

## POWER OF THE CREATIVE LEXIS IN THE ENGLISH ADVERTISING DISCOURSE: MANIPULATIVE EFFECT

*The research paper deals with the specific lexical units functioning in the English language advertising discourse. The creative lexis as a proper language instrument plays the important role in any ads by means of the words' power. Attention is concentrated on the basic themes: the notion of the creativeness reflected in the works of the foreign ads researchers; eye-catching words' function in an advertisement; classification of the creative elements. The force of the particular lexis is considered to be in the messaging of ads in such a way as to affect the behavior and needs of consumers. For this, advertisement must be original, memorable and suggestive.*

**Key words:** advertisement, creativeness, notion, lexical units, classification, word power.

*У статті розглядаються особливі лексичні одиниці, що функціонують в англomовному рекламному дискурсі. Креативна лексика як правильний інструмент мови відіграє важливу роль в будь-яких рекламних посланнях за рахунок влади слів. Увага зосереджена на основних темах: поняття креативу, яке наводиться в роботах зарубіжних дослідників реклами; слова, які привертають увагу в рекламі; класифікація креативних елементів. Сила такої лексики полягає в передачі привабливих рекламних месиджів з метою впливу на поведінку і потреби споживачів. Для цього реклама повинна бути оригінальною, що запам'ятовується і наводить на роздуми.*

**Ключові слова:** реклама, креативність, поняття, лексична одиниця, класифікація, влада слова.

*В данной статье рассматриваются особые лексические единицы, функционирующие в англоязычном рекламном дискурсе. Креативная лексика как инструмент языка играет важную роль в любых рекламных посланиях за счет власти слов. Внимание сосредоточено на основных темах: понятие креатива, отраженное в работах зарубежных исследователей рекламы; броские слова в рекламе; классификация креативных элементов. Сила такой лексики заключается в передаче привлекательных рекламных посланий с целью влияния на поведение и потребности потребителей. Для этого реклама должна быть оригинальной, запоминающейся и наводящей на размышления.*

**Ключевые слова:** реклама, креативность, понятие, лексическая единица, классификация, власть слова.

Power — the ability or capacity to do something or act in a *particular way* (OxfordDictionary).

English language, without any exaggeration, can be considered the main language of advertising and its dynamic development. It is clear that all other languages adapt to local conditions, they completely repeat means and tools of the English-language ads making up. Thus, the problem of studying the creative lexis in the English-language advertising messages as well as its translation into native languages will not lose its relevance until the trends in the global cultural and economic processes will be specified by the English-language information space. It should be kept in mind when making up bright and catchy ads that advertising does not have cultural value, although it remains in culture and, to some extent, it becomes a part of culture. Moreover advertising has cultural significance, because it

is perceived in a common cultural context and could lead to a change in cultural norms, and, consequently, social traditions.

Considering the role and features of the creative lexis in the English-language advertising message, it needs to be clarified that, in essence, we are dealing with the main source and the basis for the concept of «creative» or «creativity» as it is. J. Sivulka, a historian of American advertising, describes the specificity of that time as follows: «The abundant 50s were the welfare times for advertising. Although not one of the emerging agencies in this decade has become the leader, many advertising organizations have united and opened foreign branches, expanded the range of services provided. The trend towards companies' merging was due to the fact that clients increasingly demanded services like market research, commercial analysis, packaging design development, and the creation of an advertiser's image. It coincided with the emergence of agencies in the international arena, the opening of offices in Canada, Europe, Latin America and other regions» (Sivulka, 2002, p. 334).

It was the English-language advertising in the early fifties that was influenced by the «creative revolution», it was in the English-language advertising space that the notion of «creative» was fixed and acquired an extremely significance. Based on the experience of the English-language advertising, creativity in ads was spread to the advertising sphere in other countries. Up to now, the English-language advertising remains at the forefront of the latest trends, and, most often, when faced with creative in advertising in other languages (including Ukrainian or Russian), we are dealing with the creative processing of already tested on the English-speaking market of creative techniques. Therefore, in our article we draw attention to the opinion of the foreign linguists who concerned themselves with the topic of creativity in the English-language advertising.

Certainly, the notion of «creativity» still remains rather undefined even in the environment of scientists who represent the English-speaking society. Thus, M. Pagsley states that: «One of the maxims of advertising is «without creative». However, this is a very loose rule and can be interpreted in many different ways», rightly pointing out some uncertainty of the term (Pagsley, 1990, p. 1).

