Proceedings of the 4th Austrian Students’ Conference of Linguistics
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Edited by

Irina Windhaber and Peter Anreiter

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FOREWORD

This collection of articles contains the English contributions to the 4th Austrian Students’ Conference of Linguistics (Österreichische Studierenden-Konferenz der Linguistik, ÖSKL), which was held in November 2011 at the University of Innsbruck. With this collection, the editors want to make the insights and the knowledge presented at the 4th ÖSKL available in written format to a wider public.

The ÖSKL conferences are entirely self-organised by students of linguistics and its neighbouring disciplines and are open to undergraduate as well as graduate students from the whole world. They are intended to serve as occasions for meeting other students with the same field of interest, for sharing knowledge and results of own original research and for gathering experience in doing scientific talks. For many participants, their ÖSKL presentation is their first ever scientific talk in public. Furthermore, the conference proceedings are a unique opportunity for publishing a paper early on the career ladder. Thus, ÖSKL can be perceived as a training camp for future scholars, wanting to find their feet.

As no professors or lectors are present during the individual presentations, participants find ÖSKL to be relaxed and informal. The unintimidating atmosphere opens up for fruitful discussions among like-minded people, without fearing negative repercussions for their academic future. Remembering the conference, a very prominent impression is that we did manage to establish this kind of atmosphere and that many helpful comments were put forward, so that fruitful discussions emerged. From what the editors have heard, this also holds true for the participants.

Hopefully, the very successful ÖSKL conferences will continue in this spirit.

Irina Windhaber
Peter Anreiter

Innsbruck, January 2013
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The Department of Linguistics (Institute of Languages and Literatures) and the Institute of Slavic Studies at the University of Innsbruck supported this conference by literally opening their doors and letting us use their seminar rooms. Thank you!

For financial support, we wish to thank The Austrian Students’ Association (Österreichische Hochschülerschaft, ÖH) and the Department of Linguistics (Institute of Languages and Literatures) at Innsbruck.

Also, we thank the team at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for publishing these proceedings and their support throughout the process.

Last but not least, we thank all participants at the conference for their excellent presentations and specifically the authors of the papers collected here for sharing their insights and results, making this volume possible. It has been a pleasure to work with you!
INTRODUCTION

The contributions present in this collection are excerpts from PhD as well as diploma theses and seminar papers. The fifteen papers collected in this volume are very diverse, as are the authors themselves. They come from nine different countries, ranging from Portugal in the West, Iran in the East and Norway in the North.

Four papers deal with syntax in the broadest sense. Adina Camelia Bleotu (Venice, Italy) does a comparative, cross-linguistic survey of weather verbs. Her findings include the discovery of both a causative and a stative dimension in weather verbs in the languages considered. From this, she deduces an inherent ambiguity of these verbs, which can be resolved by assuming the presence of light verbs in weather expressions.

Jan Casalicchio (Padova, Italy) explores the pseudo-relatives and similar constructions in Romance languages. He shows that perception verbs can be joined together with many different syntactic structures, depending on the language. He focuses on the situation in the Ladin varieties and explains their large range of constructions.

The contribution of Petra Mišmaš (Nova Gorica, Slovenia) confirms the Principle of Distinctness as proposed by Richards by using data from Slovenian. Using many illustrative examples, she shows that DPs need to differ in at least one grammatical feature such as gender, case, number and animacy for the sentence to be acceptable in Slovenian.

Matic Pavlič (Venice, Italy) and Sašo Živanović (Ljubljana, Slovenia) explore the usage of the so-called genitive of negation in Slovenian and other Slavic languages. This phenomenon appears in noun phrases in negated sentences, where one would expect the nominative or accusative case.

Three contributions can be associated with cognitive linguistics. Fatemeh Naeimi Hashkvaei (Tehran, Iran) presents a cognitive approach to literature, thus dealing with the relationship between the mind and literary texts. Focusing on the fact that we understand literature by drawing in our real world knowledge, she summarises her findings from an analysis of 50 Iranian short stories.

Udo Schimanofsky (Vienna, Austria) explores the ways the speaker/hearer makes sense of linguistic utterances, presenting different models of how we derive meaning. By using these models, we activate meaning that
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is at the same time more concrete and more abstract than the bare, decontextualized utterance.

Julia Skala (Vienna, Austria) presents a small-scale study investigating the ways the English present perfect tense is implemented in the minds of both experts and laypeople. She ascribes the present perfect a variety of meanings and explores their difference in centrality in the mind following a cognitive approach.

