**JIHOČESKÁ UNIVERZITA V ČESKÝCH BUDĚJOVICÍCH**

Pedagogická fakulta

Katedra anglistiky

Diplomová práce

# Intertextuality and Neologisms in Printed Advertising

Intertextualita a neologismy v tištěné reklamě

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2012

## Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci na téma *Intertextuality and Neologsims in Printed Advertising* vypracovala samostatně pouze s použitím pramenů uvedených v seznamu citované literatury.

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V Českých Budějovicích 30. dubna 2012 Pavla Drengubáková

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Mgr. Jana Kozubíková Šandová, Ph.D., for her patient guidance, invaluable comments and constant encouragement. My special thanks belong to my dear friend Lucien Holmes, for his editorial comments and language supervision.

## Abstract

This thesis deals with intertextuality and neologisms in printed advertising. In the theoretical part, some basic characteristics of advertising discourse, with focus on linguistic features, are introduced. Furthermore, the concepts of intertextuality and essential word-formation processes are described. The practical part is based on an analysis of a corpus of printed advertisements containing intertextuality and neologisms. The aim of the present thesis is to introduce these two phenomena as sophisticated approaches in the current advertising discourse. Furthermore, the advertisements are described and interpreted from the semantic viewpoint with their possible restrictions and challenges mainly towards non-native speakers of English.

## Anotace

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá intertextualitou a neologismy v tištěné reklamě. V teoretické části jsou uvedeny základní charakteristiky reklamního diskurzu se zaměřením na jazykové prostředky. Dále je popsán koncept intertextuality a základní slovotvorné procesy. Praktická část je založena na analýze korpusu tištěných reklam, které obsahují intertextualitu a neologismy. Cílem této diplomové práce je představit tyto jevy jako sofistikované přístupy v současném reklamním diskurzu. Reklamy jsou dále popsány a interpretovány ze sémantického hlediska s ohledem na možná omezení a výzvy, které představují zejména pro nerodilé mluvčí angličtiny.

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# 1. Introduction

Since advertising is an omnipresent phenomenon in our society that can hardly be avoided nowadays, it is by many people often regarded as something undesirable. Yet whether we like it or not, promoting goods and services has undoubtedly become an inseparable part of popular culture. Thus, it can be viewed from many different perspectives and raise different attitudes. As I have always been extremely interested in how language works in real life, I have chosen the language of advertising as the focus of my thesis.

When gathering the body of examples for the purpose of this work, my main aim was to find such advertisements that actively engage the receiver in a meaningful way. Thus, I was not interested in simple adverts that say, for instance, "Four out of five doctors agree: you should buy this product." My primary objective was to create a corpus of advertisements the decoding of which presents a challenge for the receiver.

As the title of this work reveals, my research has indicated two techniques used by advertisers that meet the above mentioned criterion. Therefore, the main aim of this thesis is to present intertextuality and neologisms as sophisticated approaches in current advertising discourse. Another objective is to describe and interpret the meanings conveyed in the advertisements under investigation, with their possible restrictions that mainly regard non-native speakers of English. When interpreting the advertisements, I was considering myself as the receiver. However, I had to think not merely as a bilingual receiver, but to suppose how others would perceive them as well.

It would be wrong to say that this thesis is strictly divided into a theoretical and practical part, because my intention is to present these in an interconnected manner. The theoretical framework on advertising discourse, adopted from Goddard, Cook, Myers et al., will provide some chosen concepts of the language of advertising, as presented by these authors. However, I will focus my attention on the corpus, the core of this thesis, presenting intertextuality and neologisms contained in the advertisements as up-to-date advertising approaches, as opposed to those suggested by the aforementioned authors.

Last but not least, I will try to show why intertextuality and neologisms are commonly used features in today's advertising discourse and to explain the possible challenges, as well as enjoyment they might bring to the receiver.

# 2. Understanding Adverts

Within the theoretical framework of this thesis, the main focus will be dedicated to the linguistic features of printed advertising and to the development of advertising discourse.

However, it stands to reason that the language of advertisements cannot possibly be examined in isolation from their other elements. Thus, the overall effectiveness of an advertising message has to be observed as a result of a complex interplay between linguistic and non-linguistic means. Regardless of how the communication occurs (unless it is an image alone), the advertisement must be understood in terms of language, whether the language is overt or implied.

Goddard states that "the terms "advert" and "advertising" have, at their root, a Latin word "advertere," meaning "turn towards" (2002: 9). The main aim of advertising is unquestionably to attract the receivers' attention and persuade them to buy the advertised product or service. To achieve this, advertisers use a variety of methods, from subtle to direct, from rhetorical to imperative, from abstract to practical. In all of these ways, however, understanding the intended language plays the crucial role. Therefore, advertising should be perceived as an act of communication between the sender and the receiver of the message. However, the language used in ads has its specific function which, with regard to the above mentioned aims, differs from standard language use in everyday communication. Let us now examine advertising as discourse, that is, in the contexts of language, groupings and communication. Afterwards we shall examine these elements individually.

In general, communication, especially what relies on the written word, may be sorted into groups. These groups all have particular signifying stock images, phrases or forms of delivery. Within prose, for example, a receiver may easily distinguish between science fiction and western, a novel or a screenplay. Within poetry, how the piece is presented often determines its group: even if a haiku and a sonnet addressed the same theme, it is unlikely that they would be sorted together. Limitations of the form create important associations in the receiver's mind.

Despite being lexically based, advertisements fit neither in poetry nor prose. Though it is true that they engage the receiver in a similar process, as we shall see, advertisements, no matter how creative or different, tend to be viewed as messages in between content. This position gives them well-defined boundaries, but also makes

them unable to break beyond their own format. In newspapers and magazines, the two-page ad is rare. On radio and TV, ads run for thirty or sixty seconds. Longer is rare. The surrounding material (a fashion magazine, a sports program) may select thematically similar adverts, but receivers would be very unlikely to confuse the advert with the program. In this way, ads do not complement, but are rather slaves of the genre which surrounds them.

## *2.1 Classification of Adverts*

The question of what an advert is should not occur before we attempt to appreciate how they have been classified. Authors who deal with advertising have come up with different classifications of ads, based on various points of view and aims. Let us have a closer look at how Dyer, Cook and Bovée and Arens categorize advertising according to its functions and targets. Dyer (1982: 4-5) provides the following division:

- **Trade and technical advertisements** are usually restricted to special interest magazines like Hi-Fi News, Amateur Gardener or Engineering Today. They are aimed at experts, professionals or hobbyists. Most trade advertising is informative and useful.
- **Prestige, business and financial advertisements** are designed to promote public confidence and favourable business images. Such advertising is not usually intended to influence sales directly. One will often see ads on television for such enterprises as the giant petrochemical firms.
- **Small ads** are usually straightforward and informative and have long since been relegated to the small print of the classified sections of newspapers.
- **Government and charity advertising** is usually non-profit making, but often uses the persuasive techniques of commercial advertising.

While these are helpful, the focus is very narrowly on placement, or where we might expect to find them. Cook (2002: 14-16), on the other hand, does not classify according to categories, but rather classifies advertising according to components:

- **medium** – refers to such different means of mass communication as the printed book, newspapers and magazines, radio, television, and the Internet.

- **product** – here Cook points out that not all ads sell product or services. As well as product ads, there are also non-product ads, including for example, those for charities, political parties or various public awareness campaigns.
- **technique** – Cook distinguishes between the *hard-sell* and *soft-sell* ad. He states that hard selling makes a direct appeal, whereas soft selling relies more on mood than on the implication that life will be better with the advertised product.
- **consumer –** certain products are more likely to be bought by men than by women, by the rich, by a certain age group etc.

Finally, Bovée and Arens (1992: 8-16) provide a classification by four main criteria, which reflect both the idea of components and placement, which the other two models contained individually:

- **by target audience** – consumer and business advertising (industrial, trade, professional, agricultural)
- **by geographic area** – international, national, regional and local advertising
- **by purpose** – product, non-product advertising, commercial and non-commercial advertising, action and awareness advertising
- **by medium** – print, broadcast, out-of home, direct-mail advertising

These can help us see that adverts can be divided along many lines. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of particular adverts and campaigns on the receiver, then, we will need to pay some more attention to the discourse, or how adverts can be grouped by sent and received content, which all three of these classifications fail to mention, and which is most important for our thesis.

## *2.2 Discourse*

To be able to discuss "discourse" in terms of advertising, then, we must first realize that adverts are condemned to be within popular culture but outside of high culture. As our focus is on the transmission of the written word, rather than the spoken word, thus to be able to understand the term discourse, it is important to note that the term text in terms of linguistics, refers to a set of information which might be either spoken or written.

Cook defines discourse as “text and context together, interacting in a way which is perceived as meaningful and unified by the participants (who are both part of the context and observers of it)” (2001: 4). According to his classification, context consists of the following:

1. **substance**: the physical material which carries or relays text
2. **music and pictures**
3. **paralanguage**: meaningful behaviour accompanying language, such as voice quality, gestures, facial expressions and touch (in speech), and choice of typeface and letter sizes (in writing)
4. **situation**: the properties and relations of objects and people in the vicinity of the text, as perceived by the participants
5. **co-text**: text which precedes or follows that under analysis, and which participants judge to belong to the same discourse
6. **intertext**: text which the participants perceive as belonging to other discourse, but which they associate with the text under consideration, and which affects their interpretation
7. **participants**: their intentions and interpretations, knowledge and beliefs, attitudes, affiliations and feelings. Each participant is simultaneously a part of the context and an observer of it.
8. **function**: what the text is intended to do by the senders and addressers, or perceived to do by the receivers and addressees

From the above mentioned concept clearly follows that Cook understands advertising discourse as a complex interaction of text and context, with participants being only one of its parts. Cook’s approach takes into consideration all possible aspects advertising discourse can work with, paying special attention to music, pictures and other paralinguistic features, as mentioned above.

Cook’s concept treats the ad as if it were a message with fixed meaning. Our main question, however, is how the advert’s elements affect the reader. According to Cook, the receiver is only one of eight factors. For this thesis, we cannot assume that receivers understand the message the same way. We must expect that some will be more difficult to decode than others, and that this will be especially true for non-native speakers.

Cook (2001: 232) even points out elsewhere that advertisers today are far less likely to spell out the "obligatory core element – 'do this' (usually 'buy our goods') – is either external to the text or only a small proportion of it." It also means we must not presuppose a series of fixed relationships, as paralanguage determines situation, situation determines participants, and participants determine function. If communication is our focus, we should concentrate on senders and receivers.

## 3. Deconstructing Adverts

Cook also notes that the advertising industry "expends enormous effort on attempts both to categorize people effectively and then to target the categories" (2001:16). Because of this tendency to group one another, then an approach to the discourse which puts the ad in the middle and the sender and receiver on each side would help us better understand how the message is communicated. **Table 1** may help explain better the focus we wish to place on relationships rather than the composition:

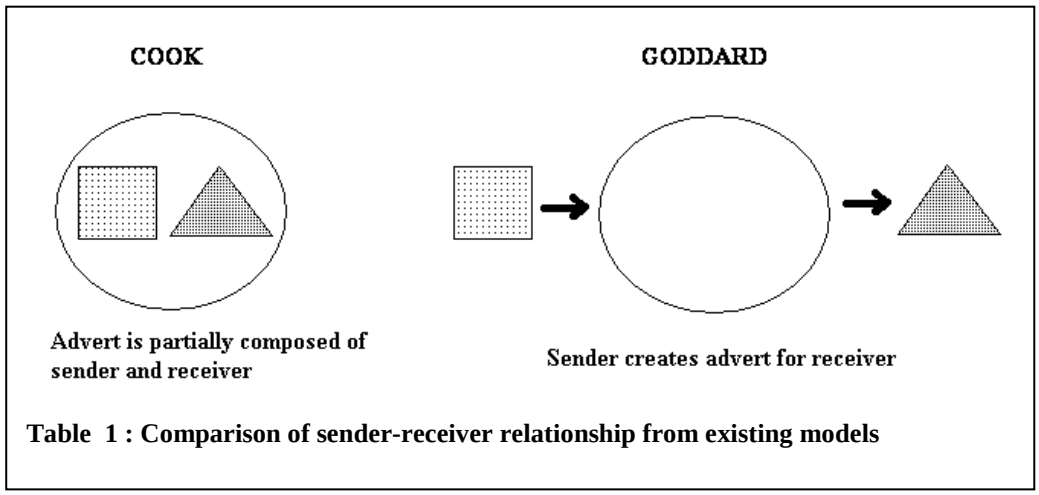


**Table 1 : Comparison of sender-receiver relationship from existing models**

In Cook's list, as we have seen, the receiver is one of many factors. Goddard (2002: 9), on the other hand, does not define the term "discourse" so specifically. She describes the interplay of image, language and graphical layout and focuses mainly on the relation between the reader and the (printed) advert. In her notion, discourse includes texts "whose intention is to enhance the image of an individual, group or organisation." She further deals with language use and its different levels advertisers use in order to attract the readers' attention. As we are essentially a sender or a receiver, Goddard places the emphasis on the relationship to the text, rather than the text itself.

Cook has written that advertisements, unlike other written material written for public consumption, do not stand up to analysis. Poetry, prose and even legal statues, as he argues, are expected to be scrutinized. Advertisements are merely meant to be absorbed. Cook's caution makes sense only if we interpret adverts as a fixed message. If, on the other hand, we choose to see adverts as the middle ground between a sender and a receiver, we do not have to heed Cook's warning.

## *3.1 Prosodic Features*

As has been already stated, the main intention of advertising is to persuade and inform, which can be achieved by different means. What makes an advertisement stick in our minds? Apart from graphical layout, unusual use of language makes an advert, and thus the product or service, memorable. There are different language levels to make use of and therefore, a catchy slogan can be outstanding in terms of phonetics, grammar, lexis, as well as stylistics.

To examine the particular levels in more detail and provide relevant examples, we will draw on the classification presented by Myers (1994) and Cook (2001). Cook's and Myers' focus on paralanguage will be kept. We will argue here that the effectiveness of an advertisement can be analysed most basically by a combination of its prosodic features and sentence types.

Cook (2001: 125) points out that **prosody**, the patterning of sound, gives the text an extra dimension which can reinforce, contradict or add to its meaning. The term is mostly associated with verse and poetry. However, as sounds in a language are often used by copywriters to create phrases with catchy sound and word effects that stick in the readers' minds, prosodic features are also prevalent in advertising discourse. Cook (200: 95) further suggests that writing partly represents speech which, even though not actually read aloud, forms a particular 'sound image'. In Cook's terms, to prosodic means that can make this image memorable belong such phenomena as **rhyme**, **rhythm**, **assonance**, **consonance** and **alliteration**. Myers (1994) on the other hand, provides another classification of sound patterns and stylistic devices used in advertising which are important factors in the adverts themselves.

### 3.1.1 Alliteration

Alliteration is defined as a literary or rhetorical device that consists in using the same consonant sound at the beginning of several words in succession. Myers (1994: 32) states that building up a pattern of similarity, so that it can be broken for effect, is the most common technique in many advertising slogans. He provides the following examples:

The Times slogan from an early period of their advertising campaigns

- *Top People Take the Times*

Slogan of an advert for Allied Irish Bank reads:

- *Britain's best business bank*

A headhunting company claims:

- *Specialized staffing solutions*

However, only repeating sounds may not be enough for a slogan to stand out. As there are only 20 consonants sounds in English, most of them get repeated fairly often and thus may go unnoticed. In many slogans the repetition is not as prominent, as is the case in this, a slogan from one of the largest British supermarket chains:

- *Good food costs less at Sainsbury's*

This slogan is a more subtle example of how alliteration can work with similar, as well as identical, sounds. Another example of alliteration is the anti-drink driving campaign "*Don't drink and drive*" which will be referred to in the practical part.

Though in practice, the strength of alliteration is much clearer when spoken, it is also true that the receiver must internally vocalize the thought, thereby completing the circuit. A popular current internet meme shows a series of actors or cartoon characters with overlaid text reading, "You've just read this in my voice."

### 3.1.2 Assonance

Assonance, the repetition of vowel sounds, is in comparison with alliteration not so common in advertising slogans, because its effect is usually more subtle. It is important to point out that assonance works only with the vowels in stressed syllables, like in the famous Gillette razor slogan which reads:

- *Gillette – the best a man can get*

(Myers 1994: 34)

### 3.1.3 Rhyme

In Myer's terms (1994: 35) rhyme is "the repetition of ending sounds; technically it is the similarity of all the last sounds of two words, from the ending of the last stressed syllable on."

Rhyme in non-visual advertisements, for a time, was closely associated with "jingles," or songs written specifically for the advertisements. The rhymes were often forced and seem outdated today, as with this American toothpaste advert from the 1950s:

- *You'll wonder where the yellow went when you brush your teeth with Pepsodent.*

Though rhyme, like alliteration, is often associated with this contrived and forceful approach, the following slogan proves that even rhyme can provide rather more subtle examples. In addition, apart from rhyme, it also involves alliteration (*skin* and *care*) and assonance (*breath* and *fresh*):

- *Timothei: A breath of fresh air in skin care*

Rhyme can also be derivative. Some slogans are variations on sayings familiar to native speakers of English. This makes the work of the sender easier, because their slogans may be easier to recall in receivers' minds. Mars candy bars, for example, derived a slogan from the familiar saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." By keeping the initial part the same, and rhyming the end in a similar way, the advertisers

used existing models and the human disposition to remember rhymes to create, "*A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play*."[1]

### 3.1.4 Spelling

Unusual spelling in advertisements is an effective attention-seeking device. Behm (2009: 9) states that advertisers often ignore and break the rules of standard English language in order to create a very attention-seeking ad which makes people talk about it. He further claims that copywriters "produce advertisements which contain deviations from the standards of normative spelling and grammar and, by doing this, the attention of the audience is increased because the readers are confronted with something unexpected making them attentive". However, advertisers have to take care that the advert containing deviation is still comprehensible for the reader. In Behm's terms it means that it must not be too difficult to decode the sent message, because otherwise the reader decides not to read further, for this reason.

But these basic levels of code play invite the receiver to become involved. We might note here that unusual spelling is not a neologism (literally a new word). This unpredictable spelling when decoded has the maximum effect of merely making the receiver "look twice," not actually to reflect or engage

Myers (1994: 39) mentions the famous slogan for Heinz "*Beanz Meanz Heinz.*" It shows deviation in graphology, that is, attracting attention by spelling, because read aloud it does not sound striking. This spelling only stresses the fact that the three final consonant clusters sound the same, even if they are spelt differently. However, to be able to decode the message, one has to read the slogan as referring to the word "beans" as singular. The deviation shows what is unusual, and therefore memorable, about the brand name. Moreover, simplified spelling reminds the readers that the unusual sound-letter correspondence in English is not simple at all.

