

FINANCIAL AND OTHER ADS IN THE OPPOSITION DIGITAL/REAL

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ABSTRACT

Financial and other ads in the frame of opposition digital/real are analysed here from the standpoints of semiotics.

The literature review includes the following topics – theory of digitality; theory of virtuality; some aspects of financial theory (psychology and economy; insurance theory; financial risks’ theory; disaster theory); some aspects of advertising theory (banking and insurances advertising; psychology and advertising – ad appeals; psychoanalysis and advertising; fear appeals; theory of archetypes); semiotics (semiotics and advertising; semantics (semantic field of concept risk; metaphor; litotes); syntactics; pragmatics and literature theory (theory of drama; theory of tragedy).

The main text of article is structured on the basis of the four semiotic branches – alphabetic, semantics, syntactics and pragmatics.

Financial and other ads in the alphabetic’s part are examined from the standpoint of opposition real (traditional)/digital as communicative approach and from the standpoint of concept “continuum”. Some transformations of traditional (analogue) signs into digital ones and the creation of digital ads in the opposition variant/invariant are also studied here.

The second part of the article is about digitized ads from the point of view of semantics.

The concept of semantic field and its digital dimensions; the digitally connoted ads; the digitized ad metaphors and the digitized ad contrasts (counterpoints, oppositions) are examined in this section.

The ads are analysed from the viewpoint of syntactics in the third part. The connections between the digital metaphors and digital litotes and how they form one and the same stylistic figure are studied as well.

The fourth part is on pragmatics. The analysis of archetype appeals is the main topic here.

Keywords: advertising, ad appeal, opposition “digital/real”, semiotics, alphabetic, semantics, syntax, pragmatics

JEL: M37

1 INTRODUCTION

To analyse the communicative approaches of financial and other ads in the opposition digital/real. The article is written on the bases of four semiotic branches – alphabetic; semantics; syntactic and pragmatics. Advertising and other marketing communications gradually acquire digital characteristics. Semiotics is one of most appropriate science to explore and explain these new transformations. With the help of semiotics’ scientific apparatus admen can create more efficient digital communications. The article explores only a small part of digitized advertising. The same applies to the semiotic concepts which are used.

The only reason for this is the limitations due to the size of article. This article is for the following specialists:

- university lecturers in the field of advertising and semiotics;
- admen and advertisers who create digital ads and other digital marketing communications.

The article has two practical advantages – it will help:

- the university lecturers on advertising and semiotics.;
- the admen and advertisers.

The article “Financial and Other Ads in the Opposition Digital/Real” is one of the rare scientific studies on semiotics of transitions between traditional and digital advertising. The analysed ads are created the past few years.

Acknowledgement to Admen which Ads are Analysed in the Article

Some of the world’s best ads are analyzed in this article. They are excellent examples of the high communicative abilities and creativity of their innovative authors. The ads are from the following site:

<http://adsoftheworld.com/>

Addsoftheworld.com is one of the leading online mediums in advertising. The site is also quite useful for specialists in the field of advertising and other marketing communications.

The authors of this article express their deep gratitude to the admen who created the ads quoted in the article as well as to the specialists who set up and maintain so well the adsoftheworld.com

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Digitality

Charlie Gere in his book on digital culture analysed thoroughly some of the most relevant concepts in this area – digital technology in art, music, design, film, literature and other areas. (Gere, Charlie, 2009)

The digital characteristics and their influence on the surrounding world are examined in detail in a book on digital culture and new media. Some of the main concepts of the book are: global network, computer programs, distribution of new digital media products, interactivity, mobility of the media audience, and so on. (Creeber, Glen and Martin Royston (Eds.), 2008)

Virtuality

“The Oxford Handbook of Virtuality” examines in depth most of the key concepts in this scientific field – ethical aspects of this phenomenon; virtuality and the identity of communicators; degree of immersion in virtuality; computer games; eroticism and virtuality; use of virtuality in various social areas; religious aspects of virtuality; different transitions between reality and virtuality; some new technologies such as augmented reality; and so on. (Grimshaw, Mark (Ed.), 2014)

The authors of the book “Real Virtuality: About the Destruction and Multiplication of World” analysed the hybrid communications – their definitions, classifications, how they function both in reality, and in virtuality, etc. The different degrees of virtuality of postmodern communications have been studied as well. (Gehmann, Ulrich and Martin Reiche (Eds.), 2014)

Financial Theory

Psychology and Economy

Richard Thaler, the winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2017, is the author of one of the most important books on economics in recent years – “Misbehaving: The Making of Behavioural Economics”. The author analyses the connections between economy and human psyche. The basic idea in the book is about the big impact of human emotions to the financial decisions. Unfortunately, the economic science does not pay the appropriate attention to this psychological phenomenon.

