
PHILOLOGY

UDC 81

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MODERN ADVERTISING AS A MIRROR OF ETHNIC CULTURE**[*Е.П. Гаран* Язык современной рекламы
как зеркало этнической культуры]**

In 1970-1980s of the XX century interaction of a language and a culture began to be considered within the framework of a new departure that arose at the interface of linguistics and culturology – cultural linguistics. Anthropocentricity of the new approach corresponds to the general current trend of humanitarian researches. At the beginning of the XXI century, at the foregrounds of changes in a modern language were those ones, which had been brought to life with the help of the change of sociocultural paradigms, socio-political movements in different countries, and other extratextual factors, which often become determinative of language changes. In turns, new language contexts give rise to new cultures in a society. The objectives of cultural linguistics are also to compare especially linguistic phenomena to their sociocultural motivation, to study their connections and interdependence.

Key words: linguaculture, advertising, ethnoculture, modernity.

As contrasted with such advanced areas of knowledge of anthropological linguistics as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, cultural linguistics, as well as its basis – culturology – is still in the stage of designing and making. «...Linguistics stands on the cusp of one more aspect of linguoculturological investigation. It is based on the investigation of a language dynamics in the context of common cultural processes of an epoch» [5]. According to the concept of the cultural linguistics, a language actively participates in all major aspects of cultural creativity – forming the concept of the world, its fixing, and further understanding. It is a form of expression of the content of a thought, it is gained and conservable spiritual content, and finally, it is an instrument of its interpretation, a body of consciousness [6].

Linguistic and cultural studies and ethnolinguistics are fairly considered to be the precursors of cultural linguistics. However, as distinguished from ethnolinguistics, cultural linguistics is focused on the contemporary state and functioning of a language and a culture (in the sense of a specific way of organization and development of human activity, presented in products of material and spiritual work, in the system social norms of institutions in material and cultural values, together with people's attitude towards nature, to relationships between each other, and to themselves), on real communication processes. The new branch of humanities knowledge differs from linguistic and cultural studies in the fact that it does not equate the concepts of «cultural in a language» and «ethnic, country specific». Linguistic and cultural studies are characterized by an electoral approach to the description of cultural realias, or even an illustrative one, but cultural linguistics is aimed to find out integral, integrated, and system-defined notion of units of a language and a culture in their correlations and interaction [1].

Linguoculturological distinctions in the sphere of advertising deal not only with its content, but also with a perceptual pattern: obtrusively repeated advertising hardly fits to cultural canons. Cf. the section «Favourite movies without advertizing» on the television channel «Zvezda»¹. Also cf.: «...endless messages and imperatives cannot but irritate bearers of those cultures where a «direct» imperative is ordinarily unaccepted. The elderly British or the Frenchman cannot but get irritated with Afroamerican «rap's» perking one's finger in a consumer with threats: «Have you already bought?» or «How haven't you bought it yet?» French eroticized advertising gifts cannot but drive representatives of orthodox Islam to frenzy» [3].

The word *advertisement* is included in the dictionary of lexical difficulties of the Russian language in two meanings:

A wide population informing about characteristics of a new product, about different types of services with a view to developing demand for them, and also a poster, radio - and broadcasting, also containing such an announcement. *Perfume advertisement. A colourful advertisement. Illuminated advertising*

¹However, «obtrusiveness» of advertising is estimated in different ways by representatives of various linguocultures. Cf. A. Verigin's remark, who is one of the first Russian specialists in the sphere of advertising of the end the XIX century: «The American, travelling by train and seeing a repetition of the same advertising on each and every fence, wall, and tops of lofty mountains, will say that it is an excellent deal, and that the advertising expert is a fine fellow. The Russian, even having a European mentality, will say that it is a dirty act, without a moment's hesitation». Cit.: [11, p. 47].

Dissemination of information about somebody, something with a view of creating reputation, famousness. *A.P. Chekhov, thanks to his wonderful modesty and fear of any kind of advertizing, A.P. Chekhov as if consciously effaced and tried to lessen his role* (Borovsky «A. I. Kuprin»).

«Lower» areal roots of advertising are traced in the etymology of the Russian word *advertising* (lat. *reclamare* – ‘to call out, to call, to beat the drum’) [3].

Every linguoculture is characterized by certain preferences in the choice of models of representation of cognitive experience in a form of these or those representations and conceptions. Such dominating systems of representations (according to M. Foucault – cultural and historical episteme or episteme of mentality) penetrate into all the spheres of life, and in modern conditions – they are certainly verbalized by all the means of advertizing, which, in its turn, has strongly pronounced modeling nature. Episteme of social way of thinking determine the spheres of cognition interest, categorical concepts of psychological, moral, spiritual nature.