Subsumed under the broad roof of historical linguistics, the reader finds three papers. Alexander K. Lykke (Oslo, Norway) investigates the phenomenon of vowel harmony in disyllabic words in Old Norse runic inscriptions. Focusing on medieval Trondheim, Lykke asks the question whether, and if so to what degree, vowel harmony is graphically represented in runic material. Also, he argues that runes are well suited for linguistic research, if given close scrutiny.

Matthias Benjamin Passer (Amsterdam, Netherlands) investigates in his contribution the topicality in historical texts. He argues that diachronic research in the field of information structure offers many promising opportunities for research and advocates consistent terminology.

Michael Vereno (Salzburg, Austria) uncovers the history of bagpipes in Europe. Looking at historic texts from a linguistic and musicological perspective, he makes a scientific contribution to the current discussion, mostly led by laypeople.

Two contributions deal with pragmatic aspects of language. Dominik Baumgarten (Cologne, Germany) explores the relationship between language and images in static multimedial texts, i.e. print advertisements. Reading those adverts, we perceive written text and various types of visuals at the same time, which poses new challenges to the recipient.

Claudia Beisl (Vienna, Austria) analyses the strategic use of titles in children’s literature. Her contribution is part of a new development in linguistics and literary studies, namely “titlelogy”. Specifically, Beisl examines the connection between the transparency/opaqueness of the title and the age of the target group.

The three remaining contributions deal with foreign language acquisition, phonology and sociolinguistics respectively.

Teresa Santos (Lisbon, Portugal) analyses derivational affixes in both Portuguese and English and explores the mechanisms underlying their acquisition by native speakers of Portuguese. In this paper, she presents
the results of a case study carried out with third-grade students and compares them with fourth-graders.

Regula Sutter (Budapest, Hungary) discusses the necessity of rule ordering in phonology. Examining Kiparsky’s examples of umlaut and lowering in two dialects of German-speaking Switzerland, she shows that neither of these are in fact phonological. Sutter concludes by denying the claim that syntax and phonology are fundamentally different by systematically demonstrating the absence of phonology in umlaut and lowering.

Irina Windhaber (Innsbruck, Austria) presents the methods and results of a sociolinguistic survey among Innsbruck youth. Using variationist sociolinguistic framework and methods, she explores the (non-)significance of both internal and social factors in constraining the linguistic behaviour of ten Innsbruck teenagers.
Advertising visuals

Ian MacRury introduces advertising as a complex system that goes far beyond single television commercials or a billboard at a bus station. Moreover, it seems to be a current and integrated phenomenon that appears in various situations of our everyday life:

“Perhaps popular media culture can serve as the place to seek out if not a ‘common sense’ view of advertising then a snapshot of the current discourse through and about the topics of media-based marketing. Advertising is examined in various popular and journalistic discourses; in newspapers, current affairs and magazine features, and frequently also in popular cultural texts; film, comedy, documentary and of course within advertising itself. Advertisements frequently foreground ‘advertising’ as a cultural practice in itself, inviting momentary reflection and a kind of critique and analysis of ‘advertising’ and consumers’ relationships with it.” (MacRury 2009: 35)

Because of the enormous range and constant appearance of advertising in all kinds of media, reading advertising campaigns may not be a new research topic in the linguistic field. Especially when it comes to the construction of slogans/claims, copies or bodycopies, there is a wide variety of possible syntactic, semantic or composition structures given in the actual research literature. But the afore mentioned elements of printed advertisements are all based on written language, which has always been one of the major bases of linguistic interest. Advertising in its acoustic occurrence on the other hand can be analysed by linguists as well – or even by musicologists – with help of more or less similar methods.
Usually linguistic studies of advertising focus on the various text modules, their distinctiveness and their aberration from other sorts of texts (e.g. regularly slogans never contain more than twelve words – and so force the advertisers to extreme conciseness as the given space is this tiny). Other research fields attend to the construction of newly created advertising vocabulary, to phonetic or phonological peculiarities or to modified syntax or semantics of an advert. To sum it up, the text modules of print ads are much more represented in today’s research than images are.

But advertisings do not only include texts (or speech), they also offer various types of visuals. Therefore in this case reading advertising means looking at it and perceiving visual “text”. The common advertising images can be classified as key visuals, catch visuals or focus visuals\(^1\). These types of visual modules usually offer the opportunity to show off the product itself in the centre of the ad (key visual), the product’s innovative features in a close-up-version (focus visual), or to frame the product with an inviting environment (catch visual). This classification can be seen as very basic, especially when the figure part of an advert either consists of more than three images (which legitimates the question whether these three types can be marked e.g. as focus visual 1, focus visual 2 and so on and still allow a distinctive differentiation) or when there are images that cannot be classified clearly as one of the explored types of visuals.