British linguist G. Leech, working on the concept and phenomenon of creativity in advertising during the period of the «creative revolution peak» (mid-1960s), pointed to the key role of the play of imagination in making up a creative ad product: «What a copywriter means, if he calls his job creative, is that the preparation of the advertising material calls not only for experience or good judgment, but imagination» (Leech, 1983, p. 1). The same idea is followed by L. Karlsson: «Advertising is about creativity and not about a model with strict steps» (Karlsson, 2007, p. 41), which cites in her work the opinion of D. Jobber on this issue: «The design of the advertisement has a huge effect on the result of the campaign. Advertising is a campaign that sets high demands on the creativity and to put all of this within a frame of models would kill the creativity» (Karlsson, 2007, p. 16).

One of the most significant theorists of the creativity in advertising' notion is the American copywriter and the founder of a number of successful advertising agencies David Ogilvy. His point of view on the question of creativity is of more practical

connotation, but it will be useful for determining the psychological and functional aspect of creativity in the English-language advertising. The researcher (D. Ogilvy) claims: «If the advertisement does not help sell, then it is not creative» (Ogilvy, 2006, p. 24). This statement definitely points out the key role of creativity in the success of an advertisement.

On the other hand, D. Ogilvy emphasizes the need to subordinate the creative element to a defined functional role within the framework of an advertising message: «When I create an advertising product, I do not even need an ordinary consumer to delight the creativity of the product, that is, its extraordinary creative excellence. All I need to be done that the buyer would be interested so much that he comes and purchases the promotional product» (Ogilvy, 2006, p. 7). This frank thought of D. Ogilvy again confirms the thesis of the manipulative characteristics of the creative element in advertising.

Thus, we come up to the main issue of our article. What does creativity mean in advertising when making up a message? The thorough answer to this question is provided by G. Leech: «But what does it mean to be creative in the use of language? Copywriters have to use their imagination to create something new and striking in order to make people remember their ads. And one of the most effective ways of doing this is to violate the orthographic, grammatical, lexical, semantic or contextual rules of the language. However, violation by itself does not make an advertisement creative. The minimum condition of creativeness is the constructive use of violation, whereby some special kind of effect is conveyed» (Leech, 1983, p. 22).

Based on the opinion of G. Leech, we can say that creativity of the copywriter in making up an effective advertising message involves a deliberate violation of language norms, the widespread use of stylistic techniques, a kind of «language play». The purpose of all these techniques is in achieving a certain psychological effect, which makes the advertisement possible to manipulate with the consciousness of the recipient. The creative lexis in this case can be considered as the whole set of lexis, which gives this effect.

It is the violation of language norms in ads that R. Kannan and S. Tyagi speak in their work: «The language of advertising is, of course, normally very positive and emphasizes why one product stands out in comparison with another. Advertising language may not always be «correct» language in the normal sense» (R. Kannan, 2013, p. 4), once indicating the estimative lexis of advertising.

C. Lundmark, recalling the creative effect, points to its contact-setting role, the function of attracting attention, as well as on the possible informative potential:

«As far as the creative effect is concerned, it may attract people's attention, create humor, or provide information or some sort of comment about the product» (Lundmark, 2005, p. 4).

R. Kannan specifies the semantic aspect of the creative lexis that lets us build creative (creativeness) on allusion and fine points of semantic values: «The English language is known for its extensive vocabulary. Where many other languages have only one or two words which carry a particular meaning, English may have five or six. Moreover, the meanings of these five or six words may differ very slightly and

in a very subtle way. It is important to understand the connotation of a word. Connotation is the feeling or ideas that are suggested by a word, rather than the actual meaning of the word» (Kannan, 2013, p. 3).

In her investigation of the advertising lexis, as well as the creative use of it, A. Lehrer gave special attention to the neologisms and their role in the advertising message: «Many of the neologisms are witty; they involve word play, such as puns and allusions, as well as the puzzle of novelty. Therefore, when the hearer figures out the intended meaning, he or she is amused and perhaps feels clever for having «gotten» the point. As a result, the hearer has a positive attitude toward the speech event and possibly towards the speaker and the referent of the neologism» (Lehrer, 2003, p. 370). Of particular interest is the psychological effect of the collision with the neologism, subconscious human desire to find out the meaning of unfamiliar words that leads to the increased probability to memorize the messages: «It is desirable for the response not to be automatic. When we automatically and normally process language, we focus on the meaning, and after recording the input, we remember the gist but usually forget the actual words in the original message. Since clever neologisms require effort to figure out and process, we are most likely to remember the form» (Lehrer, 2003, p. 380).

M. Pugsley, in turn, lists a number of techniques that can be considered as creative solutions: «violation or deviation in terms of exploitation of multiple meaning and homonymy, invention of new lexical items, unorthodox combination of lexical items, and figurative language» (Pugsley, 1990, p. 33).