People often make important economic decisions on the basis of their emotions, rather on economic rules. Therefore, the author used the key concept – “behavioural economics”.

Because of this, economists, psychologists and marketers should jointly develop marketing theory, based on the main psychological and sociological notions. (Thaler, Richard, 2015)

Allan Kimmel explored the links of economy with some important psychological phenomena as attitudes, life styles, etc. They are some of the most important concepts in advertising and in other marketing communications. Due to this reason, a new concepts should be introduced, defined and examined – psychological economy, emotional economy, behavioural economy, etc. (Kimmel, Allan, 2012)

Insurance Theory

Part of the ads, analysed in the article, are for insurances. This is why some important scientific books and articles on insurance theory are part of literature review.

In his book, Rob Thoys explored the most important aspects of insurance theory – definitions, types of, functions, etc. The author analysed also the insurance systems in different cultures. The concept of risk is a key one in his book. The same concept is used often in the ads of insurances’ services. It is besides related closely to the psychological, communicative and literary notions of “drama” and “tragedy”. The effectiveness of communications depends to a large extent on them. (Thoys, Rob, 2010)

Georges Dionne thoroughly analysed the concept of “risk” in his book. These are some of the basic notions in the research-risk prevention, risk management, regulatory mechanism, risk-order attitudes, risk measures, and dependence modelling, prevention and precaution, systemic risk, risk classification, catastrophe risk competition. (Dionne, Georges, 2013)

Financial Risks’ Theory

Financial risks are the main scientific topic in the Jan Grandell’s book. The author studied in depth several of the important phenomena in this regard-ruin possibility; classical risk model; as well as some mathematical models by which the different risks can be measured. (Grandell, Jan, 2012)

“Handbook of Risk Theory” is one of the most relevant researches in this field. The concept of risk here is interpreted also from a cross-cultural stand points – the risk perception in different cultures; fatalism with regard to the risks; etc. (Roeser, Sabine *et al.*, 2012)

Disaster Theory

Disasters are closely related with the concept of risk. That is why they are analysed in many scientific books on risks in insurance business. David Etkin in his book on disasters examined them from different perspectives – economical, financial, psychological, social, etc. (Etkin, David, 2014)

E. Quarantelli studied the social components of disasters theory. Disasters are often results of inappropriate (inadequate) human behaviour – social conflicts, colonial thinking, wars, nature pollution, global warming, etc. Social advertising is one of the most suitable marketing communications to oppose these highly destructive phenomena. (Quarantelli, E, 2005)

Advertising Theory

Banking and Insurances Advertising

Basova and Kakurina analysed in their article the integrated marketing communications of financial services. The article is one of the rare researches in this field. The effectiveness of advertising and other marketing communications depends largely on the proper integration between different marketing communications – the choice of the most appropriate ad appeals, the suitable choice of marketing communications involved, on the proper ratio between different marketing communications, etc. (Basova, N. *et al.*, 2014)

Some of post-modern marketing communications of financial services are part of social media. Ferretti and Graziani - authors of an article on these issues, have thoroughly examined the use of visibility; loyalty; brand awareness; engagement, reputation, etc. enhanced by the use of social media in banks' marketing communications. (Ferretti, Antonella *et al.*, 2017)

Psychology and Advertising-Ad Appeals

The ad appeal is the key concept with regard to the effectiveness of advertising and other marketing communications. The ad appeals are studied in Ernest Gill book "Advertising and Psychology" from different stand points.

The book of Fennis and Stroebe's explores thoroughly ads' mental processing; the attitudes; psychological aspects of persuasive communications; motivational adequacy of advertising; and so on. (Fennis and Stroebe, 2015)

The book of Heath is a valuable study in the field of psychology of persuasive communications and subconscious. One of the most relevant ideas in this book is connected with the Subconscious Seduction Model (SSM). (Heath, 2015)

The books on consumer psychology and consumer sociology are crucial with regard to effectiveness of advertising and other marketing communications. Some of important ad concepts in this field – consumer memory; consumer learning; motivation; persuasion; hedonism and consumer behaviour; etc. are analysed in depth by the authors of "Handbook of Consumer Psychology". (Haugtvedt *et al.*, 2012)

Psychoanalysis and Advertising

Psychoanalysis is of key importance for the psychological foundations of advertising and marketing. It helps a lot in the selection of appropriate ad appeal (motivational psychological drive). The basic reason is that the modern psychoanalytical theories are based on appeals of power which are decisive for efficient communications.

