dying. (Although John kicked his bucket and John's bucket was kicked are both valid)

It is likely that every human language has idioms, and very many of them; a typical English commercial idiom dictionary lists about 4,000. When a local dialect of a language contains many highly developed idioms it can be unintelligible to speakers of the parent language; a classic example is that of Cockney rhyming slang. But note that most examples of slang, jargon and catch phrases, while related to idioms, are not idioms in the sense discussed here. Also to be distinguished from idioms are proverbs, which take the form of statements such as, "He who hesitates is lost." Many idioms could be considered colloquialisms [24;88].

Many idioms were first created by working people. These idioms consist of familiar terms which are associated with their own trades and occupations. Such idioms were all colloquial and informal and once confined to a limited group of people in the same trade or activity. But they proved terse, vivid, forcible and stimulating so that later they broke out of their bounds and gradually gained wide acceptance. As a result, their early stylistic features faded in part, and many became part of the common core of the language and are now used in different situations.

Despite the fact, idioms are generally felt to be informal and some are colloquialisms and slang, therefore inappropriate for formal style. Occasionally, we find idioms, which are extremely formal and used only in frozen style[8;37].

The same idiom may show stylistic differences when it is assigned different meanings. In addition, slang expressions are often peculiar to social or regional varieties. Some may be used only in British setting; others may be suitable for certain groups of people. All this needs care on the part of the user in the course of production.

Apart from the stylistic features, idioms manifest apparent rhetorical coloring in such respects as of phonetic manipulation, lexical manipulation and figures of speech.

1. Phonetic manipulation. This manipulation includes alliteration and rhyme.

2. Lexical manipulation. Lexical manipulation embraces repetition, reiteration (duplication of synonyms) and juxtaposition (of antonyms).

3. Figures of speech. Idioms are terse and vivid because of the copious images created by them. Large numbers of idioms are used in their metaphorical meaning. Since idioms are peculiar to the native culture and language, many images appear exotic to foreign learners but are expressive, impressive and effective. The figures of speech, which can be found in idioms, are: simile, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, personification and euphemism.

Characterized by semantic unity and structural stability, idioms do not allow changes as a rule. But structural stability is not absolute. When idioms are used in actual context, they do experience grammatical changes such as different forms of verbs, agreement of personal pronouns and number and so on. Occasionally, we may find changes in constituents of idioms: addition, deletion, replacement, position shifting, dismembering.

1. Replacement. In some idioms, a constituent may be replaced by a word of the same part of speech, resulting in synonymous or antonymous idioms.

2. Addition or deletion. In some instances, some constituents can be added or deleted, which does not affect the meaning of the idioms.

3. Position-shifting. The positions of certain constituents in some idioms can be shifted without any change in meaning.

4. Shortening. This occasionally occurs in proverbs and sayings, where only a part of them is used instead of the whole.

5. Dismembering. It is what I mean by breaking up the idioms into pieces, an unusual case of use of idioms particularly in literature or popular press to achieve special effect.

As we can see, idioms are very important elements of the language with a elaborate structure and various ways of expressing thoughts which can be effectively used both in literature and for some practical purposes as well [27;328].

**Chapter 2. Practical usage of the idioms in commercial advertising**

## 2.1. Manipulating by idioms. Foregrounding

Idioms are bright, short and image provoking as we mentioned before. This gives a lot of opportunities to use them for advertising and product promotion.

Advertisers have as their rhetorical purpose the presentation and exhibition of a product or service and the exhortation and coercion of the potential purchasing population to the extent that that population becomes actual. Simply put, advertisers try by the various means at their disposal to get people to buy the product or service advertised. Moreover, advertisers want potential purchasers to consider what is advertised to the exclusion of all other similar products or services [8;13]. They therefore attempt to construct an advertisement that will fully involve the attention of the potential purchaser and which will have a suasive effect. Advertisers thus create a semiotic world in order to persuade their audience of the essential "rightness" of purchasing the product or service advertised.

The creators of most print advertisements, however, couple some kind of visual material with ample linguistic material and, often, this linguistic material is manipulated over and above the more commonly expected rhetorical uses of language. What is meant here is that it is, of course, the case that advertisers will use language in as clever, tight, stylized, and suasive a way as they can to persude someone to go out and buy the product or purchase the service which is the subject and substance of the advertisement [19;180]. However, what often occurs is that the very structure and form of language is additionally manipulated - we may say that rules are intentionally and sytematically broken -presumably to achieve an even greater, more salient, more pervasive, more penetrating, and ultimately more persuasive effect on the viewer/reader. It is to this type of manipulation that we now turn.

