

Olga Gerus  
Lviv National Polytechnic University

## Value aspects of modern Ukrainian advertising discourses

### ABSTRAKT

Artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie specyfiki wartości społecznych pojawiających się we współczesnym dyskursie reklamowym na Ukrainie i wpływ reklamy na ich kształtowanie się. Autorka wyjaśnia pojęcie dyskursu reklamowego w oparciu o wybrane literatury przedmiotu oraz przedstawia własny schemat teoretyczny i metodologiczny umożliwiający jego analizę. Odwołuje się do metodologii badawczej KAD. Według autorki, reklama wpływa na kreowanie nowych relacji społecznych, nowoczesnych form wiadomości oraz nowych wartości. Stanowi potencjalne źródło do wiadomości społecznych, które kierują zachowaniami jednostek.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: reklama, pole społeczne reklamy, wartości, dyskurs reklamy na Ukrainie, krytyczna analiza dyskursu (KAD)

Perhaps the most popular and studied phenomenon of modern world is mass culture. Unlike traditional, which was based on religious tenets and doctrines of faith, mass culture is based on commercialized semantic and symbolic systems that are main producers of meanings, styles and lifestyles. In modern fast developing world commercial advertising has become an integral part of this mass culture. Confined to the locality of the action, advertising creates cultural forms, images, facilities, value-based judgments that become widespread component of social value system, and this way constitute the specific mechanisms of socialization<sup>1</sup>.

Modern advertising provides information about the outside world, relaying values of the society where it is distributed. It sets benchmarks of sociopolitical action forms and iconic models, usual for cultural paradigm of this society<sup>2</sup>. Today, it is regarded as one of the most controversial phenomena. As a part of all social activity aspects, advertising has become an integral part of reality, one of the infrastructures

<sup>1</sup> D.Feng, P.Wignell, *Intertextual voices and engagement in TV advertisements*, "Visual Communication", 2008, vol. 10 (4), p. 565.

<sup>2</sup> I. ..., 2010, p. 11 – 12.

of modern media<sup>3</sup> and got reflected in the various fields of knowledge. Thus, the aim of this study is to shed light on the problem concerning the advertising and society – how modern advertising influence social values and behavior patterns.

Under the present conditions advertising has assumed the character of social mark<sup>4</sup>. Nowadays, with the help of advertising techniques visual images and characters have moved in a wider context of social relations. So, that advertising becomes a kind of value-semantic model, the world of ideas, goals and aspirations<sup>5</sup>. This broader context of understanding advertising allows regarding it as an important mechanism of symbolic exchange between agents of social influence and social actors in the process of socialization. So, we can define advertising as a sociocultural phenomenon, a compiler of social meanings, values, norms and behavior patterns.

Advertising has progressed beyond the use of simple techniques for announcing the availability of products or services. It has ventured into the domain of persuasion, and its rhetorical categories have become omnipresent in contemporary social discourse. Because of the growing effectiveness of its persuasion techniques, advertising has become entrenched into social discourse by virtue of its wide spread diffusion throughout society.

This way we can interpret advertising as a form of symbolic field that consists of a wide range of other types of discourses<sup>6</sup>. In the light of social fields theory (by P. Bourdieu) advertising generates certain values and norms of behavior, thus 'programming' people to a certain type of actions. The field of advertising creates a special symbolic and communicative discourse, where socialization occurs through a transaction values, norms, practices, behavioral responses and social behavior patterns, unique to this field.

Optimal theoretical and methodological scheme of discursive and social practices formation in the field of commercial advertising, is based on the theory of P. Bourdieu's social fields theory and critical discourse analysis (CDA) by Norman Fairclough.

Combining two approaches of CDA and the theory of social fields we can say that the use of language constitutes social identities, social relationships and systems of knowledge and beliefs. However, in addition, language itself is socially prescribed, namely is shaped by other social practices and structures<sup>7</sup>.

In general, the term *discourse* varies from a narrow linguistic descriptions, according to which discourse is defined as 'a coherent speech utterances (written or oral, owned by one or more speaker)', to the macro, which wider understanding

<sup>3</sup> . . . , 1999, p. 5 – 6.

<sup>4</sup> D.Feng, P.Wignell, *Intertextual voices* ..., p. 568.

<sup>5</sup> G. Cook, *The Discourse of Advertising*, London, 2005, p. 20 – 22.

<sup>6</sup> . . . (Sociologie de l'espace social), . . . ( . . . ), 2007, p. 565.

<sup>7</sup> R. Wodak, *Disorders of Discourse*, London, 1996, p. 11.

where discourse is determined as theoretical ideological clusters – discursive formations that systematize knowledge and experience<sup>8</sup>.

That is why we have to consider not only verbal constructs of advertising and its symbolic impact, but also to consider how discourses of advertising affects socialization, so the best is the definition of *discourse* proposed by N. Fairclough. He defines discourse as 'language use as social practice', other words, as socio-cultural phenomenon<sup>9</sup>.

CDA theory ascribes discourse a special role in the social world construction<sup>10</sup>. According to this we can understand *discourse* as a certain sociolinguistic phenomenon that shapes the social world (the world of human interaction) with a certain range of values<sup>11</sup>.

