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Semiotics, mythology and translation in the framework of commercial advertising

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(fig.2). The Reebock advertisement highlights the 'performance value' of the sport shoes - "Life is not a spectator sport", whilst 'fashionableness' is the image put across by the Adidas - "What the best dressed man wears to work out".

In advertising myth correlates feelings, moods or attributes to tangible objects, linking possibly unattainable things with those that are attainable, and thus reassuring us that the former are within reach (Williamson, 1978: p.31). These 'unattainable things' are usually things which are hard to come by or do not materialise on demand; they are the concept of the myth which is very often a state of mind (e.g. happiness, nobleness, valour, etc.). Myth relates the concept to the product in such a way that the product both represents as well as embodies the concept. According to Judith Williamson, this is a two-stage process; at first the product, which has no 'meaning', "must be given value by a person or object which already has a value to us, i.e. already means" (1978: p.32).

> The next step, after a product has had meaning transferred to it from another object is that the product itself comes to mean. A product may be connected with a way of life through being an accessory to it, but comes to signify it. (Williamson, 1978: p.35)

That is to say, through myth a product appropriates values existing outside it and later becomes the symbol of these values.

When a product comes to signify a concept (or value), "the two things are made interchangeable and hence equal in value, they may be used as currency for one another" (Williamson, 1978: p.38).

The John Rolfe cigarette advertisement (7) illustrates the way in which a product comes to mean and embody a concept. The advertisement depicts a man wearing a khaki shirt, taking a packet of John Rolfe cigarettes out of his pocket. The words "MAN-SIZE 30's" are printed in bold letters at the top of the advertisement. Immediately the concept of manliness is identified and related to the '30's' which are obviously the cigarettes. From this point onwards, the various signifiers in the advertisement merely serve to confirm the concept, since the relationship between the product and the concept has already been established. The khaki shirt worn by the man in the picture is olive-green and the cigarette packet is yellow . Green and yellow are amongst the most durable colours found in nature and represent the qualities of durability and naturalness associated with manliness. The words "BEST TOBACCO, BEST TASTE" are an example of the simple, straight-forward talk of a man 'who does not waste time in idle chatter'. Loquacity is a quality associated with women, and men are supposedly the opposite. The khaki shirt is also made of a tough and durable material associated with strenuous and 'manly' actions (e.g. army training, hiking, etc.).

From what has already been said about advertising technique, it is clear that metaphor and metonymy play a significant role in it. Metonymy and metaphor are an integral part of the mythical function since they associate images recognised by the public with new objects. The result of this procedure is that all the elements contained in a recognised image are transferred to a new object, thus giving this object 'meaning'. We will take an advertisement for Bols Brandy (8) to illustrate this point The

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(7) c.f. Appendix A, fig.3.

(8) c.f. Appendix A, fig.4.

advertisement shows two pictures, one of the sunset by a river, and the other of a hand pouring Bols Brandy into a glass. Both pictures have the colours red, yellow and gold, therefore it is already evident that the one picture stands in relation to the other. The words "SUNDOWN, SLOW-DOWN, BOLS BRANDY" clearly show that the sunset is being compared to Bols Brandy. Bols Brandy is gold in colour as is the sunset. In the reader's mind, sunset is associated with relaxation ("SLOWDOWN") and mellowness. These attributes are then transferred to Bols Brandy through the outlay of the advertisement, for example, the juxtaposition of images.

From the advertisements which have been discussed, it is clear that colour plays an important part in commercial advertising and reinforces the myth, as do all picture advertisements. Most commercial advertisements consist of a text and a photograph; the former is usually short, for the sake of economy in communication, and is 'explained' by the latter. In other words, the photograph provides the framework in which the text is to be understood. Photography is also known as "visual rhetoric" (Marcus in: Borbé, 1983: p.1501) and as such constitutes a message. The difference between the textual message and a photographic one is that the former is made up of words and the latter of lines, surfaces and shades of colour (Barthes, 1982: p.10). Barthes calls the photographic image "un message sans code" (1982: p.11). According to Eco's definition of non-codified messages, this would mean that the interpreter of a photograph would have to create his own hypotheses as to its interpretation (1975: p.183). In the case of picture advertisements, these hypotheses would then be tested and modified according to the parameters set out by the advertising text: "Le parole vient sublimer, pathétiser ou rationaliser l'image" (Barthes, 1982: p.19). The text thus explains the photograph, but it does so in a selective manner. As regards the text Barthes says:

