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## INTERNET POST AS AN ELEMENT OF E-BRANDING. LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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E-branding of Lidl brand is a wide-ranging marketing strategy, which purpose is to keep the current customers and gain new. The authors of advertisments posts, that includes information regarding a specific product (name, information about it, price, reason of showcasing in the specific moment), use semantic (mostly nature, price, tradition, modernity, comfort, luxury), grammatical and non-linguistic categories to convince the receivers to themselves. Such communicational process enables also to read the needs of customers, who – by liking the brand's page – want (actively) to participate in the whole sales process, want to be informed and to have a chance to use the offer.

Keywords: e-branding, semantics, pragmatics, internet, persuasion.

Branding is not only an advertisement, as Grażyna Filip points out in numerous pragma linguistic analyses of texts, a.o. advertisment. The author precises, that branding is a multi-thread communicational process, which is build of precisely considered, consequently realized and constantly updated strategy. Its main purpose is the creation of brand's positive image and recording it in consumer's awareness [see more: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]. As the mentioned author states, branding "means marketing technique consisting of creating and recording in consumers' minds the fact of existence and positive image/personality of a specific brand. It is important to assign the product specific features and attributes, as well as building its recognizability, because the better the brand is recognized, the more often it is chosen by the purchasers," [7, p. 53-54].

One of the ways to maintain relations with potential or current customer is the internet communication, mostly by social media (Facebook), which speeds up the moment of contact in the transmitting-receiving relation. The sender transmits information, that he considers important, via the Internet posts, which are the advertising type typical for this media.

In the area of advertisments texts the linguists distinguish many – important for a specific discourse – categories, that relate to code. Among them exists ones allocated to linguistic or visual code. The linguistic code is created by linguistic and paralinguistic

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(phonic and graphic) means. To the visual code belong the figural means (picture, icon, symbol) and non-figural (color, composition) [11, p. 32; 20, p. 172; 16, p. 106].

In the analysed internet discourse legitimate are three main categories, a.o.:

- semantic categories,
- grammar categories
- non-linguistic categories (graphic) [see more: 12, p. 103-125; 3, p. 283-292], which are worth to be analysed deeper in connection with the held linguistic analysis.

Advertisement is a way of encouraging to buy goods or services. This matter is described in details by Kazimierz Ożóg, linguist from Rzeszów, in the monography called *Polish of the Turn of XX and XXI Centuries*, stressing, that after 1989 the advertisement became omnipresent in Poland both in the mass media, as well as in the everyday life. These observations are relevant, because they construct not only a scheme that shows the product with its features and advantages, but a kind of imposed vision of perceiving world, subordinated to the contemporary consumption. The mentioned author emphasizes, that this is a primitive vision, set to possess, not represent a defined position [12, p. 103].

Among many determinants of the advertisement, it's the code which is particularly important for the researcher. Kazimierz Ożóg indicates the division into three kinds: linguistic, visual and sonic, which linguistic layer "is though a stem, a base of each advertisement [...] and may become a subject of analysis in isolation from those elements of advertisements" [12, p. 105].

In order to indirectly present values (positive features and actions) of the presented product, Kazimierz Ożóg set three basic semantic categories, that are most often featured in the various discourse advertisements: press, radio and television. Not considered by the author was internet discourse, which also can act as an example material, because it derives – similarly to the previously mentioned media – from the primary forms of interpersonal communication. These are five complete semantic categories, which are novelty, tradition, naturalness, effectiveness, luxury & comfort and price [12, p. 105].

The analysed material basis, that comes from Facebook social portal, is full of semantic categories in the centre of which stays the advertised product by Lidl Polska brand. The senders of advertisement posts, consisting of linguistic layer and – obligatory – image, creatively present a specific ware, exposing its most important features. Analysed were over 600 advertisement posts published on the brand's profile between July 2020 and April 2021.

Lidl Polska brand is a concern that is handling sales of various products, i.e. groceries, equipment for home, garden, garage or clothing wares<sup>1</sup>. Among the presented advertisment texts, the largest group are texts, that has extensions to naturality of choices and pro-ecological and pro-health behaviors, what does not surprise in the era of the common propagation of healthy lifestyle.