Haineault and Roy's research is quite valuable in this respect. They examine the subconscious and its important role in advertising. (Haineault and Roy, 1993)

Forest's research is also relevant in this respect – because many ads are created on the basis of archetypes. The drama and tragedy are the perfect communicative strategies by which the archetypes' appeals can be expressed in the ads. (Forest, 2016)

Fear Appeals

Admen use actively fear appeals in financial and other ads – especially in insurance ads. Witte and Allen analysed the effectiveness of fear appeals in the continuum "low – high intensity". (Witte and Allen, 2000)

Theory of Archetypes

The most important ad appeals are result of our archetypal thinking. The founder of the theory of archetypes is Carl Jung.

Vance Packard published his book “The Hidden Persuaders” in 1964. So far, this book is the leading study on archetypes’ appeals of power and might in advertising. This monograph will continue to inspire the scientists many years ahead. (Packard, 1964)

One of the most interesting studies on utopian images – the images of paradise in advertising, is written by some of the leading world scientists from various fields – media, marketing communications, politics, religion, art, etc. The idea of paradise is very important in the system of archetypes and advertising.

Some of the relevant phenomena are analysed in the book, namely – utopian spaces in magazine ads; women and children in a fragile paradise; the American dream in an Absolut World; masculine and feminine images in Italian magazine ads; etc. (Manca, Alessandra, Luigi Daniele and Gail W. Pieper (Eds.), 2012)

Semiotics

Semiotics and Advertising

Ron Beasley and Marcel Danesi analysed thoroughly the different persuasive signs in advertising and marketing communications. The authors also studied advertising depending on its various media formats – print, electronic and digital, etc. (Beasley, Ron and Marcel Danesi, 2002)

The book of Sebeok is one of the most important works in marketing semiotics’ theory.

The author examined in depth important semiotic phenomena - as semiotic marketing and product conceptualization; consumer aesthetics; rhetorical figures in ad images; motion picture mythology; corporate imagery and communication; mythology in organizations and marketing; signs of consumer identity; symbolic consumption; story grammars; gender images and myth in advertising; etc. (Umiker-Sebeok, Jean., 2012)

Semantics

The book of Kate Kearns is one of the leading scientific studies in semantics’ theory. The following concepts – generalized quantifier theory; referential opacity; lexical conceptual structure; discourse representation theory; semantic composition; narrative time; etc. are carefully studied there. (Kearns, Kate, 2011)

The book of Cliff Goddard “Cross-linguistic Semantics” examines how the different languages express one and the same phenomena in different ways – depending on the specific language and extra linguistic characteristics. The book is based on the Model of Natural Semantic Meta Language (NSM) – a framework, created by the famous world linguist Anna Wierzbicka. (Goddard, Cliff, 2008,)

Semantic field of concept risk

The concept of “risk” can be analysed from many semiotic standpoints. One of this is the semantic field. In his article Max Boholm checked out 224 words which express different aspects of risk. The author proposed 25 categories (semantic fields) in which these words can be classified depending on their ways of connoting the concept of “risk”. (Boholm, Max, 2017)

B. Vardanyan compared the notions of safety, danger and defence depending on their psychological content in Russian and English. One of the main aims of this study is the semantic fields’ structures of these notions in both languages. The results demonstrated that the semantic fields of these constructs in Russian and in English are almost similar. (Vardanyan, B, 2015)

Ina Colenciuc investigated the various semantic fields of concept of money in different cultures depending on their historical, religious, ideological, etc. characteristics. The author

defined the following fields – “functional-semantic field”, “conceptual field”, etc. and analysed their constituents. (Colenciuc, Ina, 2016)

One interesting research on this topic revealed the structure of semantic field “Good/Evil” in English. Freda Thornton analysed 9071 lexical items constituting this field. The article is important for advertising because many ads are conceptualized on the basis of this archetypical opposition. (Thornton, Freda, 1988)

Metaphor

The book “Metaphors we live by” is one of the most significant scientific researches in the theory of tropes. This book is also important for the advertising industry, because many of the creative ads are done on the basis of semantic mechanism of visual (iconic) metaphor. (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