A second example of a deliberately misspelled brand is *"Absolut Vodka."* The company makes use of the fact that wrong spelling is an attention-seeking criterion by leaving out the final "e" in the brand name. Thus, it differs from the common adjective in a striking way and is for the reader and potential customer more interesting. Yet as for prosodic features discussed in this part, in this case the misspelled word "absolut" does not affect the pronunciation because it is read aloud exactly the same way as if the

[1] see "Mars (chocolate bar)". Wikipedia. 2012. Wikimedia, Inc. 21 April 2012 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mars_(chocolate_bar)>

adjective was spelled correctly. To mention another interesting feature, the slogans of the advertising campaign for Absolut Vodka always include the word “absolut” in connection with one or two more words defining the depicted theme more precisely. As this campaign is a suitable example for the focus of this thesis, it will be referred to in the practical part in more detail.

## *3.2 Sentence Types*

If prosody is the use of language, then sentence types are their containers. As Myers (1994: 46) points out, even a printed advertisement can suggest a voice or an attitude towards the subject matter and towards the reader which can be conveyed by a number of linguistic choices. It may transmit more than the comparatively simple devices that have been so far examined. Let us now look at both the kinds of sentences used in advertising slogans and the way they are put together.

A basic way of classifying sentences is to observe the way they function as *statements*, *commands*, *questions*, or *exclamations*. In Myer’s terms (1994: 46) statements assert facts about the world; commands seek to make the hearer act; questions seek information from the receiver and exclamations express the sender’s surprise or feelings. Though such a simple classification does not tell us anything about the style, it is still eloquent enough to illustrate what the advertisers assume in a particular type of sentence. As far as written English is concerned, the most common sentence type is the statement. On the other hand, as Myers further points out, in everyday conversation sentence types such as commands, questions and exclamations are more frequent, because they show interaction with other people. Furthermore, the use of these sentences suggests some information about who is sending and who is receiving.

As advertising predominantly works with colloquial language, advertisements make use of a full range of sentence types, as mentioned above, in order to evoke everyday conversation. Let us now look at particular examples, as suggested by Myers (1994: 48-52).

### 3.2.1 Commands

It might be assumed that the imperative is the predominant sentence type for ads in general, because all advertisements urge us to some action. Myers (1994: 47) claims

that advertisers use commands because it creates a personal effect, a sense of one person talking to another; he further points out that it is possibly not because telling the potential customers to do something would really make them do what the advertisers say. Myers also states that a form of a command is easily recognizable even without a speaking voice because the subject *you* is typically left out. The following ad for a skin bronzer says:

- *Brush up your tan.*

The famous slogan for Apple urges one to

- *Think different.*

The underlying assumption of commands used in advertising slogans becomes clearer if we consider why they never say *please* – a politeness word so typical of the British culture when using imperative. In Myer's words it is left out when we ask somebody to do something that benefits the receiver, not the sender:

*Take a seat.*
*Have some more cheesecake.*

This is how advertisers would like to present their commands, namely as benefits to the reader. If they said, for instance, *"Please brush up on your tan"*, they would imply that it was for their own benefit, not ours. To sum up, while most commands make sense as being for the benefit for the speaker or writer, the above mentioned examples present themselves as advantages to the hearer or reader.

Exxon's slogan from the 1970s was *"Put a Tiger in your Tank"*. In this way we are reminded that adverts feature both prosodic and structural elements. The strength of a "tiger" was attractive because of the shortage of petrol, and indicated that the receiver would have a stronger product. But the imperative verb form is more than a command, it also functions like friendly advice.

But it is also important to note here that in English, the imperative is indistinguishable from 80% of regular present verb tenses. This allows for the subtle distinction between a sentence fragment and a command. In English, it is also possible

to take this as an omitted “let us,” or an unspoken modal verb, particularly “should” or “ought to.” Taken in this view, famous slogans like Nike’s *“Just Do It”* can be seen simultaneously in an advisory and imperative sense.

### 3.2.2 Questions

Questions, like commands, imply a direct address to the reader – they require someone to answer, as Myers further states. For this reason they are, among others, often used on magazine covers, both to attract the readers’ attention and to arouse their curiosity. Myers (1994:50) mentions the following examples used in advertising headlines, all of which are rather outdated from today’s perspective, however:

*Why does a woman look old sooner than a man? (Sunlight soap)*
*Should a mother continue to model? (Ipana toothpaste)*
*How do I stay fresh, clean and comfortable all day, every day? (Carefree pads)*

In fact, each of these questions implies assumptions about a woman’s role, as Myers points out. The old-fashioned feel is possibly because these sorts of questions can only engage the reader in one way. The conclusions or interpretations are:

A woman does look old sooner than a man.
Being a mother is inconsistent with being a model.
I do stay fresh, clean and comfortable every day.

From these examples clearly follows that one has to perceive the advertising discourse as a critical reader (or hearer), always bearing in mind that advertisers often present certain facts as something given, and thus make it hard to question.

Another common device is a *rhetorical question*; that is, it assumes only one possible answer. As an example, Myers (1994: 50) provides the following ad for Christian Aid:

*If your pay was £1 short each week, who would really notice?*

First, it implies that the receiver is well-off and can only answer no. Yet the question of who would really notice is left open, so that an unexpected answer can be provided at the bottom of the page. As receivers, we automatically create a group linking the interrogative with the action. In short, we hear "Who *of us*?" "Us" indicates to the hearer perhaps primarily a group composed of wage-earners, rather than "who" in the whole world. This difference results in the unexpected answer:

*You'll hardly notice the difference, but they will* [photo of impoverished farmers]

As Myers (1994: 50) points out, charity ads are selling not a service, but a version of yourself as a good person. This is the reason why such questions are typical of charity advertising.

They are, however, in practice the only kind of question an advertisement would realistically want to include. Questions which assume one answer (as we have seen) are more like inverted statements. But an open-ended philosophical question might make the message too ambiguous. A philosophical question, then, can only function if it leads, as the Christian Aid advert does.

### 3.2.3 Exclamations

Exclamations may be the plainest kind of statement, in that that it advertises itself – within the advertisement! Presumably, this last sentence has caught the reader's attention. Used sparingly, it can arguably be an effective and immediate way to separate one sentence or phrase from others on the page.

If a single phrase were to stand alone on a page with an exclamation mark, the effect would be to startle the receiver. This can lead to a hostile relationship between sender and receiver: the impression is of coercion or exhorting. The receiver's loss of the illusion of control shapes the way he reacts to the advert. Simple propaganda also follows the same minimalist approach.

Exclamations, to this end, may be seen as amplified statements. Myers (1994: 51) however, argues that there is a purist view of exclamations as well: that exclamation points should only be used "for written utterances that must convey spoken emotion to make sense." Myers provides the phrasal example "*Marrying My Jim!"* from a 1946

toothpaste ad. Without the punctuation, there is no frame of reference for the receiver. With it, however, the phrase can only be understood to convey the anguish of a "jilted woman."

## *3.3 Rhetorical Features*

Prosody and sentence types are the basic tools and containers we need to understand and deconstruct adverts. Rhetorical features, which we about to examine, are an advanced reflection of how these tools are used in practice.

### 3.3.1 Parallelism

Perhaps less irritating than repetition, and more common in written adverts, is parallelism. This means the repetition or iteration of a theme, rather than a word. Thus, it creates variations rather than lists, which necessarily amount to a series of commands. These are again statements. Papa John's, a pizza company in the United States used *"Better ingredients. Better pizza."* The repetition is obvious and the parallelism is in the adjective-noun pairs. (An interesting side-note is that the company was sued by a rival pizza company, who demanded that Papa John's produce proof.)

In the 1980s, a memorable campaign from Martini was *"Any time, any place, anywhere."* Even though the first two are two words and the third is a compound word in English, the repetition of "any" followed by a more a specific word has the desired effect of parallel structure. Though some critics have noted that "any place" and "anywhere" can be considered redundant, the campaign has the advantage noted by Dorothy Sayers, who is quoted in Myers (1994: 55) saying, "If, [even] by the most far-fetched stretch of ingenuity, an indecent meaning could be read into a headline, that was the meaning the great British public would surely read into it." As the world has become more subject to advertising, her comment can apply to consumers in any number of economies with purchasing power and access to media.

Myers (1994: 52) further describes a sweatshirt with recognizable icons of major world cities on it. London is represented by Big Ben, Rome by the Coliseum, Paris by the Eiffel Tower and, in this case, Boise (a city in an agricultural region of the United States) by a potato. This parallelism accomplishes two important things. First, it allows and even invites the receiver to construct the linking theme. Second, it places the value on the exception, highlighting a relatively unknown item next to recognized ones. This

brings the value of the exception, even in irony, closer to the other more well-known items.

Thus, parallel construction does not necessarily need to be lexically repetitive. Some, or even all, of words themselves can change while maintaining parallelism.

### 3.3.2 Ellipses and Substitution

If parallel construction is about adding, then ellipsis is about subtracting Advertisers may omit to bring the receiver closer in for code play or for deliberate ambiguity.

Ambiguities allow the advert to be used in whatever way other cultural pieces want to use. It bridges gaps and forces a connection to be made even if it is not inductive, unlike the previous example of the parallels on the sweatshirt.

In terms of code play, we can recall what Sayers said about double-entendres. Clairon, a cosmetics company featuring female models, used the slogan *"Does she or doesn't she?"* Though the specific reference of this is to the question about whether such a beautiful woman uses cosmetics, the ambiguity seems almost designed to be suggestive. Even the advert's writer thought the client would not accept it, as Myers (1994:55) points out.

The British newspaper "The Independent" was famous in part for its slogan *"It is. Are you?"* Because these words were designed to be seen around the name of the newspaper, the meaning would have been obvious in context. The ellipses replaced makes "It is independent. Are you independent?" It reflects the publisher's perspective that the newspaper has no bias, and that the readers are also free from bias. But with the ellipses, the deliberate ambiguity allows receivers, or groups of them, to re-use the line with reference to themselves. With the Independent, Myers notes that in places, the gay community adopted the slogan, but without reference to the newspaper. It is irrelevant what relationship the newspaper had to the community who used the slogan. The important thing is that the slogan was so easy to remember that it worked to advertise a product even unconsciously.

### 3.3.3 Incomplete Sentences

Brevity, especially in printed advertisements, is very important. To preserve the obvious focus of the ad, the phrase "less is more" can be applied.

While approaches like ellipses and incomplete sentences or fragments both use deliberate ambiguity, the difference is that incomplete sentences do not direct the receiver. We have seen how the double-entendre works with substitution. Though double-entendre and specific information directed to receivers is possible with an incomplete sentence it is less likely. The reason to use a fragment in advertising is to communicate an image, and perhaps to solicit whatever related information the receiver can contribute from personal experience.

Club Med, a resort-package company, sells its vacation packages with the fragment *"Antidote to civilization."* The simplicity makes the message most effective, as the receiver has the freedom to visualize whatever antidote this is, although different images of exotic locations were supplied. Marlboro cigarettes offered simply, *"Marlboro Country."* This was also often accompanied with a picture of the desert or a rugged landscape. In the case of fragments, images help to fill in the gap left by the missing words.

### 3.3.4 Tone

Tone is possibly the most subjective of all and does not fit well in either prosody or in sentence type. Even so, it is included by the sender and seldom added – rather, understood – by the receiver. As the rhetorical approaches have shown, the sentence type often predetermines the tone. Exclamations tend to have a tone of command ("Just do it"), questions a tone of oratory ("Who would notice?"), repetitions a tone of monotony ("Better ingredients, better pizza"), parallelism a tone of pedantry ("Any time, any place, anywhere"), ellipses a tone of double-speak ("It is. Are you?"), and fragments a tone of reflection ("Antidote to Civilization").

It is surprising to find tones like humility in advertising, though. To create a slogan which reminds the receiver that one is not the best seems to run against all the studies, models and approaches we have examined. Nonetheless, is an interesting approach in advertising and has a relatively recent history. The best example is from Avis rent-a-car, so firmly in second place to Hertz in the 1960s that even receivers were aware of it. The only recourse Avis had was to admit it, and publically. They launched an advertising campaign, making fun of themselves in the process: "*The line at our counter is shorter."*

The advert features a statement and a question in big type, “Avis is only No. 2 in rent a cars. So why go with us?” The rest of the ad is a parallel list, answering the question. The argument is, in part:

*We try harder. (When you’re not the biggest, you have to.) We just can’t afford dirty ashtrays. Or half empty gas tanks. Or worn wipers. Or unwashed cars. Or low tires. . .*

Such an approach is risky, because in such a case it may be seen as confirming an inferior product to the receiver. Because tone is subjective, especially without a speaking sender, the message must be very clear and unmistakable. Sarcasm, when unnoticed, can be dangerous to business. This may explain the length of the text in the advert.

A more current example of humility is *“Possibly the best beer in the world.”* Carlsberg beer has had this slogan since the 1970s. Unlike the Papa John’s slogan we referred to earlier, which is very strong and uncompromising, Carlsberg’s is exactly the opposite. By being willing to admit competition, or even accept it, they seem to be making themselves try to appear less confrontational and more reasonable.

## 4. Future of Adverts

These examples do show that advertising uses many prosodic, structural and rhetorical approaches (often simultaneously) to create messages to send to receivers, but by studying adverts through only these, we limit our analysis around the discourse as Myers, Cook and Goddard have described it. The prosodic approach that Myers speaks about will make for colourful and effective combinations of words and ideas, but idea is not infinite. The sentence type analysis reveals less about the content and more about the style of delivery, but even that is limited by fixed possibilities: it is a question, a statement, a fragment or an exclamation. A rhetorical view of adverts gets us closer, but most of these either leave out the receiver. In a sense, thus far, the receiver has been asked to respond, but not to decode. Decoding, as we shall see, requires a different kind of thinking about discourse and analysis.

## *4.1 Transition*

All of these prosodic and sentence-type devices allow two things which separates the modern advertisement from the basic exhorting character of earlier generations, the 1940s, 1950s and the 1960s. History, especially in the west, has shown us an evolution from propaganda to a focus on science and later, the idyllic family. When the discourse began to expand, as we have demonstrated in the examples we have been looking at, the doors were open for new approaches like self-deprecation and parody.

Though these were arguably used first on television, other media was quick to see the value and begin using the approach also. There were two re-makes of a Coca-cola Superbowl television advert from 1979. The inter-referential character, for example, does not require the receiver to appreciate the parody. It can function all by itself. But it also addresses a more elite group of receivers, those who recognize the reference. In this case, the original ad showed an injured athlete giving his jersey to a young fan who offers him a Coke. In the first remake, with the same athlete, the exchange is the same, but the fan throws the jersey back because it smells bad. The product there is laundry soap. It was then again remade, this time a second time for Coca-cola. Here, an advertising executive interrupts the exchange and claims copyright infringement. The athlete tackles the executive, but instead of throwing his jersey to the fan, as in the original, the athlete rips off and throws the fan the executive's shirt.

This "family" of adverts represents a big point of departure from the decades of more traditional approaches. By being inter-referential, it shows the beginning of invitation to code play in advertising. In the broadest sense, it makes it acceptable to represent a world which can be accessed by the receiver's familiarity with different products and a similar delivery, through versions of the same scenario – even across decades. Receivers who appreciate the link feel superior to the viewer who does not, fully possessing what they think advertiser's point and reference to be.

## *4.2 Code Play*

Today, adverts on the "cutting edge" are engaging the receivers in code play. This cutting edge has always been changing, sometimes imperceptibly, sometimes dramatically. Adverts are hard to discuss in any classification system, not because they

somehow resist analysis, but rather because they by nature seek a new way to be competitive and memorable, and reclassify themselves.

Some critics claim that the advertisement is in the process of replacing poetry, particularly poems designed to be light in character. Cook (2001: 233) states that a poem tends to be subject to analysis and carry its importance with it. This would mean serious poems have all but taken over poetry, leaving no room for the light-hearted poem in English. Cook calls this code play, an important activity for communication.

A typical example of this, presented by Cook (2001:88), is an advert for a wide screen television. The text claims the television is the best on which to watch a tennis match. The words read from top right to top left, with a wide space in between, so the receiver's eyes read the text as if he or she were following a tennis match. This, interestingly, is actually taken from an earlier poem.

Adverts are filling the space left for code play. Thus, it is no longer sufficient merely to examine adverts in terms of the sender's goal, as we have done until now, according to the likes of Myers and Cook. In this age of greater engagement, it is more important to examine closely how the receiver may have understood the message. Clearly, the intention is that the advert will be understandable easily enough that the sender's message and the receiver's understanding are the same, but with code play there is both a greater change for a memorable message, but at the same time a greater risk of missing it entirely.

But the main goal is that the receiver makes the connection, gets the joke or recognizes the reference. All of these are hallmarks of intertextual and neologic code play.

## *4.3 Challenges*

One Kenwood advertisement, described by Myers (1994:136), is almost all graphic, showing audio components, but has some vital statistics in a corner as its only text. There is a name, her position, her hobby (running) and two times. One is a personal best, and the other is "today's time," which is not as good as the best. The last words are "damn, damn, damn." This forces the receiver to connect the picture to the text, and infer that because the employee did not do her best at her hobby, she is upset with herself. It implies that the company's employees have very high standards, and

thus that the product they make is an excellent product. Myers cites the personal difficulty of decoding this particular advert.

This demonstrates the greater risk that print-based media runs. Very much the approach depends on placement. As Cook (2001: 222) suggests, what works in one place will not necessarily work for another. In short, the way that adverts exist in space is changing. Even so, senders cannot change minds if they are not noticed by receivers.

This is part of the reason for the trend in dense so-called "Cloud adverts" being placed in places like train stations, where the receiver has more time to reflect, rather than on a billboard on a busy highway. Even so, innovation in placement has always been important. Decades ago, "Burma-Shave" found a new way to address receivers, by putting humorous poems up on successive billboards along American highways:

*Don't take a curve / At 60 per / We hate to lose / A customer / Burma Shave*

The placement meant the receiver had to engage by the expectation of the next billboard. The rhyme meant that the receiver was expecting what word would be used. This search for the relationship between placement and engagement is still happening today in print media. A two-page Nike ad in Cosmopolitan, for example, was printed on both sides of one page, forcing the receiver physically turn the page to get to the company name.

Lexical media have to work harder to compensate for the lack of moving pictures, spoken words, tone and other advantages of visual media. Conversely, other media tend to have the same non-linguistic features that print media contains:

- colours
- typography – handwriting, typed text, different fonts, different sizes
- layout
- background – a placement of certain elements in the background of an advert
- image

Therefore, printed adverts manage to cope by using high-level code play.

### *4.4 Advertising Discourse in the Future*

Ads are ultimately disposable. Campaigns come and campaigns go. Companies do well and companies close. The constant is that there will always be senders and receivers, and there will always be a message. How can this message best be created, so that it benefits the sender by more than just selling a product, but also keeping itself in the mind of the receiver?

And even if we do remember the best of the best, advertising is, in Roland Barthes' words, a "restless" medium (as cited by Myers 1994:136) which seeks continually to change itself, often without regard for self-analysis. Thus, it is in aggregation that the outliers stand out, and are remembered. These must be on the cutting edge.

