

# Prolegomena to the Linguo-semiotic Study of Advertising Discourse

Daria G. Kurenova, Andrew V. Olyanitch, Olga E. Pavlovskaya  
and Olga S. Sakhno

***Abstract---** The relevance of the study is due to the globalization of consumer requests for quality awareness of products and services, which imposes responsibility on the product promoters for the semiotic accuracy of the advertising discourse. In this regard, this article is aimed at identifying clusters of signs and concepts used in the advertising discourse to achieve the maximum impact on the consumer and increase his/her awareness. The leading approach to the linguo-semiotic study of the advertising discourse is the use of the algorithm “from sign to word and to discourse”. It makes it possible to comprehensively consider the cognitive and linguo-semiotic mechanisms of discourse development, to apply the method of studying this process to the study of advertising communication space. The article presents prolegomena to a large-scale study of the semiotics of advertising communication in general: the article reveals the prospects and shows the vectors of five stages of the linguo-semiotic research of advertising discourse development, such as identifying clusters of signs that support the institutional characteristics of advertising discourse; identifying directions for the typology of advertising discourse signs; determination of clusters of signs supporting the conceptual sphere of advertising communication; the paper shows the direction and stages of the formation of values among the consumers of modern advertising discourse and determines the stratagems that form the strategic component of the advertising discourse. Already at this (initial) stage of a large-scale study of the linguo-semiotics of advertising discourse, a typology of sign clusters has been made: 1) maintaining the institutional characteristics of advertising discourse (legislative signs, fixative signs, restrictive signs, gluttonyms, personal signs, phononyms, actionyms, locatives, attractives, chrononyms, auditives); 2) vectorization of the functions of the advertising discourse in the following directions: a) informative (informative signs); b) imperative (imperatives or impact signs); c) axiological (axionyms); d) argumentative (argumentative signs); 3) ensuring the semiotisation of the advertising message through the promotion of the basic concepts of “State”, “Action” and “Process” and their specifying concepts, for example, the concept of “Beauty” (somatism signs, coloronyms, condition signs, luxonyms, exclusive signs); 4) semiotisation of the process of value creation by the advertising discourse through the formation of a technological and comfortable environment (technonyms, ecologems) and a call for a healthy lifestyle through “shocking advertising” or “shockvertising” (aggravatives, epiciniums); 5) incarnations of the advertising impact (stratagems - positionyms [differentiation signs, signs of value orientation, signs of assignment of estimated values], signs of optimization [stratagems-coordinatives, stratagems-cognitonyms, stratagems-attractors, stratagems-mnemonyms, stratagems-argumentative signs; discriminative stratagems], signs-technonyms). The materials of the article are of practical value for linguistic*

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Daria G. Kurenova, Kuban State Technological University.  
Andrew V. Olyanitch, Adygea State University.  
Olga E. Pavlovskaya, Kuban State Agrarian University.  
Olga S. Sakhno, Kuban State Agrarian University.

*specialists in the field of linguo-semiotics, cognitive linguistics, conceptology, for theorists and practitioners in advertising, marketing and impact technologies, public relations.*

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Advertising is a very important type of human activity in terms of civilization development with a high impact potential on the mentality of consumers of material and spiritual products that are created by society. Advertising is a communicative and socio-cultural phenomenon and is manifested in a special type of discourse – the advertising discourse, which is a type of institutional communication and broad social interaction. It is introduced in many spheres of social life and is included in various social institutions.

The communicative status of the advertising discourse is fairly well covered in linguistics, but it still attracts the attention of researchers because it is in the focus of yet insufficiently studied and unsolved global linguistic problems such as impact theory, communication theory, linguo-semiotic theory of discourse development, presentation theory of discourse, cognitive theory of conceptualization, theory of structural and semiotic organization of advertising text depending on the dynamics of the increase of social stratification, as well as the intensification of the differences in gender, age and psychological preferences.

Advertising discourse has been widely studied from different aspects, such as:

- Its function of forming a media-advertising picture of the world as a structural-semiotic entity [Rogozina 2003; Yezhov 2010];
- Its functioning in the institutional communicative space as a semiotic tool of presentational impact [Oljanich 2007];
- Its belonging to the institutional type of communication in the totality of the corresponding constitutive features [Oljanich 2011; Zamyshlyeva 2016];
- Its linguistic and manipulative nature in terms of impact on the consumers' mentality [Vasilenko 2014];
- Its role in the linguistic structuring of images of the products / goods / services and the semiotisation of their value [Il'inova 2011; Pocheptsov 2007];
- The study of its communication strategies and tactics [Lazarev 2003].