Evrripides Zantides analysed visual metaphors in marketing communications from the standpoint of intertextuality. Visual metaphors and intertextuality are the two most frequently used semantic concepts in creative ads. (Zantides, 2016)

The visual metaphors enhance considerably (double, triple, etc.) the creative potential of ads. This is explored in the article “The Doublespeak of Empowerment Tropes”. (Lee, C., 2014)

Rhetorical iconic and mixed figures are the core of advertising creativity. The verbo-visual rhetorical figures – metaphors, metonymies, hyperbole, litotes, apheresis, apocope, ellipsis, zeugma, asyndeton, neologism, paronomasia, etc. are analysed in-depth from the standpoint of visual sequences in one article. (Rossolatos, 2014)

The same author studied in another research the isomorphism of visual and verbal tropes and how metaphors, metonymies and the other stylistic figures interactions in multimodal advertising texts. (Rossolatos, 2013)

The authors of the book “Aspects of Metaphor” are some of the leading scientific specialists in this field. Many important phenomena connected with metaphors, similes, similarity, tropes generating mechanisms; iconic tropes, etc., are examined here. (Hintikka, Jaakko (Ed.), 1994)

Paul Ricoeur in his book “The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language” studied many linguistic concepts, related to the various aspects of metaphor, namely – analogy attribution, changes of meaning, connotation/denotation, context, mimesis, polysemy, etc. This book is one of the most serious scientific achievements in the theory of tropes. (Ricoeur, Paul, 2004)

Litotes

The book of María Hoffmann on litotes is one of the few ones, dedicated entirely to this stylistic figure. The admen use different litotes in several ads. This is why the visual (iconic) aspects of litotes must be examined in details in advertising. (Hoffmann, María E., 1987)

Syntactics

The syntactic structures are analysed in relation with semantics and with pragmatics in the book of Talmy Givón. Syntactic phenomena as constitution and hierarchy, grammatical relations and relational control, clause union, syntactic diversity, etc. are examined here. (Givón, Talmy, 2001)

Pragmatics

The book of Wolfram Bublitz and Neal Norrick is the first of nine volume pack on pragmatics. These authors analysed the basics of pragmatics and focused mainly on the use of language in different social contexts. Some of the most important concepts with regard to the

establishment and subsequent development of pragmatics – indexicality, reference speech acts, types of inference, and so on are parts of this study. (Bublitz Wolfram, Neal R. Norrick, 2011)

The socio-cultural and psychological factors which define the parameters of effective communication are essential part of pragmatics. The authors of one book on pragmatics explore how the characteristics of communication are influenced by phenomena as age, gender, class and religion, the different actions of the communicators, etc. Because of this the authors introduced the concept of variational pragmatics. Other important points of view here are the analyses on global and intercultural communication, politeness, discourse characteristics, linguistic anthropology, etc. (Andersen, Gisle and Karin Aijmer, 2012)

Literature Theory

Theory of Drama

Dramatized communications attract constantly the customers and the other participants in this process. Because of this, the admen dramatize actively marketing communications. It is not by chance that many of the ads in this article are dramatized. This is why the theory of drama (as well as that of metaphor) is one of the most important in advertising.

Manfred Pfister studied the drama from ancient Greece to the present day. The book is one of the most valuable in this respect, since it examines the most important concepts in the theory of drama – its compositions, storylines, the main characters, their functions and actions, the different types of dramatizations, etc. (Pfister, Manfred, 1991)

In another book, the drama is analysed from the perspective of Renaissance. In most cases, the researchers examine drama only in terms of literature and to a lesser degree – in the theory of mass communication. The drama as phenomenon here is explored by the help of the paintings of some of the most prominent Renaissance artists – Caravaggio, Giorgione, Michelangelo, Titian, etc. Such research could be done with regard to the most up-to-dated communications, such as the drama in transmedia – based for example on the Star Wars movie saga or on some computer games – World of Tanks, Assassins, etc. (Phillips-Court, Kristin, 2011)

Theory of Tragedy

John Snyder's book "Prospects of Power: Tragedy, Satire, The Essay, and Theory of Genre" is one of the most valuable in terms of conflicts and their use in advertising of insurances. The insurances as specific service are closely related to the disasters, injuries and death. They are the main reasons for every tragedy. The authors also explore the connected concepts of tragedy and power and their actualizations in most important communications – in art, in media, in political life, etc. (Snyder, John, 2015)

This article examines important topics and the reasons for this are the following:

- Digital communications are the leading at the moment and in the future.
- Many scientific books and articles analyse the digital aspects of communications. The transitions between real and digital (virtual) communications however are hardly explored.