While the tone of humility was once a cutting edge tool, today it is decidedly more common. Where rhyming slogans were once so common that not using one seemed daring, today they seem ordinary and banal. Even parody has had its day on the cutting edge. Neologisms and intertextuality, as the corpus reflects and the following sections argue, continue to be the highest levels of code play in advertising today.

Today, what seems to be clear is that receivers want and expect to be entertained. In many ways, adverts are coming closer and closer to what we might call art. The famous Apple commercial "1984" introduced Macintosh brand, and was shown in the same year. It was directed by Ridley Scott, and relied heavily on the receiver's intertextual knowledge of George Orwell's book. Interestingly, this is an example of high-profile and high-budget commercials, and also of the move toward courting an intelligent audience, largely with the new tools for the new age of advertising: intertextuality and neologisms.

## 5. Corpus Description

The corpus of advertisements, which presents the core of this thesis, has been created on the basis of two main criteria. The adverts it contains have been gathered with the aim to contain either intertextuality or neologisms. The corpus is comprised of 46 print advertisements that have been published during the last couple of years on the Internet and in several British magazines. However, the Internet presents the main source of the material analysed.

During the research process, the webpage *Ads of the World* proved as the most prolific and relevant source. It is an advertising archive and community that collects advertising work from all over the world.

Nevertheless, to adhere to the above mentioned criteria chosen in advance, the material was to lesser extent obtained from other web pages and print media respectively, as referred to in the bibliography section at the end of this thesis.

At this stage I would like to point out that finding the desired number of advertisements for the purpose of this thesis proved to be a very difficult task, indeed. The reason is that intertextuality and neologisms present numerous restrictions in understanding, namely for non-native speakers of English. Both of these phenomena, as will be shown, require the receiver to have some external knowledge, may it be lexical or cultural, to be able to engage in the code play and "get the message." Non-native speakers often lack this ability and are thus left behind.

With regard to what has been mentioned above, the main aim of the corpus which will now be analysed is not in quantity. Its purpose is to illustrate the topic of this thesis on the basis of authentic examples from current advertising discourse. Some of the advertisements are for better orientation included directly in the text, others are referred to in the appendix. The appendix includes all of the advertisements with reference numbers in full size.

# 6. Intertextuality

The concept of intertextuality is based on the assumption that each text exists in relation to others. However, the term itself, as one of the central ideas in contemporary literary theory, is defined variously and is thus not transparent. According to Allen (2000: 1), the notion of intertextuality comes out from the idea that works of literature are built from systems, codes and traditions established by previous works of literature. Furthermore, the systems, codes and traditions of other art forms and of culture in general are also essential to the meaning of a work of literature. Reading texts, both literary and non-literary, challenges us to uncover a number of textual relations. Thus, to be able to interpret a text and understand its meaning, we have to trace these relations.

As Worton and Still put it, the theory of intertextuality insists that a text itself cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole, and so does not function as a closed system. This is for two reasons, as they put it. “Firstly, the writer is a reader of texts (in the broadest sense) before s/he is a creator of texts, and therefore the work of art is inevitably shot through with references, quotations and influences of every kind” (1991: 1).

The term *intertextuality* firstly appeared in Julia Kristeva’s early work published in the late 1960’s. In her essays Kristeva introduced the work of the Russian literary theorist M.M. Bakhtin. She not only coined the term intertextuality, but also introduced a figure who has since been considered one of the most important literary theorists of the twentieth century. Bakhtin points out that communication is influenced by the situation and participants of the communication. In his notion, language responds to previous utterances and their meanings and thus creates a basis for understanding following texts. He further states that no utterance exists alone. Even if an utterance presents itself as an independent entity, it still emerges from a complex history of previous works and is dependent on a complex institutional and social context. Thus, according to Bakhtin, all utterances are dialogic; their meaning and logic depend on what has previously been said and on how they will be perceived by others (Allen 2000: 19).

Nowadays, we as receivers have access to a wide range of sources for information. Thus, it is likely that we can take intertextual relationships for granted. As a matter of fact, because of the high number of texts which exist, and are added daily, finding and identifying intertextual relationships becomes harder.

## *6.1 Intertextuality in Theory*

As far as advertising is concerned, Goddard (2002: 51) claims that intertextuality can be an important part of an advertisement’s meaning, in that the original text being referred to formed a message which the second text can then use and develop. Thus, the second text does not have to work so hard – it can take for granted that the original text has left a trace which it can make use of.

As has been already stated, intertextuality can be employed in different genres; it is very popular in postmodern literature, for instance. Compared to literature, advertising is a relatively young form of discourse, yet it already has its own history, as well. Thus, “just as modern literary writers can base their stories on traditional texts,

modern advertising copywriters can base their copy on older versions" (Goddard 2002: 52). The effect of this strategy in either type of discourse, as Goddard puts it, can be the same: the reader feels clever if he or she gets the connection. As she further states, the difference is that not everyone may recognize a reworking of a Shakespearian plot, but many people are likely to remember an advertising slogan or jingle.

When we look at how Cook understands the notion of intertextuality in advertising, he divides this phenomenon into two types, according to whether the ad relies on the knowledge of another advertisement or whether it contains an allusion to a different genre. His division is as follows:

> **intra-generic intertextuality**: containing the voice of another example of the same genre, as when an ad assumes knowledge of another ad. (For instance, the "Secret Weapon" ad with its "Warning: may cause outbreaks of jealousy" alludes to the health warning on cigarette ads.)
> **inter-generic intertextuality**: containing the voice of a different genre, as when an ad evokes knowledge of a film or story. (The text of the Philips cordless phone ad for example echoes the wording of a legal statement "I understand that…".)

(Cook 2001: 194-195)

According to Cook, ads contain both intra-generic and inter-generic voices. These have increased as ads have grown in quantity and significance, and accumulated their own history and tradition (2001:194). That also means that as the body of work grows, levels of reference will also change generationally. Thus, an advert might allude to a second advert which alludes in turn to a different genre, and so on.

Cook further points out that if advertising has changed dramatically since the mid-1950s, creating a new genre, then it is not surprising that early advertisements did not employ intra-generic echoes, thus allusions to other ads. As Cook puts it, lacking a tradition of other advertising material to make use of, early ads simply made allusions to other genres, in order to create a credible and straightforward persuasive message.

It should be noted at this stage that the advertisements in our corpus are not meant to be divided on the basis of Cook's above mentioned concept. Again, the main focus of this thesis is not to point out where the intertextuality comes from, but how it is understood by the receiver.

## *6.2 Intertextuality in Practice*

However, as the tradition of ads has grown, the nature and number of intra-generic allusions have changed. Sometimes, ads assume and rely on knowledge of another product and its ads mainly in order to attack a competitor. Cook (2001: 194) describes the following example: In 1991 the slogan for the Peugeot 405 "Takes Your Breath Away" was parodied without direct reference in an ad for the Polo whose copy says "It doesn't take your breath away" – a means which both attracts attention and makes the claim that the Polo's catalytic converter reduces air pollution. Such cross-references reflect tough competition between manufacturers of similar products, as Cook points out.

Goddard (2002: 126) describes intertextuality as the way in which one text echoes or refers to another text. She mentions an advertisement which states "To be in Florida in winter or not to be in Florida in winter" and points out that it contains an intertextual reference to a key speech in Shakespeare's Hamlet. It is interesting to note that the receiver need not have read the entire play, for example, to understand the allusion in this case.

From what has been mentioned above it stands to reason that there are different levels of comprehension within intertextuality in advertising. The mere recognition of a phrase might be considered the lowest level of the ability to recognize an intertextual code play, even without specific knowledge of the reference (as it might be the case of the allusion to Shakespeare mentioned above). The next level would require the receiver to be familiar with parts of the reference, perhaps the source without the context. Finally, the highest level is the knowledge of the source and the context of the allusion.

# 7. Less Restrictive Intertextual Code Play

Intertextuality works at many different levels of language, from phonological and lexical references in title and slogans to visual aspects such as layouts and images.

The receiver's interaction with the text may depend on a range of factors, from simple to complicated. Examples from our corpus of advertisements with an intertextual code play will now be presented, based on **Table 2**, a construct which has been specially created for the purpose of this thesis and will be drawn upon:

| **Characteristic** | **Feature** | **Receiver must solve with** |
|---|---|---|
| Least Restrictive | Double meaning | Basic linguistic knowledge |
| | Receiver supply | Contextual clues |
| | Idioms | Specific linguistic knowledge |
| | Allusion | Basic external cultural familiarity |
| Most Restrictive | Inference | Specific external cultural familiarity |

**Table 2 Levels of Intertextual Code Play**

As the table shows, the least restrictive levels deal with language itself. The higher, more restrictive levels require not only linguistic familiarity or knowledge, but passing or even intimate knowledge of other texts and genres. What does this mean to a non-native speaker of English? It stands to reason that the ability to speak and understand the language is only a first step. Thus, it is not necessarily cumulative, although a receiver who has the skills to infer from cultural allusions doubtlessly has the more basic skills to recognize a word with two meanings. For example, an intermediate speaker could understand "double meaning" and perhaps "receiver supply," where he or she must fill in a gap with information – or remove it so that the text makes sense. Unless the receiver has knowledge of specific sayings, proverbs and idioms, not even excellent linguistic knowledge can help reveal the links. As we will take these categories and their adverts sequentially, then, we can safely say that the adverts will become progressively more challenging to decode, based on what the receiver is being asked to do.

Even though the receiver has understood the message, the question with the language-based features is to what level. It is a different picture with allusion and inference, the top levels of intertextual play in advertising, according to our division. These require levels of familiarity with a set of external references. “Allusions” may be culturally biased (customs and traditions, works of literature, etc). By far, the widest knowledge is needed for “inferences.” For these, an allusion is made, and some manner of textual code is embedded. Even for native speakers, these might present challenges of interpretation, as we shall see.

Let us now examine some examples of adverts from the corpus which demonstrate the gradual intertextual dimension of discourse according to these five levels.

## *7.1 Double Meanings*

A pun can be generally defined as the use of a word that has more than one meaning, often in a humorous way. It is presumably accessible to most people, as it requires only basic knowledge of language to decipher. However, “double meaning,” as the first level has been called, involves more than simple puns. Here we will see a collection of words used ambiguously or apparently in error, with the picture providing the guidance for correct interpretation. They are neither deliberate misspellings nor puns, they are what seem at first to be misused terms, which contain a second meaning.

**Figure 1: Every man has a dark side.**

Guinness beer, a company with a long and interesting history of engaging adverts, uses the example shown in **Figure 1**. To properly understand the message, the receiver should already know that the beer being advertised is dark. Otherwise, the textual slogan, “Every man has a dark side,” is confusing. A “dark side” has negative connotations. Likewise, the picture by itself (without the text) might lead us to undesired inferences, perhaps about race. The text in the context of the picture,

however, clearly indicates that having a "dark side" refers to "every man's" need to drink dark beer occasionally.

Another depicts a Bosch dryer machine console with the large headline "Dry one – get one free." (see appendix, **Ad 3**, p.iii) Receivers are first arrested by "Dry" instead of the expected "Buy." Yet a consumer would hardly want to buy two drying machines. The subheading makes it a little clearer what the slogan means: it "uses 50% less energy than other tumble dryers." The apparent "mistake" is nearly explained in the midst of relatively dense text at the very bottom, which claims that it reuses the heat other dryers lose. The picture in this ad is minimal, but without it, the text risks losing the receiver's interest.

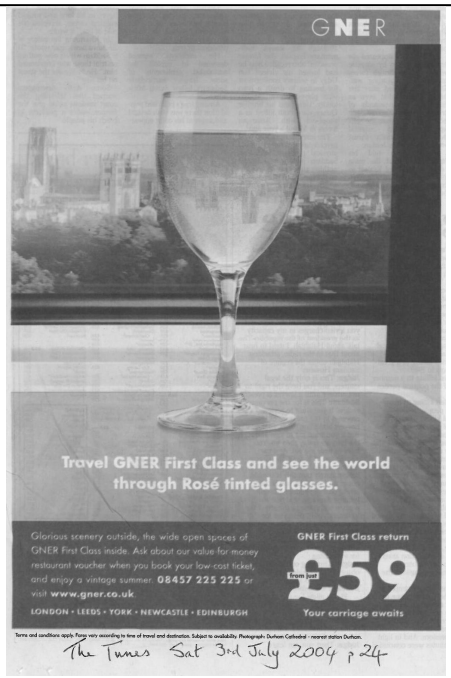


**Figure 2: Tour GNER First Class and see the world through Rosé tinted glasses.**

However, sometimes the picture is as important as the text. This is true in **Figure 2**, which is a superb example of lexical code play influenced by the graphic.

The advertisement for a train company is based on the knowledge of an idiom; however, it is only part of the structure. To see the world "through rose tinted glasses" is to have a positive outlook. Thus, riding in such comfort and luxury would influence the passenger to see the world with a positive outlook. A quick glance at the advert might be enough to understand it.

But the text uses "rosé" instead of "rose," and then the receiver realizes the full wine glass with the countryside seen through it makes a play on the word "glasses," which is being used as plural utensils instead of the visual aid to which the idiom refers. In fact, as the lowest text confirms, the ad is for first-class travel, where according to the text, one may "ask about [a] … restaurant voucher," possibly to enjoy a glass of wine during the trip. The final pun used is to enjoy a "vintage summer," with vintage evoking both high class and the grade of wine.


**Figure 3: Sarah's style spoke volumes on how to capture a guy.**

Not all advertisements using double meanings are that in-depth, even when the text is directly linked to the picture. In an advert for hair-care products, Shockwaves released a campaign based on puns with a visual element. In the advert in **Figure 3**, a woman with full-bodied hair is being admired by a man. The slogan says "Sarah's style spoke volumes on how to capture a guy."

The word "volumes" is in a bold font. It points out very clearly that the word refers to the collocation "to speak volumes," but also to the characterization of full-bodied hair as possessing "volume."

Thus, the contrast between the two uses of the same phrases invites the receiver to reflect on the use of language. Because the language used is associated with hair care, the reflection seems likely to succeed.

## *7.2 Reader Supply*

Reader Supply basically requires the receiver to engage and solve code play based on clues in the picture. In some cases this refers to inferring lexical information or pictures. This is slightly more restrictive than double meanings, as reader supply presumes some external familiarity, at least with the brand. In other forms, as we shall see, the receiver may be asked to remove, rearrange or codify information.

In another advertisement for Guinness (**Figure 4**), there are three blanks between the "u" and "e." Without the reader-supplied information, it reads "Guess who?" This evokes a children's game, but more importantly is put in a question, which the receiver then answers either from the image of the beer or the logo in the lower corner. Filling in the blanks would create "Guinness who?" which does not make literal sense. Thus, the entire point of the advert is the code play itself.

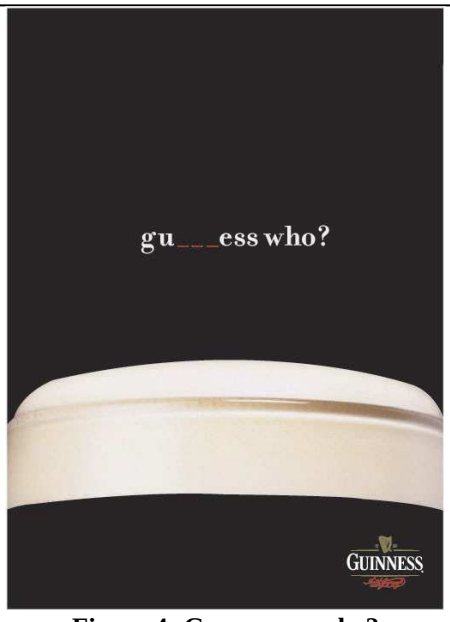


**Figure 4: Gu_ _ _ ess who?**

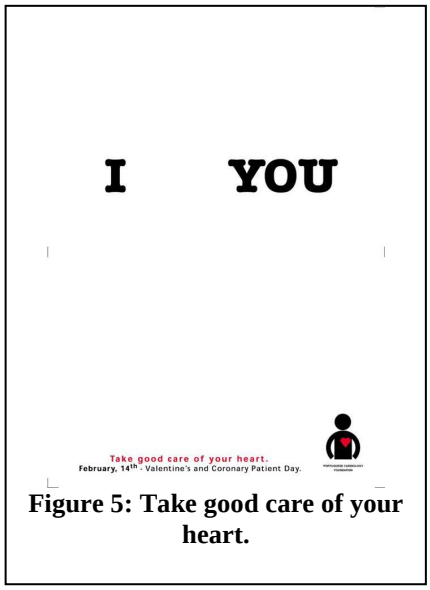


**Figure 5: Take good care of your heart.**

The supply can also be an image. The Portuguese Cardiology Foundation used the iconic advert shown in **Figure 5**. The only grammatical knowledge needed is to understand the English grammatical structure "subject-verb-object." Further, the missing verb in this case can only be a heart, meaning "love." This has a relatively long history, not connected to advertising only.

The supply of the heart image then creates a line that reads "I love you." However, this is unlikely to compel sales. In this case, it is a public service campaign, whose slogan reads "Take good care of your heart." In addition, "heart" as both a verb and a noun is implied in the silhouette at the bottom, with the supplied verb-heart in red where the noun-heart is. This builds extra levels into otherwise simple code play.


**Figure 6: Disconnect for a while. Read a book.**

Companies are increasingly using other brands in their own adverts, as it was suggested by Cook. One such example of that is a bookstore advert in **Figure 6**, using the signature colour, font, and image of the social networking site "Facebook." The extra "a" asks the receiver to consider "facebook" not as a compound noun, but as a directive, as in, "face a book." The verb "face" means to direct one's self to. Thus, the piece itself is ironic, in that the slogan urges that the receiver do the opposite from what the slightly altered image suggests.

Facebook is nearly universally recognized, and the addition of "a" relies on lexical tricks specific to the English language, like the Guinness and cardiology adverts. In the interest of appealing to a more universal audience, however, some adverts do not rely on text. The risk is that the advert might be misconstrued or misunderstood because it contains information that only certain groups of people will understand.

One example of this is a Heineken beer advert in **Figure 7**. There are four logos, the last of which is Heineken's. The first three include Facebook and Twitter, another social global social network. There is one more logo, though, an "H" icon. It stands for Hyves, a Dutch social networking site practically unknown outside the country. The tag-line, "Heineken: Social Networking since 1873," confirms that the first three are being compared to the beer company. Because Heineken is a Dutch beer, it may be obvious why this was included. But when comparing the overall popularity, only two of the three social network logos are well-known enough for the advert to be understood outside of the Netherlands. Thus, for non-Dutch consumers, more attention might be paid to the unknown logo than to the intertextual play. It also might mislead the receiver to infer a different conclusion. In either case, this leads us to a conclusion that drinking Heineken beer is being part of a "social network," and that they have been a social network since the 19th century.

**Figure 7: Heineken. Social networking since 1873.**

A receiver may also be asked to engage with images in other ways. In a BMW advert, for example (see appendix, **Ad 9**, p.ix) the entire page is blank, apart from three characters and a slogan in the lower corner. The text reads, "BWM." The slogan below is, "use original parts." The brand is globally recognizable, and even if a receiver were unfamiliar, next to the slogan is the company logo, on which the name appears in the correct order. This provides a kind of "key." The connection between using original parts and the scrambled name seems to indicate at first that BMW does, but perhaps at second glace shows that "BMW" would not be "BMW" if it did not use original parts. Instead they would be something less prestigious and recognizable.