Manipulation of linguistic form and structure implies that linguistic material beginning with the smallest or most discrete of segments or forms and leading to quite large linguistic entities will be fashioned to undergo some change, transformation, mutilation, mutation that is relatively unexpected on the part of the viewer/reader. This is done clearly with the purpose of providing another means of directing the viewer/reader's attention squarely onto what is the subject and substance of the particular discourse in which the manipulation occurs. In print advertising, this comes out to manipulating some linguistic item - breaking a rule in some systmeatic fashion - so that maximum suasive effect for the product or service advertised is achieved in and by the ad [10;81]. It seems almost trivial to state that to the extent that the creator of an advertisement can find and achieve more and more means and devices of getting the attention of the potential purchasing population riveted onto the product or service advertised and to the extent that these means have the suasive effect of getting the potential purchasers to view and consider the product or service to the exclusion of all others, then the ad will have its proportionately successful outcome - an increase in the actual purchasing population for that product or service. The claim inherent here is that manipulation of linguistic structure and form over and above the commonly understood and utilized rhetorical uses of language coupled with visual material in print advertising will increase the probability of that happy effect [4;49].

One must view the manipulation of linguistic entities as a type of **foregrounding**. Foregrounding is a linguistic process in which some elements, such as words, phrases, sentences, stressings, intonations, or the like are given prominence or made more meaningfully significant by the communicator/language-user, in this case the creator(s) of an advertisement. The author utilizes the conceptual linguistic framework - a synthesis of the concepts and insights relating to foregrounding-as devised in Harris in order to examine and explain several advertisements (see the appendix) below. It is the contention herein that only by attempting to account for the knowledge of formal processes (in this case, "foregrounding/backgrounding" and, therefore, "communicative intent") which are available to and utilized by communicators in discourse (here, advertising) do we avail ourselves of necessary and sufficient information to be able to interpret adequately the symbols each lexical, phrasal, or sentential utterance of the discourse conveys. This information allows us to assign and to distinguish between possible meanings that the individual brings to and takes from a particular environment. As Pelz says, The fact of the matter is that only when meaning or sense is attached to words, linguistic expressions, to sentences, texts, indications, symptoms, syndromes, signals or to symbols -in brief, to signs-do we deal with the semiotic concepts of meaning or with the semiotic concepts of sense.

Thus, this is both an investigation into the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic properties of a sign and into **applied semiotics, i.e.**, semiotic (here **linguistic** and **communicational**) methods are used to analyze some fragment of reality. Pelz mentions. Nonetheless, the results of the application of semiotic methods to a walk of life, field of knowledge, or branch of art can be presented in the form of theorems which are subject to proofs, classifications, orderings, and some of which follow from other theorems; to put it briefly, a system of knowledge, sometimes a scientific discipline which is precisely a semiotics of the given fragment of reality, appears.

Finally, investigations such as these may be viewed as *abductions* or "guesses" that are made regarding specific aspects of the studied culture (in this case, the "world" of the advertiement). These abductions arise from a linguistic theory of foregrounding and a communicative theory of language behavior. Virginia Fry mentions that these investigations are the type of "guess" that Peirce says takes the form of an hypothesis which then requires validation through concrete observation. She contends, furthermore, that guessing and confirming are often correlative and simultaneous activities rather than distinct processes and that what allows one to discriminate among observations and also to evaluate the trustworthiness and validity of those observations is "canons of judgment," a concept attributed to Hymes. Just as Fry contends that the dramatism of Burke and the semiotics of Peirce and Eco are distinct abductions for studying communication and culture, so we contend here that foregrounding and communicative intent are equally valid abductions for studying aspects of the communication and culture in advertising.

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## 2.2. Idiomatic language in commercials

It is important to clarify the **linguistic** means by which the material in the ads will be analyzed. Typically, in any sentence or longer piece of discourse, the communicator signals the intention of bringing some element of information into prominence, **i.e., the information is foregrounded. He or she marks that element, emphasizes it, stresses it, or contrastively signifies it by manipulating various linguistic structures or devices. Concommitantly, other elements are systematically backgrounded or disappear from the linguistic string entirely. After Wallace Chafe, we may say that passivization of a relatively basic sentence such as "Tom kicked Harry" to "Harry was kicked by Tom" or "Harry was kicked" is an example of the fairly well‑understood foregrounding/backgrounding phenomenon. *Clefting* of the same sentence to "It was Harry whom Tom kicked" is another example of the phenomenon of foregrounding. Chafe observes that foregrounding and backgrounding constructions or devices are concerned principally with how the communicator presents certain information to the addressee (the auditor, the audience), thereby *altering the meaning or significance* of that information. This choice of the linguistic device reveals some special intention or decision, contrary in some sense to usual expectations, on the part of the communicator and is, then, at the heart of the notion of "foregrounding."**