> il s'agit d'un méta-langage appliqué non à la totalité du message, mais seulement à certaines de ses signes.
> (1982: p.32)

It should now be clear that the various signifiers in a photographic message are connotators serving the text. There are various advertising techniques used to get the message across of which we will look at four of the most common ones: paronomasia, apodioxis, erotesis and exergasia. Aaron Marcus uses these techniques in connection with visual rhetoric alone, whereas we will use them to refer to the advertisement as a whole.

Paronomasia is the playing on words which sound alike. This advertisement for Penny Lane wine aperitif (9) is a good example of paronomasia. The top of the advertisement reads: "Take a trip down Penny Lane". Here a pun is being made between Penny Lane and 'memory lane'. The effect of this technique is that the advertisement is immediately recognised and linked up to a particular referent system. Further down the page the following words appear: "[...] enjoy strawberries and cream forever". This is yet another example of paronomasia which also alludes to the familiar, but this time to the old Beatle's song 'Strawberry Fields Forever'. This second example may be seen as linked to the first one because thinking of the old Beatle's song is equivalent to 'taking a trip down memory lane'. By alluding to the familiar, the product itself is made familiar; this is further borne out by the words: "You've always had a taste for it', implying that the product has always been familiar as well as liked.

Another advertising device mentioned is apodioxis, which is the "emphatic rejection of an idea" (Marcus in: Borbé, 1983: p.1502). The advertisement

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(9) c.f. Appendix B, fig.1.

for Pamper cat food (10) employs this device to show how 'Pamper cat food is the only food for your cat'. This idea is also borne out by the selection of Pamper cat food presented in the advertisement. On the left-hand side we see a cat which has totally rejected its food (it has its back to the food bowl); and on the right, the cat is eagerly eating its Pamper food. In this advertisement two opposite poles have been created, the left and the right, providing a clear demarcation line between that which is right and that is not. Since apodioxis is by nature extreme in its function, it is cleverly stated in the advertisement that it is the cat which is extreme not the advertiser: "There's one thing cats will always make clear and that's to tell you when their meal's not right". Apodioxis is a device of intensification used by advertisers to 'guarantee' the superiority of their product.

Another common device of intensification is erotesis which puts a direct question to the reader. The question is invariably rhetorical, thus assuming that the answer is self-evident. A German advertisement for Jack Daniel's whiskey has been chosen as an example to show how this device works (11). The most marked examples of erotesis in the text read as follows:

> Don't the farmers wait patiently every year until our barley has ripened in the sun and acquired its aroma ? Why shouldn't we then allow the whiskey which we take especial care in preparing from the barley, a lot of time to acquire its mildness and distinctive taste which has made it famous the world over ?

Here the rhetorical questions are presented in the form of a logical argument. It is taken for granted that the reader will agree with that which the advertiser proposes to him. This device is most often used to promote

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(10) c.f. Appendix B, fig.2.

(11) c.f. Appendix B, fig.3.

products which have already gained a reputation for themselves and therefore 'state that which is already known'.

The last advertising technique to be discussed is exergasia, where 'the same thing appears in different ways'. This is known as a device of refinement or elaboration (Marcus in: Borbé, 1983: p.1503). The advertisement for New Taranagi Kiwi-Fruit Cocktail (12) provides a good example of how to use this device. The advertisement shows how New Taranagi can be mixed with a variety of drinks:

> Taranagi is so versatile, so delicious it will mix well with just about everything.

The message of the advertisement is that 'regardless of what you want, you can have it with Taranagi'. Exergasia is used in advertising to present a product as the 'ultimate one' and 'all that you need to buy', because it has such a wide range of applications. This kind of advertisement uses the myth of the 'wonder drug' which cures all ills.

We have seen how important myth is for advertising but, in the translation of advertisements, how should myth be treated?