«Nevertheless, modern Russian society, maintaining in its baseline a huge common hatred of wealthy people, has created a cult of wealth and luxury that is extensively carried with the help of mass media. All kinds of corporality and ways of life have become a worldview of enormous numbers of people in Russia. Advertizing, glossy magazines, TV programs are full of pieces of advice about arrangement of a household material world. <...> Orientations of «glamorous» world perception are actively flourishing in Russia: the world in glamour seems to be completed material construction, our life is about to be presented as a formula that advocates for external «prettiness», luxury, and setting housekeeping up [8].

Nowadays, in general, advertising influence on a character and a way of life, on culture – is not controverted by anybody: advertising reflects a modern way of life and builds it up at the same time. «Commercials is not only a mirror of commerce, but also an information and communications technology that is built into commerce» [12]. L. N. Fedotova's data of public-opinion poll in France on a topic: what is the best way to reflect a present-day character and a way of life? Is this advertising, television, print media, movies, music, sound-broadcasting or a theater? 76% of all the respondents have chosen advertising foremost.¹ It is no coincidence that the English novelist Norman Douglas said that ideals of a nation could be

¹Cf. a distinctive title of the article [6]: «A pretension of one genre to modify the structure of the Russian literary language (about advertising force)».

judged by its advertising. Compare cultivation of personal success and the RBC TV channel self-presentation – *the channel of successful¹ people*. Cf. also: «*Dirol*» *with calcium will give you a smile of the winner*.

Advertising draws attention to benefit, profit, and advantage:

The best prices!

It is profitable to cooperate with us!

Big benefit of small discounts!

With the beer from us, profit is with you!

Our goods will take care of your profit!

Exclusive windows and doors from Finland. Always in favor of you!

In society, that has well-developed market relations, a young person aged 20 watches a great number of commercials (in the USA – about 1 million). Furthermore, advertisements teach adolescents that all the problems in society can be solved, what is more – quickly solved, in case if special technologies are used, in other words «advertising supplies the younger generation with social optimism in the course of their natural socialization» [12]. Advertising strategy is focused on relieving a critical perception of an advertisement copy by an addressee and building-up a positive image of advertising items of goods. However, the addressee properly realizes advertising purpose (to sell goods), but, at the same time, a creation strategy of an attractive image of goods is unobtrusive for him (because it is not shown in the verbal stuff of advertisement). Nowadays advertising plays a great role, creating habits and customs, defining morality of a society, its ethical characteristics, distributing and fastening cultural and aesthetical cliches. It is interesting that advertising is used as a source of quotations in the English lexicography [10], whereas there are no such available practices in the national lexicography yet.

In Russia advertising development has passed the same principal stages as European nations and North America: from barkers and chapmen to print advertising. In Russia, as far as is known, emerging of the first advertising literature belongs to the beginning of the XIX century (the newspaper «Vedomosti»), but modern Russian advertising began to be developed after the CPSU Central Committee provi-

¹Cf.: «Even a Russia-specific word «successful» (rus. успешный) has begun to sound with the English accent. Formerly it went together only with case titles, names of ceremonies: a successful offer, a successful match. Nowadays we can come across successful people, by analogy with English «successful», first of all these are businessmen and showmen» (Vl. Novikov «Affaire d'amour with the language»).

sion for free enterprise in February, 1987. A crash of the system of formal planning in our country, transition to market economy and a democratic structure of society were the key elements of modern advertising image formation. Advertising affairs became the main link between producers and consumers of production.

It is characteristic that definitions in terms of class-specific approach were prevalent in advertising researches produced within the country even during the 1980s. Cf.: «In middle-class society, advertising serves as means of profit markup of dominant companies, a competitive weapon, as well as an instrument of ideological impacts on a wide audience of potential customers. Social support of entrepreneurial advertising makes itself evident in the fact that mass media, being economically subjected advertising customers, promote multiplication of their income...» [5]. Advertising has an ability to «flourish» in society with a certain level of economic abundance, when offers headily go before demands. This is precisely the stage where advertising passes from providing mere information to such messages, which are to create demand for certain variety and brands of production.