As Kenneth Pike says, " A crucial characteristic of human nature is our ability to select and guide into attention almost anything that we please." Essentially, then, foregrounding is a semiotic, linguistic process of establishing significance or special prominence given the intentions or decisions of the communicator. By means of various linguistic devices, the communicator decides to mark, emphasize, stress, or contrast in a significant way, and this information, and this information *alone*, is conveyed to the addressee (**Cf.** Harris 1981 or, especially with regard to markedness, Shapiro 1983). In examining the process of foregrounding with regard to the material in print advertisemts, I will attempt to see how the manipulation and use of elements or forms in the sentences, here sound, morphological, lexical, phrasal, sentential, supersegmental, supersentential, and /or orthographic items, alter the relative prominence of those elements and forms. In other words, I will attempt to reveal, by a careful, abductive, linguistically‑based analysis, the degree, type, and extent of meaningfulness conveyed by the manipulative use of items within the linguistic masterial of the selected ads and what, then, may be construed semiotically as the **actual** meaning of those items with regard to the rhetorical purpose of the ads.

**Communicative Intent** It is also important to clarify what the notion of **communicative intent** is and how I will use this notion to explain and describe the manipulation of elements within the linguistic material of the ads. I refer to the interpretation of communicative intent in the work of Albert Mehrabian as made explicit in his book, *Silent Messages* (1981), based upon earlier work by Wiener and Mehrabian (1968). Although Mehrabian (1981) treats both the phenomena of verbal and non‑verbal communication, we center on his notions of the manipulation of "language" and how that manipulation is made manifest in the earlier *Language Within Language*.

Mehrabian suggests that it is quite important to note "the numerous and frequently overlooked subleties of speech itself that are a part of the expression of feelings and like‑dislike." He maintains that the concept of **approach‑avoidance**, which he has explained with reference to relatively non‑verbal communication, may now be ". . .helpful in understanding the seemingly arbitrary and stylistic aspects of speech, as well as the apparently inconsequential variations in implicit [non‑verbal] behavior."

Mehrabian claims that many kinds of speech variations indicate the speaker's attempt to place something at a spatial or temporal distance or otherwise to minimize the speaker's relation to or involvement with the thing described. Mehrabian says, Variants of verbal avoidance subtly minimize the speaker's responsibility for what he says by implying that the contents of this message are obvious to everyone including himself; or the contrary, that these statements are conditional and doubtful. Alternatively, responsibility is minimized by implying that the events were beyond the control of the actors, one of whom may be the speaker.

Thus, by entwining a careful, linguistically‑based analysis with a explanation of communicative intent, I will attempt to reveal the degree, type, and extent of meaningfulness conveyed by the manipulation of linguistic material in the selected ads and what may then be construed as the actual meaning of those ads. In some sense, therefore, a reinterpretation of the manipulations in these ads along the lines of the foregrounding phenomenon and the correlation of that analysis with the notion of communicative intent will reveal, abductively, the semiotic "world" of the subject of the ads. Pelz sums it up very neatly from a semiotic perspective:

Thus the theoretical foundations of semiotics . . . are always: first of all, logic and linguistics, since it is on them that the structure of theoretical semantics rests, and then the theory or methodology of the disciplines to which we apply semiotic methods. Theoretical foundations are, albeit indirectly, psychology and epistemology since interpretation of sign is a psychic and cognitive process, neurophysiology because thinking is an activity of living organisms, history and sociology, since the process of thinking occurs in time and in a community. Such then are the foundations of semiotics.

From both a linguistic and communicative point of view, then, we will perhaps be able to grasp what the creator(s) of an advertisement had in mind to say, or **not** to say, in the design and construction of the "best" means to achieve a suasive effect over the potential purchasing population.

**Manipulation of Forms** In analyzing the content of the advertisements below from a foregrounding perspective, it is immediately apparent that the advertiser manipulates forms and structures, **i.e.**, makes decisions regarding which form or structure will appear in the surface sentence string, within well-understood linguistic categories. The advertiser **intends** the manipulation of - or breaking of rules for - certain structures, primarily sound (or its equivalent in print), word formant, word, phrase, sentence, idiom, spelling, orthographic style and the like in order to convey different, more suasive meanings. The analysis utilized here proceeds both from an assumption of the validity of **abduction [cf. inter alia**, Fry's explanation of Peirce] as a *bona fide* scientific perspective and from the assumption of the existence of **canons of judgment** (asserted by Hymes) as a means of discriminating among observations and evaluating the trustworthiness and the validity of those observations. The analysis is a slight modification, therefore, of an implicitly abductive conceptual framework as constructed in Harris, *From Linguistic Theory to Meaning in Educational Practice* (1981), for the categorization, analysis, and treatment of linguistic structures that foreground or background information.