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(12) c.f. Appendix B, fig.4.

4.2 MYTH AND TRANSLATION

The level of description and explanation of translation studies is linguistically, psycholinguistically and sociolinguistically based (Wills, 1980: p.9). However, for the purpose of our study we will focus on socio-linguistic aspect of translation since myth operates within a socio-cultural framework and translation within cultural and linguistic one (hence the adoption of the socio-linguistic perspective).

Translation is based on language and can therefore be viewed semiotically on both the paradigmatic and the syntagmatic level. The corpus of translation, with all its possible combinations of linguistic units, comprises the paradigmatic level. It is important to note that the linguistic units of translation (translation units) are modified and restricted by the combination of linguistic units selected by the author of the source text. This does not at all mean that the translator does not have the whole linguistic reservoir of the target language at his disposal but rather, that he is limited in his use of it by the source text. The actual process of translation, however, operates on the syntagmatic level and is therefore predominantly parole-related (13). This means, in terms of translation, that the translation process concerns itself with the interrelationships of signs and sign systems within the written mode. The whole network of sign relationships comprises the context and determines how irdividual textual segments are to be translated.

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(13). See Wilss 1980: p.9

Text typology is the underlying foundation of context and plays a major role in determining the invariant core of a translation. The German translation theorist, Katharina Reiss, classifies translations according to text types (1971: p.31 - 34). For each text type a hierarchy of translation considerations is established (from which the invariant core is derived). Reiss, adopting Bühler's terms, states that there are three functions of language: depiction, expression and address (1971: p.32). These functions are not always qualitatively of equal rank. Depiction is better described as content, because texts in which this function of language is predominant are known as informative texts - what is expressed being more important than the way it is expressed. Texts where the mode of expression is most important are known as conative texts, and appellative texts have a predominant address function (where the reader's reaction is all-important) (Reiss, 1971: p.32 - 34).

In terms of this hierarchy, advertising belongs to the appellative text type. Appellative texts do more than just convey information in a particular form of language; they are characterised by the fact that they always aim to achieve an extralinguistic effect (Reiss, 1971: p.44). In advertisements content and form are subordinate to the extralinguistic aim, which is to influence consumer behaviour in such a way that people buy a particular product. The appellative function of advertisements operates on the basis of manipulating the feelings of the consumer (e.g. fear, snobbism, false pride),and, in this way, serves the extralinguistic aim (Reiss, 1971: p.45).

Since advertising texts aim at eliciting a particular response from a reader, they must be translated in such a way as to ensure that the target

text evokes a response in the target text reader which is equivalent to the response evoked by the source text in the source text reader.

Language can be viewed as belonging to a cultural framework, therefore when a text is translated the cultural framework changes, or at least, is different to that of the source text. The extent to which this happens is directly related to the cultural proximity or divergence of the source and target systems.

Advertisements can cause serious problems for translation since they use symbolism extensively, that is, mythical thinking. A symbol associated with a particular thing in one culture often has completely different associations in another culture.

> Nicht jede Sprachgemeinschaft fühlt sich von denselben Werbesymbolen angesprochen. So kann wahr in Deutschland für Orangensaft mit dem Slogan 'die konzentrierte Kraft südlicher Sonne' geworben werden, keinesfalls jedoch in südlich heissen Ländern von der wörtlichen Übersetzung dieses Slogans Werbewirksamkeit erwartet werden.
> (Reiss, 1971: p.47)

From this fact it is apparent that translating advertising texts involves much more than a simple 'language swop'. Target language equivalents have to be found for source language symbols; this problem is often aggravated by the multi-medial form of communication frequently operating in advertisements, for example, pictures or graphical symbols in addition to the actual text.

If the impact of symbolism is to be preserved in a translation, then the source text symbol must be substituted by the equivalent target text symbol (the equivalent symbol is the symbol fulfilling the same function in the target text mythology as the source text does in the source text mythology).