We have seen reader supply adverts which ask receivers to supply missing text and images, others which ask the receiver to reduce the given information and still others which ask the receiver to rearrange or seek patterns. In some cases, all of these code play features can occur.

This is the case with one advert which urges receivers not to drink and drive (**Figure 8**). Because in English the word “die” can be created by omitting two letters in “drive,” the campaign slogan uses both words and pictures to make its point. “Don’t drink and drive” is missing the initial contraction “Don’t.” At first glance, it may seem that the verbs encourage the receiver to drink and drive. The “r” and “v” of drive are missing, though, replaced by the marks of tyres, making the message appear, “Drink and die.” Thus, a receiver is asked to omit and insert simultaneously, and deals with words and pictures. Additionally, the receiver is expected to be familiar with the campaign. Being familiar with external information is a restriction which makes the code play more elite. We will see this most particularly in the next three levels.

**Figure 8: Don't Drink and Drive.**

# 8. More Restrictive Intertextual Code Play

Receivers – native and non-native speakers alike – can understand grammar, yet still find idioms and collocations complicated as their meaning cannot be easily derived without external knowledge. This is made even more difficult when the advertisers themselves use idioms – or customise them – with no apparent relation to their product or service.

One reason that idiom-based adverts require some pre-knowledge is obviously that idioms, sayings and proverbs usually have their own specific contexts. That means in addition to the possibility of misunderstanding, another danger is that the receiver may be confident that he or she has correctly decoded the advert, when in fact he or she lacks the external information needed.

## *8.1 Idioms*

Let us have a look at the advert for the John Deere lawn-mower (**Figure 9**). The slogan, “Your lawn has earned its stripes,” immediately leads us to connect the text with the stripes on the lawn. Because the verb “earn” implies that there has been hard work,

or that the result is deserved, it means a receiver might jump to the conclusion that the quality of the machine means the lawn has nicer stripes.

This is only partly true; the levels of intertextuality become clearer with a better understanding of the idiom. "To earn one's stripes" is in American English a military or police phrase to describe the promotion of an officer. The "stripes" refer to the bars on the sleeves of the uniform. With the understanding of this idiom, we can connect the user of the machine, the machine, and the one who benefits from the machine. In other words, the lawn is now of a higher rank because the user has been using this machine. Thus, the idiom adds dimensions and clarifications to the message.


**Figure 9: Your lawn has earned its stripes.**

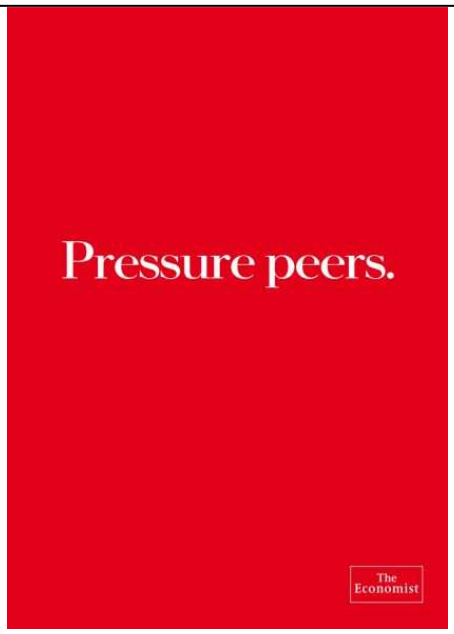


**Figure 10: Pressure peers.**

Without an image, the understanding of the idiom is necessary for understanding the advertisement. This is especially true when the idiom has been slightly altered. That adds a level of restriction to those who will be able to decode it.

A four-word advert for the Economist magazine is such an example (**Figure 10**). With a reversion of a famous collocation, the two-word command encourages us to influence our friends. The name of the company is simply, "The Economist."

There are different levels here of

external information required for decoding. The collocation “peer pressure” refers to a group that tries to influence one member. It is nearly always used negatively. Thus, by inverting the phrase, the original collocation turns from the noun-phrase into an imperative sentence.

The negative connotations associated with the original “peer pressure” might remain until we connect the inverted slogan with the company. “The Economist” is a well-regarded magazine with many important contributors. Thus, the meaning of the four-word advert appears to be that the receiver who reads their magazine will have information and good arguments with which they can help change their peers’ lives.

Other slogans relying on idioms and collocations are more obvious. Corona beer in one advert (**Figure 11**) features the slogan “You win some, you win some.” This makes no grammatical sense unless the receiver is familiar with the idiom “You win some, you lose some”, which is used to express sympathy for somebody who has been disappointed about something.

**Figure 11: You win some, you win some.**

By replacing the second verb with the repeated first, the association is made for the receiver between the product and the impossibility of “losing,” or experiencing misfortune. The link to ideal living is further supported with the tag-line, “Find your beach,” accompanied by a picture of a sunny day and an empty beach. This last sentence is imperative, but is softened by the use of “your” instead of an article. It becomes actualizing and inviting for the receiver, who has been encouraged to select a product which promises he or she cannot “lose,” and then to select a quiet paradise.

Though idioms and collocations can be very effective, they might also be irrelevant. Several examples exist where the adverts – and even the whole campaign – are sayings with no relation to the image or the product (**Figure 12**).

**Figure 12: All that glitters is gold.**

Similar to the Corona advert, Absolut vodka ran a campaign based upon inverted idioms. Some of the examples were “One swallow does not make a summer,” “All that glitters is not gold,” “Lucky in

cards, unlucky in love," and "All good things must come to an end" (see appendix, **Ads 14-17** , p.xiv-xvii.)

The campaign reversed the polarity of all these idioms, creating a relentlessly positive scenario for the receiver. The adverts showed the slogans in a slightly psychedelic style. In the corner, they were tagged with the line, "in an Absolut world." Thus, the receiver must infer that when he or she drinks Absolut vodka, for example, "All that glitters is gold . . . in an Absolut world."

While the reversing of the idioms engages the receiver, the relation of the message to the product is unclear. The advertisements seem to state that a receiver's judgement will be impaired after the consumption of their product, and lead the receiver to see things in a distorted reality. The psychedelic font and images only support this. The inferences drawn from the advertising claims included in this campaign are summarized in **Table 3**:

| **Absolut Idiom-based Advert** | **Idiom's Original Meaning** | **Advert's Implied Message** |
|---|---|---|
| One swallow makes a summer | Have patience | Tomorrow is too late |
| All that glitters is gold | Do not judge by looks | Only looks matter |
| Lucky in cards, lucky in love | You can have something | You can have everything |
| All good things never come to an end | Life is short | Tomorrow never comes |

**Table 3 Idiom-Based Campaign of Absolut Vodka**

If the adverts are meant to imply that these original idioms are wrong "in an Absolut world," then they advocate a kind of applied feeling that pleasure is the most important thing in life. If, on the other hand, the adverts are only trying to engage the reader in simple negation of recognized sayings, then there is a disconnection between the product and the campaign.

**Figure 13: Crunch Time.**

Regarding disconnection, the worst of these offenders is Green and Black's chocolate (**Figure 13**). Their slogan belongs more properly to double meaning, as the collocation or idiom used is only-half relevant. The slogan "Crunch Time" which

appears in their advertisement should refer to a period of time where something must occur. Yet the advert uses “crunch” only to refer to the character of its butterscotch candy.

## *8.2 Allusions*


**Figure 14: I had a dream.**

Allusion is an indirect reference to someone or something and thus, it is a common attention-seeking device in advertising discourse. The highest levels of intertextuality, however, require more than a lexical familiarity with a certain phrase. These are the most restrictive – and the most entertaining – adverts. In this section we will examine those which require the receiver to possess knowledge of an external discourse. Without this knowledge, the receiver is unable to process and decode the advert.

In some cases, the advert is situational. This is the case with the simple four-word example, “I had a dream.” (**Figure 14**) It refers to Martin Luther King’s famous speech from 1963, in which he repeatedly used the sentence, “I have a dream.” The first knowledge necessary is the reference. But as it is an allusion, the context is also important. King’s speech and the repeated sentence in particular, was used to describe inequality among the races.

The receiver now has the context of the allusion. Regarding the advert, the particular context important to appreciate is the publication date of the advert: 5 November 2008. This was the day after Barack Obama, the first black president of the United States, was elected. Thus, we can understand the language and the meaning of the advert to indicate that the human race has moved forward and what was a dream is now a reality.

These allusions can also be culturally limited. Doubtless, Obama’s election was globally reported. Even King’s speech is known outside of the United States. But as with the Heineken advert which named a local social networking brand, some other adverts involve allusions that may not be understood outside a locality.


**Figure 15: Elephant & Chateau.**

The British Airways is a good example of

this (**Figure 15**). The average receiver who may have spent some time as a tourist in London might recognize the format of the Underground sign: a red circle with the name written across a blue text-box. But only a receiver more familiar with London is likely to decode the advert in question. “Elephant and Castle” is a stop on the London Underground. Further restricting the receiver is a basic knowledge of French. “Chateau” translates as “Castle.” By making these connections, a receiver might suppose that there is a link between France and London. The advert’s tag line confirms this, offering “London to Nice 12 times a week.”

Here, understanding the allusion is not strictly necessary to understanding the product. The tag line assures this. Other allusions, however, require the recognition of the allusion without text.

One Volkswagen advert (**Figure 16**) displays four cars crossing an intersection. With no knowledge of the allusion, this is confusing to the receiver. Cars do not travel in pedestrian crossings, and these appear to be stationary, or parked. Two clues are in the image which help a receiver decode the advert, but both require external knowledge.

First, the name of the car is the “Beetle”. In very small type in the lower corner, the only text reads “The Beetles.” Since there are four of them, the receiver might make the connection to the band “The Beatles.”


**Figure 16: The Beetles.**

This homophone becomes more compelling for the receiver who recognizes the background of the photograph, which is Abbey Road, used on an album cover of the same name by The Beatles. Instead of the four walking musicians, the advert features four cars, in the approximate positions of the walking musicians in the pedestrian crossing in the original. Thus, a “Beatle” becomes a “Beetle,” but only makes sense when the allusions have been properly understood.

Another image-based advert which can only be decoded with a lexical inference is a Mortein print advert (**Figure 17**). It depicts thirteen mice around a banquet table. The table is filled with food, and one mouse in the centre appears to be hosting the dinner. A small emblem in the corner reads "Mortein raticida." Again, without recognizing the allusion, a receiver would be confused by rats apparently willingly eating poison.

**Figure 17: Mortein Raticida.**

As in the Volkswagen advert, however, there is an allusion at work, with the main human figures having been replaced by something else. In this case, the title of the original painting is what will allow the receiver to decode: "The Last Supper." The original painting, from Leonardo da Vinci, showed Jesus and his disciples. "Last," in this context, refers to their final meeting before Jesus' arrest and the demise of the group. Applying this title to the advert, we understand that this is the final meal for the rats before their demise.

Interestingly, the allusion works only in part because after the Last Supper, only Jesus died. Thus, it would follow then that only one of the rats depicted in the Mortein advert would die. The creators of the advert, more likely, wanted to allude that both situations are final and let the decoding start and stop with the title alone.

Allusions are strongest when they contain levels of decoding, as with the Beetles and the British Airways adverts. If, like the Mortein example, they are only using a part, the receiver cannot know for certain which part is relevant. This creates ambiguity in the message, and the receiver can be left confused.

This is certainly the case with a Footlocker advert (**Figure 18**). This example features restrictions in the allusion, the message and the product.

The image appears to depict an old school desk. There is also a piece of paper, a pencil, an eraser and a book in view. An image on the book shows a bird – probably a cuckoo bird – with a whistle around its neck.

The title of the book alludes to “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest,” a novel by Ken Kesey about individualism in a mental institution. However, “Nest” has been shortened to “net.”

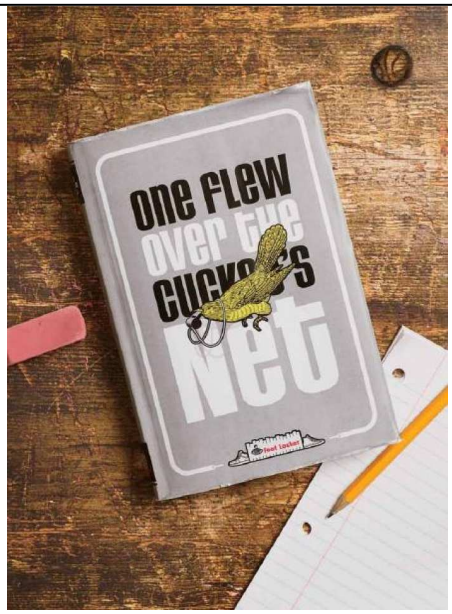

**Figure 18: One flew over the cuckoo's net.**

In the picture, there are some indications that this is a student’s work station. Where the author’s name or publisher might normally appear on the book, we see in the advert instead “Foot Locker,” which is an American sports shoe store. However, the connection between the book and the advertised sport shoe store remains unclear. Does it intend to say that sporty people like literature as well? Most probably, the references we might decipher are pointless and the advert only uses the similarity of the words “nest” and “net.” Alternatively, it might also be a public campaign with the aim to encourage people to read. Then, the message would perhaps be more understandable – yet still only to receivers who already like reading and literature and thus, are familiar with the original title.

Allusions are admittedly high levels of intertextual code play. The most successful examples seem to offer a clue, some part of an external reference. That reference, depending on the intended audience, should be well-known enough for the advert to work. The receiver then processes the clue and supplies the missing information (a title, a substitution, a homophone) to complete the decoding.

## *8.3 Inference*

The highest level of intertextuality is, according to our division, the inference. The receiver generally engages in the same way, but inference is higher because the receiver must in addition estimate some information to decode the message fully. In the complicated levels of intertextual code play, the risk of receiver misunderstanding is high but the risk of the advert not being memorable is also high. It should be obvious, then, that there are fewer examples of these adverts than the others.

In the complicated upper levels of intertextual code play, the risk of receiver misunderstanding is high but the risk of the advert not being memorable is also high. When it fails, it fails completely. But when it succeeds, the receiver is left with questions and reflections. It should be obvious, then, that there are fewer examples of these adverts than the others. They are the most adventurous and high-risk adverts, and relatively few companies are understandably willing to undertake this.

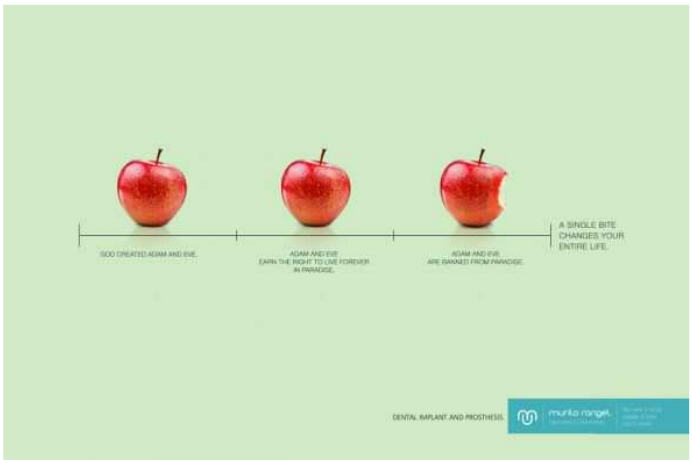


**Figure 19: A single bite changes your entire life.**

One approach is seen in an advert for dental implants from Murilo Rangel (**Figure 19**). The allusion is clearly to the Biblical story of Adam and Eve, which is summarized on a simple timeline. The three stages of their stay in paradise are labelled "*God created Adam and Eve*," "*Adam and Eve earn the right to live forever in paradise*," and "*Adam and Eve are banished from paradise*." This, unlike most of the examples in our corpus, is a familiar allusion to almost every receiver, as even people who haven't read the Bible know the story of Adam and Eve. In the story, they eat the "forbidden fruit," which is signified where the apple pictured has bite marks at the moment of banishment. The receiver, however, still must infer the connection between the loss of paradise and dental implants. The clue is given in the next position on the timeline, which ends with the words, "A single bite changes your entire life."

Thus, the conclusion might be that when a person bites an apple and loses a tooth, it is the loss of perfect teeth. In an appearance-conscious world, this might seem to be the end. Alternatively, it can also function as a warning. The message could also be that biting the apple had a negative consequence for Adam and Eve, and so can have a single bite a negative consequence for people, whose teeth are not healthy.

This is an example of a classical allusion. However, current works may also be used intertextually. Bavaria Pilsner beer (**Figure 20**) does this with a current bestseller, "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus." The popular non-fiction book describes the different stereotypical behaviour of men and women by stating they are from different planets – Mars and Venus.


**Figure 20: Men are from bars.**

This is the allusion. The inference that the receiver must make is to notice the subtle change in the title from "Mars" to "Bars." This is reader supply and the image provides the clue for the decoding. Inside the open book, which is pictured twice, the pages are empty, and a beer is in the hollowed-out pages. Perhaps the message is that men will only own the book if it is an excuse to have a beer in secret. In any case, the link between the allusion and the product is clear, and produces reflection in the reader.

The last example of a successful inference-based ad is for Volvo (**Figure 21**). The allusion is to a fairy tale, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves." At first it seems that there is no key for decoding the message, but there are many clues.

In the image, a reader only sees an expressionless young woman in a provocative posture and fairy-tale clothes hitchhiking by the side of an empty road. We can perceive the road is modern by the asphalt and the painted lines. Additionally, the colours of the landscape are darker, while the woman's clothes are bright, which creates a strange scenery.

The brief text provides two further clues. It reads, "The Volvo XC90. With Seven Seats. Sorry." The three sentence fragments sound apologetic. However, a car with seven seats does not seem like something to apologize for. The second clue is in the number seven.

The decoding ability of the reader depends on his or her knowledge of fairy tales, but the deduction that Volvo expects the reader to make is that the only possibility of seven seats being filled and Snow White. Thus, the seven dwarves have driven the car away

full and left the main character on her own. The receiver's response, then, is likely to be that it is unexpected that the main character in the story is not in the main group.

However, the receiver might also ask whether the advert would be as successful if it was one of the dwarves on the side of the road. Would we still infer the same way? What were the circumstances that led the dwarves to have a car? How did they choose to leave Snow White behind? What this, and to at least some extent, all intertextual adverts do is create room for a response in the receiver. This makes the advert memorable, which as we have noted, is the most important function it has. Intertextuality does more than involve other discourses, it creates a discourse for the receiver to participate in.


**Figure 21: With seven seats. Sorry.**

# 9. Neologisms

A common reason given for the introduction of new words in a language is to provide new names for new things and processes. New concepts need their names and this is why neologisms have been entering English at an ever increasing rate. Apart from this fact, there is also a great increase in clever, trendy, eye-and-ear-catching words to be observed in contemporary English (Lehrer 2003: 371).