“Artificial languages are often classified on the basis of the extent to which they are built from elements of natural languages. Some use one or more natural languages as their sources; these are called a posteriori languages. Others are attempts to build a language ‘from scratch’, i.e. not borrowing anything from natural languages, they are referred to as a priori languages. A third type of artificial language has been posited, mixed languages, which have both a priori and a posteriori components.” (Libert 2003: 1)

According to Libert’s classification, the language of advertising can be seen as an a posteriori language, as it bases on the common language of the country it appears in. But in addition to written information, simple signs or more complex composed images are published as part of the ad to transport their own part of the whole narration. This article focusses on the ability of an advertisement picture to transport a more or less complex narrative content. Furthermore it calls into question which kind of

\(^1\) A more detailed classification of the common kinds of advertising visuals can be found in Nina Janich’s work that is concerned with the structure of print ads and the semiotics between text and images (Janich 2010).
“phrasal” structure can be found in an image when reading it in a similar way as one would read a text.

Image-linguistics and supertext

Franziska Große proposes a new kind of linguistic research in 2011. She proclaims that images can also be read in a quite similar way as already established in the analysis of texts (Große 2011). While Ulla Fix mentions a supertext which includes both text and images, Große is more interested in analysing only the visuals of an advert and interpreting their narrative and almost “phrasal” structures. Image-linguistics can be seen as one of the newest linguistic research fields, since the overview of the secondary literature only adds up to Große’s work and an anthology edited by Hajo Diekmannshenke (2011). As other disciplines are far more in advance when it comes to analysing and interpreting images, this new linguistic field can be seen as a cut surface between text sciences and visual studies such as art history. Große introduces image-linguistics as a current answer to new and upcoming media, which consist more and more of visual components. Especially in advertising, imagery has become more and more important since the 1950s, and currently up to 70-80% of all advertising campaigns work with images as focal point. This majority alone justifies a more focussed look at the visual contingent of print campaigns.

Symbols and sign systems

Symbols are usually conventional and arbitrary, which means one specific item can be marked as a place holder for one meaning or expression for which it stands from that point on. Common symbols for example would be a heart for love or a cloverleaf for luck. Figure 1 (see appendix for all figures) shows one of the most famous city adverts, a campaign for New York City. It is composed of black letters, a red heart and a white

2 Ulla Fix coins the term supertext to create a research basis that defines the intertextuality of text and images, especially regarding advertising structures in print media (Fix 2000: XIII).

3 The amount of visual content in contemporary advertising is taken from Ruth Roemer’s work about the tendencies of development in advertising language (Roemer 2000: 2148).
background. Even though the pure text of this advert only includes the pronoun “I” and the initials of the city’s name, “NY”, the slogan can be read as “I love New York”. The abbreviation in this case is not as difficult to comprehend as the readability of the symbol. Usually symbols are supposed to stand in for a wider range of possible associations; a cross, for example, can imply a church, a cemetery, death or Christian belief. The heart clearly symbolizes “love” in most cultures, so this ad can be published in an international context and be understood by its readers in those two seconds of average advertisement that the producers of an ad can plan with\(^4\). The second figure shows an interpretation of the famous NY-ad by the municipality of Düsseldorf, Germany. The composition of the ad consists of similar elements and especially an identical setting of elements compared to the first ad.

There are two main differences between these two advertisings:

1. The symbol itself is already common in the first figure. A heart clearly stands for “love” in most cultures and the reader can identify the connoted symbolism without difficulty. The rubber duck in figure 2 can of course be distinguished as what it is, but it does not carry any further meaning.

2. The second symbol would not make much sense, even if it was verbalised. Whereas “to heart” (German “herzen”) could be understood as some kind of verb – even a very old fashioned one – there is no such thing as “rubberducking”. Therefore, the readability of the slogan normally should be affected by the missing verb.

It is obvious that under other circumstances it would not be possible to “read” the picture of the rubber duck. To make it readable the advertisers need to load it with a deeper meaning to introduce it as a new conventional sign. As they do not have any opportunity to brand the rubber duck and to connote it with their client they have to show and explain it at the same time – the moment when the finished ad appears on various billboards across the city. As soon as the rubber duck appears in a textual setting that makes it part of a written slogan, the reader is able to understand it in the way he or she should and, more important, to keep it in mind (which is the main goal of every advert: to make the future consumer aware of the

\(^4\) Isabelle Lehn mentions the extremely short amount of time the average reader invests in the perception of a print add. Similar to billboard or poster advertising print adds must be constructed in a way that their texts and images can be realized and understood in almost the same time, as the general involvement for regarding an advert never lasts longer than only a few seconds (Lehn 2011: 93).
brand). If signs were words, this process would be called “lexicalisation”, which describes the integration of a foreign word into the given language. In advertising, it is quite popular to *brand* new products’ names in a manner that they can be used in a regular way, even if the topic of conversation does not include the actual brand or product. In this case the new advertising words are not used in a commercial way any longer, but still very present in the speaker’s mind – and one would find them in upcoming dictionaries, where they are listed as neologisms.