C. Lundmark, in the study of creative effect, notes features of metaphors: «Many ads are based on conceptual metaphors that are more or less conventional, but the degree to which that metaphor is exploited creatively can vary from ad to ad» (Lundmark, 2005, p. 59) and polysemy: «One effect of the creative use of polysemous words is that of humor, more specifically in the form of puns» (Lundmark, 2005, p. 65). In the end, C. Lundmark binds the function of metaphors and polysemy to the common system, which creates a versatile creative effect: «To sum up, the creative elaboration of a conventional metaphor may on the one hand result in new understanding of some sort, either in the form of a claim made about the advertised product, a problem that may be solved by the product, or even a novel conceptualization of the product. On the other hand, it may also involve humor, often in the form of a pun that occurs when attention is drawn to a non-salient sense of a polysemous word, an idiomatic expression, or a metaphorical expression, which then leads to ambiguity and tension» (Lundmark, 2005, p. 190).

M. Pugsley describes the scientific approach of G. Leech, who turned in the search of creativity to the literary experience and, of course, to the stylistic techniques as the most expressive instruments: «What does being creative with language mean? In his search for an answer G. Leech turns to the language of poetic and prose literature because this variety breaks the rules and conventions of linguistic usage which limit the means of expression» (Pugsley, 1990, p. 2).

At this stage, we have every reason to say that the role of the creative lexis in the English advertising message is extremely important. In fact in the process of the

«creative revolution» bare and purely informative ads with crude slogans that «shout» (press to come) is changed to a bright and diverse messages that used the full range of expressive possibilities of the English language to achieve the desired effect. This has led to a greater role of advertising in American life, and in a slightly lesser degree in the English society and a greater penetration of the advertising phenomenon in mass culture. Despite the development of audiovisual expression means it is lexical component, and more specifically, the creative lexis, is thus the key to the successful achievement of the goal of advertising. R. Kannan is of the similar opinion: «Visual content and design in advertising have a very great impact on the consumer, but it is language that helps people to identify a product and remember it» (Kannan, 2013, p. 3).

The next item of the paper concerns means of creative lexis classification made by researchers-advertisers. They are cited below.

Firstly, since we study the creative lexis as it is and its manipulative effect in different languages it should be mentioned that under the creative lexis, we understand the full range of lexis, which is involved in the certain techniques specific to advertising texts, which can be described as «creative». On the one hand it is as purely lexical means (neologisms, archaisms, jargon, etc.) and the full range of stylistic means. The psychological «creative effect» combines them and that help to achieve manipulative advertising effect (to a certain way) to influence a consumer (a recipient) at most by natural and imperceptible way. Thus, the creative lexis performs a key role in the advertising message, where beyond its artistic and colorful form a sober, realistic and practical calculation of obtaining maximum effect is hidden (Zirka, 2016). In the end, we are dealing with a number of classifications of techniques and methods. Despite the lack of comprehensive classification of the creative lexis as it is, many researchers referred to the problem of creative techniques classification in advertising, realization of creative potential in grammar, syntax, typology ads headlines according to the manipulative effect and etc.

From the linguistic point of view the classification of creative techniques according to the well-known specialist of marketing — A. Crompton — is quite interesting. He, first of all, describes *the psychological aspect of impact*, while we can see the classical stylistic techniques that stand after his classification. He names such phenomenon as «a conflict (collision) of words»: «The effect of the collision of words does not occur if they do not bear any thought. For example, I could write a «cabbage sky» by putting the two words together in the first (and, hopefully in the last) time, but since they speak about nothing you simply drop them as nonsense. However, as soon as you know what you want to say, the collision of words becomes a part of the mechanics of such a statement» (Crompton, 1998, p. 94). In the form of examples of «conflict of words», A. Crompton suggests the following phrases: «*soft whiskey, unhurried ketchup, kids' central heating (hot cereal for breakfast), try your hair for thirst, table whiskey, cozy taste, pajamias pajamas*» (Crompton, 1998, p. 94–95). That means we deal with metaphors, personification, neologisms, violations of language norms, etc. The researcher mentions «the play

with letters», which in turn proves to be alliteration, assonance, rhymes. Under the «repetition» the parallel patterns are guessed (Crompton, 1998, p. 95).

Dr. R. Kannan selects a number of techniques that are characterized as means to achieve a creative effect. While studying these techniques it appears to make a conclusion that more often the question is about perfectly notable stylistic means.

R. Kannan selects the following techniques:

*Hyperbole* — exaggeration, often by use of adjectives and adverbs.

A limited range of *evaluative adjectives* includes *new, clean, white, real, fresh, right, natural, big, great, slim, soft, wholesome, improved* etc.

*Neologisms* may have novelty impact, e.g. *Beanz Meanz, Heinz, Cookability, Schoweppervescence, Tangoed, Wonderfuel ...* etc.

Long noun phrases, frequent use of pre and post modifiers for descriptions.

Short sentences for impact on the reader. This impact is especially clear at the beginning of a text, often using bold or large type for the «Headline» or «slogan» to capture the attention of the reader.