We will now look at one way in which an advertisement can be changed so as to appeal to readers of a different culture. Let us take the example of a Camel advertisement (14) depicting a man sitting under a tree by a river, lighting up a cigarette. He has a boat tied up close by. For argument's sake let us say that the man in the advertisement represents the myth of the lone cowboy in Western culture - showing the self-sufficient and rugged man who leads a life fraught with dangers, and whose sources of pleasure consist of little more than tobacco, a cup of coffee and a campfire (i.e. 'the simple things in life'). If we now try to adapt the same advertisement for members of a North African Arab culture, certain symbols (which have different associations in the target text culture) will have to be changed. The advertisement is composed entirely of a picture therefore all the sign components are to be found in it. Myth is made up of signs therefore by translating them we translate myth.

Although, far from being an expert on North African Arab culture, I would assume that the most important change which the advertisement would have to undergo is a change of setting - a scene by a large river would have a disorientating effect on an Arab accustomed to desert country and arid land. It is obvious from the advertisement that the river represents familiar surroundings in which the man in the picture feels at ease. If the very same symbol were transferred directly into the translated advertisement it would most probably represent luxury and otherworldliness, changing the concept originally intended.

Pleasant and familiar surroundings in the case of the target advertisement would be well represented by an oasis in the desert. Just as the boat

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(14) c.f. Appendix C, fig.1.

stands for a means of transport in the source advertisement, so too would a camel in the target advertisement. The target text could show a man wearing typical desert clothing to protect him from the rays of the sun. This would fulfill the same function of the light shirt, jeans and high boots in the source advertisement. In both cases the dress suits the environment.

In changing the picture in the advertisement we have hopefully succeeded in preserving the concepts of self-reliance and solitude as well as the principle of equivalent response demanded of appellative texts. If the two cultures under discussion were more closely related, we might have been able to keep the same signifiers without running the risk of changing the myth and consequently the effect of the advertisement on the reader.

It should now be apparent that symbols cannot be translated from a source text culture without prior knowledge of the cultures under discussion and of the relationship between myth and culture.

4.3 MYTH AND CULTURE

Myth is a cultural phenomenon and culture is a social construct. There are cultures and sub-cultures whose identity as such very much depends on the size of the social group under discussion. A leading cultural anthropologist Roger M. Keesing defines a social group as

> a collectivity of individuals who recurrently interact in a set of connected identity relationships.
> (1981: p 74).

In other words, the social group determines the role of the individual within that group giving him a social identity. Certain ideational forms are shared within the group and are given a specific meaning which may or may not be the same as the meaning attributed to the same or similar ideational forms existing outside the group. Thus it can be said that a group has its own culture or sub-culture because meaning is a collectively sanctioned phenomenon; it also follows that culture is a system of shared meanings (Keesing, 1981: p.70).

Culture is a powerful phenomenon which conforms to its own mode of reality. R.L. Gregory has shown that what we see is constructed from what we know. He says:

> We do not <u>see</u> a wet pavement : rather what our retinas pass through our optic nerves, are patterns which we interpret as reflections; knowing that the streets are not made of glass, and that they reflect light only when covered with water, we <u>see</u> the wet street and drive accordingly.
> (in: Keesing, 1971: p.97).

Thus culture is an interpretative process - it interprets reality according to its own rules.

In today's society the increased international co-operation (especially in the scientific, technical and economic fields), has caused many cultures to be 'swamped' by the more dominant cultures, whose influences have had to be accommodated to varying degrees. Man's culture is continually changing to meet the new requirements of his social and physical environment. With every change in a social group's culture, there are corresponding modifications in their psychological makeups and social relations (Cohen, 1974: p.45).

> Cultural evolution, however, is a slow and difficult process. Although people may welcome technological innovations that provide them with increasing mastery over their habitat, they tend to resist the necessary accompanying changes in their organisations of social relations. (Cohen, 1974: p.50).

As a rule, technology spreads from one area to another and rarely appears independently in different areas. In the past, technological transfer (and, by extension, cultural transfer) was halted by natural barriers such as oceans, mountains, deserts, etc. This was one of the reasons for the tendency of peoples living in geographical proximity to one another to develop along similar lines in terms of both culture and language.

Similar cultures also tend to be based on similar modes of production; in other words, culture is a result of a kind of social organisation. To take the argument further, myths are also directly relatable to the modes of production.