As Iain MacRury explains, advertisement signs are rather complex and not very easy to be differed from other kinds of sign that we meet on a regular basis as soon as we enter public life. MacRury also mentions that just like new terms enter the lexicon of a language signs can be lexicalized as well. In that case, a new and *branded* sign in advertising can be evaluated in the same manner as a neologism would. Advertising language is already famous for creating so called “plastic words”. These words are enigmatic and euphonious, but by closer examination it becomes obvious that standing on their own, these words would barely make any sense:

“Semiotic terms are abstract and quite complex. The conceptual laboriousness of semiotic analysis and the elaborate nature of semiotic concepts emerges largely from the processes being described: the movements of representation, perception and interpretation. However, the sense of linguistic complexity – and ‘jargon’ […] – emerges partly also from the unfamiliar challenge of articulating the nature and processes inherent in everyday signs; an advert, a traffic light or a stranger’s smile[.] Analysis of ordinary sign dynamics requires an effort of theorization in reflective strategies of de-familiarisation. Semioticians’ combinations of neologism, revivified terms from classical rhetoric and linguistic jargon – producing various conceptual outlines – deliver just this sense of ‘un-familiarity in the ordinary’ in a manner well suited to a ‘de-familiarising’ engagement with most everyday signs – such as advertisements.”
(MacRury 2009: 190)

This brings us back to the advert by Düsseldorf’s municipality. The rubber duck therein is familiarised with the “I love NY”-environment, so it can be said that new advertising symbols are introduced by the composition of the ad in which they appear. The readability of these advertisings reminds of the way a reader would perceive a text in a language he or she barely speaks: they would read the words they can translate and try to imagine the translation of the foreign words by regarding their whole context.
“In an ad text, we understand the iconic cues unconsciously as part of a system of meaningful representation because they are derived from our codes of signification. In advertisements, iconicity usually takes the form of visual cues. Visual or imaginistic thought would seem to be a more fundamental form of cognition than verbal, propositional thought. This is, actually, an implicit theme that can be extrapolated from a large portion of the research in development psychology.” (Danesi 1995: 59)

This quotation by Marcel Danesi explains that advertising pictures do work because of the reader’s unconscious knowledge of the real intention of the ad. Danesi mentions the newly build iconicity of artificial advertising signs, which trademark the product much deeper in the reader’s head as they would realize. This can only happen, because the new signs are so similar with the common signs the reader is already used to, as the formal similarity between the two first ads of this article underlines. Paul Messaris furthermore accentuates the relevance of imagery in advertising for crossing cultural boundaries. While language in written or oral representation can only address a certain audience, images can be published internationally:

“If images can bring us closer than words can the appearance of reality, are they also an effective means of communicating across cultural boundaries? Does the iconicity of visual communication make it a vehicle for the sharing of meaning between people who are separated by linguistic or cultural differences? There are at least two aspects of advertising to which these questions are directly relevant. To begin with, because of the growing globalization of economic activity, commercial advertising is directed increasingly to a variety of linguistic and cultural communities.” (Messaris 1997: 90)

This aspect may justify the high grade of popularity advertising pictures enjoy. Not only are they in many ways much more attractive to the reader’s eye (and mind) than written words, they also can be published almost everywhere without spending extra money on translations into various languages worldwide.

**Commercial symbols and backgrounds**

As seen before, symbols can be *trademarked* as representatives for a certain product or even a whole advertisement campaign. But not only symbolic images can signify a brand’s image, also the background in which the symbol is integrated can be established as significant for a label.
“While the syntagmatic relations provided appear as serial an narrative, it is a further feature of the advertising genre that it allows, in its juxtaposition of images, words and sounds, the forging of acceptable syntagmatic relationships by asserting formal spatial relationships between signifiers within the signifying field of the text, or by linking sign elements by colour-coding. So although narrative is a key tool in advertising, various techniques of montage, colour-coding, layout and counterpoint are also used — always, however, with the generic purpose of producing in the space of the text a credible conjunction of signs binding products to eye-catching series of cultural signs. This aspect of advertising textuality that co-ordinates signs and signification in space is the work of framing.” (MacRury 2009: 209)

The German initiative “Print wirkt” (which can be translated as “print succeeds” or “print works”) by the Association of Magazine Publishers proclaims the “readability” and the recognition value of print ads. Their argument accentuates the importance of every kind of visual that can appear in a printed campaign. To underline this assumption, one campaign was published in 2009 for the first time and from that point on frequently recharged until today. The ads show the bare backgrounds of popular print ads from various common brands like Absolut or Jack Daniels complemented with the slogan “print wirkt”. The following figures therefore present an original by Lucky Strike (fig. 3) and an imitation out of the discussed campaign (fig. 4). It is obvious that the imitated campaign works because of the remarkable background. Therefore the common key visual becomes obsolete as soon as the background is branded.