## *9.1 Neologisms in Theory*

As Lehrer points out, unusual about new words is that they do not increase efficiency. In fact, they create more effort to interpret – at least until readers (or hearers) have figured out what the source words are and what they mean. Furthermore, neologisms do not appear in isolation; they occur in context where their interpretation is more or less obvious. If we assume that neologisms make the decoding of the reader or

hearer harder, what is their purpose? As far as advertising is concerned, it is undoubtedly to attract the reader's attention. As Lehrer puts it, neologisms in ads are intended to be memorable because the advertiser wants the target audience to remember the name of the product, process, or business establishment (2003: 370).

Lehrer further states that many of the neologisms are witty; they involve word play, such as puns and allusions, as well as an aspect of novelty. Thus, when the reader (or hearer) figures out the implied meaning, he or she might feel clever for having "gotten" the point (2003: 370).

## *9.2 Neologisms in Practice*

Generally speaking, in all the advertisements selected for the purpose of this thesis advertisers either want the receiver to supplement text and image to one another, or to interact with the receiver. In the latter case, as has been already demonstrated, intertextuality is a commonly used feature in today's adverts. The receiver is invited to engage and react based on his or her external knowledge, may it be lexical or cultural. With neologisms, however, the receiver is asked to engage and react based on his or her linguistic ability. This is possibly even more complicated than to decode intertextual allusions, particularly for non-native speakers, as it demands the receiver first to isolate the new word, then the context, and only after, the message or meaning. All of these stages undoubtedly present a challenge for the receiver.

The difference between the adverts which create the core of this thesis and the traditional ones which have been mentioned in the theoretical section is ultimately that only the code play of intertextuality and neologisms actively engages the receiver in a meaningful way.

However, one significant difference between neological and intertextual advertising approaches involves the importance of the image. The creation of a new word requires an image to help guide the receiver to the correct interpretation. Intertextuality, on the other hand, has an external reference (lexical or cultural), for which either the image or the text provides the key to decoding. Because neologisms, as they are defined, involve only the creation of words which have not before existed, the image becomes the means by which the receiver may interpret the message.

The question of which presents the greater restriction, especially for a non-native speaker, is not within the scope of this thesis. Its aim is to present intertextuality and neologisms as sophisticated techniques of current advertising discourse.

Before describing the neologisms in our corpus, some basic word-formation processes in English will now be provided. By doing so, our attention will mainly be focused on blending, which is on one hand the least common word-formation process in English,

| Characteristic | Feature | Receiver must solve with |
|---|---|---|
| Least Restrictive | Basic word-formation processes | Derivation<br>Compounding<br>Conversion |
| Most Restrictive | Blending | Extraction<br>Correction<br>Brand Allusion |

**Table 4 Levels of Neologic Code Play**

but on the other, it is predominant in advertising context because on the basis of this procedure the most neologisms are created.

## 10. Less Restrictive Neological Code Play

To classify the neological adverts in our corpus, traditional categories of word-formation have been drawn upon. Apart from that, special subcategories of blending have been added. According to our division, those neologisms which only require the receiver to have knowledge of basic word-formation processes are considered the least restrictive. They include derivation, compounding and conversion. These word-formation categories are possibly accessible to any receiver with appropriate grammar skills in the English language. As with intertextuality, however, neologisms become more restrictive when they ask receivers to decode blending. These may require extraction, correction, or prior external knowledge.

The major ways of word-formation will now be mentioned. The following definitions which isolate compounding, derivation, conversion and blending are literally taken over from Howard and Amvela (2007: 82-102). Furthermore, matching examples from our corpus are added and analysed in **Table 4**.

As with our categories in intertextuality, these are cumulatively placed in terms of a receiver's ability to decode the message. They are further separated based on the

culling and grouping of many examples, the most representative of which are included in the corpus.

## *10.1 Derivation*

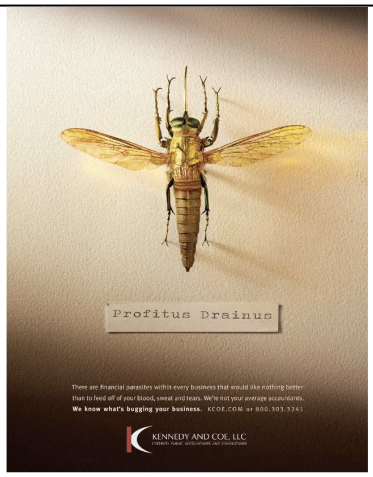

**Figure 23: Profitus Drainus.**

Derivation is a lexical process which forms a new word out of an existing one by the addition of a derivational affix. For instance, the suffixes – *ation* and –*ure* may be added to the verbs *resign* and *depart* respectively to derive the nouns *resignation* and *departure*, which are different parts of speech. Similarly, the suffixes –*dom* and –*ful* may be added to the adjective *free* and the noun *hope* respectively to derive the noun *freedom* and the adjective *hopeful*, which again are different words. Thus, the term derivation refers to the creation of a new word by means of the addition of an affix to a stem.

For the decoding process, the receiver must merely be able to recognize the added convention which creates the new word.

In the case of the Brew Corner (**Figure 22**) they have created the word "beerism." The suffix "-ism" indicates a system of beliefs or practices. In this example, the advertisers have included two examples (socialism and capitalism." The placement of these two "isms" on their own line in a smaller font assist the receiver in the decoding process, as he or she is already lead to how to interpret the new word.

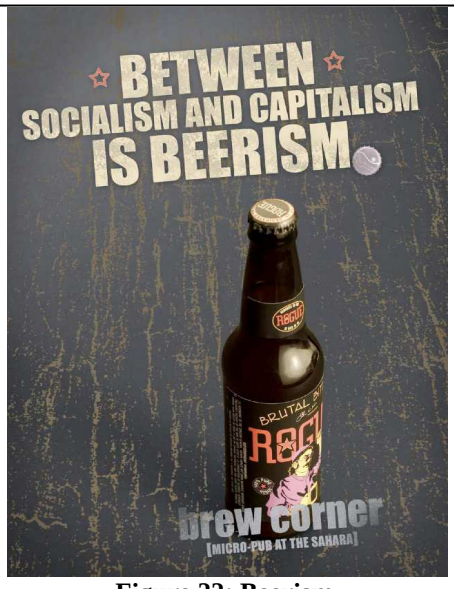

**Figure 22: Beerism.**

It could seem as if "beerism" is one thing that all people, regardless of ideology, can agree on. The slogan on the bottle depicted is for their brand Rogue: "Dedicated to the Rogue in each of us."

Encountering and decode a foreign language or a language which even only looks foreign might be quite difficult for the receiver. An accountancy firm (**Figure 23**) depicts what

appears to be a dead mosquito. The receiver perceives this not only because of the long-nosed insect in the image, but through a collection of related words: “financial parasites,” “feed[ing] off of your blood,” and the phrase “bugging your business.” These are all in the lower, smaller text. The neologism, however, occupies the centre of the page: “Profitus Drainus.”

The receiver might perceive that this is a kind of parody of Latin declension. The “-us” suffix, though it is not necessary to recognize it. Because of the pin which holds the specimen to the board, the receiver is being asked to recognize that the official name of the species is obviously being put on the tag below.


**Figure 24: Getoffwithawarningable.**

## *10.2 Compounding*

Compounds may be defined as stems consisting of more than one root. For example, *bedside*, *black market*, *car-wash*, *waste paper basket*. Orthographic treatment of compounds is by no means consistent. Some are written as one word (with or without a hyphen between two roots), while others are written as two words. This observation tends to suggest that compounds have an intermediary status between phrases and words consisting of a single root. Furthermore, most compounds consist of roots that are simply juxtaposed, in some cases, one of the roots of a compound may be modified by an inflection as in *bird’s-eye*, *driving-licence* and *homing pigeon*.

Trident White chewing gum created two adverts which use the same compounding approach. The two words invented are “officecrushable” and “getoffwithawarningable.” This also uses the derivation approach. In both examples, the suffix “-able” indicates the ability of the stem word (in this case, compounded words) to function. Words like *fixable* (able to be fixed) and *understandable* (able to be understand) might help the receiver in the decoding process.

The compounding relies, as most neologisms do, on the connection of the invented word with the image. In one (see appendix, **Ad 30**, p.xxx), a young man with a wide smile stands in an elevator holding business papers. On each side is a young woman making eyes at him. Because Trident gum claims to “prevent over 35% of stains,” and the young man is smiling widely, the receiver concludes that chewing this

gum will increase popularity in the office. This is confirmed by a textual clue in the explanation, claiming that you will "make more 'friends' around the office." The quotations around "friends" help the receiver decode "officecrush" as a love affair or attraction at workplace. The addition of the suffix concludes the decoding.

It functions similarly in the second advert (**Figure 24**), which depicts a young woman smiling up at someone at her vehicle. Applying the same derivation decoding, the receiver is left with "getoffwithawarning." This advert relies on the identification of the standing figure as a police officer. The emblem on his sleeve confirms this, although it is difficult to see. Again, the neologism helps send the message that a whiter smile will result in an officer not writing a ticket for speeding, but a warning instead.

## *10.3 Conversion*

Conversion is a process by which a word belonging to one word class is transferred to another word class without any change of form, either in pronunciation or spelling. It is a highly prolific source for the production of new words since there is no restriction on the form that can undergo conversion in English. In fact, this word-formation process occurs so regularly that many scholars prefer to consider it as a matter of syntactic usage rather than as word-formation. Conversion most often involves a change from one word class to another. The major kinds of conversion are noun → verb, verb → noun, adjective → noun and adjective → verb. For example:

| | |
|---|---|
| noun → verb: | to bottle |
| verb → noun: | a call |
| adjective → verb: | to better |
| adjective → noun: | the poor |

Furthermore, many word classes can undergo conversion into more than one other word class, e.g. to go *down* (adverb particle), to *down* a beer (verb), to have a *down* on someone (noun). Finally, even a whole phrase may undergo conversion and act as a noun (*forget-me-not*) or as an adjective (*not-to-be-missed* opportunity).

Volkswagen offers an example of conversion in their advert for used vehicles (**Figure 25**). Using the principle of parallel structure, the advert offers three reasons to purchase their product. The caption reads, “re-tuned. re-conditioned. heck, it’s been re-everythinged.”

The neologism, though is interesting in this context. “Everything” is a noun, here being used as a verb – but also with derivation. The fragments and the interjection “heck” make the tone very informal. The stylized two-tone black and white drawing also creates a very simple and straightforward approach. Importantly, the image contains no clues whatsoever for decoding, and does not elucidate the neologism. The print, though, shows more specifically what “re-everythinged” means.

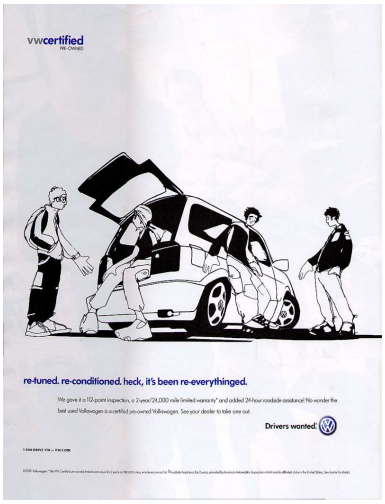


**Figure 25: Re-everythinged.**

Interestingly, using a neologism and the process of linguistic conversion at the same time seems to have a very strong effect. However, it is probably only in this particular context. Furthermore, the simple art direction of this advert contrasts effectively with the strong neologism.

## 11. More Restrictive Neological Code Play

A blend is a new lexeme built from parts of two (or possibly more) words in such a way that the constituent parts are usually easily identifiable, though in some instances, only one of the elements may be identifiable. Blends may also be referred to as “portmanteau” words. For example:

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| breakfast | + | lunch | → | brunch |
| channel | + | tunnel | → | chunnel |
| dove | + | hawk | → | dawk |
| motor | + | hotel | → | motel |
| sheep | + | goat | → | shoat |
| slang | + | language | → | slanguage |

As we can see from these examples, in the formation of blends the first part of the first element is added to the second part of the second element. The resulting items are generally nouns, while a few are adjectives such as glitzy (glitter + ritzy) and verbs such as gues(s)timate (guess + estimate). Blends tend to be more frequent in informal style and are very common in advertising discourse, which is our focus.

In this respect, Lehrer points out that "in the case of blends, the hearer must identify the complete words in the underlying compound and then find a plausible meaning. Since blends and other neologisms almost always occur in context, the problem of identification and interpretation is highly determined" (2003: 370). Crystal (2003: 130), on the other hand, states that "blending seems to have increased in popularity in the 1980's, being increasingly used in commercial and advertising contexts." The forms are felt to be eye-catching and exciting, as Crystal further puts it, but according to him it remains an open question of whether they will still be around in the upcoming decades.

In some sense, this justifies our placement of these linguistic blends at the upper limit of restrictions to the receiver.

## *11.1 Extraction*

In what we have called in our table "extraction," the advert asks the receiver to separate the words and appreciate how they were put together. Mercedes Benz automobiles created an advert with the word "Fabuttractive" (**Figure 26**), with the slogan written underneath "The E Class Coupe. It deserves a whole new language."

**Figure 26: Fabuttractive.**

The image is just a parked automobile. Thus, a receiver's entire focus must be on the word. It appears most likely to be a portmanteau of "fabulous" and "attractive." To decode this, the receiver must direct his or her attention to where the likely collision of the words is occurring. This area, then, is the most critical part of any blended word.

More successful advertisements are the ones with a second dimension of decoding. An ad for a short film called "The Terrorist" (see appendix, **Ad 33**, p.xxxiii)

features a picture of former U.S. President George W. Bush and an attributed quote, presumably for the movie: “Terrorific!”

As a portmanteau, it seems to be a combination of “terrific” and “terror.” Because of the similar appearance of the linguistic stems, the word is fairly obvious. The image of the former president yet adds another dimension. Bush was well known for his incorrect using of foreign words, and the image of the figure, the neologism, the sarcastic quote and the title of the movie all indicate something about the probable character of the product.

The Gazette created an advert which read “Think Glocal” (**Figure 27**). Although it is relatively simple for a receiver to decode this by connecting “local” and “global,” a greater dimension of the message is appreciated with the knowledge of the possible external context.[2] However, it does not necessarily prevent the receiver from understanding the message.

**Figure 27: Think Glocal.**

In this case, “Think Glocal” applies a kind of ellipsis. The adage, “Think global, act local” has been used often by non-profits, particularly regarding the environment. The omission of the verbs “think” and “act,” then, do not necessarily negatively affect the receiver’s ability to decode.

An advert promoting the fuel efficiency of the Toyota Prius (see appendix, **Ad 35**, p.xxxiv) contains the blend “Gaslean.” The word “lean” refers to a low quantity of something, and “gas” is a common North American shortening of “gasoline,” the fuel for an automobile. Thus, “gaslean” as a neologism seems to make the claim of fuel efficiency which is supported in the lower text.

## *11.2 Correction*

In this section, a series of advertisements within one campaign will be analyzed. It could be argued that in the case of an advert having several similar versions, they ought to be interpreted and seen as a group, rather than individually. Though strictly speaking, the average receiver is highly unlikely to appreciate the adverts in this fashion, for our purposes of analysis of how neologisms function, it is important both by itself and in comparison to a one-off example. The campaign has been organized by

[2] see “Think globally, act locally.“ Wikipedia. 2012. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. 21 April 2012 < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Think_globally,_act_locally>

Lindt chocolates, which features images of several different fruits (see appendix, **Ads 36-40**, p.xxxvi-xl). The fruits themselves are associated with the flavours of the chocolates the advert intends to represent. Taken simply, the slogans which accompany the fruits seem to be very basic word play. What is less obvious at first glance is the purpose and approach of the campaign.

The first image we will deal with is that of a pear. The slogan reads “intensely prepeared.” This is a pun, as the homophone “prepared” is undoubtedly to what the neologism refers. The next advert shows leaves of an herb, and reads “intensely mintastic” (**Figure 28**). This neologism is more sophisticated, as the linguistic blending encourages the receiver to “correct” the perceived error. Here, “mintastic” is intended for “fantastic.” There are no clues in the individual images. Taken as a campaign, the receiver can first appreciate the repetition of the word “intensively”, which features in all the adverts, followed by a neological adjective related to the fruit. The set of all possible solutions, then, possibly includes all adjectives and participles. The only clues suggest that the fruit seems to be a rhyme, or similarly structured word. Thus, it seems that these cases in particular are easier to decode for a native speaker than for a learner of English.

**Figure 28: Mintastic.**

The next two adverts in the series are of similar character. The receiver must take the given neologisms “berrysmatic” and “coffenomenal” identify the food, and correct the phonetics so that the word becomes familiar. Probably only a few adjectives in English end in “-smatic” or “-nomenal”. We may assume that here it stands for “charismatic” and “phenomenal”, respectively. The last slogan in this series, “intensely orangeful”, seems to be the hardest to decode. It may be assumed that the word play employs adjectives like “wonderful” or “beautiful.“ However, nothing appears to resemble orange. Not only does this reinforce the restriction, it also makes the receiver’s job more difficult because the adverts are better understood as a campaign, rather than as individual units.

## *11.3 Brand Allusion*

Without question, a receiver is challenged with the highest restrictions when he or she is forced to know external discourse in order to decode the advert, as it was noted with intertextual adverts earlier. The understanding of neologisms in general is conditioned first by the receiver's knowledge of the word, and then is increases with the associations he or she can draw from it.

When the advertisers employ a neologism with the brand name in it, the effect seems to be the greatest. Two adverts for car safety use this level of code play (see appendix, **Ads 41-42**, p.xli-xlii). The created words are "Toyazda" and "Volksubishi." The image is a little confusing, in that the receiver is not clear on who the advertiser is. . The words are blended the same way as the images of cars are crashed together. The tagline, "available for careless drivers, at all intersections," indicates that the company is not actually selling a vehicle; in fact, it is a public interest campaign regarding the result of careless driving.

**Figure 29: Cointreauversial.**

Another example is an advert for Cointreau (**Figure 29**). It depicts a young woman who appears to be dressed as an orange peel, an ingredient in the company's product. She is holding an oversized bottle of the orange liqueur and written at the top is the neologism, "Be Cointreauversial." A receiver is likely to be able to decode the new word as misspelled "controversial." However, dressing like an orange seems unlikely to be something truly controversial. If we stick to the real meaning of this word, it is rather connected with causing a lot of angry public discussion and disagreement. Furthermore, there is also a tag-line which says "so many taboos, so little time." It still does not make complete sense, but the three pieces of information (dressing as an orange peel, the neologism and the taboo) seem to be sending the message that a receiver should be in touch with his or her own identity, and not worry about society´s perspective. Still, the main attention-seeking device is the use of the brand name.

An advert on Reebok shoes (**Figure 30**) pictures a woman from the waist down, with an emphasis on her nice legs. She is evidently wearing a pair of their shoes, and the two-colored caption reads "Reetone." Unlike the "fabuttractive" example, the Reebok advertisers separate the blending. It can be assumed that "tone" refers to the woman's

attractive legs, based on her running in their shoes. This advert is an excellent example of the advertiser relying on the receiver's recognition of all or part of their brand name.