The contemporary customer's interest in the nature can be explained by the technological-information progress, which on one hand takes the network users – Lidl Polska consumers – away from those contents by "shutting the contemporary human down in the trap of new technologies" [12, p. 117], while on the other hand in a meaningful way brings him closer, thanks to the widely accessible scientific and popular scientific articles concerning environment and its protection. Kazimierz Ożóg additionally explains this matter by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> <u>https://kimjestesmy.lidl.pl/</u> [read: 12.04.2021].

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the fact, that "Contemporary human surrounded by the world of technics, various kinds of everyday life easements, easily communicating with the whole world, spending most of his day with media, is missing the widely understood nature, giving high value to everything that is connected with nature" [12, p. 116]. The senders of contents/producers<sup>2</sup> of the analysed brand uses various forms of indirect valuation of the advertised product. To the typical lexemes of this kind belong the ones listed by already often mentioned linguist, that is *natural, naturally* in the meaning 'proper to nature, compatible to is laws' [1, p. 492]. In the example material exists collocations: *natural sourdough, natural shapes, natural composition, natural origin, natural yogurt.* Sometimes naturality is not enough, so its additionally specified by some other word, as in the case of collocation *natural light.* 

Often listed are also, in the form of negation, the unwanted ingredients of a healthy product, i.e. *does not contain thickening substances, salt and sugar*, signalizing this way their absence in the contents and ich potential naturality.

Among numerous notions from this semantic area present is also idiom *gift of nature* in the meaning 'nature, natural resources' [10, p. 64] or rhetoric triads like: *natural, clean, healthy* or *coconut, natural and also without sugar*.

Adjective *natural* is synonymous word for various lexemes, among others *ecological*, which is 'not harming the environment or having its protection as a purpose' and 'produced from natural ingredients' [1, p. 186]. These forms in the example material are: *comes from ecological agriculture, ecological harvests, ecological bamboo brush*.

Other lexeme from this group is the word *environment* understood as 'group of people connected by the same conditions of existence, work, etc. or in which someone lives, spends time' [1, p. 1019]. In the advertisment posts *producers* point out the state of these conditions or their possible support or enhancement, using neology *friendly*, which is 'supporting someone, not bringing harm' [SJP], as in the slogan of woman sport shoes: SHOE *FRIENDLY* TO THE OCEANS and also *friendly to the environment* or phrases like: *environment support, improvement of conditions* (with their place precised).

In the *PWN Synonyms Dictionary* edited by Lidia Wiśniakowska the lexeme *ecological* relates to the word *healthy* [17, p. 108] meaning 'beneficial for health' [1, p. 1304], which is often emphasized by the *producers* in the descriptions of groceries, among others: *healthy; natural, clean, healthy; healthy, organic products; healthy Vegangurt Pilos Coconut, healthy shot.* 

The senders of advertisement posts are also emphasizing, that the guarantee of keeping health meant as 'good, normal state of human, animal and plant organism' [1, p. 1303-1304] is not only consuming products of such features, but also doing specific supporting activities. For this purpose used are formulas in the form of emblems or advices: *safe for health, to keep an eye on your health, take care of your health, control your health.* This is a small devices, but able to do a lot! It will measure the pulse and blood saturation, in one word it will help you *take care of your own health*! Look for it on lidl-sklep.pl in a super price (E)

In this group exists also a lexeme *immunity* as 'ability to withstand to some action, influence, diseases, adversities' [1, p. 562]. The assortment presented by Lidl Polska brand

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The notion *produser* (English: producer) created by Małgorzata Kita is referencing the contemporary human who lives and creates contents in the new [compare 9, p. 145]. *Produser* can be both sender, as well as recipient, assuming the exchangeability of these roles.

relates to food. In the day of pandemic (2020-2021) focus on health and immunity is for sure bigger, because it makes a partial protection from getting sick or the complications during disease. This conviction is used in the persuasive texts of food products, so on the social profile of the advertised brand as well. Among numerous collocations found can be the following advantages: *strengthening of immunity, strengthens immunity*.