In Russian linguistics, a special place is given to the semiotics of advertising discourse. Thus, a profound study of E.A. Yelina covers all the manifestations and mechanisms of advertising sign formation up to the creolization of the advertising text and advertising discourse development [Elina 2008].

The semiotics of advertising discourse was also considered in detail by T.Yu. Kobzareva in the linguo-didactic aspect [Kobzareva 2009].

The principles and technologies as a basis for the design subdiscourse of advertising semiotics were considered by V.S. Pavlova [Pavlova 2013].

Yu.K. Pirogova and P.B. Parshin studied in detail the semiotics and linguistics of advertising text as a product of advertising discourse [Pirogova, Parshin 2000].

Advertising signs of were partially described in the works of S.Yu. Tyurina [Tyurina 2009] and M.A. Filippova [Filippova 2016].

Role semiotics of television advertising discourse was studied by N.A. Cherkashina [Cherkashina www].

Semiotic advertising discourse studies have been conducted in foreign linguistics for a long time and brought results. The ethnological signs have been particularly intensively studied: for example, the advertising discourse from the point of view of its semiotic and conceptual content has been analyzed on the basis of African advertising [Alozie 2015]; advertising signs incorporated into the mass-information discourse have been explored on the example of Egyptian media [El-daly 2011]; the semiotics of African construction advertising is being studied by Cameroonian researchers Evangelista Seino and Franklin Agwa [Seino, Agwa 2016]. Great attention is paid to the semiotic research of advertising discourse in China: see, for example, D. Xu's systematic study on the semiotic analysis of multimodality in Chinese advertising [Xu 2014].

The study of the semiotics of advertising discourse in Great Britain and the United States of America is especially abundant. Thus, the signs of advertising discourse are studied from the point of view of lexicography - in the dictionary of media and communications, published in Oxford by D. Chandler and R. Munday [Chandler, Munday 2011]. The idiomatic processive signs, their actualization in the advertising discourse and the effectiveness of their influence on customers were studied by E. Aim, Ch. Lima, S. Hoon, Y. Ang, G. Leeb and S. Leon [Aim, Lima, Hoon, Ang, Leeb, Leon2009]; their analysis was published in the famous American "Journal of Pragmatics."

A detailed study of advertising semiotics as a component of market communications was carried out by W. Arens, C. Arens and M. Weigold [Arens, Arens, Weigold 2012]; the integration of advertising signs into modern marketing activities and market processes was also studied by G.E. Belch and M.A. Belch [Belch, Belch 2014].

The mechanisms and algorithms of the semiotic involvement of advertising signs on the Internet were analyzed by Chinese researchers Chen Yo and Chu He [Chen, He 2011].

Western researchers of advertising discourse show great interest to the text-formation of advertising messages during the development of advertising discourse: for example, L. Downing, a researcher from the Autonomous University of Madrid, give a typology of signs embedded in advertising texts [Downing 2010]; her Slovenian colleague M. Džanić describes the decoding process of visual signs in advertising text messages [Džanić 2013].

The role of advertising signs in shaping the consumer discourse is reviewed and analyzed by B. Kettemann [Kettemann 2013].

Signs of impact of the advertising discourse on the consumer are analyzed in the works of A. Flergin [Flergin 2014] and S.R. Fox [Fox 1997]. Semiotics of the impact of advertising messages of the American newspaper media on consumer consciousness has been in the focus of attention of a Swedish researcher S.Karlsson of the Linnaeus University [Karlsson 2015].

A Greek semiologist E. Kurdis [Kourdiswww] has studied the intersemiotic translation of the “plastic visual signs” in the advertising discourse. Equally high is the interest of foreign scientists to the cognitive mechanisms involved in the advertising discourse development and using signs that secretly affect the subconscious; such mechanisms have been studied by Thai researchers M. Najafian and A. Dabaghi [Najafian, Dabaghi 2017].

Finally, an attempt of a linguosemiotic study of the advertising discourse (bachelor’s work) was undertaken by an Iceland researcher M.B. Wejher from the University of Iceland [Wejher 2015].