These transitions are the main topics in this article. They are quite important because these continuums (conversions) are used constantly in various communications – including advertising.

Ads of financial and other services and products are analyzed in the article from the point of view of semiotics and its four parts – alphabetic; semantics, syntactics and pragmatics.

The main reason to choose semiotics as a basic research method here is that any semiotic concept is also an efficient communicative approach or strategy.

Thanks to this research, the analyzed problem can be understood better – both from the stand points of signs used and from the point of view of communicative approaches and strategies.

The limitations imposed are due to the article’s volume and therefore only a small part of semiotic concepts are analyzed. Otherwise, the size of the article will be as big as the volume of large book.

The article is structured on the basis of semiotics and its parts – alphabetic; semantics; syntactics and pragmatics.

3 ALPHABETICS

Alphabetic is the semiotic branch which defines different sign systems and creates their alphabets in the form of oppositions. The main concepts in this case are sign system, opposition, variant/invariant and some others.

3.1 *Oppositions*

3.1.1 *Opposition Real (Traditional)/Digital as Communicative Approach*

This is the most important opposition with regard to this article. It reflects the classification of signs depending on their interpretations from traditional or from digital standpoints.

The admen used opposition real/digital in three ads of Visa credit cards (Fig. 1a, 1b, 1c).

Mobile phones are one of the most typical manifestations of digital communications.



Fig. 1a, 1b, 1c

With the help of these bank cards the customers can install in their smart phones application which supports and expresses the feelings of their might and greatness. This way the admen used the archetypal appeals of power. These appeals are the most universal and the most attractive for the biggest part of customers.

Admen used here iconic metaphor as communicative approach. They attributed almost mythological (deifying) characteristics to the smart phones. Using them:

- the customers practice actively extreme sports (Fig. 1a, 1b);
- the customers are the triumphant winners and thousands admirers worship them (Fig. 1c).

3.1.2 *Opposition Real/Digital and the Concept of “Continuum”*

The continuum is a concept of semantics and means prolongation – transition between two polar (opposite) points. Human life, for example, is a typical continuum – from birth to death.

The continuum could be actualized in many different communicative contexts – even in the so called “border situation”. The border in this case is the line between classical and digital communications. These borders’ communications are hesitant (fluctuating) – they are neither entirely real, nor entirely digital (virtual).

The same phenomenon is actualized in some of the marketing communications of Johnny Walker whiskey (Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f, 2g).



Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c

If we look carefully, we will notice that the walking Johnny is a computer generated image (Fig. 2a, 2b, 2c). The other elements in the picture are not digital, but analogue. The talented artist made a small theatrical decor, putted Johnny Walker in it and photographed all that.

Then she uploaded the photo and processed it digitally.

On the basis of this editing, the admen created the packaging of whiskey (Fig. 2e, 2f, 2g).



Fig. 2e, 2f, 2g

The packaging replicates the initial analog-digital images. So, the artist-photographer expressed the spirit of postmodern era which is between reality and virtual (computer-mediated) world.

3.1.3 Characteristics of Digital Signs – Transformations of Traditional (Analogue) Signs into Digital Ones

People read easily different verbal texts on computers' screens (monitors). Because of this they communicate without any particular problems with the computers. In fact computers interact with us using much more abstract signs and texts, which we do not see on the monitors.

This phenomenon is demonstrated very well in the film "Matrix". Coded information is flowing constantly on the monitors of this film. The protagonists – members of Resistance read this coded (very abstract) information quite easily – in the same way the ordinary people read normal verbal texts.

Monitors with similar encoded information are demonstrated in an ad for technological university (Fig. 3a).



Fig. 3a

The ad headline states that video games without proper management and communication are not video games.

The ordinary people are not with the high IQ level of Matrix' heroes and they will never be able to communicate with the highly abstract digital signs in their extreme computer formats.

But when the students will finish the advertised university, they will handle these abstract signs without any problem and they will interact easily with their help.

3.1.4 *Variant/Invariant*

The linguistic concept “variant” is one of the most important in phonetics. It means that people pronounce one and the same sound with small differences - because they are female or male, sick, hangovers, and so on. The main characteristics in the articulation of the sound remain one and same (the invariant), but there are also minor differences (the variants). They determine the numerous ways by which people pronounce one and the same sound.