**Application** Two essential principles are seemingly adhered to by advertisers in practically all linguistic manipulations and it is important to state them at the outset [4;40]:

1) it is rarely if ever the case that one component, such as sound or word-form or lexical item, is manipulated in isolation; that is to say, rules are broken or manipulations operated at several levels and are, therefore, inextricably bound up amongst several entities. Even, say, in the case of so simple an ad as the picturing of a single bottle of Stolichnaya vodka with the words, "Stolichnaya *The* Vodka," must we note that the viewer/reader of the ad is presented with a manipulation at several levels: one must know that the underlining (orthographic manipulation) of "the" refers to the pronunciation of the item as "thee" (sound manipulation) and that this, in turn, signals a particular interpretation and use of the article other than "definiteness" (morphological manipulation), **i.e.**, the is to be read as "the unique, the singular, the only" (lexical and idiomatic manipulation).

2) the last observation above leads immediately to this second principle - the viewer/reader must be familiar with the environment of the ad visually, on the one hand, and linguistically, on the other. This implies a maxim that advertisers must adhere to: "Fashion the ad visually and linguistically so that the potential purchasing population will recognize the visual material of the ad easily and will also be familiar with the words, idioms, etc. that are manipulated."In other words, as an hypothetical linguistic example, one would not expect an ad that involved the now almost archaic idiom "be hoist on one's own petard" [to be defeated by one's own device] since the general population would find the words and meaning opaque. The success of the ad, then, would be marginal at best!

In line with the above, let us review several ads and attempt to understand the manipulations **in situ.**

A very simple, elegant manipulation is performed in providing a phonetic rendering of a word such as was done with lexical items such as "performance," "manage," or "direction" in Rockewell International ads [13;35] . The purpose here was to draw the viewer/reader's attention, for example, to a word such as **'man-ij** paired with a dictionary-like definition in order to convey the notion of Rockwell's excellent record and competence in the aerospace, electronics, and automotive industries. Clearly, this involves manipulation of sound rules and orthography, but also implies by the highly technical presentation a highly technical and ultimately competent company.

Often, one can find manipulations of sound that are referred to as **alliteration, rhyming**, and the like. In an ad for Ford Motor Company, a smiling, ten-person, car-assembly team is grouped around a new, partially assembled Ford. "Body Builders." is placed squarely above. In addition to the familiar, comfortably-repeated sound, the viewer/reader is also impressed by the noun-noun compound that is, in fact, in this health-conscious age, a well-known bound idiom. The idiom conveys the notion that the team is strong and dependable and so, therefore, will be the product. Similarly, an elegantly dressed couple, the male with gin-and-tonic in hand, the female with martini, are seated above a bottle of Beefeater London Distilled Dry Gin. Juxtaposed in the middle are the words: "Befittingly Beefeater." Here, besides the repeated sounds, the viewer/reader is enticed by a lexical item that is closely associated to British usage and which conveys a "posh" connotation. Lastly, in a Myers's Original Rum Cream ad, a bottle and a ladle that is filling a glass of the liqueur are placed besides the rhyme: "Cream & Rum. Yum!" From both a sound and lexical perspective, a lucsious combination is achieved.

Often, the pronunciation of a word is purposely violated to achieve a particularly dramatic effect [27;327]. This kind of punning is evidenced in an ad for Ford Escort. A red Ford Escort Turbo GT is pictured broadside. Remember, at the outset, the American penchant for and love-affair with fast, red cars. There is a good deal of explanation in four tightly-worded, short columns below the picture of the car. Above are the words, "Raise your standard of leaving." The manipulation is achieved at the lexcial level, the sound level, and the idiomatic level. At the syntactic level, the viewer/reader is impressed with the message that tells him/her by means of an imperative sentence that purchase of the Escort will lead to the American dream of a "hotter" car and, therefore, a better life.

At a morphological level, we have manipulations such as in a Nissan advertisement for a 4x4, flatbed truck. Over the words, "To sport," we see a very flashy, well-equipped, black Nissan 4x4 ST. Below this, occupying the lower half of the frame, is the same flatbed now loaded with a flashy yellow motorcycle and yellow-shirted motorcyclist/driver. This is above the words, "Or transport." Note that this is to be considered more properly as a morpho-phonological manipulation in that the viewer/reader experiences the similar sound of the "sport/transport" alternation as well as the necessity to re-form (morphologically) the word "transport" to conform with the word "sport." Moreover, note that this is an allusion to the Shakespearean "To be or not to be," but that this is more of a veiled imperative than it is syntactically a rhetorical question begging of a decision. The message conveyed must be construed as something like: "Here is the ultimate in sporty automobiles for you. Not only is it sporty but it will transport whatever you need or want and it will never lose its allure. Therefore, if you want to be the best, purchase the best!"