Finally, our last advert under investigation is for Grolsch beer (see appendix, **Ad 45**, p.xlv). It reminds the receiver of the brand name, using a distinctive font as well. The advert depicts an equally recognizable bottle and an upside-down pint glass. The neologism here is "bottomsch up." This is a clear corruption of "bottoms up," a euphemism for the act of drinking, often said as a toast. The addition of the "ch" to "bottoms," should be enough, as the advertisers believe, to help the receiver decode.

**Figure 30: Reetone.**

# 12. Conclusion

As advertising presents a powerful form of communication, it has been the subject of analysis for many linguists and other academics. This thesis has been written to fulfil two main purposes. Firstly, it seeks to examine the receiver's interaction with the advertising message and the factors it may depend on. Secondly, it seeks to describe what restrictions and challenges may intertextuality and neologisms, the two advertising approaches under investigation, bring to the receiver.

Chosen authors who deal with advertising discourse have been drawn upon in the theoretical part. For the purpose of this thesis the works of Goddard, Cook and Myers have been introduced. The description of their approaches has shown that they mainly deal with prosodic or rhetorical features of advertisements. However, this thesis attempts to argue that both the prosodic approach and the sentence type analysis, as described by these authors, are limited tools in today's advertising discourse. Furthermore, as opposed to one of the aims of this thesis, the above mentioned authors do not focus their attention enough on the receiver of an advertising message.

To engage with the receiver in a challenging an effective way, advertisers make use of intertextuality and neologisms. The practical part of this thesis has been compiled to present these two techniques as sophisticated approaches in current advertising discourse. To analyze the advertisements under scrutiny, a structure with different levels of restriction in understanding has been imposed.

As far as intertextuality is concerned, there appear to be different levels of inference to be drawn by the receiver. The least restrictive levels dealt with language itself. The higher, more restrictive levels, on the other hand, required the receiver to have not only linguistic familiarity or knowledge, but very good knowledge of other texts and genres. It has been demonstrated that unless the receiver has knowledge of specific sayings, proverbs and idioms, not even very good linguistic knowledge can help reveal the links. Finally, the top levels of intertextual code play, namely allusions and inferences, required levels of familiarity with a set of external references. Even for native speakers, these might present challenges of interpretation.

A similar structure has been applied to analyze neologisms. While intertextual advertisements make use of some external reference, for which either the image or the text provided the key for decoding, with neologisms the image alone proved to be of

crucial importance. The reason is that neological adverts involve the creation of words which have not existed before, and the context thus becomes the important means by which the receiver may interpret the message. Furthermore, neologisms proved to demand the reader first to isolate the new word, then the context, and only after the message or meaning, which might be complicated particularly for non-native speakers of English.

On the basis of the corpus examined, the purpose of this thesis has been to demonstrate the current tendencies in advertising discourse. It has been shown that advertisers are more and more beginning to engage in code play. It may dilute the message and it may be completely ignored, but advertisers are learning that with so many advertisements in so many forms in everyone's lives, theirs have to stand out. The code play presented by intertextuality and neologisms, however, threatens to leave some receivers, and thus prospective buyers, behind. Those left behind are often non-native speakers because they need lexical, idiomatic, and allusional knowledge to engage in the code play.

# Resumé

Tato práce si klade za cíl představit intertextualitu a neologismy jako sofistikované postupy v současném reklamním diskurzu. Důraz je kladen na úskalí a výzvy, které u těchto jevů mohou nastat při interpretaci reklamního sdělení.

Teoretická část popisuje základní charakteristiky reklamního diskurzu se zaměřením na jazykové prostředky. Rozbor děl autorů, kteří se reklamou zabývají, ukazuje, že se soustředí především na lexikální a stylistické rysy jazyka reklamy a na to, jak reklamní sdělení vzniká. Cílem této práce je ovšem konfrontovat tyto tradiční přístupy s intertextualitou a neologismy, které při interpretaci významu vytvářejí větší nároky na příjemce.

Rozbor korpusu reklam v praktické části poukazuje na různá omezení, která příjemci mohou bránit v porozumění reklamního sdělení. Některé reklamy pracují s několika významy jednoho slova, jiné předpokládají znalost idiomů. Nejnáročnější úroveň představují odkazy ke kultuře, k tradicím a k jiným žánrům, bez jejichž znalosti čtenář reklamu nepochopí.

U neologismů jsou také zdůrazněny vizuální aspekty reklamy, protože jedině ty často umožňují příjemci novotvar rozpoznat, a pochopit tak sdělení.

Oba zkoumané jevy jsou v současném reklamním diskurzu hojně využívané, protože aktivně zapojují příjemce a představují efektivní způsob, jak je oslovit. Reklamní agentury tím riskují, že potenciální zákazníci intertextualitu nebo neologismus nepochopí. Největší nároky jsou v tomto smyslu kladeny na nerodilé mluvčí angličtiny, kteří intertextuální odkazy a neologismy v reklamách z výše zmíněných důvodů často nemohou pochopit.

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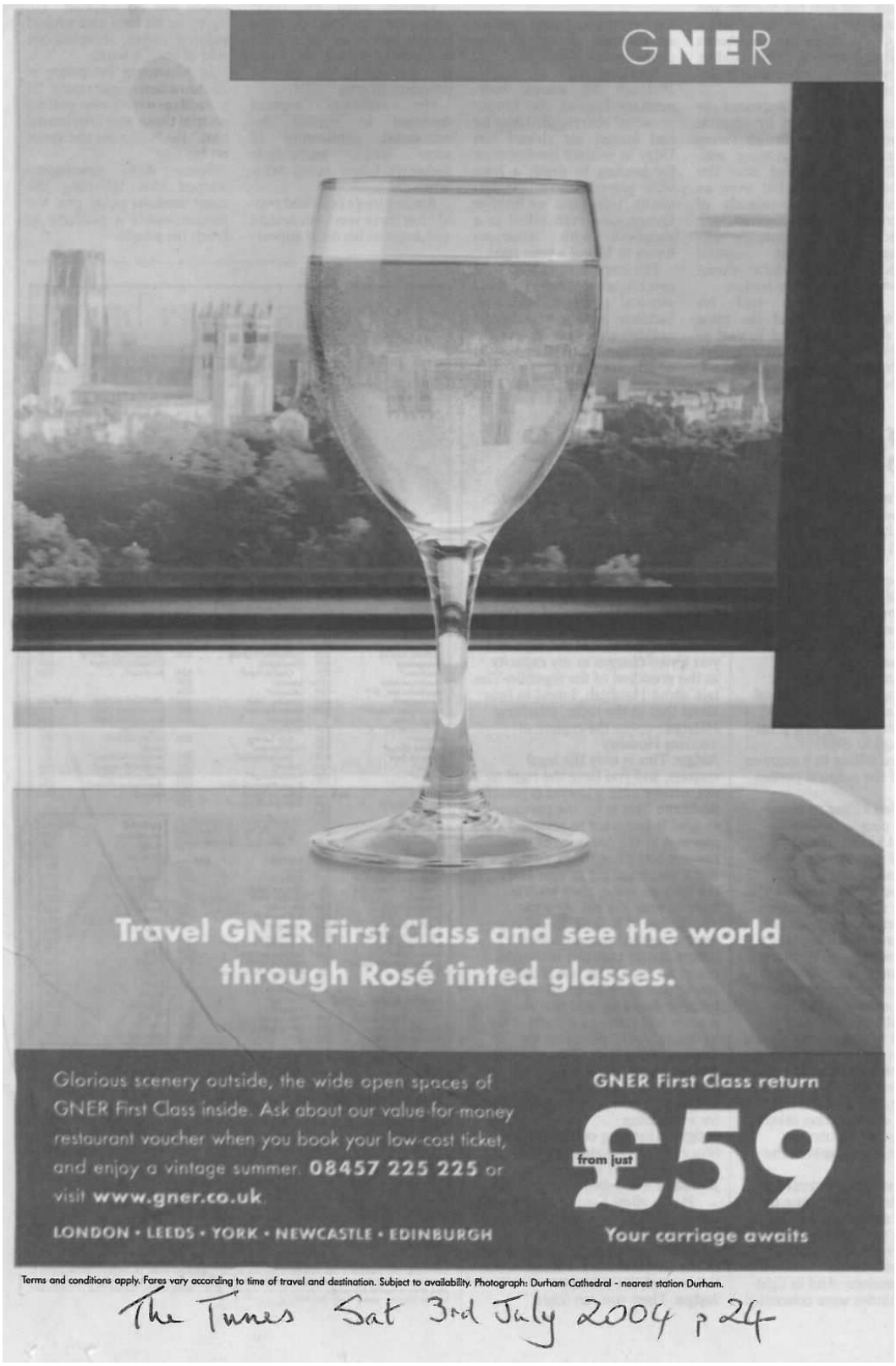
# Appendix: Table of Contents

**Corpus**

## AD 1 – Figure 1

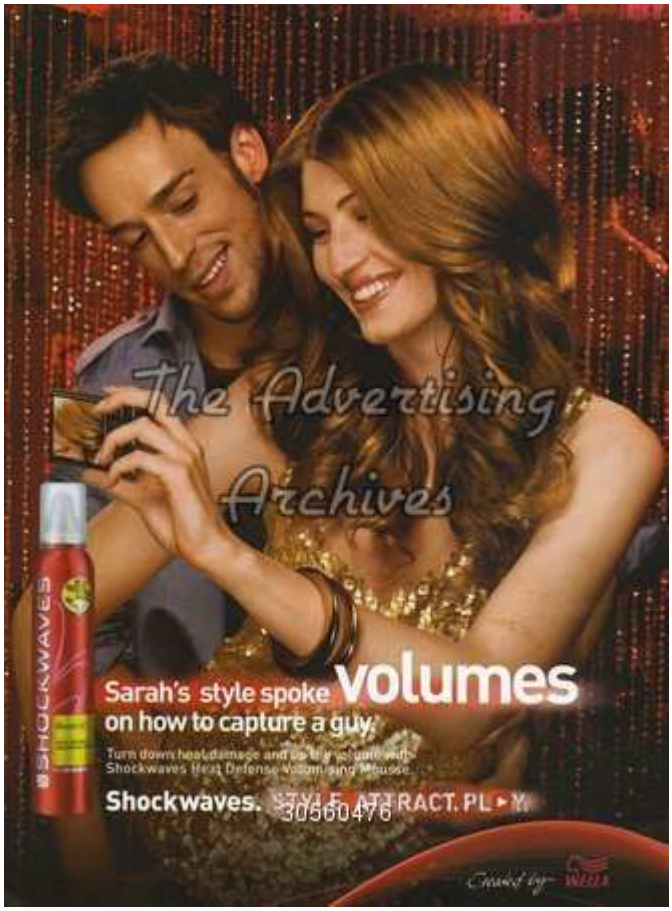
# AD 2 – Figure 2


GNER
Travel GNER First Class and see the world through Rosé tinted glasses.
Glorious scenery outside, the wide open spaces of GNER First Class inside. Ask about our value for money restaurant voucher when you book your low-cost ticket, and enjoy a vintage summer. 08457 225 225 or visit www.gner.co.uk
LONDON • LEEDS • YORK • NEWCASTLE • EDINBURGH
GNER First Class return
from just £59
Your carriage awaits
Terms and conditions apply. Fares vary according to time of travel and destination. Subject to availability. Photograph: Durham Cathedral - nearest station Durham.
The Times Sat 3rd July 2004 p 24

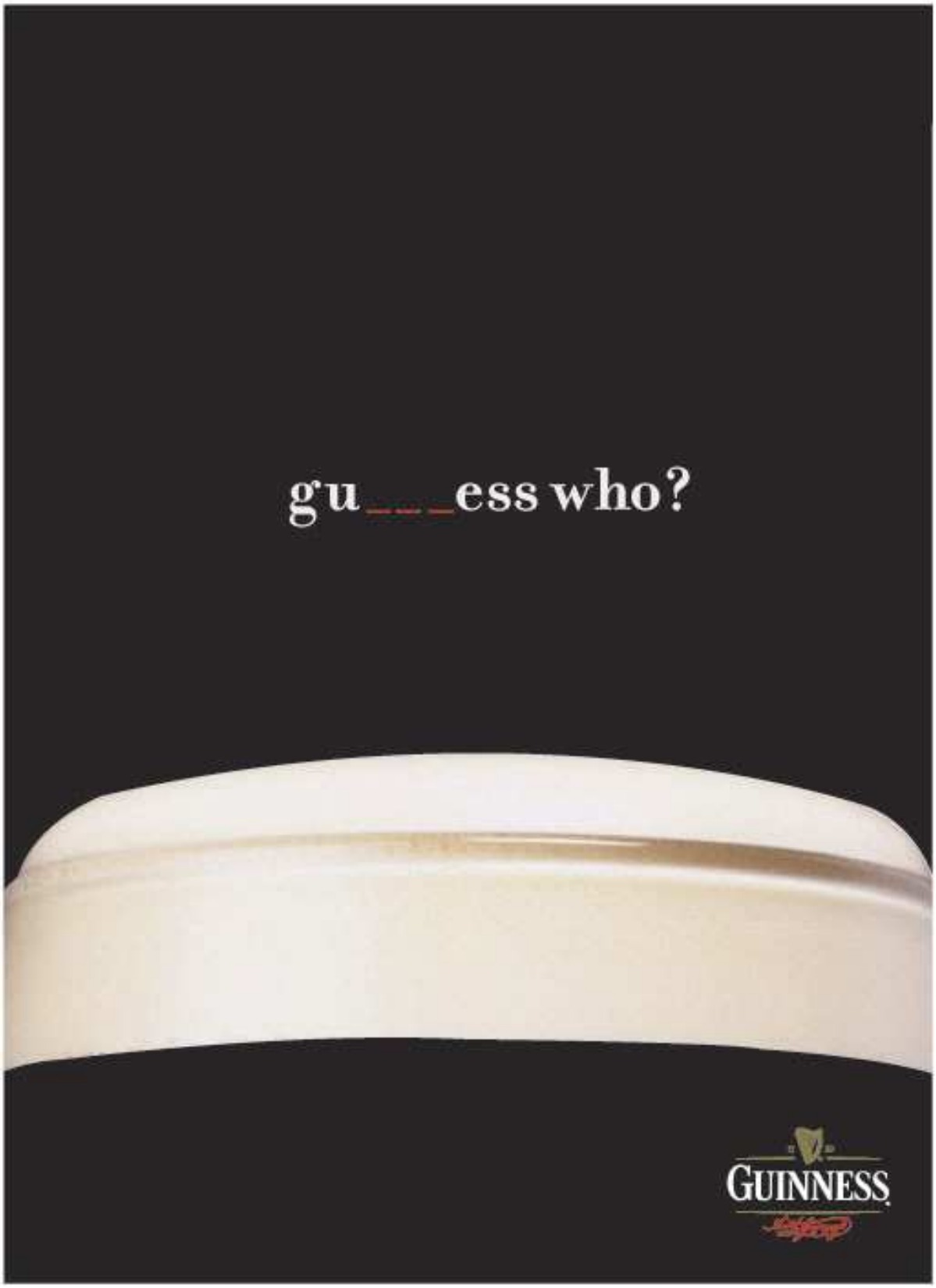
**AD 3**


125 Years Bosch 1886–2011
Dry one – get one free
The Bosch EcoLogixx 7 uses 50% less energy than other tumble dryers
BOSCH
EcoLogixx 7
Reduced Ironing
Low Heat
Menu
224
Easy-Care
Very Dry
Cupboard D
Iron Dry
Freshen up
Sportswear
Woollens
Finish
Super Quick 40
Off
Cupboard
Iron Dry
Cold
Timed Program
AWARDS 2011
which
www.which.co.uk
Best Large Home Appliance Brand
The Bosch EcoLogixx 7 tumble dryer recycles the heat normally lost in a conventional dryer, and unlike any other tumble dryer, has a self cleaning system that automatically clears the heat exchanger, so you don't have to. Which means it uses at least 50% less energy than most other tumble dryers on the market, and continues to do so for as long as you go on tumble drying. For your brochure call 0844 892 9023 or visit www.bosch-home.co.uk
BOSCH
Invented for life

## AD 4 – Figure 3


The Advertising Archives
SHOCKWAVES
Sarah's style spoke volumes
on how to capture a guy.
Shockwaves.
30560476

## AD 5 – Figure 4



## AD 6 – Figure 5

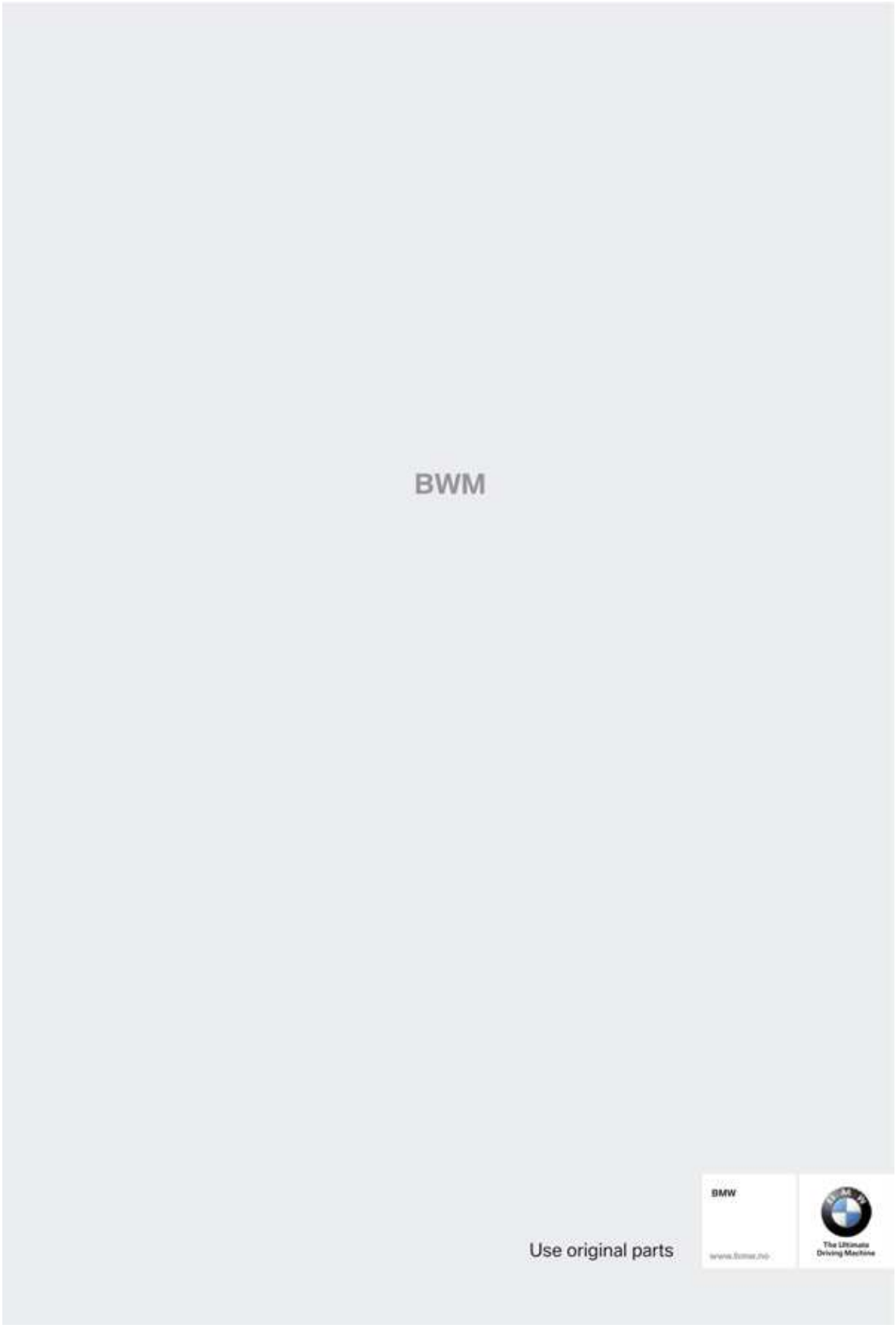

I YOU
Take good care of your heart.
February, 14th - Valentine's and Coronary Patient Day.
PORTUGUESE CARDIOLOGY FOUNDATION