Combinations of signs and syntactic structures

The next couple of images to be discussed show a variety of print campaigns all based on William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. It becomes clear that no matter whether the agencies brought up a realistic photograph (fig. 5), a comic strip (fig. 6) or some kind of surreal interpretation of the given motive, the combination of the two main signs, Romeo and Juliet, always stick to their popular positions, which means she is resting on a higher level, mostly on a balcony, while he is standing somewhere below looking up to her. The message of these adverts is

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5 Although all the given examples as well as the most interpretations of Shakespeare’s popular play work with the famous balcony-setting, in the original sketch of the play no balcony can be found, neither in direct speech nor in any
carried by the composition of the symbols. Romeo and Juliet can be represented by almost randomly selected symbols, as long as their relation still keeps the recognisable balcony setting. In this case the high-and-low-positioning of the two symbols binds the two together, like a syntactic structure would combine two subjects.

The construction of a theme, or even a more complex story, follows different guidelines according to different disciplines. Literary narration consists of at least three stages:

1. an initial situation
2. a transformation of the given situation
3. a conclusion that clarifies the initial situation regarding all changes during the transformation phase

From a linguistic point of view, a “narration” can be explained as a sequence of different states. As opposed to the literary mode a linguistic narration skips the transformation and tells an occasion with only two stages:

1. an initial situation
2. a second situation that varies from the first one

Regarding these first two narration-models, it becomes clear that a narration can be shortened and reduced to the most significant parts. Compared to the literary type of narration, the linguistic kind requires a cognitive addition from the reader. He or she is asked to look at two stages instead of three and to create their own version of the transformation part based on the differences and changes they can recognize when he compares the first situation to the second one.

Dominik Kramer describes the third kind of narration, advertising images, especially advertising signs, as a system of visual codes. These codes already contain syntactic and semantic structures in two different ways; 1. an iconic code that makes the readers of an advert perceive images in the same way they would acknowledge entities in real life, and 2. a symbolic code that addresses the cultural connotations and personal associations of every single reader (Kramer 1998: 32 f.). So, compared to e.g. word order or derivation in written language, this cognitive language always functions in two different ways at the same time. While realizing director’s advice. This also affirms the thesis that visual representations depend on references that are already fixed in a certain way in the “reader’s” mind.
and understanding the actual image the readers begins to think about it and creates their personal story around the signs they sees. As the four settings of *Romeo and Juliet* in fig. 5-8 demonstrate, these two parallel ways of cognitive “reading” can be characterized (or “colored”) in different ways. The first ad (fig. 5) shows a realistic scenario of a young man and a young woman, the second one (fig. 6) shows a simple comic-version of the same scenario. This type of advertising follows a trend Philipp Luidl already identified in 1984. He argues that advertisers always try to keep their designs as simple as possible, which again refers to the very limited time the recipients are given (Luidl 1984: 16 f.).

Even in such a tiny time frame the first and foremost interest of every ad is reference. This reference can lead directly to the presented product in the best case, but this reference can only be given when the product is already popular. In case of the four *Romeo and Juliet*-scenarios above, the advertising pictures lead to a foreign reference, Shakespeare’s famous theatre play. Such foreign references can be found in most of the current campaigns, since only very few brands (e.g. *McDonald’s* or *Coca Cola*) market their products with nothing more than a picture of themselves (Kalka 2009: 43).

The two following ads (fig. 7+8) present the scene in a more humorous way, either as a comedic moment between two window cleaners or as a balcony setting with a woman looking down at the *ALFA Romeo*, which would represent the common way of humorous wordplay in advertising.\(^6\)

In general it can be said that syntactic structures in advertising photography are replaced by the semiotic combination of the individual pictorial elements and advertising signs. So it is less about some kind of ‘pictorial word order’ than reliance on the choice of signs and their placing within the ad. As soon as a relation between two signs (in the four underlying ads the representations of Romeo and Juliet) is composed in a way the reader of an ad can understand (in this case the more or less concrete adumbration of the balcony scenario), the whole ad can be “read” by the reader’s mental composition of the given elements. The reader overlooks the collectivity of given signs and arranges them in proper order to the story he or she actually already knows. To sum it up the readability in equal parts depends on the reader’s previous knowledge and the ability for

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\(^6\) This kind of humor is normally presented with a combination of pictures and written text. It bases on interesting, funny or curious relations between images and text that do not really seem to match each other at first sight. But by closer examination the reader finds out more about the innovative idea, which binds the two together, and as expected from that point on connotes the clever idea with the new brand or product.
combination of representative details. These two components form the “grammar” of advertising photography.