Another important characteristic of digital signs is the fact that the communicators can multiply their variants quite easily.

Typical example of this is a series of computer-edited images (Fig. 4a, 4b, 4c).



Fig. 4a, 4b, 4c

The human figures in all of these pictures are surrounded by variety of computer generated materials.

3.2 *Semantics*

Semantics is the semiotic science which studies the meanings of signs. It consists of two parts:

- The first one explore different semantic concepts – semantic field; semiosis; intertextuality; zero morpheme; denotation/connotation; diachronia/synchronicity; semiotic compensation; semiotic translation; over-semiotization; redundancy; semiotic idiom, etc.;
- The second one analysis the stylistic figures – comparison; metaphor; metonymy; personification; hyperbola; litotes, etc.

3.2.1 *Semantic Field and Its Digital Dimensions*

Semantic field is the sum of all signs by which communicators can express some phenomenon.

People create and use a lot if signs to express the respective concept, if it is important for them and vice versa. For example, there are about three thousand words in Arabic languages for the camel. The Eskimos use about fifty separate words to communicate the different types of snow. Semantic field of the different illnesses, created and used by the doctors, is very rich in comparison with the semantic field of ordinary people for the same phenomenon.

Each linguistic and semiotic concept is also a communicative approach. Admen use often semantic field as communicative approach in advertising.

Suitable example of this, are 3 ads for mobile phones. These devices are some of the most typical tools of the digital era. In this case, admen used their colours (Fig. 5a, 5b, 5c).



Fig. 5a

The green colour of mobile phone is the sign which stands for ecologically conscious customers (Fig. 5a). That is why admen putted many other objects by which they actualized the semantic field of ecology – articles for sport (bicycles, ping pong rockets); green frogs; green clothes; as well as the image in the monitor – digital green peas. Everything in this image demonstrates that these eco-customers are hipsters.



Fig. 5b

The orange colour of mobile phone is typical for the sport because it is the colour of energy (Fig. 5b). That is why there are many images which constitute semantic field of sport – sport equipment (skate board, ball, etc.); sportswear, and the image in the monitor – a digital skateboard.



Fig. 5c

The pink colour of mobile phone is typical for the girls because it expresses (communicates) the idea of romantics (Fig. 5c). This the reason why admen used semantic field of femininity – pink clothes; pink scooter Vespa; eyewear; puppy; asterisks; hearts, etc., as well as the image in the monitor – digital pink nails.

The semantic field is also the main communicative approach in another three images (Fig. 6a, 6b, 6c).



Fig. 6a, 6b, 6c

Here the colours also determine the choice of the respective objects in each image.

3.2.2 Digital Connotations (Emotional Accumulations)

Two of the basic concepts in semantics are “denotation” and “connotation”. Denotation means non emotional (neutral, “dry”) signs, texts and communications, and connotation – emotional signs, texts and communications.

Admen connoted digitally two photos of car (Fig. 7a, 7b).



Fig 7a, 7b

They did this by adding computer-generated architectural objects. So, the admen expressed emotionally (connoted) the meanings of technological future.

Similar is the effect, done with the help of digital connotations in pictures of sport car (Fig. 8a, 8b).



Fig. 8a, 8b

Here the semiosis (the way by which the signs function) is slightly different. Admen did not put additional artefacts – they only edited digitally the already created photos. By this the connotations of the cutting-edge technologies was transferred to the car’s images.

3.2.3 Digitized metaphors

Metaphor is the stylistic figure of transfer. By its help the communicators assign (relocate) attributes of one object to another one on the basis of common characteristics (similarity).

The admen also create digitally edited metaphors. Five ads of pizza are suitable examples in this regard. These ads communicate the fact that the customers can track on Internet the pizzas' delivery (Fig. 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d, and 9e).

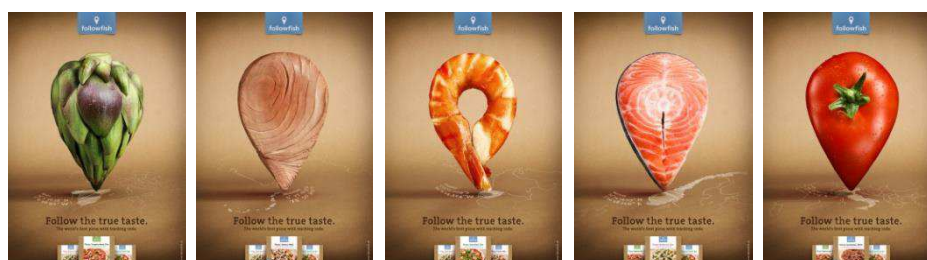


Fig. 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d, 9e

The hungry and impatient pizza lovers can track the delivery of their favourite meal by the help of chip putted in the pizza box.