Another type of morphological manipulation is the pairing of a morpheme with a nongrammatical counterpart or the creation of a pseudo-morpheme [13; 32]. In the case of the former, one is immediately reminded of the Seven-Up Corporation's eminently successful "uncola" ads in which the negative morpheme "un-" was paired with a noun rather than an expected adjective. Clearly, we were not talking of "Coke" here! In the case of the latter, we have as an example the GTE Phone Mart ad which depicts products from the store with the words, "How to keep up with the phoneses." This pseudo-morpheme then calls to mind the spelling and pronunciation of the Joneses and the newly-created, phrasal pseudo-idiom sends the message: "If you want to be at the same socio-economic level as all your friends and neighbors, purchase your phones at our store." In both cases, this purposeful rule-bending and -breaking rivets the viewer/reader's attention and conveys definitive and clear-cut messages regarding the "rightness" of purchasing the particular advertised products.

At the lexical level, punning is at a premium. In an ad for Dexter shoes, we have a picture of a Dexter shoe worn by a foot and leg in a jean on one side and the same Dexter shoe worn by a foot and leg in a dress pant on the other. The word below says it all: "Ambidexters." The fortuitous similarity of the company's name is capitalized upon to achieve a manipulation over the word "ambidextrous." Although at first blush this seems only a lexical manipulation, as I have pointed out before, this is virtually impossible. The pronunciation of the word hinges, of course, on the breaking and reforming of sound rules as well [24; 82].

Lexcial manipulations are often puns over well-known, bound idioms [10; 79]. We have examples such as the Brooks ad for its running shoes ("Roads Scholar."), the Levi-Strauss advertisement for its painted denims ("Painted Denims. Strokes of Levi's Jeanius."), the Holland-America Trans-Canal ad for its less-expensive voyage across the Isthmus ("Connect the docks and save $600."), the Nissan "Feel your Pulsar quicken." ad, or the Martini & Rossi vermouth quip: "Martini & Rossi. In a glass by itself." These all constitute manipulations at the levels of sound and spelling, "roads/Rhodes," "genius/jeanius," "docks/dots," "pulse/Pulsar," "glass/class" which lead immediately to manipulations at the level of bound idiom: a Rhodes scholar, a stroke of genius, connect the dots, feel your pulse quicken, in a class by itself.

This in turns leads, semiotically, to our messages: If one buys Brooks's shoes, one becomes an expert in running on the roads; the idea of painted/colored jeans is a stroke of genius and one who wears them will be a fashion "genius"; one need only look at the map, connect the dots leading to the dock where one embarks and the dock where one debarks to see how one is getting a good bargain in traveling with Holland-America across the Isthmus of Panama; if one drives a Nissan Pulsar, one will be excited - one's pulse will quicken because it is an exciting car; if one drinks Martini & Rossi vermouth, one will be drinking a product which is incomparable to others.

Sometimes, a lexical manipulation may be achieved by capitalizing on the meaning of a foreign word which happens to be part of the advertisement. A particularly poignant example is Goodyear's depiction of its tires on a Pontiac Fiero: "Fiero means 'proud," performance means Eagles." Here, a pseudo-definition is concocted out of the fortuitous pairing of the foreign-named car with the advertised Goodyear tires. Out of this, the viewer/reader get notions of "proud performance = Eagles," a rather neat, albeit somewhat bogus, formulation.

Almost all syntactic manipulation emerges directly from lexical manipulation. The psychological term, "alter ego," supports the manipulation sententially of "Alter your ego." in an advertisement by Chevrolet for the purchase of its Celebrity Eurosprt car. "Moosehead Beer stands head and antlers above the rest" is the manipulation of the sentential idiom "One stands head and shoulders above the rest." Smithsonian magazine tells readers that "The F-Stops Here." an allusion to the wonderful and qwuality pictures that are a hallmark of the magazine and a clear alteration of the sentential, well-known bound idiom: "The buck stops here." (In this same ad which depicts a huge lens, Smithsonian also quips in tiny letters in the lower right corner: "2,000,000 subscribers put their money where their minds are.") Maxell Gold disks are proclaimed as "The floppy disk that turns Apples golden, keeps AT&T on-line, and makes every Texas Instrument a gusher." This multiple idiomed, multiple-allusioned advertisement contains manipulations at the morphological, lexical, idiomatic, historical, environmental, referential, and syntactic levels.