**Missing “word classes” in photographs**

Identifying specific parts of a photograph as kinds of “word classes” in most cases is relatively simple. Those clear cases include nouns (which can be divided into subjects and objects in a similar way as written words can), but it wouldn’t be so easy to characterize e.g. prepositions and conjunctions. It seems that only visible word classes can be represented directly in a photograph such as a person, an object or other concrete entities. But when it comes to processes, especially when these processes are not representable in a verbal way (like the movement-terms this article will come to later), it becomes much more difficult to clearly show the complete content in one single image. The next figure shows one of the photographs that appeared in a fashion spread in *American Vogue*. It is part of a collection of so called ‘fashion fairy tales’, in which common traditional narrations are reinterpreted in a contemporary (and of course in a fashionable, commercial) way. In the picture we see a young woman in the role of Alice from Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in wonderland*. The following figure is taken out of the middle of the narration, it the sequence right after Alice (already having fallen into the rabbit hole and entered the wonderland) drank the magic potion and grew up very fast until she barely fitted into the room. Alice in her parent’s house, the fall through the rabbit hole and her first impressions of wonderland can be seen in the first three images of the fashion spread. This fourth double page (fig. 9) simply shows a huge woman uncomfortably fitted into a rather tiny room – and nothing more. Any narrative detail the reader interprets into this setting must come from his knowledge about the development of Carroll’s literary narrative (or out of any cinematic realisation of the plot).

As all of the spread’s pages only show a static moment, it is up to the reader to combine all the pictures together to a coherent story (Schmitt 1986: 17). All elements of a static pictorial representation can only show a certain number of entities, maybe furthermore their internal relationships. But when it comes to for example a temporal sequential arrangement (which is an essential part of every narration) or modal or consecutive relations between the single parts of an ad, the capability of the ads construction hits its borders. Word classes that define a further relationship or coherence between the earlier discussed advertising signs cannot be transformed into a photograph. The only exception to this conclusion would be
deictic word classes, which can be substituted by the composition and construction of the whole ad as seen in the previous figures.

The importance of cognition

Earlier it became clear that the reader of an advert needs to understand various signs as part of the written text to be able to read the complete message of a campaign. But apart from reading specific signs as if they were letters, the reader can also obtain additional information by associating the sign’s connoted environment. Iain MacRury points out that even a whole “world” can be constructed around very few advertisement signs in the reader’s head.

“We are not (just) reading signs – decoding specious collocations of signifiers in ads – but living them, linking signs to context and experience through calculation, evaluation and desire. Meaning-making happens not just in the interconnection of signifiers (i.e. the level of the representamen) but instead signs emerge in a way that both traces and constitutes experiences in concurricencies of symbolic, practical and embodied reference: in advertising industry jargon these link to ideas of consumers’ product-involvement and ads’ salience and relevance. We decode signs, advertisements included, but we also align ourselves and our worlds around them. Even in the seemingly trivial world of product-based prepositions (baked beans or holiday choices) ad signs can touch us, provoking embodied and emotional responses – affiliation and disaffiliation – thinking grounded in feeling, working meanings through as much as working meanings out.” (MacRury 2009: 195)

As a photograph can only be static whilst also trying to tell a dynamic story, it needs the cognitive help of its “reader”. It is up to the reader to compose the given parts of the image into one coherent narration. One of the advertising images of Annie Leibovitz’s calendar photographs for Disney shows Scarlett Johannson dressed up as Cinderella running down all the way from the castle and losing one of her glass-slippers along the way (fig. 10). It becomes obvious that a picture like the one above tells much more of a whole narration than what really can be seen in the captured moment. This brings up the question whether the real commercial appeal of an advertisement arises from the content of the advert (the images, signs and text the reader really sees and reads) or whether it ultimately depends on the readers own thoughts (which he develops motivated by his own associations) to feel attracted by the ad – and so to finally buy the product, as Chris Hackly declares:
“Advertising works at a cognitive level in that it influences the individual cognitive functions of perception, memory and attitude. Theories that focus on the cognitive levels of explanation also emphasize rational, conscious consumer thinking. The scope of explanation in such theories extends to the internal mental states and observed (consumer) behavior. Copy-testing, experimental research designs and attitude research attempt to isolate the internal mental states that act as causal variables which motivate consumers to act on the advertising they see. This level of explanation offers succinct and measurable results, but its weakness is that it risks distorting the way consumers engage with and understand advertising to fit a set of convenient research methods.” (Hackley 2010: 60)