The overview above is a brief overview of the research in the field of semiotics of advertising discourse, offering a comprehensive enough coverage of the modern approaches to its study. Nevertheless, it should be noted that solutions of the problem of semiotisation of advertising discourse development that are known to the researchers are fragmentary, incomplete, and based on limited factual material. In this article, for a comprehensive study of the signs of advertising discourse and their detailed typology, it is proposed to apply the linguosemiotic approach, first applied to other types and kinds of discourse and developed by one of the authors of this article together with a Volgograd State University professor T.N. Astafurova [Astafurova, Olyanitch 2008]. Thus, the *purpose* of the article is to introduce the prolegomena<sup>1</sup> to the linguosemiotic study of advertising discourse formation and discourse development, which implies the solution of a number of *prolegomena-related problems*:

1. To demonstrate a possible model for identifying and describing signs featuring the institutional characteristics of advertising discourse, namely: the presence of a large number of speech limits, strict fixation of the participants’ roles, determination by the context, the presence of legislative (legal) restrictions (the accuracy of the information, the absence of direct criticism of the competing goods or services and the non-use of information prohibited by law and provoking an intrusion into the privacy of citizens, as well as the use of advertising tools that cause social rejection).
2. To predict the direction of the typology of signs of the advertising discourse by showing its semiotic structure.
3. To designate a possible conceptual sphere of the advertising discourse with indication of the signs typical for it.
4. To determine the vectors of the value creation process using semiotic tools of advertising discourse.
5. To identify the signs involved in strategic advertising discourse development.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

As illustrative materials, advertising creolized texts taken from the Internet (mass media sites, advertising pages, blogs, advertising on the You-Tube network), and scripts of television advertising texts were used.

To achieve the objectives of this article, it is proposed to apply a research algorithm successfully tested by T.N. Astafurova and A.V. Olyanitch as a model “sign → word → text / discourse.” According to the authors, “...the explanatory power of this algorithm lies in the fact that it is possible to give a complete description of the process of

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<sup>1</sup>Prolegomena (*Ancient Greek προλεγόμενα* — foreword, introduction) is the reasoning formulating the original concept and giving preliminary information about the object of study; an explanatory introduction to the study of a particular science, with the goal of a preliminary acquaintance with its methods and tasks and the designation of the status of science or discipline in the system of rational knowledge [www.wikipedia.org].

actualizing the need for communication through the description of the quality of the signs of reality surrounding a person involved in the process of communication; analysis of the meaning of these signs, i.e. analysis of the semantics of the lexical nominations and other verbal complexes (stable phrases, idioms, paroemia) typical for this or that need; a study of the qualities of the communicative environment and conditions for the actualization of the meanings of signs corresponding to a given need, i.e. investigation of the actual process of specific discourse development” [Astafurova, Olyanitch 2014, p. 21].

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Prolegomenon I*

Using a detailed definition of the advertising discourse proposed by Dana Alwahdine<sup>2</sup>, the authors of the present paper found that the manipulative-informative nature of semiotics and the public focus on satisfying the needs of its customers (usually in the economic sphere) are manifested in *limitative signs* that impose restrictions on the use of invectives as signs of insult, such as visual offensive images related to women; offensive images against religious beliefs of individuals; offensive images against elderly people; negative impact on the psyche of minor children.

*Legislative signs* control the legal basis for the use of advertising: for example, restricting the use of a product or service by means of age limitation (digital indications of the age allowed for watching television and reading media publications – 6+, 12+, 18+, etc.); indication of copyright for a product, a trademark or a service (©; ®; ™).

*Fixation signs* denote the use of a product or service exclusively by the client as a participant in the advertising message (“*only for Sberbank customers*”; “*only for MTS subscribers*”; “*applies only to the territory of the Russian Federation*”).

Determination by the context is actualized in advertising discourse in various semiotic ways, for example, as an indication of the danger of repeating by the customers of the advertising discourse of stunt tricks performed in car advertisements. This indication is implemented with the help of the *restrictive sign* “*Do not repeat! Performed by professionals!*”

The tourist context of advertising discourse is often maintained with the help of *gluttonyms* (signs of food, its production, processing, cooking and consumption). For example, Switzerland attracts tourists by visualizing its famous cheeses in the form of a creolized advertising billboard containing an image of a Swiss wearing a national costume with an alpenhorn (a traditional Swiss musical instrument) and sitting on a cut cheese. The image is accompanied by a caption “*Switzerland... le vrai from age Suisse*” (“Switzerland... the real Swiss cheese”). Another example: a poster of a company that seeks to unite all Canadian milk farmers under the auspices of the “Dairy Farmers of Canada”, in the context of the eco-friendliness of calcium-rich dairy products and their positive impact on human bones, semiotises the following idea: “*Strong people get more out of life*”, creolized with an image of a house in the form of packaged milk and accompanied by a caption “*Milk Products: A Source of Protein*”.