*Ambiguity* is common. This may make a phrase memorable and re-readable. Ambiguity may be syntactic (the grammatical structure) or semantic (puns for example).

*Weasel words* are often used. These are words which suggest a meaning without actually being specific. One type is the open comparative: «Brown's Boots Are Better» (posing the question «better than what?»); another type is the bogus superlative: «Brown's Boots are Best» (posing the question «rated alongside what?»).

*Euphemisms*: «Clean Round the Bend» for a toilet cleaner avoids comment on «unpleasant» things. The classic example is «B. O.» for «body odor» (in itself a euphemism for «smelly person»).

*Avoidance of negatives* — advertising normally emphasizes the positive side of a product.

*Simple and Colloquial language*: «*It ain't half good*» to appeal to ordinary people, though it is in fact often complex and deliberately ambiguous.

*Familiar language*: use of second person pronouns to address an audience and suggest a friendly attitude.

*Repetition* of the brand name and the slogan, both of which are usually memorable by virtue of alliteration, *finger of fudge, the best four by four by far*;

*Rhyme* — *mean machine, the cleanest clean it's ever been*;

*Rhythm*- *drinka pinta milka day*;

*Syntactic parallelism* — *stay dry, stay happy* ;

*Association* — *fresh as a mountain stream*» (Kannan, 2013, p. 5–6).

Finally, let's turn our attention to two marketing models mentioned in the L. Carlsson's work, which can also be used within the framework of the classification of creative lexis and the classification of creative effect. That is, on the AIDA model and the Lavidge and Steiner's Hierarchy-of-effects model.

AIDA is a behavioral model that has as purpose to make sure that an advertisement raise awareness, stimulate interest, and leads the customer to desire and eventually action. The model is seen as a highly persuasive and is said to often unconsciously affect on our thinking.

For an advertisement to be effective it has to be one that:

1. Commands *Attention*
2. Leads to *Interest* in the product
3. And thence to *Desire* to own or use the product
4. and then finally leads to *Action* (Carlsson, 2007, p. 12).

Lavidge and Steiner's Hierarchy-of-effects model is created to show the process, or steps, that an advertiser assumes that customers pass through in the actual purchase process.

1. Awareness.
2. Knowledge.
3. Liking.
4. Preference.
5. Conviction.
6. Purchase.

It should be passed in a linear way but also recognizes the different levels of consideration that can take place depending on the products (Carlsson, 2007, p. 15–16).

creative lexis of advertising messages covers the widest range of manifestations of a person life, but regardless of advertising messages subject, the functional part of creative lexis is defined quite clearly. Thus, using the terms of creative lexis creative elements in ads messages we rely not on some sort of thematic, or lexical component, but namely on the functional role of these elements in the text.

Classification of the creative lexis as it is doesn't exist, and this is not strange, considering the absence of the fixed form of this term in Linguistics. Classification, used in this work is synthesis of a number of classifications that allow evaluate the creative element with the help of a number of characteristics. Thus the AIDA marketing, psychological classification and Lavidge-Steiner's Model were used as well as the classification by the stylistic function, and the linguistic qualification of the phenomenon in the form of structural characteristics.

AIDA and Lewis-Steiner' models give an opportunity to assess the psychological and marketing role of the creative element in the ads message, to reveal patterns of creative lexis use for certain purposes. Estimation of the stylistic function makes it possible to analyze the frequency of stylistic techniques use, and as it turned out, their integral and key role in the text of modern advertising. The structural characteristic gives an idea of parts of speech mostly used in the creative elements and implementation of the creative effect by means of words, phrases or sentences.

Linguistic data performed on the basis of the classification allowed to make definite conclusions. The creative effect from the point of view of the structure is more often realized within the framework of the separate sentences or the corpus. Creative lexis is mostly expressed with the help of nouns, verbs and adjectives.

Modern advertising is an integral part of the actual linguistic culture. Its role and influence on the formation of the mass media sphere is extremely large, especially taking into account the specificity of the information society and global information networks. In its development, the texts of advertising messages went from the simplest declarative or manipulative designs to complex systems that interact with the recipient at all levels. One of the most important elements of such a system is the

creative lexis. It is due to the use of the creative element the most successful and cult advertisement is stood out among other advertising messages, which ensures the actual success of the communicative purpose of advertising as such.

Research of the English creative lexis in advertising messages will not lose its relevance in the near future. Since the problem goes beyond traditional linguistics in many respects it depends on extra-linguistic factors. Such concepts as psychological effect, marketing component, creativity should be considered subsequently. However, the study of the material allowed to reveal a number of regularities and to identify a high degree of interchangeability of the concept of «creativity». It is obvious that the theme requires further working out and study using topical, contemporary examples of advertising messages.

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