Hackley accentuates the necessity of a reader’s reaction and interaction with the advertising he sees. This kind of dialogue is important according to Elmo Lewis’ traditional AIDA-model\(^7\) that describes and categorizes the function of advertising of any kind. This model categorizes four stages of growing involvement, which lead the reader of an ad from unspecified attention to a concrete action (buying the product, of course):

- **A** – attention
- **I** – interest
- **D** – desire
- **A** – action

Nina Janich emphasises this model as traditional, but still very current. Yet she critiques that in models of this kind a certain order can be proclaimed, one which does not necessarily have to be obeyed to produce successful advertisings (Janich 2010: 36). It seems to be the advertiser’s main concern to establish the product in the end, how to get there can be seen as incidental. Especially the first two stages of Lewis’ model (attention and interest) demand the reader’s involvement. Max Sutherland, on the contrary, emphasizes the general overflow of advertising in an urban environ-

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\(^7\) Lewis’ AIDA-model was invented in 1898 and is one of the oldest approaches to describing advertising in general. In 1962 it was followed by a second model (DAGMAR) in 1967. This formula by Russel H. Colley stands for “Defining Advertising Goals for Measured Advertising Results” and points out not only the affirmative commercial appeal of advertisings, but also their communicative and almost “scientific” meaning for popular knowledge. This approach focuses on advertising science in a rather social than linguistic way so that Lewis’ model still can be seen as the most effective one. This demonstrates that advertising, even though it is constituted as being fast moving still follows traditional construction rules.
ment. It seems possible that advertising agencies perch on popular tales the reader already knows, so that at least the general narration does not have to be acquired in addition to the main focus of every ad – the new product. The advertiser’s choice for combining a new item with a common narration would be to produce a complex photograph that remembers of a movie with some kind of product placement in it – a so called cinematographic photograph.

Contemporary cinematographic photography

“[A] major component of decoding an advertisement’s subtext consists in putting together it’s visual elements into a coherent iconic text, i.e. into a narrative format that is implied or suggested by the visual features of advertisements.” (Danesi 1995: 57)

The necessity of “mentally converting” the visual parts of an advert seems to be crucial one the one hand (as Marcel Danesi mentions), on the other hand most readers of an advert do still have the tendency to focus on the written part (Stöckl 2004: 6). Therefore advertisers tend to produce cinematographically arranged advertising pictures rather than just adding together a couple of lose advertising signs, because this kind of imagery is much more suitable for telling a story in a similar way as a written text would do. Therefore it seems to be more familiar to the reader and he will be more willing to engage with it.

Cinematographic photography is composed in a way that resembles a still shot taken out of a movie or a documentary. It is meant to grab a certain moment out of a wider context and so to function as a single image as well as a representative for a complete story whose complexity goes far beyond the pre-existing photograph. The earlier figure contains all the previously discussed elements: the subject of the narration is a young woman (the American actress Scarlett Johannson dressed up as Disney’s Cinderella), the two objects show a castle in the distance and a glass slipper lying on the stairs between the woman and the castle. The ruffles on the woman’s dress illustrate her movement down the stairs and away from the castle.

8 “Ads are like alcohol: the more you have the less you remember. […] After exposure to only one or two competing ads, your memory for the first one starts to become impaired. […] Over a period of week, the more competing commercials there are for a product category, the less the average person will remember about any of them.” (Sutherland 2008: 183)
This kind of cinematographic photography allows a linear reading, as all components of the image are composed on an invisible diagonal line from the upper left side down to the lower right side of the ad, which is quite similar to the direction in which one usually reads texts\(^9\). If the reader follows his usual reading behaviour he might read this combination of visuals in the following order:

\[ \text{castle} \rightarrow \text{glass slipper} \rightarrow \text{moving ruffles (as a symbol for movement in general)} \rightarrow \text{Cinderella} \]

This word order could be realized in a rather unusual sentence like “On her way out of the castle, one of the glass slippers was lost by running Cinderella”. This sentence would not be a-grammatical, but still not fit into a common expression. If one changes around the orders – and so read the diagonal from upside down – it might change the word order into:

\[ \text{Cinderella} \rightarrow \text{moving ruffles (as a symbol for movement in general)} \rightarrow \text{glass slipper} \rightarrow \text{castle} \]

In this interpretation a combined slogan could sound “Cinderella loses one of her glass slippers on her way from the castle”. This sentence would fit into a current expression mode much better than a sentence that is composed in the way the reader would follow a written text.