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<sup>2</sup> “Advertising discourse is a discourse used to influence individuals based on the use of available media, which helps to convey this discourse to a particular category or to a large number of people. It is also defined as the declaration of a set of information that contributes to the description of a commodity in order to connect it to as many individuals as possible in the commercial market. An advertising discourse is also the use of spoken or written words, and a method of addressing, in order to communicate with the public and introduce it to the idea of what may have been unknown in the past” [Alwahdinewww]

As we can see, the examples above prove the thesis that the signs of advertising discourse are determined by tourist and environmental contexts.

In the semiology of advertising discourse, the most effective are the advertising messages in which verbal and non-verbal signs interact: for example, in TV commercials, the distribution of information between the audio-text and non-verbal (visual) channels of information transfer is theatricalized. These two clusters of signs closely correlate with each other: the first cluster is composed of *personal signs*, i.e. the personalities of actors, their phonology, i.e. their voices (*phononyms*), their actions (*actionyms*) and the scenery (*locatives*) where the action takes place. The non-verbal cluster includes the semiotic space (*locatives* as places of actualization of the advertising message), *attraction signs* as a system of television effects attracting attention to the advertised object, *chrononyms* denoting the temporal order of the message parts, as well as *auditives* denoting the sound accompaniment of the message, including the special features of the voice reading the text of the commercial.

As it turned out, the universally significant non-verbal channels in transmitting images of people are: facial expression and eye movement, gestures and poses, appearance and clothing, surrounding objects, the way the person uses space and time, voice characteristics, and tactile communication.

### ***Prolegomenon II***

The following directions in the general typology of advertising discourse signs are possible:

**1. Informative** direction, suggesting a representation of the parameters of the advertised product or the content of the provided service, indicating their advantages and basic features (*informative signs*). For example, in the advertisement of Samura Reptile Japanese knives, there is a whole block of informative signs:

*The geometry of the REPTILE knives has been worked out taking into account all the experience that mankind has accumulated over the last 50,000 years. For this 'predatory' collection, we chose some of the best and the most solid Japanese corrosion-resistant steel - AUS-10 Japan (Aichi Steel Corporation), which keeps the knives sharp for many months. The spine of the knife is rounded and does not rub fingers raw during prolonged operation. Knife handle 'sticks' to the hand thanks to the distinctive ribs of the handle. The knives are manually grinded on a whetstone. The blade of the REPTILE knife has a characteristic hole that serves as a support for the thumb when doing a "cook grip".*

In the text above, informative signs denote material quality, convenience, optimal use, durability, the special features of the product (the text contains a reference to the ancient Japanese traditions of sharpening knives on a whetstone) and indicate that the knives are designed for professional use ("cook grip").

**2. Imperative** direction (influential or impact direction), appealing for the immediate purchase of a product or service (*imperatives or impact signs*). Thus, in a social advertising discourse, imperative signs are used to appeal to citizens so that they keep the streets clean, as, for example, in the following creolized text: an empty bottle is "hitching a ride". The image contains a caption: "Give me a lift to the trash bin!" This line is accompanied with another one: "The rubbish has a home."

3. **Axiological** direction, making the consumer buy a product or service, psychologically forcing him/her to appeal to the common civilization values (*axionyms*). For example, a positive attitude of a person to nature, life, youth, hope, energy as eternal values is appealed to in an commercial of the Megafon mobile communication network, where a woman, talking on the phone, did not notice that she had sliced a heap of cucumbers. The green color of nature, which is the color of the Megafon brand, semiotically supports the axiological message to the consumer about the intrinsic value of the new "Excellent" tariff, which gives hope for new communication opportunities as one of the core values of civilization.

A number of examples of semiotic impact on the consumer with the help of axionic characters are given by J. Seguela, one of the successful creators and theorists of advertising and public relations. Analyzing the causes of the global success of famous US brands, he notes the successful exploitation of universal human values in the American advertising discourse: "The American dream was popularized not by novelists or philosophers of the country, but by simple products, which, having incorporated the fundamental values of America, made them sparkle in all parts of the world. Thus, "Coca-Cola" became the symbol of youth, "Marlboro" - masculinity, "McDonalds" - family, "Levi's" - freedom, "Nike" - responsibility. The five largest trademarks of the world have become what they are by putting up their morality and the American way of life" [Seguela 1999, p. 200].

4. **Argumentative** direction, aimed at giving reasons for the purchase of goods or services. This direction is semiotically represented by **argumentative signs**, designed to convince a potential buyer or consumer to buy the advertised product.