CDA is an interpretive and explanatory method. It provides a systematic methodology and the relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and relations of power. Interpretations are always dynamic and opened to new contexts and new information.

Field of commercials is a combination of interrelated created by agents (advertisers) discourses that have a direct impact on social development of advertising actors (recipients). In this process socialization manifests itself in actors' perception, learning and modifying offered discourses, forming ideas and beliefs, social patterns, according to their individual beliefs, logic and consciousness. Socialization influence of advertising discourses is mainly manifested within the discursive practices at the individual level.

Individual discursive practices become social as a result of social communication and interaction of actors. A transfer of learned behaviors, social patterns i.e. discourse in general occurs during the act of social communication. Thus, a system of social group expectations and dispositions is formed.

Table 1 presents the three-dimensional scheme of the CDA.

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<sup>8</sup> R. Wodak, op. cit., p. 127.

<sup>9</sup> N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (London, 1992), p. 201–202.

<sup>10</sup> N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (London, 1992), p. 90–95.

<sup>11</sup> N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (London, 1992), p. 197.

Table 1. Critical discourse analysis scheme of commercial TV advertising

Materials involved for research			
Content formation	← Intersemiotics → Mini genres, components (linguistic, visual and / or others)		
	Language tools	Visual tools	Audio tools
	← Intersemiotics → Discourse		
	Discourse links	Intervisual	Interaudial
	← Intersemiotics → Grammar		
	words, utterances	scene episode image (images, characters, figures, events, historical facts, time, location, etc.)	style effects intonation sound
Emotional formation	← Intersemiotics → Materiality		
The discursive practices analysis			
The social practices analysis			

According to the theoretical and methodological schemes methodology the research consist of<sup>12</sup>:

1. The study of the advertising as a discourse that affects the recipient, based on the CDA.
2. The discursive practices analysis. Basically this is the study of the recipients' discursive practices implementation. Data collection will occur with the use of qualitative research methods – individual standardized full-depth interviews using incentive material. Here qualitative methods allow analyzing how the proposed advertising discourses are approved in the minds of recipients, how they affect individual values and allows drawing conclusions about whether they support formed in society values, principles and standards.
3. The social practices analysis. This means the investigation of the transforming discourses process in specific groups, analysis of their prevalence across study the dynamics of values and attitudes in society. Here one should use quantitative research methods (e.g., formalized personal interview).

So, the task of discourse analysis is to identify the cultural aspects and determine their role in the persuasive advertisements<sup>13</sup>. Here we should admit that researching of discourses in advertising can not only identify and decode those ideological

<sup>12</sup> K. L. O'Halloran, *Systemic functional-multimodal discourse analysis (SF-MDA): constructing ideational meaning using language and visual imagery*, "Visual Communication", 2008, vol. 7 (4), p. 454 – 456.

<sup>13</sup> Hosney M. El-daly, *Towards an Understanding of the Discourse of Advertising*, "Review of Research with Special Reference to the Egyptian Media African Nebula", 2011, 3, p. 25.

appeals contained in advertisements, but also to determine their impact on digestion and the formation of certain values and cultural patterns.

The study of the advertising as a discourse that affects recipients was conducted in June – November 2013 in Lviv (Ukraine) based on CDA methodology. The output of the sample was carried out in two stages. In the first phase we analyzed major television advertisers with the highest ratings of advertising costs. The next step of constructing the sample was the selection of advertising samples according to its' broadcast frequency. In general 292 TV advertising texts were analyzed

The survey found that in general discourses of advertising include the promotion of values common for society. This indicates social determination of selected discourses. As a rule, all discourses are quite clearly defined, often determined by the context of an advertising message.

According to CDA methodological scheme discourses of Ukrainian commercial advertising are as follows (see Table 2)<sup>14</sup>.

Table 2. Discourses scheme of Ukrainian commercial advertising

Discourse names	Value aspects of discourses
«free of charge»	"Free of charge" value
«natural»	Values of healthy lifestyle and a healthy natural food
«patriotic»	Patriotic values
«paternalism»	The need for a strong authoritative leader
«family»	Family values
«hedonistic»	Promotion of high social status, secured a comfortable life, higher good physical, mental, moral and aesthetic pleasure
«history»	Importance of the history, traditions, rules, etc.
«innovation»	Development and use of new technologies, presentation of new products and the latest innovations

'Free of Charge Discourse' - perpetuate the stereotype of normality and acceptability of phenomenon of 'free of charge' products and services. Among all others this discourse is the most numerous, which to some extent is inherent in each of the analyzed texts. The main source of this type of discourse is advertising of mobile phones operators, financial structures, banks and etc. Thus, advertisers emphasize the realistic effects of 'free of charge' notion and perpetuate the stereotype of its normality and acceptability for Ukrainian society. In the texts they operate on such terms: 'finance', 'no commission', 'cheap', 'discounts', 'promotions', 'gifts', 'price', '%', 'credit', 'zero', 'free', etc. We can assume that this discourse forms in society rather specific 'free of charge' value – peculiar idea that there are some things that people have owned for granted.