Lévi-Strauss claims that myths are universal, in other words, a myth in one culture has a corresponding myth in another culture (N.B. a corresponding myth in structuralist terms is a myth having an equivalent function in the social structure). This is most apparent amongst communities which have similar historical and cultural development . Lévi-Strauss undertook study of various myths in the mythologies of certain

North American and South American tribes and found distinct structuralist correlates between them. The universality of myth is still a strongly contested theory in anthropological circles, partly because it would appear that Levi-Strauss uses the term universal in reference to a small anthropological sample, which can hardly be regarded as a representative one. It cannot be denied, however, that there are myths which have the same 'function' world-wide, such as myths which purport to answer questions common to all civilisations e.g. creation, birth, death, etc. This argument is, however, largely academic for the purposes of the present study, since we are concerned primarily with the function of myth within the advertising context.

Even if correlates of one myth may be found in various cultures correlation becomes a much more difficult task in the case of cultures which differ greatly from one another; this problem has however been partially resolved in the modern world by more efficient means of communication and transport so as to minimise the effect of natural barriers. There are now therefore more cases than ever before of cultural transfer between societies which are geographically distant from one another. In contrast to societies living in close geographical proximity to each other, societies which are far removed from each other tend to have very different modes of production. For example, two hundred years ago the Western world and sub-Saharan Africa had very different modes of production; but today Africa has assimilated many aspects of Western technology and the ideational forms which go with it. This cultural and technological transfer has been a very one-sided process because Western culture has demonstrated a far greater mastery over its physical habitat than have many African cultures. Because of the physical similarities existing be-

tween Western and African habitats, Western technology has been of great value to the 'developing world'.

We have already mentioned how slowly societies accept social changes in comparison to the rate at which technological changes are absorbed by the societies. This trend is of great significance to international advertising and provides much insight as to why certain products, although much needed, have not proved popular with certain potential consumers. A major reason for this is that advertisers involving themselves in cross-cultural promotion have forced the source culture symbol on to the target culture instead of finding the symbol best 'corresponding' to the source culture myth. In the case of translated advertisements (appellative texts), 'correspondence' is gauged through consumer response. This in essence, is the 'equivalent effect principle' discussed by Nida, stating that the response of the target text readers to the target text must be equivalent to the response of the source text readers to the source text (1974: p.1-3).

Myth is an integral part of culture and as such, its symbols reflect an ideational network determined by social relations which form the basis of culture itself. In other words, mythical symbols and culture are collectively sanctioned and can have no meaning outside the social structure. Similarly, ideology is collectively sanctioned and only has meaning within a certain socio-economic framework.

4.4 MYTH AND IDEOLOGY

Myth and Ideology are two closely related concepts. The most significant feature which they have in common is that they are both components of the message in a communication system. In the context of advertising they, together with the product itself, form part of the package being sold to the consumer. Advertising does more than just promote a product, it promotes a particular value system and way of life, that is, a particular set of social relations (15). Thus advertising forges a strong link between commodities and ideological power, a fundamental feature of the capitalist mode of production. It is an established fact that capitalism is very much in the hands of the middle classes, or the bourgeoisie; capitalism does not, however, try to alienate the working class but rather, tries to convert it by encouraging it to adopt capitalist values. In advertising this task can be carried out by promoting capitalism as a popular phenomenon. A good example of this technique at work can be provided by almost any cigarette advertisement which, although espousing bourgeois values, promotes a product which is within the buying power of worker and employer alike. Thus it can be said that, like myth, ideology is inherent in the framework of the problem - solution model espoused by Davis and Walton (16).