An advertisement of the famous brand iPhone can serve as a good example. The lead of the advertisement is an imperative sign "Take the iPhone!" Further discourse development contains argumentative signs, united under the statement "10 reasons to buy an iPhone":

- 1) *It is much less likely to have bugs;*
- 2) *An iPhone is a small investment in the next smartphone;*
- 3) *An iPhone is much easier to sell;*
- 4) *A lot of accessories have been and are released for iPhone;*
- 5) *The iPhone in the box already has everything you need;*
- 6) *An iPhone does not become outdated like other smartphones;*
- 7) *Games work much better on the iPhone;*
- 8) *With an iPhone, you get everything at once;*
- 9) *An iPhone is practically the only small flagship on the market;*
- 10) *Long-term support* (see <http://https://keddr.com/2016/05/pochemu-stoit-kupit-iphone/>).

It is worth paying attention to the manipulative nature of the reasons above: the advertisers conceal from the simple consumer the fact that downloading a number of applications, games, audio, video and other content requires a lot of money.

### ***Prolegomenon III***

The conceptual sphere of the advertising discourse is a vast space of abstract concepts that provide the basis for a specific semiotisation of an advertising message. In the center of such a conceptual sphere there are three basic concepts - "State", "Action" and "Process". The study of the conceptual sphere of the advertising discourse is a very promising task for cognitivists. As for semiologists, they should be focused on the search for clusters of signs that support the conceptualization process.

Despite the global nature of this problem, some of the ways of solving it are already obvious. For instance, it is already clear that the concept of "State" is the basis for the formation of the abstract concept "Beauty", which serves as the cognitive sphere of advertising discourse and is supported by different types of signs, for example:

*"The **beauty** of the new Peugeot 2007 immediately catches the eye. Muscular contours of the body, graceful mobility, tenacious "cat-like" look of a predator" (somatic signs are: muscular, graceful, tenacious look);*

*"Oriflame". How many new interesting products! That's what I need! The world's first three-layer "3 in 1" lipstick. Three layers combine rich color, moisturizing, and radiant shine. Delightful effect! Oriflame catalogue. Everything for my beauty! "(Coloronym: rich color; condition sign: moisture; luxonym: radiant shine);*

*"Beauty is the first dairy product for beauty. Its unique 3D Regeneo formula with vitamins, minerals and aloe juice works from the inside in three directions, strengthens and nourishes the skin, hair and nails. The effectiveness of Beauty is confirmed clinically. Beauty. Support the beauty from the inside! "(naturonyms: dairy product, vitamins, minerals, aloe juice; exclusive sign: unique 3D Regeneo formula).*

Continuing this line of analysis of the material, it is possible in perspective to build a whole typology of the conceptual spheres of the advertising discourse simultaneously with the identification of sign types that support the actualization of advertising messages.

### ***Prolegomenon IV***

The vectors of the process of value creation with the help of semiotic tools of the advertising discourse (here, the values of the technologically advanced countries of Europe, North America, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, South Korea, and China are concerned, that is, the values of countries living in pace with the digital world progress) are described below.

First of all, modern advertising discourse promotes new values associated with the modern digital habitat based on digital technologies (smart home, electric cars, telecommunications, new public transport, new cooking technologies, etc.) and environmentally safe.

For example, a commercial of the Novotelecom company, which provides software development services for smart homes in the city of Novosibirsk using the Electronic City brand, with the help of which you can control your apartment and monitor the entrance hall via a mobile application. The commercial includes an orange **coloronym** (color sign) as a corporate color of the brand, which is emphasized in the commercial with the help of red-haired people watching in their smartphones via My Home app the hot dance of Viktor (another character of the

commercial) in the entrance hall of the house. The advertising discourse also includes the following *technonyms* (technological signs): “Did you notice how wonderful it is? *Video cameras and smart intercom* in your house!”

The values accumulated in the modern concept of habitat are based on three, semiotically significant elements - “Comfort”, “Safety” and “Eco-friendliness.” For example, in the advertisement of a smart home made by Infopol company, all the concepts contain *technonyms* and *ecologems* (ecological signs). The following advertising text is creolized and accompanied by the visualization of a modern cottage:

*“Over the years, almost all technology has changed. A handful of innovations can make a little less fuss in the consumer’s life. Smart home technology is sure to fit into this category. If you think so, you should consider purchasing some smart home devices.”*

This advertisement contains a cluster of visual signs with references explaining the meaning of these signs: “blinds control”, “door opening control”, “lighting control”, “climate and ventilation control”, “unauthorized entry notice”, “motion sensors”, “heating control”, “control and lighting control”, “imitation of the presence of the owners in the house” (technonyms); “smoke detection”, “gas leakage”, “polluted groundwater spillage” (ecologems) (<https://www.infopol.ru/165531-novye-tehnologii-umnyy-dom/>).