The admen metaphorized the specific computer sign which show on the computer maps where the pizza is at the specific moment. They used the trope mechanism (the transfer) by assigning characteristics of pizza ingredients – fish, ham, tomatoes and so on to the signs-markers of computer maps.

Similar metaphor had been used in an ad of expensive clock (Fig. 10a, 10b).



Fig. 10a, 10b

The communicators attributed characteristics of a stadium to a clock. The similarities in this case are two – the shapes of the clock and the stadium are coinciding – respectively circle and ellipse. The second connecting characteristic is the movement of time.

The art director edited the clock surface as stadium, divided into sectors for various sports – horse racing, tennis and football. At the same time the admen left the other attributes of the clock – its outer circle with the mechanisms and the arrows.

This way they connected the sport with the clock in a single visual (iconic) text – editing it digitally and metaphorically.

Three digital metaphors, which visualize a football tournament in Detroit – “Bring MLS soccer to Detroit” (Fig. 11a, 11b, 11c), used similar approach.



Fig. 11a, 11b, 11c

The process of metaphorization was the following:

- The admen shot parts of the city early in the morning.;

- Then they photographed the players in a studio with light and tones which are typical for the night.;
- Finally, they combined digitally the different photos.

The stylistic figure in all four pictures is metaphor. The reason is that the admen attributed characteristics of a football field to the streets of Detroit. The four digital metaphors illustrate and support the ad headline – to bring back football in Detroit.

Two ads for e-banking are also created on the basis of digital metaphor (Fig. 12a, 12b).

The admen edited two picture of bank furniture, transferring to them the characteristics of the wi-fi – in order to express the concept of e-banking.



Fig. 12a, 12b

This metaphorical solution is probably not the best. The reason is that e-banking eliminates completely the physical offices. Obviously the physical bank office is very important for the admen who created the two ads. It is due to the fact that the admen continue to think from the point of view of the physical (real) space, and not from the standpoint of digital (virtual) one. Spatial metaphors are also actualized in another three ads for insurance of extreme sports (Fig. 13a, 13b, 13c) – in order to express the idea of security by the help of the images of safe space.



Fig. 13a, 13b, 13c

The athletes exercising these outrageous sports can damage severely their bodies because of the big and sharp stones. That is why the sportsmen need insurance – in order to reduce the financial burden of the expensive hospitals.

For this reason the admen edited the terrifying spaces surrounding the sport adventurers.

They replaced the sharp stones and rocks with soft objects – pillows, teddy bears, soft balls, and so on.

3.2.4 Oppositions

The contrast (opposition, counterpoint) is stylistic figure which is done by connecting two verbal, iconic, etc. signs which have opposite meanings. The contrast is the stylistic figure with the highest dramatic (conflicting) charge. This is very important (crucial) for the success of communications, because the drama is intrinsic part of effective communication.

The admen used this stylistic figure in a digital variant in four ads for insurance (Fig. 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d). The reasons for this are the social networks – some of the brightest manifestations of digital age in media space.

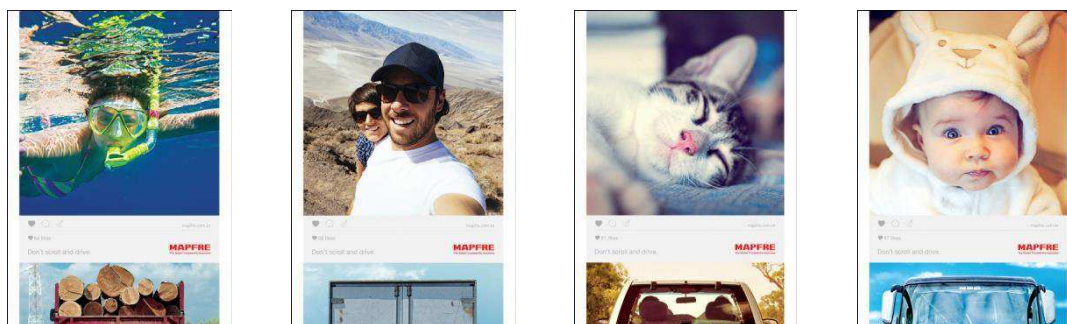


Fig. 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d

The headline of the four ads is “Do not scroll and drive.” The argument is that the drivers could be distracted fatally by the cute web pictures – images of dear friends, babies, kittens, and so on.