## AD 7 – Figure 6


Disconnect for a while. Read a book. Tzomet Sfarim

## AD 8 – Figure 7

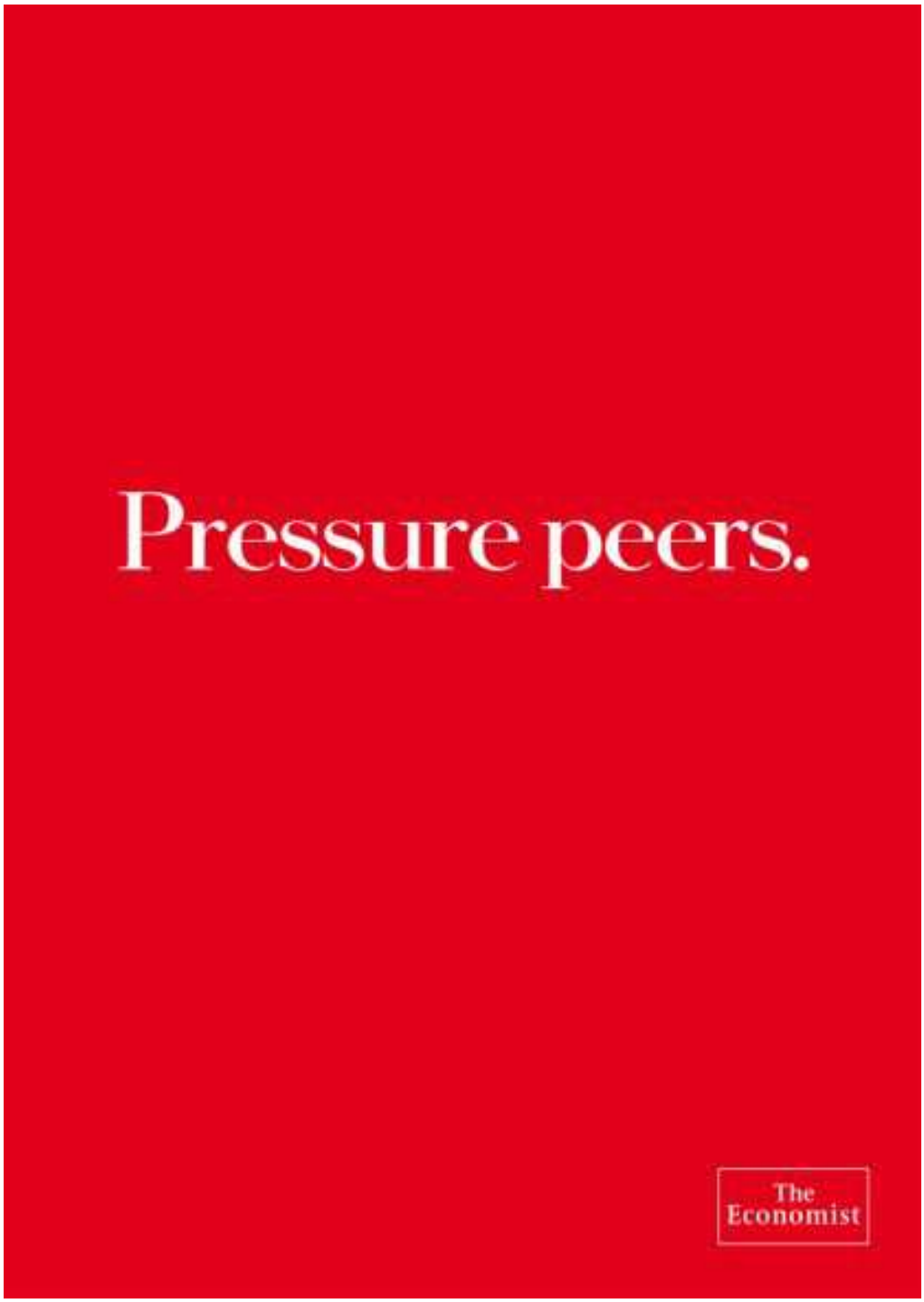
# AD 9



# AD 10 – Figure 8

# AD 11 – Figure 9

## AD 12 – Figure 10



## AD 13 – Figure 11

## AD 14 – Figure 12

## AD 15


ALL GOOD THINGS
NEVER COME TO AN END
IN AN ABSOLUT WORLD
ABSOLUT
KURANT

## AD 16

**AD 17**


LUCKY IN CARDS,
LUCKY IN LOVE.
IN AN ABSOLUT WORLD
ABSOLUT
VODKA

## AD 18 – Figure 13

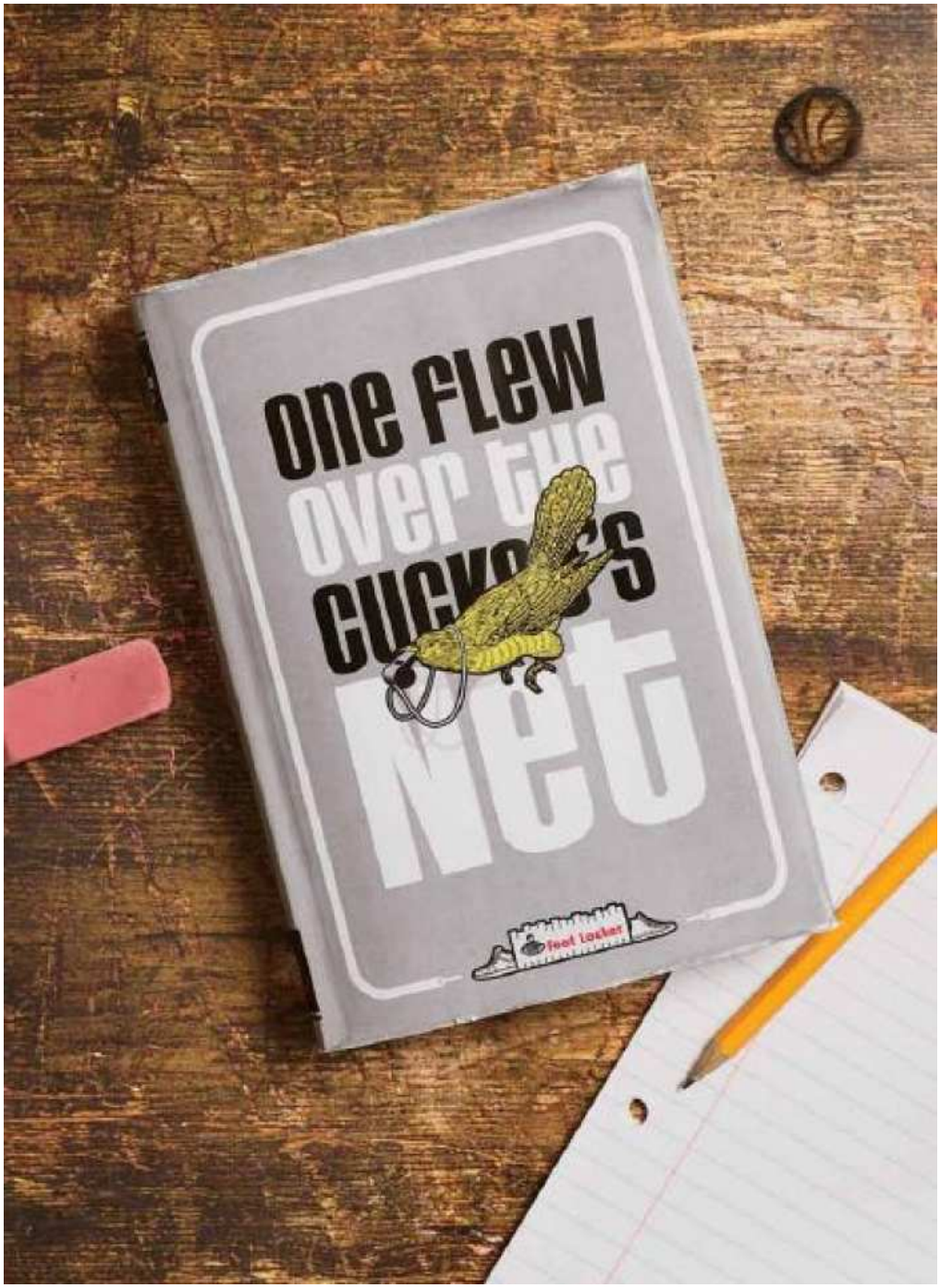
## AD 19 – Figure 14

## AD 20 – Figure 15

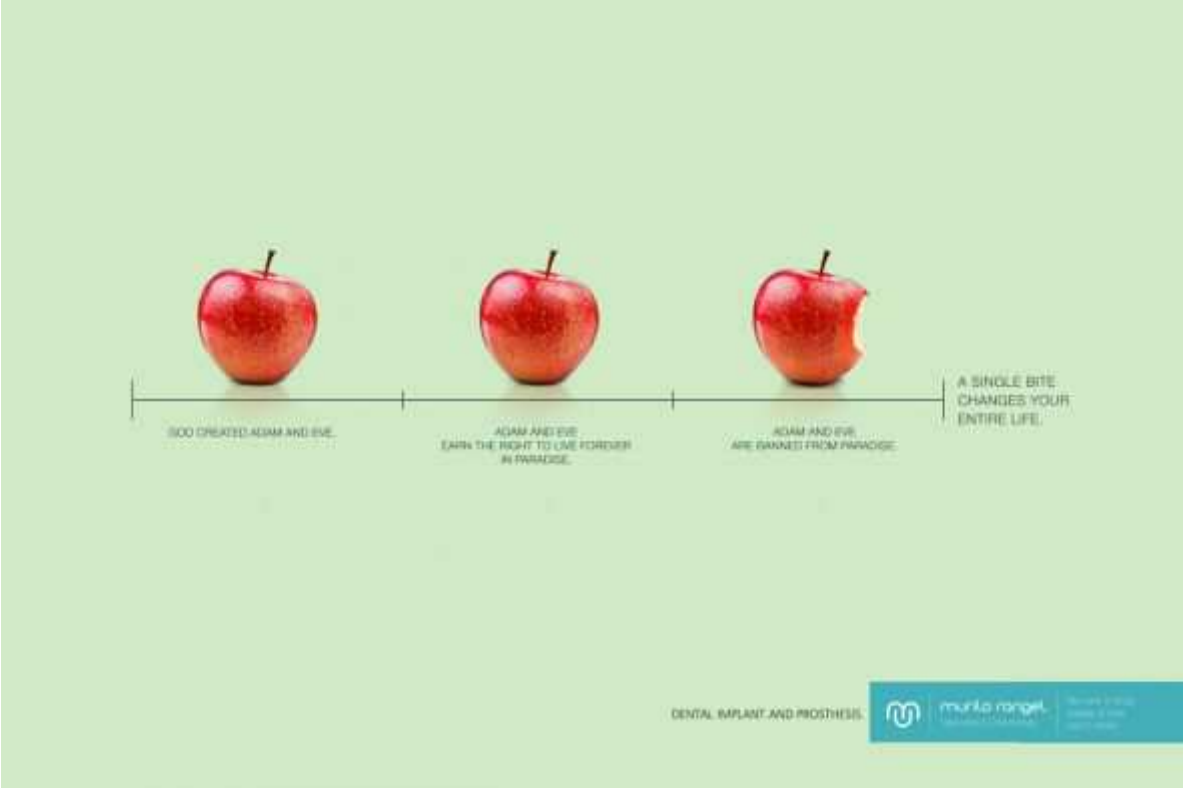

# AD 21 – Figure 16

# AD 22 – Figure 17

## AD 23 – Figure 18



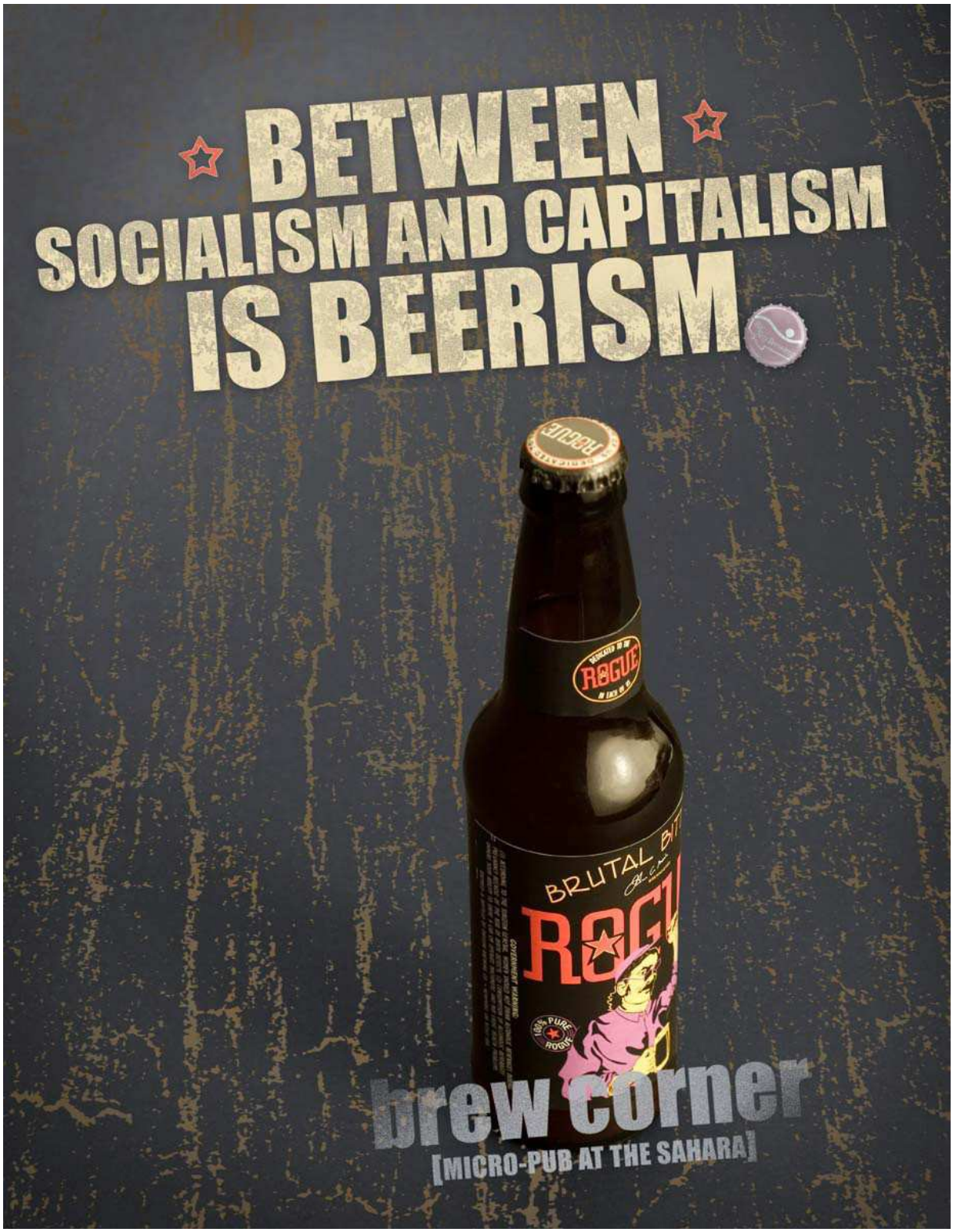
# AD 24 – Figure 19



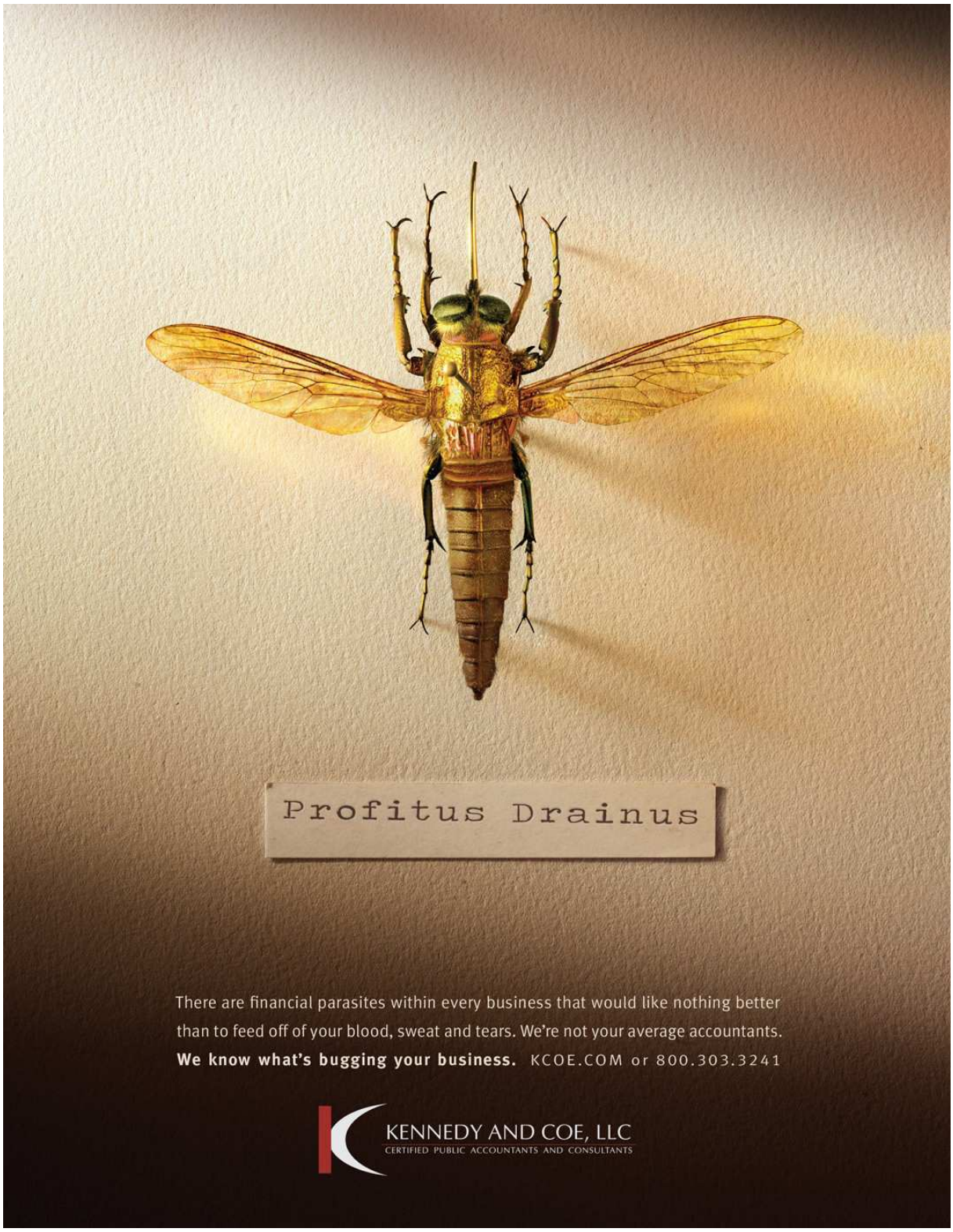
# AD 25 – Figure 20

# AD 26 – Figure 21

## AD 27 – Figure 22



# AD 28 – Figure 23



## AD 29 – Figure 24

# AD 30


35% MORE OFFICECRUSHABLE.
Trident White® prevents over 35% of stains* for a smile that will help you make more "friends" around the office.
PREVENTS OVER 35% OF STAINS*
Trident White
PEPPERMINT
*In a 12 week clinical study based on chewing 2 pieces of Trident White sugar free gum 4 times a day.
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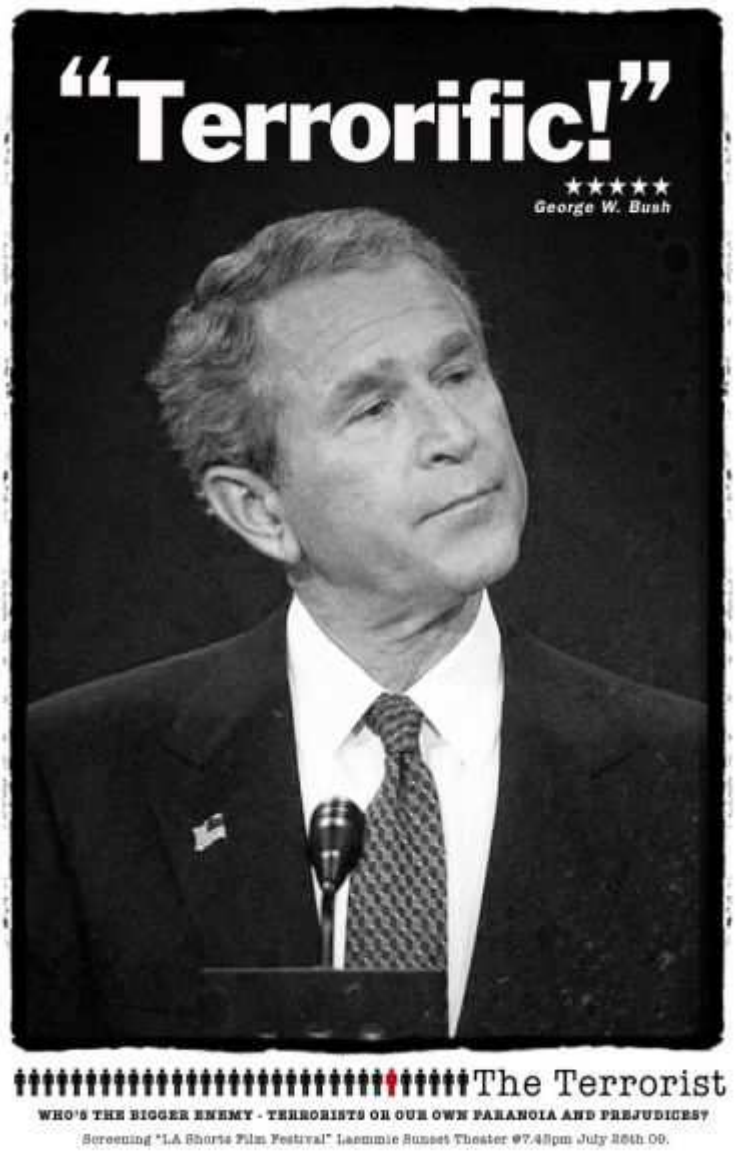
# AD 31 – Figure 25

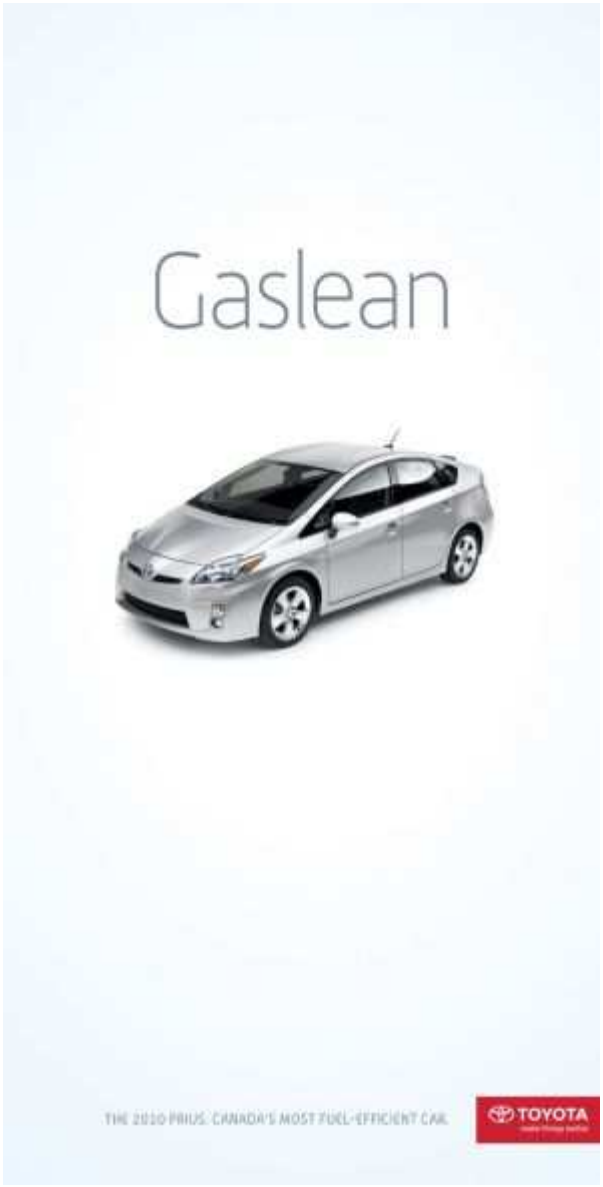