Secondly, modern advertising discourse promotes the values associated with a healthy lifestyle, quitting smoking and drinking, and drug addiction, promotion of healthy eating habits, creating a strong family.

Thus, advertising quitting smoking in Russia is effective when “shockvertising” (shocking advertising) techniques are used: on cigarette packs, the trivial slogan “*Smoking is dangerous for your health*” is strongly associated with visual *aggravative signs*, i.e. a sign of a threat to health (creolized text consisting of images of rotten limbs and the caption “*Gangrene*,” decomposed lungs and the caption “*Lung cancer*” or the lower part of the male torso and the caption “*Impotence*”, etc.).

Aggravative signs are also used to try to prevent consumers from eating junk food and make them return to healthy food: see, for example, <http://www.2social.info/sotsialnaya-reklama-o-zdorovom-pitanii/> which contains a creolized text: “*Obesity is suicide*” (accompanied by two images - a person who hung himself on a necklace of sausages, and a terrorist with a bomber's vest, on which, instead of explosives, briquettes of butter are attached, strongly resembling the C-4 bomb). Quite expressive is the initial visualization of the idea of the site itself: it contains an image of a Kalashnikov gun, the details of which are junk food products (butt — wheat bread loaf; barrel — long smoked sausage; cartridge — chocolate bar, etc.) (see <http://www.2social.info/sotsialnaya-reklama-o-zdorovom-pitanii/>).

The advertisement of the German Olympic Sports Confederation, calling for a healthy lifestyle, is a creolized text “*If you don’t move, you get fat*,” which is accompanied by a caricature of Michaelangelo’s David with a huge stomach. Such a combinatory advertising sign can be called an *epicinium sign* (a sign warning of the consequences).

It seems that further studies of the semiotics of the advertising discourse in the context of this prolegomenon in order to identify the values relevant for the current moment and forecasted in the future will be very fruitful.

### ***Prolegomenon V***

It seems that the specific embodiment of the advertising communicative impact in the form of strategic signs of the advertising discourse can be successfully described and classified, if we take into account its dramatic (theatrical, presentational) characteristics.

The main goal of presentation strategies in the advertising discourse is to make an object stand out from the set of competitive objects and artificially construct its properties (real and/or symbolic) which would be attractive to the recipient of the message.

Usually, there are the main and additional strategic communicative goals. The latter are associated with overcoming the unfavorable conditions of communication determined by the specific features of the perception of such information and attitudes towards it. It is well-known that advertising is perceived, interpreted and evaluated differently than non-advertising information. Advertisers have to overcome inattention and “avoidance” of advertising information, lack of interest in it, prejudice and distrust of the recipient of information. Among the unfavorable factors of the communication channel are the lack of direct contact of communicators, the impact on the recipient of competing advertising messages and other information flows that cause cognitive dissonance. An important negative factor is the assessment of the usefulness / acceptability of a product for the society, its compliance with the moral / ethical foundations or traditions of the society. This primarily refers to goods that cause damage to health (cigarettes and alcohol). In this case, the advertisers “manipulate with human weaknesses and vices,” and, first of all, they use such a function of language and speech, as the *hedonistic* function, which includes *stratagem signs*.

It is proposed to distinguish the following presentational communicative stratagems in the advertising message:

**1) Positionyms** (positioning signs), denoting strategies that shape the perception of the advertised object (advertising image); they can usually be divided into:

- a) Differentiating signs**, helping to make the advertised object stand out from a number of competing objects;
- b) Signs of value orientation** linking the advertised object with value concepts that are important for the target group;
- c) Signs of assignment of estimation values** helping to enhance the perception of the positive properties of the advertised object.

**2) Optimization signs**, which denote strategies that can balance the impact of the advertising message and overcome the unfavorable communication conditions.

The following signs can be distinguished in the cluster of strategic optimization signs:

- a) Coordinative stratagems**, contributing to the coordination of the language and worldview of the communicants;
- b) Cognitive stratagems** that increase the degree of recognizability of the advertisement, enabling the recipient to quickly correlate the message with the advertised object and perceive its main features;
- c) Attraction stratagems** that increase the attractiveness and “readability” of the message;
- d) Mnemonic stratagems**, allowing to increase the memorability of the message or its part;

*e) Argumentative stratagems;*

*f) Discriminative stratagems*, dividing the information according to the degree of importance (“more/less important”).