For the purpose of emphasizing nature and naturality serves also the usage of lexemes with *bio*- prefix or *bio* adjective indicating the relation with life, life organisms or life processes [1, p. 56]. In the advertisement posts found can be expressions like: *sweeten with BIO agave syrup, BIO pumpkin lunch from Świętokrzyskie Farm, almond drink Pilos BIO, Lord Nelson Bio Organic Tea, Bio concentrate Freshona, Bio oranges, Bio lemons, BIO butter, biodegradable universal cloths, on the occasion of BIO Week<sup>3</sup>.* 

Besides the listed lexemes in the advertisements posts show up also words connected with the area of nature as: *fresh*, *hygienic*, *safely*, *regional*, *Silesian*, *Polish*.

Due to the often used mechanism of relating products of various kinds to nature and naturality, *producers* emphasize the credibility of information about their products by referring to percentage values, certificates, sources and methods of extracting raw materials, as well as the effect of purchasing listed products, i.e. improvement of harvesters' incomes and their financial and life state. All these means are more or less persuasive form of convincing potential customers to buy specific product, so to increase the brand's profit.

The category of price is "very important in the whole advertisement message. The sender wants though to convince the potential recipient, that the promoted article has a proper price for him" [12, p. 123]. "All the procedures *with price* pay specific attention to the fact, that the ware is valued positively, also because this price's approachability. These procedures came across the contemporary tendencies to savings, economy, cheapness of the world of things and products" [12, p. 124].

The senders of contents/*producers* use many nominal groups. As enhancements to the price's attractiveness shows up the specifications using the particle *really*, as well as many relations to senses and forms of play with lexical forms, including the usage of brand's name, as in the examples: *lower price, low price, dazzling low price, nice price, super price, good price, really good price, very good price, bargain price, really bargain price, super bargain price, really super price, tasty price, price nice for the eye, in a price to crunch, special price of the day, attractive price, really attractive price, cool price, crazy low price, lowered price, lidl-prices, lidl-price.* 

In the taken analysis the figures show up. As says Joanna Wrycza-Bekier "Figures attract attention in the text only under the condition, that we will describe them interestingly" [19, p. 122]. The author, writing about copywriter texts, emphasizes that such figures shall always be chosen, that will write themselves in memory, stand out from others. She suggests though that in such texts, which is reasonable also in advertisement texts, show and presented shall be only not rounded figures, that specifically catch attention and confirm credibility [19, p. 120-123]. This kind of figures are used by senders/*producers* of the analysed brand, which is confirmed by the following constructions: *cheaper; -25%, -28%*,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> At this point it is worth to get familiar with the opinion of prescriptivist on the subject of joint and separate spelling of *bio*- prefix and *bio* adjective, see <u>https://sjp.pwn.pl/poradnia/haslo/Przedrostek-bio;20971.</u> <u>html</u> [read: 13.04.2021].

-50%, -60%, -72%, 20% cheaper, 30% cheaper, 40% cheaper, 50% cheaper, 50% cheaper for the second one, 80% cheaper, 22% cheaper, price lower by 27%, 32% cheaper, 41% cheaper, 42% cheaper, 46% cheaper, 53% cheaper, 62% cheaper.

The benefits of purchasing products in lower price may not be enough, that's the reason of the more common usage of periphrastic constructions or numbers-letters collocations, i.e.: *in equally low price, half price, 2 in the price of 1, 2 packages in the price of 1, in the offer 3 pieces in the price of 2, 4 in the price of 2, we reduce the price until further notice,* in the function of encouragement and conviction.

The obligatory part of the analysed advertisement posts is related to product's price, so the senders use many creative epithets and complements, which main goal is to make consumers interested, i.e., phrases like *price has fallen*, *price was cut*.

Interesting group is also the one, in which emphasised is the uniqueness of the new price, which according to the senders is lower than the previously valid, or even more attractive than usually: *cheaper than usual, even cheaper than usual*, hence accompanying or existing separately direct phrases in 2. person in singular to the recipients like: *don't let yourself miss such price*.