There is more. Again at the level of sentential manipulation, Nissan tells us that a Nissan Sentra XE going uphill in the photo implies that you must "Make the grade, no matter what course you take." An ad for Palm Springs, California, with all of its sights, relaxations, and refreshments, depicts a beautiful woman in a bathing suit lying on a floating mat in a pool with the appropriate and requisite male at her side. The caption tells us that "In times like these, you need times like these." A Seagram's Gin bottle poses as the letter "I" in between two gold letters, "G" and "N" with the caption: Seagram's Gin makes your screwdriver letter perfect." This is a somewhat long-winded sentential extension of the well-known bound idiom, but it seems to achieve its rhetorical purpose [27; 313].

Up to this point, we have avoided several ads in my collection which manipulate in much the same way as the above but have the additional dubious feature of being exploitative in a way that is, in my opinon, somewhat noxious. Of course, all advertisements exploit in the sense of wanting to convey the impression of the "rightness" of the product or service advertised. These ads, however, are different in that they typically contain manipulations aimed at the sexual appetite of the viewer/reader. Most often, but not always, the target is the American, purportedly to-be-dominated-and-therefore-to-be-exploited female.

While it is clear that in a society and culture which makes a regualr habit, nay a ritual, out of being titillated sexually, advertisers in that society can be expected to attempt to capitalize on that tendency, one can hardly find a reason for necessarily condoning such manipulation. It is not my purpose to discuss it at length here. It is, indeed, the subject of an entirely different piece. I merely present a few examples for your interest and understanding:

Shofar kosher frankfurters and salamis depicts a very shapely female posterior in a pair of almost revealing cut-off jeans. A package of Shofar kosher midget salami is crammed in one back pocket. The ad is titled "Little Nosh." [Yiddish for "a little something to eat]. Suffice it to say that "salami" has a phallic connotation in the popular culture and let your imagination do the rest!

In a milder yet equally exploitative fashion, Sassafras swimwear presents a photo of four very comely young ladies all dressed in fashionable, not particularly risque', swimwear. However, they are all posed full length, from the rear. The title of the advertisement is "Beach bums," an obvious allusion to the posteriors as well as to the well-known bound idiom. Solorflex somewhat less mildly or subtley exploits males by depicting the very well-muscled and proportioned Ken Norton with the linguistic manipulation: "A hard man is good to find." Lastly, an ad that drew so much criticism a few years back that it was eventually pulled: the Canadian Black Velvet whiskey bottle is placed under a very comely young woman in a strapless, black-velvet evening gown. The caption, "Feel the Velvet Canadian" is placed over the figure in such a way that the words, "feel the," are squarely over her breasts. The seeming message: "If we men [and men as potential purchasers are the obvious target of the ads] would but purchase the whiskey, we may vicariously experience this woman's breasts." Again, this is a very clever linguistic manipulation at the lexical and syntactic level. It is however, a poignantly exploitative and noxious example of the kind of semiosis American advertising as an institution could well do without.

Thus, if we analyze the language of commercials, we will clearly see how important is the use of idioms in advertisement. Advertising occupies a central position in the landscape of consumer culture. Advertisers commit major resources to finding out how the purchase of a product could fulfill consumer needs and desires - which may or may not have anything to do with the product's purpose. While advertising's immediate goal may be the promotion of a specific item, its legacy is a standard of values and behavior, which have made advertising copy into idiomatic expressions.

## 2.3. Creative usage of the idioms. Extension and alteration

Here we will analyze an extended idiom. Extended idioms were described in the introduction as being featured in their original form together with an additional piece of text that somehow makes a comment on the idiom itself. This comment is often fairly concise and occurs in direct proximity to the idiom, either directly preceding or immediately following it. The main effect provided by the comment is to draw attention to the literal meaning of the idiom.

*Burn the candle at both ends, then get rid of the smoke*

This extended idiom is found in an ad for a product by Comfort called Refresh, which is sprayed onto clothes to remove smells, or as the slogan promises, it “puts freshness back into clothes”. The entire background of the ad consists of a picture of a woman wearing a dress and a cardigan, but it seems to have been cut in two pieces, with the left half showing her at night in a dark and smoky room, her hair slightly disheveled and her cardigan flailing open, revealing the straps of her dress. In the right-hand half of the picture it is daytime, she standing in a brightly lit room with a desk and a computer visible in the background. Her hair has been combed and her cardigan is neatly adjusted. The woman is holding a spray bottle of Comfort Refresh in her left hand, spraying its contents towards the smoky left-hand half of the picture. The idiom itself, burn the candle at both ends, is written across the smoky half of the picture, while the comment, then get rid of the smoke, is superimposed on the other side. The idiom is partly motivated by conceptual metaphor(s), but it is also possible that conventional knowledge plays a part in forming mental images, at least for some speakers. According to Szabó, the underlying metaphor behind this idiom is energy is fuel for the fire, but it is unclear exactly what they mean and they fail to give a more detailed analysis. Presumably, if we understand energy in terms of fuel for a fire, it means that we need energy to keep the fire burning, in this context perhaps the fire of life. My attempt at an explanation would be that if we burn the candle at both ends, i.e. use up too much energy late at night and early in the morning, there will not be enough left.