Below is an example of the actualization of a cluster of presentational stratagems in an advertising discourse based on a hedonistic game in the context of the general constant negative and moralizing attitude towards vodka as a product that ruins health:

*“Are there Russians who do not like to drink vodka? After all, what can be more pleasing to the eye than a transparent bottle, with condensate from the cold? What can be compared with the pleasant warmth spreading over the body after a shot? A bottle of good vodka can be a reason for a pleasant friendly chat on a cold winter evening. Sipping vodka, it is so nice to crunch a pickled cucumber, and there are also boiled potatoes, meat jelly, sauerkraut, mushrooms, caviar, salmon and much more. How can we not drink vodka? Drinking vodka is a cult, and those who do not like vodka, most likely, simply have not followed its rules or have never drunk good vodka. Such as “Flagship”. “Flagship” vodka was especially created as a high-quality alcohol drink available at reasonable prices for the average buyer with a sense of measure and taste. “Flagship” is a Russian brand, created with all the care. The design of labels, bottles and corks for “Flagship” vodka was developed by a British studio David Taylor’s, which had created such products as Hennessy cognac, Sandeman sherry, Ursus vodka, Stella Artois beer, Sobranie cigarettes, etc. The founder of the studio is Mr. Taylor - the author of the design of famous cigarette brands “Rothmans,” “Dunhill,” and “Cartier”. Which makes it a good company, doesn’t it? The original patented bottles are made in Finland using the latest technology. They are made of transparent high-quality glass, have a special relief in the form of an old Russian order, a special neck with a non-standard external diameter and a special internal shape, which makes fakes practically impossible, at least, very difficult to manufacture. Labels for the “Flagship” vodka are printed in an old printing house in Austria using environmentally friendly inks and special label paper. So, you will feel sorry if you throw away the bottles. Vodka “Flagship” meets the most stringent requirements for the quality of potable alcohol. Various methods were used in the process of alcohol purification, including freezing, filtering alcohol and vodka through felt, cloth, linen and cotton cloth, crushed stone, river, sea and quartz sand. “Flagman” vodka recipe is based on traditional natural raw materials, high-quality luxury alcohol and natural water from an artesian well, which has undergone special treatment in the form of deep triple purification and additional softening. For the production of “Flagship” vodka, aromatic spirits of kvass wort with birch buds are used. The important point is that not extracts, but aromatic spirits are used, which means higher technology and higher quality.*

*“Flagship” vodka has been tested by various focus groups. As a result of testing, minor adjustments were made to the recipe and product refinement was carried out. The result was the perfect combination of all the ingredients, a balanced soft taste, and a unique character. The style of “Flagship” vodka is the perfect combination of all the ingredients, the softness and the natural taste of water, the purity of alcohol, and the light aroma of birch buds. ”*

*(Vladimir Ignatiev [www.vino.ru](http://www.vino.ru)).*

As the basic stratagems, positioning and differentiation signs are used: “Flagship” is positioned among such internationally recognized products as Hennessy cognac, Sandeman sherry, Ursus vodka, and Stella Artois beer. Their semiotic impact is complemented by value-oriented stratagem signs: the value concepts of “prestige” and “elitism” are used, enhanced by the origin of product design (an elite design studio and an old Austrian printing house respected by manufacturers are mentioned). Besides, such a type of value-oriented stratagems as signs of national value orientation, semiotising the ethnic and patriotic feelings of Russians, are also emphasized (a rhetoric question “*Are there Russians who do not like to drink vodka?*”, a set of gluttonyms “*it is so nice to crunch a pickled cucumber, and there are also boiled potatoes, meat jelly, sauerkraut, mushrooms, caviar, salmon and much more,*” an ethno-communication sign, describing a communicative situation of a conversation typical for Russia “*A bottle of good vodka can be a reason for a pleasant friendly chat on a cold winter evening*”).

It should also be noted that there is an opposition-type value-oriented stratagem, referring to the *international values*, showing a wish to possess the goods of “non-Soviet” origin, developed over the long years of acute deficit of consumer goods in the psychology of the former citizens of the USSR. Hence, the deliberate mentioning of the foreign product designers and a hint of the western origin of the production technology and the testing of the product by focus groups.

To optimize the impact of the advertising discourse, strategic mnemonic signs were used (a series of presentational descriptors like “*original patented bottles... made of transparent high-quality glass, have a special relief in the form of an old Russian order, a special neck with a non-standard external diameter and a special internal shape*” and gluttonic hedonistic rhetorical questions “*What can be more pleasing to the eye than a transparent bottle, with condensate from the cold? What can be compared with the pleasant warmth spreading over the body after a shot?*”).