They must not look at these sweet images during driving, because the death is near by – huge trucks loaded with logs; big vans; buses, etc. They will smash the inattentive drivers, if they are not careful. This way the admen created stylistic figure visual (iconic) opposition” connecting contradicting (opposite) signs – these of pleasant life with the images of cruel and sudden death.

3.3 Syntactics

Syntactics is the third semiotic branch which studies the different connections. With their help the communicators create the texts.

Connections of stylistic figures – digital metaphors and digital litotes in one and the same stylistic figure.

Some of the most interesting but not explored connections are the combinations of different stylistic figures. Admen relate constantly two or more stylistic figures. They do this all the time because creativity in advertising and in other marketing communications largely depends on the use of stylistic figures.

Litotes is the stylistic figure of understatement (reduction). It is the opposition of hyperbola – the stylistic figure of amplification.

The admen used both digital litotes and digital metaphor in three ads of Russian mobile operator Билайн, (Fig. 15a, 15b, 15c).



Fig. 15a, 15b, 15c

At the beginning, the admen metaphorized the digital signs for the social networks, Skype, etc. in the form of suitcases and bags. After that they reduced (litotized) these metaphorical images.

In this way the admen expressed the idea that a lot of “internet luggage” can be accommodated in a very little space – in the smart phones.

3.4 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the semiotic branch which studies the signs depending on the attitude of people towards reality. The phenomenon is one and the same, but the communicators' attitude to it is different. Communicators use dissimilar, even opposite signs for one and the same thing – depending on these differences.

The concept “appeal” in advertising and other marketing communications is closely related to pragmatics. The appeal is the main psychological drive which attracts customers to the advertised commodity. The appeal reflects the attitudes of customers to reality and this is the main reason why the psychological appeals are intrinsic and very important part of pragmatics.

The power is most important appeal. The reason is that each of the customers on a subconscious level thinks that she/he is the greatest being in the universe.

The three Visa credit cards ads (Fig. 1a, 1b, 1c) are some of the most appropriate examples in this respect. The main argument is that the admen presented the customers as absolute (sublime) winners – with the help of archetypal appeals of power.

3.4.1 Archetype appeals

These are the appeals on subconscious level, which express the idea of power and greatness. They are the most universal and the most attractive appeals for the majority of us.

One financial company used variants of archetype appeals and spatial metaphors in three insurance ads (Fig. 16a, 16b, 16c).



Fig. 16a, 16b, 16c

Admen actualized in a very creative way the archetypal opposition inside/outside. The outer space is dangerous, and the internal space is safe. Protection as psychological phenomenon is closely related to the idea of power.

Because of this the communicators attributed to the outer space (stops of public transport), characteristics of internal spaces – rooms (Fig. 16a), offices (Fig. 16b) and garages (Fig. 16c).

The admen transferred very creatively the characteristics of protected interior spaces to the unprotected, outer spaces. This way they communicated very creatively the need of insurance.

The outer spaces in this case are the real, and the interior spaces, depicted on them, are the virtual ones. There is no equality between the concepts “virtual” and “digital” here. That is, these two concepts are not necessarily synonymous in all communicative contexts.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEORY AND RESEARCH

The people are already in the digital era and the biggest parts of communications are partly or fully digitized. This means that communications and their signs are radically changing.

Shifts are both on content and formal levels.

Digitization at a content level means that the monopoly of addressants (politicians, journalists, admen) with regard to communications is overmastered (or even completely destroyed) and this is the end of unilateral communication.

The addressees (to whom the communication is intended) with the help of social networks start to rule the communication, transforming themselves from passive to active participants in the communication processes.

The signs in the digital surrounding are also changing and these are some of the main trends in this respect:

- The communicators create more signs and texts in shorter time;
- It is much easier for them to edit the signs and the texts;
- The communicators can create more variants of one and the same sign, etc.

As it can be seen, there are many new creative solutions to express the transitions between real and digital signs.

Semiotics and linguistics are highly developed sciences with thousands years of history and experience. On this basis the highly trained semioticians and linguists can analyse easily the new aspects of digital signs, texts and communications.

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