According to Kazimierz Ożóg for the purpose of emphasising the attractiveness of advertised product serves also the usage of lexeme *sale* [12, p. 124], meaning among others 'action leading to increase popularity of some product or project; also: each of these actions' [SJP]. In the analysed example material the usage of this lexeme makes a representative group. Here are the examples of joining this word: *lidl-sale, special sale, tasty sale, delicious sale, big sale, interesting sale, extra sale, super sale, in sale 2+2 for free, sale 1+1 for free, in sale 75% cheaper, in sale -40%, in sale -46%, in sale -70% cheaper for the third product.* 

Rare example is the word *sale* build with the lexis influencing the senses of taste and smell simultaneously, as in the example:

Do you feel it? It *smells like tasty grill sale*, which you can fall in love with! Tasty tofu for grill you can now buy in Lidl in super price, which is 3,99 zł 🔅 <u>https://tak.to/tofugrill</u>

Sale and its potential are also emphasized by various idiomatic innovations, as in the example *bloodcurdling sale*, in which the contents of idiom *something bloodcurdling* meaning 'something scary, causing fear' [10, p. 188] was widened by lexeme *sale* and the negative valuation was turned into positive in order to strengthen the persuasive effect:

*Bloodcurdling sale*! Unbelievable price! You'll pay 199 zł for battery hand saw with a case included. Wide offer of workshop products available from Friday 14.08 in store and on lidl-sklep.pl! <u>https://tak.to/PilaVII</u>

Category of novelty is considered as the type most often appearing in the advertisement texts [compare 12, p. 106]. In the analysed Internet discourse, as shown in the above analyses according to categories of nature and price, novelty does not construct the essence and guarantee of purchasing the presented ware, but it shows up often as a semantic category. Among lexemes of this kind there are words like: *new, modern, novelty, newest*. Here are the legitimate illustrations defining novelty of the product among others of such kind: *novelty among pots, pressure cooker, vegan novelty*; changes in packaging look: *new packaging*, which for the non-oriented clients is important, because not having this knowledge can cause disorientation and as an effect not making the purchase.

Different product patterns than before are signalised by *producers* via lexeme *modern* in the meaning 'proper to the new times' or 'about people: progressive' [1, p. 527] – *modern* 

*patterns*. It happens like this, because the phrase *new* does not always have to be according to the current fashion cannon, what may be important to a contemporary, progressive consumer.

As Walery Pisarek claims: "If though a product itself advertise as a *new*, than it has to be in contrast to the previous [old - G.F and J.M.] stronger, more effective, more efficient, so this way more economic, and by those without unwanted side effects" [13, p. 73].

For the emphasis of the specific offer's existence and to attract attention to its benefit, which is "here and now" serve such expressions like: *current offer, newest offer*, which implies the timing limitations of the bargain.

Occasionally appear periphrastic construction in which senders/*producers* inform, that the specific product showed up in the brand's offer *for the first time*, as in the example:

[..] Available in Lidl *for the first time*, but you'll buy it in a really good price! <u>https://</u> <u>tak.to/Mielona</u>

Among the brought up examples specific attention is attracted by the usage of lexemes in new meaning, among others *hit* meant as 'song or dance melody very fashionable in some period; also: thing that has huge popularity in some period' [1, p.753]: *hit, hits, greatest hit, best hit.* 

As Kazimierz Ożóg claims "It may seem that in the simplified image of the reality, proposed by the advertisement texts, totally turned to today and the future, strongly technic, staring into modernity [...], there will be no place for past and tradition" [12, p. 112]. Taking into consideration the year in which this work was published – 2001, it may seem, that in the moment of writing this monography – 2021 – this insight would be more up to date. In the course of held analysis of Internet discourse this category is also present, but because of the specifics of offered products, list of this lexis is shorter.

To the circle of expressions from this group belong also collocations with lexeme *tradition* understood as 'rules of behavior, habits, opinions, information transferred through generations' [12 p. 1046] or *traditional* 'related to tradition' [1, p. 1046], as in examples: *long-term tradition, traditional cultivation, brewed traditionally.* 

In order to keep persuasiveness of advertisement text senders use also synonymic lexis, as in the case of *classic* meaning 'traditional' [1, p. 323].

Last of the discussed categories exposes comfort, luxury and effectiveness experienced by the consumer indirectly thanks to possession of specific product or service, which purpose is to fulfill needs and indulgences, ease performing specific (everyday) actions and reach expected outcomes [1, p. 923].

Kazimierz Ożóg sees in this category an explicit linkage with the modernity, to which heads the contemporary human-consumer [12, p. 123].

In the lexical circle of this group placed are words like: *comfort, comfortable, effective, effectively, luxurious,* related to clothing, home appliances and groceries.