Nighttime is when we recuperate and gather more energy, and if that time is cut short there will be no fuel for the fire. However, is it not possible that some other metaphor is involved as well, one that involves time rather than fuel for a fire? One very common metaphor we use in order to understand time is by seeing it as a physical object, sometimes more specifically as a container, which we can move in and out of, as in expressions such as We’re well into the century and He’s like something out of the last century, or as a moving object. In my view, burning the candle at both ends could be partly motivated by this metaphor as well, if we think of a period of time as a bounded entity or slot, that can be shortened at both ends. The candle burning at both ends would then correspond to our night rest being shortened at both ends [24; 90]. Interestingly enough, the reference in this ad is not specifically to the lack of energy that is caused by late nights out and early mornings, but rather it addresses the problems associated with smoky venues and how to feel clean and fresh the next day. The focus is thus not on the short period of rest, but on the short period of time in which you must get your clothes feeling fresh again. What our conventional knowledge tells us, and which could influence our mental images associated with this idiom, is that it is often dark late at night and early in the morning. Being up at these times would therefore require some form of light source, such as a candle, which then would have to be burned at both ends of the day.

Regardless of the exact motivation behind the idiom, it is clear that the element smoke in the comment is grounded both in the literal meaning of the idiom, according to which a candle is burning, and in the wider situation associated with the metaphorical meaning of the idiom, i.e. the knowledge that late nights are associated with going out to smoky bars or clubs, which is information that is partly provided by the picture. Out of context, the idiom would perhaps be difficult to understand, since our attention is drawn to its literal meaning by the comment clause then get rid of the smoke. Gibbs et al., reporting on earlier studies by Gibbs, point out that “people do not ordinarily process the entire literal meanings of idioms,” which often results in a “double-take” when they encounter idioms in a non-metaphorical context [22; 127].

This is clearly what has been exploited by the makers of the ad in question. When reading the idiom burn the candle at both ends, we are more likely to access the metaphorical meaning, which is why we might react when we get to the word smoke, which triggers the literal meaning. This incongruity draws our attention to the underlying metaphorical mappings, and allows us to access the input spaces. The source domain object/fuel is elaborated as a candle space, which contains the candle, the process of burning, and the smoke, or perhaps rather soot, that results from it. The target domain time/energy is instead elaborated as a nightlife space, in which a person stays out late, frequents venues where people smoke cigarettes, and as a result end up with clothes that smell of smoke.

In the headline, which may be understood as a conceptual blend, both these spaces are activated at the same time, and a humorous effect is created by the double literal interpretation of the element ‘smoke’ against both the inputs.

This makes this example similar to the double grounding constellation proposed by Feyaerts and Brône (in press), and it might also be argued that there is metonymic tightening in the blend, since the smoke stands for the previous night out on the town. In that input space, the smoke was one element among others, while in the blend it represents all the others, and in fact forms the evidence that has to be removed.

А good example of an altered idiom in commercial is following:

*Comfort is in the eye of the beholder*

This ad one for Focus contact lenses, which appeared in Marie Claire in March, 1997. The main part of the ad is taken up by a picture of a woman dressed in a white knitted polo jumper, cuddling a fluffy toy animal that might be a teddy bear. The headline above the picture is written in white against a green background and reads Comfort is in the eye of the beholder, a variant form of the idiomatic expression or proverb *Beauty is in the eye of the beholder*. As with the previous ad, the headline is ambiguous and may be interpreted both literally and metaphorically. Again, the fact that the idiom has been altered triggers the otherwise non-salient literal meaning, but perhaps not as strongly as in the previous ad, since Comfort is in the eye of the beholder may actually be understood in an entirely metaphorical sense, as opposed to Don’t get your panty liners in a twist, where a literal interpretation is inevitably highlighted.