Ideology, however, solves the problem differently to the way myth does; where myth 'glosses over' ideology 'implicitly rejects' thereby denying or, at least, invalidating the problem. To continue with the example of the cigarette advertisement, ideology 'implies that there is no gulf be-

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(15) c.f. **Myth and Culture**

(16) c.f. **Myth and its role in advertising**

tween the classes because all can 'afford the same luxuries'. It could of course be argued that there are products advertised which are well beyond the buying power of the working class. One aim of such advertisements, however, is to make the working class aspire to the accumulation of wealth (a capitalistic ideal) and thereby increase its buying power, since

> the aspiration to purchase an object, or a style of life, means adhesion to a superstructure and thus to a system of relations.
> (Mattelart, 1974: p.23)

Mattelart, discusses at length capitalism's domination of the mass media in its various forms. One of the most important and most successful media techniques used to camouflage bourgeois hegemony is to proclaim the autonomy of the media (1974: p.9), celebrating them as 'the pulse of the people'. In Mattelart's own words:

> The media have given rise to a new concept of revolution, that of rising expectations...and in substitution [to] that of genuine revolution.
> (1974: p.8)

A few examples of these 'revolutionary trends' which are exploited by the advertising industry are the revolt of women, the sexual revolution and individualism. Three advertisements are used to show how such phenomena are exploited. The first one is for Kim cigarettes (17). it depicts two highly fashionable women looking at a newspaper, with a newspaper seller standing behind them. The advertisement is full of signifiers connoting the concept of feminine self-assertion in modern society. The most interesting connotator is the relationship between male and female posited in the advertisement; a definite contrast exists between the newspaper seller and the young women - they are shown as obviously belonging to a

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(17) c.f. Appendix D, fig.1.

higher income bracket than he does. This would imply that it is no longer 'a man's world', an impression supported by other connotators in the text, the type of clothing worn. The women are wearing boots, an established signifier of mastery, and their attitude is one of self-assurance illustrated by their confident gait (with one hand in the pocket). The man is situated behind them and they are obviously the subject of his attention (as demonstrated by his eye following them). He is dressed in jeans, old sport shoes and a T-shirt which in comparison to the women's attire is very modest indeed. The women are trend-setters and the man is but a face in the crowd (even though there is nobody else in the picture). At the top of the advertisement we read: "Kim is for girls who do things their way", which leaves little doubt as to the message of the advertisement. From an ideological point of view it is being stated that women need no longer accept male domination since they can be just as capable and successful in their own right.

The second advertisement is for the New Toyota Corolla Avante (18). The car is in the foreground and a man and a woman are in the background leaning against it. The car is streamlined and metallic brown in colour (a streamlined quality and a metallic colour being both well-established connotators of speed in motor vehicles). The man is wearing a fashionable leather jacket whose shine can be regarded as a co-signifier to the metallic glimmer of the car and thus, by extension, also connotes speed. He also has one hand on the car suggesting a sensual relationship to it; this is further borne out by the fact that the man is facing away from the woman who in turn is seeking to capture his attention (seemingly sensing that she is 'playing second fiddle' to the car). This would

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(18) c.f. Appendix D, fig.2.

strongly suggest that 'loving' material possessions more than human beings is 'forgivable', especially if that possession happens to be the New Corolla Avante. The advertisement reads: "PASSION IS YOUR MOTIVE"; this would imply that passion is an emotion which should be 'let loose' and should no longer be subject to the restraints of society. From an ideological perspective, this would be 'proof' that the media 'have a mind of their own' and are not controlled by the middle classes since not only do overt shows of passion offend middle class sensibility, but such a relationship being demonstrated between man and his possessions is even more insufferable. This advertisement is, therefore, a classic example of the sexual revolution characterising 'modern society' (i.e. a society with no fixed moral code).

The third and last advertisement about 'revolutionary trends' in modern society, characterises the individualism of modern man (19). At the head of the advertisement we read: "FREE YOUR THINKING", and under this heading is a picture of the new Renault 21 Savanna at a dock overlooking the endless expanse of sea. The sea is clearly a connotator for free thought, as both are deep and limitless. The car is stationary, almost in a contemplative mood. At the bottom of the picture stand the words: "THE NEW RENAULT 21 SAVANNA. SPACE IN WHICH TO EXPRESS YOURSELF". Thus the new Renault is portrayed as a co-signifier of self-expression and free thought and the word "SPACE" refers to both thought as well as to the spaciousness of the car. The ideological message of this advertisement can therefore be understood as: 'if you are individualistically-minded, need lots of space and won't allow yourself to be dictated to, then this car is for you'.