From the institutional point of view, advertising (as a type of practical activities of a person) is constrained by statutory and professional codes of ethics; by Federal law «Concerning Advertising» - in our country (March 13, 2006). In short order, starting upon its official recognition as a full fledged market instrument, advertising became the most important mechanism of modernization of the Russian society, well-established and required guide of market production operations. It has also approved itself as a mass culture phenomenon that, however, is able to build up a spiritual culture in its best instances of creativity in the greatest respect. This particular advertising qualities as well as a huge volume of advertising **texts** determine unchanged research interest at the hands of humanitarian of various spheres – psychologists, sociologists, marketing specialists, journalists, and linguists. Such components of advertising texts as structural (verbal and paralinguistic) are clearly specified in linguistics. There are a lot of works on the topic of advertising as a cognitive-suggestive phenomenon within the framework of the theory of linguistic manipulation. Advertising capability to represent fragments of the linguistic worldimage was analysed in details within the framework of linguoculturological and anthropocentric paradigm.

Advertising communication as a social phenomenon carries not only barely economic and marketing functions, but some others. The most important function is socialization, in other words it is an insertion in a person's consciousness of knowledge

and concepts of norms, stereotypes, values, behaviour patterns that exist in society at-large and in certain communities; this is a special person's adaptation to a current social peace. Another function can be defined as a promotion of progress, with the help of an insertion of new knowledge and new concepts of the ways of improvement of people's lives in their consciousness (it is advertising that has considerably speeded up introduction to our everyday life microcomputers, personal computers, systems of healthy eating, ecological ideas, etc.). Advertising has an effect on integration of a society through broadcasting of images and behaviour patterns, which promote development of common values and stereotypes in society. Advertising makes those consumption patterns public (style, fashion, special articles of consumption, preferable brands, etc.) which are preferable for this or that sector of society, including elite. If we recognize that a criterion of differentiation in modern society is «a way of life» (according to P. Bourdieu's ideas), then broad information accessibility on various ways of life within one linguoculture promotes social mobility of a person.

As a general rule, advertisements are in the field of societal norms and social values. That is why advertising is often characterized by proverbs:

Clothes count for first impressions only... But clothes still go first. Rely on our shop «Fashionable Clothes»;

After the first spoon – Galina Blanka is your love;

It's nobody's business. There's a smile in every Hershey's bar.

American historian and sociologist D. Burstin describes advertising as a main layer of the American civilization and a heart of folklife culture: «Folklife culture (folk-cultura) came to us from publicity agencies; newspaper, radio, and television networks; and authors of advertising of the largest magazines, etc. Against the background of our democracy, we live in a special type of national culture. It is created by advertising, it is advertising. Probably, we are the first people in the history, which have centrally organized mass production of folklife culture» [11]. Cf.:

You are what you drive – your car shows what you are.

Advertising absorbs cultural make-up, special aspects of history and mentality of speakers of a language, reflects problems that are important for a society (even if it is not directly connected with advertise commodities). Cf.:

How many valueless promises we hear every day! What should we, women, trust to? Ariel's creators take up the position that their new powder can be better at washing spots than qualitative powders, when they are paired with soft bleachers.

O. V. Anderson writes: «National advertese pretty exactly reflects an overall level of a culture, inclusive of a linguistic one. It can be said that advertising not only promotes sales, but also stipulates creating of new communicatory functions of the Russian literary language, manner of the statement – that is increasedlly suggestive and productive, from the linguistic point of view, (and conceptual) «hybridization»; hence, all the present-day kinds of advertising texts were created».

M. Maklyuen singled out integrative advertising functions: «Advertising compressed image of modern times. It accumulates feelings and experience of all society. In a perfect world advertising work for harmony of human impulses and desires, and a society integration to achieve common goals» Cit. ex: [11]. Also cf.: «Doesn't advertising run across a demarcation line between the reflection of *community values* and their *creation*? Critics insist that advertising constantly breaks down this border; moreover, being improved and developed, it turns into a certain instrument of public control. <...> Even if any individual advertising cannot control our behavior, it can have negative and suppressing influence on us because of a cumulative effect of continuous advertising on television and radio, in press, and anywhere outside the doors of our houses» [11].

Advertising, explicating in the advertisement message any given image, explicates a certain way of life of a potential consumer of advertised items; to be successful, however, advertising should focus on those things that constitute a part of people's lives or on those ones which are close and easy-to-understand to the audience. Cf.:

The magazine «Zdorovye» (eng.health), Magazine of careful parents.

Even grammatical language features of an advertising text come out to be a representation of linguocultural features of a language. In such a way, linguists correctly describe dialogueness as a distinctive feature of the Russian language during the period of post-perestroika. «Dialogical relationships push aside monological ones, and we can see large fields for public dialogues coming into existence» [2]. Or «Strengthening of personal principles and commitment to an active dialogue brightly appear in reviving genres of oral advertising, an invitation» [4].

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