The following signs were also identified:

1) **Cognitive stratagems** that increase the recognition of the name of the drink (“Flagship” means the first, and therefore the best), emphasized by a description of the complex process of its preparation;

2) Two types of **argumentative stratagems** -

a) **signs-appeals**, which denote the direct appeal to three representative systems that are important for the description of the quality of the drink – taste system (soft taste and aroma of birch buds), visual system (authentic packaging) and kinesthetic system (it is pleasant to hold the bottle in hand and the customer will feel sorry to throw it away); and

b) **signs-appeals**, which denote the appeal to the consumer’s trust to the focus groups who tested the quality of the product.

In the semiotics of the advertising discourse, as a rule, there are always **manipulation stratagems**: the target audience of the advertisement, which is known to be very trusting in scientific arguments in the press, is being manipulated with the use of **technonyms** (*freezing, filtering, deep triple purification and additional softening, kvass wort, focus groups*). The manipulation here is absolutely obvious, since none of the recipients of the advertising

discourse is able to determine how triple purification makes the product's quality higher than, for example, double or quadruple purification, and why kvass wort is so necessary to improve the quality of the advertised product.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Summing up, the following should be emphasized.

The linguo-semiotic research of the advertising discourse demands special attention to the careful following of the established algorithm necessary for the description, analysis and typology of signs clusters of the given discourse type. Following the "sign → word → discourse → text" model has made it possible to describe directions in which the proposed analysis can evolve. These directions are represented by the following prolegomena:

I. Maintaining the institutional characteristics of advertising discourse is possible with the help of legislative signs controlling the legal basis for the use of advertising; fixation signs, which denote the use of the goods or services exclusively by the client; restrictive signs used in the context of a threat to life; gluttonyms determined by tourist and ecological contexts. The effectiveness of the semiosis of advertising discourse is enhanced by the interaction of verbal and non-verbal signs, such as personal signs, their phonology (phononyms), actions (actionyms), space (locatives), the method of attraction (attraction signs), time (chrononyms) and sound (auditives).

II. The typology of the advertising discourse signs can be carried out in the following directions: a) informative direction (representation of the parameters of the advertised product or the content of the provided service, indicating their advantages and basic characteristics with the focus on informative signs); b) imperative (impact) direction, calling for the immediate purchase of goods in which imperative signs or implications are used; c) axiological, forcing the consumer to refer to general civilizational values through the use of axionyms in the discourse; d) argumentative direction, representing the reasons for purchasing a product or service, semiotically supported by argumentative signs.

III. The conceptual sphere of the advertising discourse provides a basis for a specific semiotisation of the advertising message; in its center there are three basic concepts - "State", "Action" and "Process", semiotically embodied by clusters of signs, for example, the concept "Beauty" is cognitively associated with the concept "State" and is semiotically embodied by such signs as somatism signs (denoting human body parameters), coloronyms (color signs), conditionyms (condition signs), luxonyms (light characteristics), naturonyms (the natural origin of the product), and exclusive signs (denoting the uniqueness of the product).

IV. The value creation process of modern advertising discourse is formed by the following: 1) propaganda of new values associated with a modern habitat, eco-friendly and based on digital technology; at the same time, the values accumulated in the modern concept of habitat are based on three, semiotically significant elements - "Comfort", "Safety" and "Eco-friendliness" which are embodied in the use of technonyms and ecologems; 2) a call for a healthy lifestyle through "shocking advertising" ("shockvertising") demonstrating the harmful effects of not following a healthy lifestyle with the help of visual aggravative signs (signs of a threat to health) and epiciniums (warnings about the threat).

V. The specific embodiment of the advertising communicative impact occurs due to the strategic signs of the advertising discourse - stratagems, classified into the following groups: 1) position-signs, appearing in the form of a) differentiation signs, helping to make the advertised object stand out among the competing ones; b) signs of value orientation linking the advertised object with value concepts important for the target group; c) signs of attribution of estimation values that enhance the perception of the positive properties of the advertised object; 2) optimization signs, strategically overcoming unfavorable conditions of communication and appearing in the form of a) coordinative stratagems coordinating the language and worldview of the communicants; b) cognitonyms that increase the degree of recognizability of advertising; c) attraction stratagems that increase the attractiveness and "readability" of the message; d) mnemonyms that increase the memorability of a message or its part; e) argumentative stratagems; e) discriminative stratagems, dividing information according to its importance ("more/less important"). This list also includes manipulation signs in the form of technonyms.

This is, in general, a preliminary idea of the prospects for the linguo-semiotic research of advertising discourse.

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