To sum it up, whether or not the components of a cinematographic ad are composed in a linear order they provide a complete setting of entities that the reader needs to grab a full narration out of the picture he sees. Stuart Macyntire points out the familiarization of the reader and potential future customer with television culture since 1956, which could explain why readers are much more addicted to photographs that remind him of the moving pictures they are already used to:

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\(^{9}\) Isabelle Lehn points out that in most cultures and sign systems it is common to read texts from left to right and from top to bottom, which encourages the creators of an advert to compose their campaigns in a certain manner that doesn’t contradict the reader’s habitual reading attitude. In this way the reader’s direction can determine the placement and the positioning of advertising visuals. It is advisable to keep certain linearity, just like a written text would do (Lehn 2011: 204).
“The year 1956 also brought television, a potent medium to extend familiarity with the plentitude of idealised American family shows and to enlist viewers of the commercial channels in the drama of consumer desire. Advertising became a major business, divining and shaping those desires.” (Macyntire 2009: 223)

Even though this reference from television should be the same for every consumer, not everybody is influenced by the same movies, series or documentaries. Or even if he is, the advertisers cannot count on a generally acquired taste or interest of every reader. Marieke Mooij mentions the difficulty between the various mind settings and mentalities of different cultures and the kind of universality international branding tries to establish. Therefore cinematographic advertising can bridge the gap between the reader’s personal uniqueness and a universally valid message, as the readers on one hand gets specific commercial input, on the other hand they are not only allowed but forced to add their personal opinion while bonding the fragments of the advertisings narration.

Outline and forecast

The overview of the possible strategies for “reading” advertisement photography points out that in general the visuals of an advert have to be administered in a similar way as the text components to guarantee a coherent perception of a whole campaign.

To summarise, advertising photography can be read in three different ways:

1. Particular signs can be introduced in a common (textual) environment. As soon as the consumer has affiliated the new advertising sign it can stand on its own from that point on and represent the brand it stands for. This process works for both, advertising signs and advertising back-grounds.

10 “Although people are not the same, some Western marketing and advertising professionals tend to perceive them to be the same. In particular Western brand managers – because they are used to define the brands in abstract terms of personality and identity – are genuinely convinced of universality of consumers. Universals are always formulated in abstract terms, like happiness or love. But what makes people happy or how they express love varies not only by individual but even more by culture. The more values are formulated in an abstract way, the more universal they are. But in marketing and advertising we’ll have to express values and motives in a concrete way. Then most universality disappears.” (Mooij 2010: 49)
2. The combination of advertising signs (whether or not they are already familiar to the reader) in a certain composition can provide a kind of “pictorial syntax” so that the reader can perceive the message from the structure of the ad more than from its actual content (e.g. in case of the various interpretations of *Romeo and Juliet*).

3. In a wider context whole ads can work for each other in the same way the particular elements can within one single ad. This happens in case of advertising spreads, where the narration goes on from one advertising picture to another. This kind of serial imagery reminds of the structure of a comic or a photo-text, so the addition of various pictures all together can substitute a written (literary) narrative.

Image-linguistics still is a current desideratum in contemporary text- and visual disciplines. Apart from common approaches from e.g. art history to decompose and classify the elements of an image, but also to determine the syntax and semantics of an image, currently only very few approaches for interpreting images in a text-scientific way can be found.

The way of reading an image or a visual leads to the reader’s collective knowledge. This kind of knowledge contains the awareness of traditional narrations (like for example fairy tales) as well as the ability to “lexicalize” new terms such as advertising signs into a current view of the world. This acquirement can for example be based on the consumption of contemporary cinema films, which bind together the same kind of images as in cinematographic photography and a more complex narration than can be told in one single picture. Paul Messaris exemplifies this phenomenon by means of 80s cinema:

> “Hollywood cinema and television can also provide a basis for crosscultural interpretation of American ads that make references to more diffuse cultural practices or values, as opposed to specific images. For instance, international viewers, who had seen such earlier Hollywood movies as *National Lampoon’s Animal House* (1978) or *Porky’s* (1982) presumably would have been in a better position to understand the values expressed in the ad for *Spring Break*, which appeared in 1983.” (Messaris 1997: 102)

Even very precise studies and research fields have to admit that ultimately there’s a grey area in the reader’s mind, in which they make their final shopping-decisions. This area can possibly be stimulated (maybe even better by images than by written text), but when it comes to the reader’s thoughts (and the variety of association with the input they get out of the advert) advertisers as well as scientists can only guess what really motivates a customer.
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