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(19) c.f. Appendix D, fig.3.

From the above it should be apparent that:

> Ideology is the repertoire of signs characteristic of the rationality of a class's domination. These signs are prescribed by their function of masking the basis of a given society. If they did not possess this character, they would reveal the mystification achieved by the ruling class in determining the meaning of reality and defining objectivity. (Mattelart, 1974: p.11 - 12)

Ideology thus provides the overall framework in which myth operates. The uncovering of myth provides no problems for ideology since the former is made up of two interrelated semiological systems operating within an even larger set of sign systems (ideology). This larger set of sign systems forms the basis of an interpretation of reality and must not be unmasked because under it lies "the social class which does not want to be named" (Barthes, 1972: p.138) - the bourgeoisie and the economic relations supporting its existence.

5.0 A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO TRANSLATING ADVERTISEMENTS FROM GERMAN INTO ENGLISH

Translation also has a practical component which, in the case of advertising, merits the special attention of the advertiser. In the translation of advertisements, certain criteria are highlighted which are of less importance in other types of translation (e.g. consumer response). Through the analysis of six advertisements, the practical application of theory will be investigated as well as linguistic features important in the translation of advertisements. Translations have been made of these advertisements in order to illustrate clearly problems encountered and solutions proffered. In each case, priority has been given to the appellative function of translation, with the informative and conative functions occupying a secondary position. The first advertisement to be studied promotes a product called Merfluan (20). Merfluan is a term connoting the flowing of the sea. The term should be divided into two separate components if this is to be observed: Mer + fluan. Through a process of association Mer is linked to the German word Meer, meaning sea and fluan to the German verb fliessen meaning to flow. Immediately the translator is faced with a problem - should he or shouldn't he translate the product name? What are the advantages and disadvantages of selecting either option? An incorrect choice in this regard may account for the success or the failure of a product. A common example is when the product name gives rise to negative associations on a phonic level (e.g. a name

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(20) c.f. Appendix E, figs.1a and 1b.

such as Schitz cannot be other than negatively associated in the English language and would therefore have to changed). In the present instance, however, no such problem is envisaged hence it is not necessary to change the name. Furthermore, even though the above-mentioned associations of Merfluan cannot be obtained on the lexical level in English, they can be deduced from the advertisement itself. The advertisement shows a bottle of Merfluan standing to one side (an enlarged picture) and two miniature photographs, one of a wave on the sea and one of Merfluan being sprinkled on a toothbrush. The large photograph of the Merfluan bottle on the one side of the picture and the two smaller photographs juxtaposed on one another on the other side, serve to demonstrate that the product is associated with the flowing of the sea. The layout of the advertisement functions as a hypocodifier by means of which the little puddles of water around the Merfluan bottle serve as an implication of the sea and, by extension, of the sea salt contained in the bottle itself. The symbols used here have similar associations in both the German-speaking and the English-speaking worlds (e.g. the highly esteemed cleansing properties of sea salt and the great importance attached to dental care). German has a tendency towards nominalisation where English would prefer verbs or adjectives as evidenced in line (2): "For healthy teeth", which serves as a translation of the German "Für die Gesundheit Ihrer Zähne" (line 3). In the English version the possessive pronoun has been dropped for aesthetic reasons only. The bottle of Merfluan bears an inscription with instructions for use. This advertising technique is used to illustrate how easy it is to use the product. The inscription on the bottle of Merfluan is translated as follows: "Sea salt for cleaning your teeth" (line 3). "Zum Zähneputzen" (line 4) is translated as "for cleaning your teeth". Compounds are readily constructed in the German language consti-

tuted by the close union of two or more words whose meanings are blended together as to produce one idea (Curme, 1970: p.441). English also possesses compound forms such as bloodbath, but these forms are fixed by usage and cannot be constructed by the individual language user as is the case in German. "Zum Zähneputzen", which is an impersonal construction, has been made possessive in the English for stylistic reasons, since "for tooth-cle[illegible]g" would sound clumsy and 'contrived'. The translation of the inscription on the bottle continues as follows:

> For daily dental care. Remove cap. Sprinkle Merfluan on a wet toothbrus[illegible]place cap after use. Do not fill the bottle up with water. Stor[illegible] dry place.
> (lines 4-8)

German has three imperative forms: the familiar, the polite and the impersonal forms. English, in contrast, only has one [illegible]perative form to cater for all commands and therefore cannot capture the nuances present in the German imperatives (in this case, the impersonal form). The German sentences "Flasche wieder schliessen. Bitte vor Feuchtigkeit schützen. Kein Wasser in die Fla[illegible]he fullen (lines 8-10)" have not been translated lite[illegible]lly because they have a fixed form in English usage (as shown above). At the bottom of the advertisement we have the German reflexive form; this form denotes either a self-referential action or a passive mood. In the sentence: "Nur bei Merfluan entwickelt sich in Verbindung mit Wasser aktive Kohlensäure" (line 12), the reflexive form indicates the passive mood as is reinforced by the use of the preposition bei - an impersonal construction when preceding the subject of the sentence (in this case, Merfluan). In the English version the active mood is used, making Merfluan the object and the reader, the subject - "Only in Merfluan do you find the combination of water and active carbonic acid" (lines 11-12). The reason for this is to maintain a uniformity in the English text, that is, the use of the active verb form. This portion of text is

also very interesting from a semiotic perspective, especially as regards the use of the words active and acid. From a functional point of view acid is a 'purging' agent and is rendered even more forceful by the attribute active. In other words, Merfluan actively purges your teeth of all impurities. The mythical reference of this advertisement can be clearly seen to be the struggle between Good and Evil, where the Good (championed by Merfluan) eradicates the Evil. The translation continues as follows:

> The result is a fine foam with natural active substances. This active foam cleans each and every tooth and helps strengthen the enamel. (lines 12-14).

Extending the mythical analogy, the interaction of Good and Evil results in the formation of 'foam' which represents the heated battle between opposing forces. In the original, the words: "Zahn für Zahn" (line 14) appear whose literal translation would be "tooth by tooth". This would, however, evoke more than just the image of thoroughness but also give the impression that Merfluan is slow-working. A preferable translation would be "each and every tooth", since this preserves the idea of thoroughness without the negative association of being slow-working. The translation continues:

> Myrrh promotes blood circulation in the gums. Merfluan protects sensitive tooth necks and is effective in preventing the bleeding of the gums, the formation of tartar, tooth decay and paradontosis. Use Merfluan daily. Merfluan for clean teeth: thorough and healthy. (lines 14-20).

Here we have life, symbolised by blood, being brought back to the gums. Merfluan, in protecting sensitive tooth necks, acts as guardian of the weak as well the opposer of Evil in all its manifestations (tartar, tooth decay, paradontosis). On the whole, this advertisement has been satisfactorily translated, a task made easier by the fact that mainly grammatical elements had to be translated and not mythical ones, since the

latter, although interesting, remained the same in both source and target text.

The second advertisement we will examine must be translated in a totally different manner from the first one. Even though both advertisements promote products which are foreign to the English consumer, the first product 'explains' its function and features whereas the second one does not. The second advertisement is for Beck's beer (21) and is presented as a product already familiar to the German consumer. As in the Merfluan advertisement, there is also the image of the sea (as shown in the picture) with the additional concept of adventure connoted by the ship sailing in the background and the boats lying on the shore. To the right of the picture there is a much enlarged photograph of a bottle of Beck's standing out on a background of clear blue skies. This makes the statement that Beck's is a 'lofty' and superior beer. The bottle is also in a stationary and silent pose, overlooking the entire scene depicted in the advertisement. The bottle of Beck's has been positioned in such a way as to ascribe to it the concept of benevolence in the face of the ever wandering and adventurous spirit of man. By extension, the concepts of pleasure and adventure are embodied in Beck's which becomes the exchange currency for everything depicted in the advertisement.

The text of the advertisement consists of no more than a sentence: "Beck's löscht Kenner-Durst" whose translation according to the equivalent effect principle would be "Beck's - the connoisseur's thirst-quencher". However, such a translation does not take into account that the English consumer

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(21) c.f. Appendix E, fig.2.

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