<sup>14</sup> The study was conducted in June - November 2013 in Lviv (Ukraine), based on CDA methodology. Sample size – 292 TV advertising, selected by the frequency of broadcasting.

The other one important for Ukrainian society is 'Discourse of Paternalism'. This type of discourse has a hidden form. It is produced not directly but covertly. 'Discourse of Paternalism' is intended to support the existence of the stereotype of a 'strong authoritative leader' to guarantee security and meet the needs of citizens. It is manifested in the use of the image of a strong and reliable partner, and in the use of words and phrases: 'to take care about', 'reliable, caring, concern', 'I will always be with you', '...we attended so that your loved ones were always with you'.

Common to many of the analyzed texts is 'Family Discourse'. Generally, this discourse is totally positive, as using image of a happy family it provides an understanding of the family as the essential objective highest human values.

Key features in the 'Discourse of Natural' is the use of words and images of natural and ecological products: 'safe', 'environmental', 'precious gift of nature', 'of natural origin', 'nanotechnology' and more. Overall, this discourse is focused on attracting the attention of consumers to quality products, forming installation on healthy lifestyle, healthy natural food, etc.

'Patriotic Discourse' involves promoting patriotic values, including pro-Ukrainian values. Particularly this type of discourse acutely raises in November, 2013, in the context of recent social and political situation in Ukraine. It is manifested in the use of the image of the Cossacks, paraphrasing folk sayings, such as: 'They say that our house is on the edge. Of course, it is to be the first to meet guests'; 'Remember who you were. Feel who you are. You are the son of Ukraine. And your will is your fate. And your power is in your blood... Cossack Council'; 'When it stopped, when the question of how the country gets the ball rolled... We haven't turned off engines...'

'Hedonistic Discourse' promotes a comfortable secure life, higher good physical, spiritual, moral, aesthetic pleasure. It is manifested in images and words: 'temptation', 'pleasure', 'rest', 'you deserve it', '...created for me', 'selected', 'perfect', '? 1', 'best', 'all the best starts with you', 'precious gift', etc.

'Discourse of Innovation' is appointed to promote the use of new technologies, presentation of the latest innovations and new products: 'modern', 'new generation', 'just ahead', 'time is changing with innovations'.

'Discourse of History' consists of two similar discourses – 'Discourse of Traditions' and 'Discourse of Nostalgia'. Both of them emphasize the importance of history, but differ in the manner of its interpretation. This way 'Discourse of Traditions' focuses on the benefits of the past, their impact on the present and the importance of preserving traditions. In return 'Discourse of Nostalgia' depicts nostalgic return to the past, reconstruction of historical events, styles and episodes. For example, 'Discourse of Traditions' finds its verbal expression in words 'legend', 'history', 'king', 'traditions', 'in ancient times', 'our roots'. 'Discourse of Nostalgia' combines vivid images and visual images of the past using slogans: 'Our Juice – originally from childhood', 'Feel the mood of era'. Summarizing, these discourses can be characterized as 'Discourse of Time', because time is a major criterion in their definition.

After analyzing the survey data we can state that modern Ukrainian advertising is targeted to meet the social demands of the population by implementing and maintaining values and standards specific for Ukrainian society.

A number of discourses are operating in the field of advertising. These discourses are interrelated<sup>15</sup>. They form a field of social values and affect values already established in society. Advertising discourses such as 'family' and 'paternalism' or 'history' and 'patriotic' ones suggest that these discourses are supported by society, and are operating as its integral part.

Besides, while examining discourses researcher should pay particular attention to the context in which this discourse is formed and functions as advertising discourses, like any others, are dynamic entities that change according to the time and the state of the society where they function. For example, events in society, dominant values and behavioral patterns can cause and construct discourses. This proves that on one hand advertising is the 'mirror' of social relations, but on the other – their producers. The vivid example is an interrelation of social events in Ukraine in November 2013 and dominant at this time "Patriotic Discourse".

In general, advertising discourses are oriented to the state of society, and in accordance they are relevant for the society substantive elements of its culture.

Other words, symbolic field of advertising generates a special symbolic and communicative discourse, during which socialization occurs through a transaction of values, norms, practices and behavioral responses and social behavior patterns, learning the implementation of which is the subject for further research.

#### Value aspects of modern Ukrainian advertising discourses Summary

This article reveals peculiarities of social values functioning in the discursive field of commercial advertising. The author has worked out the theoretical and methodological discourse analysis scheme, explains the concept of advertising discourse. In the article the influence of advertising upon the formation of social values is featured. There have been held an empirical analysis of advertising discourse field. The main point of the article is highlighting the peculiarities of value types of discourses prevalent in the field of commercial advertising.

Key words: advertising, social field of advertising, values, Ukrainian advertising discourses, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

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<sup>15</sup> M. Pajnik, P. Lesjak-Tušek, *Observing Discourses of Advertising: Mobitel's Interpellation of Potential Consumers*, "Journal of Communication Inquiry", 2002, vol. 26 (3), p. 277 – 280.