## AD 32 – Figure 26

## AD 33


"Terrorific!"
★★★★★
George W. Bush
The Terrorist
WHO'S THE BIGGER ENEMY - TERRORISTS OR OUR OWN PARANOIA AND PREJUDICES?
Screening "LA Shorts Film Festival" Laemmle Sunset Theater @7.45pm July 26th 00.

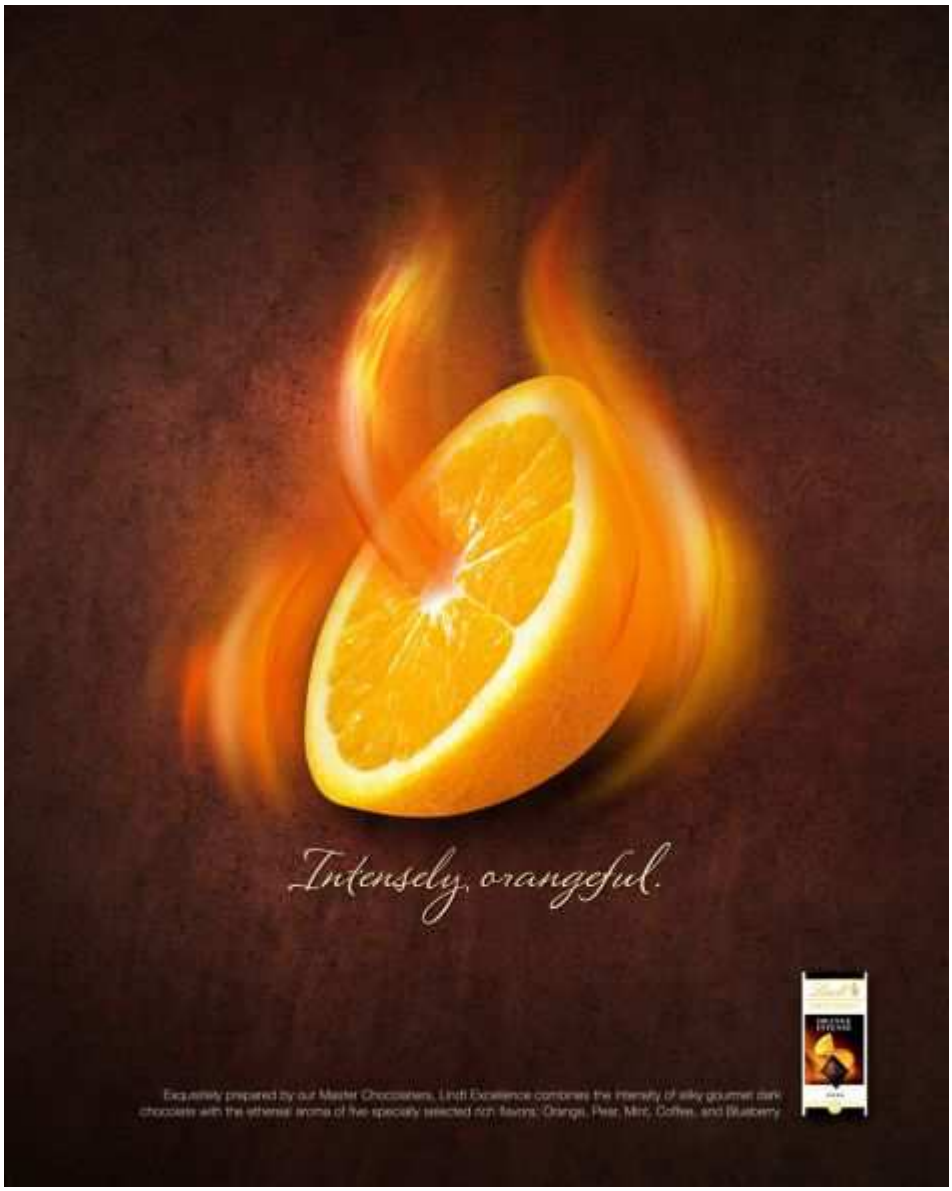
## AD 34 – Figure 27

## AD 35


Gaslean
THE 2010 PRIUS. CANADA'S MOST FUEL-EFFICIENT CAR.
TOYOTA

# AD 36 – Figure 28

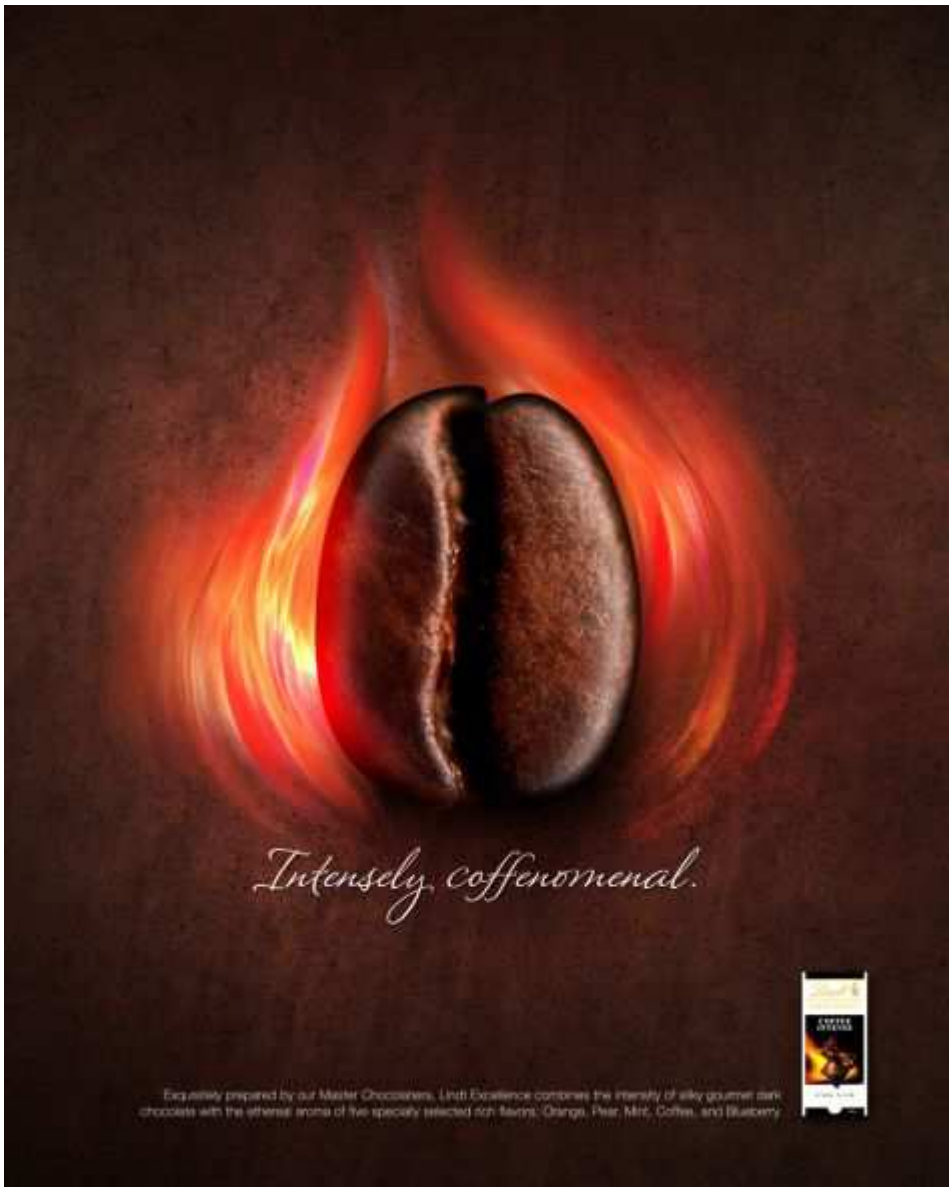
## AD 37



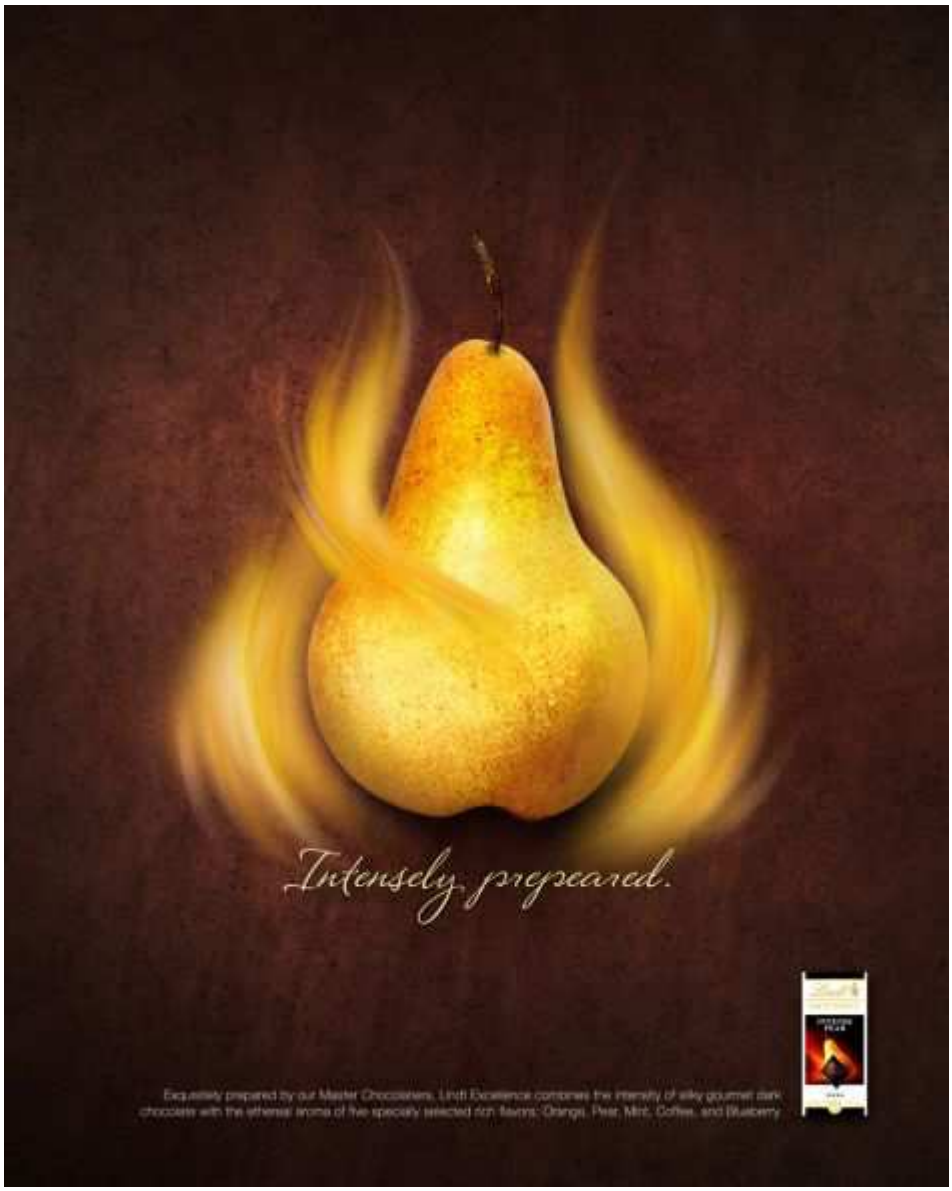
## AD 38


Intensely berrysmatic.
Exquisitely prepared by our Master Chocolatiers, Lindt Excellence combines the intensity of silky gourmet dark
chocolate with the ethereal aroma of five specially selected rich flavors: Orange, Pear, Mint, Coffee, and Blueberry

## AD 39


Intensely coffenomenal.
Exquisitely prepared by our Master Chocolatiers, Lindt Excellence combines the intensity of silky gourmet dark chocolate with the ethereal aroma of five specially selected rich flavors: Orange, Pear, Mint, Coffee, and Blueberry.

# AD 40



# AD 41


TOYAZDA
Road Safe Hawkes Bay
Available for careless drivers, at all intersections.

# AD 42


VOLKSUBISHI
Road Safe Hawkes Bay
Available for careless drivers, at all intersections.

# AD 43 – Figure 29

## AD 44 – Figure 30

## AD 45