Let us start with the original idiom, which is partly motivated by the conceptual metaphor ‘feelings are objects’ or in this case rather personal characteristics or abstract notions are objects. Being seen in terms of an object is what enables beauty to be located in different places, in this case in the eye of the beholder as opposed to in the face of a woman. Fittingly enough, contact lenses are also objects that are located in the eyes of some beholders, namely those with poor eyesight. The source domain objects is elaborated as a more specific space, which will be referred to as lenses, and it includes the simple scenario in which lenses are worn or placed in a person’s eyes [22; 130]. In addition, we can identify two elaborations of the target domain feelings/ characteristics, where one may be labeled comfort and the other beauty. In the comfort space, there is the feeling of comfort, which exists in the opinion of the person experiencing the event, while in the beauty space; there is the characteristic of beauty, which exists in the opinion of the observer. In the altered idiom in the headline, all these spaces are activated simultaneously, and contribute to the understanding of what it means to use the Focus lenses. Not only will they improve a person’s eyesight, they are also comfortable for the wearer and make her/him look good in the eyes of other people. Moreover, all three input spaces may be understood to be reflected in the image, in particular the comfort space, to which the warm jumper and cuddly toy belong, but perhaps also the beauty space, which in that case is reflected in the face of the woman, and possibly also the lenses space, if we assume that the woman in the ad is wearing them. However, they are also signaled in the text or slogan at the very bottom of the ad, which says “see better,” “feel better” and “look better,” and these are of course linked to the three different input spaces lenses, comfort, and beauty.

The altered idiom in the headline may also be seen as a comment on the image, which actually illustrates some examples of what comfort may involve, but at the same time asks what it really means for something to be comfortable. Is it wearing a warm jumper and cuddling a fluffy toy as the woman in the picture is doing, or is it something else? That is all up to the beholder, which of course carries a possible negative implication as far as the aim of the ad is concerned. Are the contact lenses really comfortable or is that also, metaphorically, in the eye of the beholder?

The role played by metaphor and conceptual blending in these creative examples shows that advertising language follows the same cognitive principles as everyday language, but many processes, which are normally unconscious and therefore largely go unnoticed may be highlighted and made more noticeable

Conclusion

In this paper we tried to analyze and identify the impact, which is produced by the usage of the idiomatic language on the recipient of the information in terms of the pragmatic aspect of the usage of idioms in commercials. To keep it simple, usage of idioms is a powerful source for creation of the desirable effect with the potential customer. The basis of this phenomenon lies within the sophisticated subliminal organization of the idiomatic expressions. We do not split these expressions into parts but perceive them as a holistic thing.

The idioms are found either in the headline or in the body copy of the ads and occur in two main patterns, which we referred to as extended idioms and altered idioms, respectively. The extended idioms are found in their original form, accompanied by an additional piece of text that is either a continuation of or a comment on the idiom, hence the label. This comment or complement provides an elaboration on the idiom itself, sometimes by drawing attention to its literal meaning, as in Burn the candle at both ends. Then get rid of the smoke. In the altered idioms, on the other hand, one lexical item has been replaced in a context where in normal cases it would not be replaced, for example in Don’t get your panty liners in a twist, or syntactically altered in a way that does not occur in regular use. In short, the main difference is the location of the creative or unexpected surface element—as a complement to the idiom or inside the idiom. Besides, every person has a clear and instantaneous image in mind that is tightly welded with the particular idiomatic expression. So whereas the motivation of the promoters is quite clear, the mechanism of the linguistic influence through idioms leaves much to be learned about.

However, it is important to note that this paper does not state exactly what features are mapped or which conceptual links are established each time a particular idiom is deconstructed. Similarly, no claims are made as to how individual people would interpret the ads and there is no suggestion that everybody would understand them in exactly the same way, which means that there are many questions that still need to be answered.

# Resume

Курсова робота під назвою «Ідіоми в рекламних слоганах. Прагматичний аспект» торкається проблеми вікористання ідіоматичниго словнику в рекламних оголошеннях та слоганах з огляду на прагматичний аспект використання фразеологізмів та їх похідних.

Головна **мета** роботи полягає у дослідженні феномена ідіоми в англійській мові та використання ідіоматичних виразів як інструмента маніпуляциії свідомостю покупця.

Робота включає в себе декілька основних **завдань**:

* Проаналізувати ідіоматичнє мовлення, виділити основні типи ідіом
* Проаналізувати використання ідіом в усному мовленні і в сфері реклами
* Дослідити вплив ідіом на свідомість покупця

**Об’єктом** дослідження є ідіоматичні вирази та сталі вирази в англійській мові, шо використовуються в рекламі як ідіоми.

**Суб’єктом** дослідження є використання ідіом в рекламі (друкованій та на телебаченні) з огляду на прагматичний аспект.

Робота складається зі вступу, двох частин, висновків, резюме та списку використаної літератури.

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