In the advertisements posts of Lidl brand features long statements, without impersonal or non-verbal forms. Senders/*producers* use direct phrases to recipients–potential customers in the form of directive, understood as 'tip or ordinance on the procedure' [1, p. 171]. Among many forms of this kind in the example material exists phrases like: *buy, come, move, eat,* implicating lack of possibility to decline.

Interesting mechanism of the sender's play with recipient is directing message defined as "you" and then turning to the group of people, as in example:

*Przewiń* (scroll), if diapers are not interesting *you* already (or not anymore). Interested in przewijanie (swadlling) we though informed that from Thursday 14.01 Lupilu diapers can be bought in Lidl 31% cheaper! <u>https://tak.to/Lupilu</u>

In the example material there are many non-linguistic forms of sender's integration with recipients. To the most often used belong punctuation marks, including question marks, exclamation mark, ellipsis [see more: 2; 18], being the supplement of text and strengthening the advertisement. The authors of posts often use also emoticons [compare 154] which are faces imitating the emotional states of senders, so they are suggesting emotions, that will be felt by the recipients during reading text or buying the advertised product.

Observation of gathered example material allows to conclude, that basing the communication strategy on the new media may bring huge benefits, among others form of close contact with customer, due to the periodicity of added posts longer transmission-receival relation and finally bigger profits from the purchases made by regular and new customers. In the internet posts appear mostly permanent semantic categories (nature, tradition, price, novelty and luxury) with different persuasive potential. The most often used are semantic categories of nature and price, which should not surprise in the day of pandemic and care for own health, but also in relation to the assortment of the analysed shop, in which found can be mostly necessity articles. The presented realizations are though creative and well thought, often surprising. The image of sender in the analysed texts is additionally specified by grammatic and non-linguistic categories, by the mean of which the sender appears as a unit or group and also a person who has communication competences close to the contemporary network user.

E-branding of Lidl brand is a wide-ranging marketing strategy, which purpose is to keep the current customers and gain new. The authors of advertisement posts, that includes information regarding a specific product (name, information about it, price, reason of show-casing in the specific moment), use semantic (mostly nature, price, tradition, modernity, comfort, luxury), grammatical and non-linguistic categories to convince the receivers to themselves. Such communicational process enables also to read the needs of customers, who – by liking the brand's page – want (actively) to participate in the whole sales process, want to be informed and to have a chance to use the offer.

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## ОНЛАЙН-ПОСТ ЯК СКЛАДОВА Е-БРЕНДИНГУ. ЛІНГВІСТИЧНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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Е-брендинг – це спектр заходів, що інформують про певну марку, презентують її на ринку, низка заходів, що зацікавлюють покупців і підтримують відносини між відправниками та одержувачами бренду, тобто – продукту. У статті аналізуємо е-брендинг торгової марки Lidl. Це широка маркетингова стратегія, спрямована на утримання існуючих споживачів та на залучення нових. Комунікація відбувається в Інтернет-дискурсі. Суть – це інтернет-пости, опубліковані в соцмережі Facebook. Автори цих рекламних постів використовують різні стратегії у спілкуванні зі споживачем. Окрім основної інформації про конкретні продукти – назва, інформація про товар, ціна, причина презентації – вони використовують різні семантичні, граматичні та позамовні категорії, щоб залучити аудиторію. Найчастіше вдаються до стратегії семантичних категорій. Автори використовують п'ять усталених категорій, в т.ч. природа / натуральність (зміцнює імунітет, підсолоджений БІО сиропом з агави), ціни (дуже хороша ціна, вигідна ціна, справді вигідна ціна, 50% знижки на другу одиницю товару, 2 упаковки за ціною 1), новий / сучасний (новий серед посуду, скороварка, веганська новинка), традиція (давні традиції, традиційне вирощування, традиційно готується на пару), комфорт, розкіш (зручно, оперативно). Граматичні та позамовні категорії в матеріалі становлять додаткову інформацію, яка існує для підвищення привабливості тексту.

Пропорція конструкту відправник-отримувач є постійною: відправник надає зміст, одержувач коментує. Такий процес комунікації також дає змогу зрозуміти потреби клієнтів, які, лайкнувши веб-сайт бренду, хочуть (активно) брати участь у всьому процесі продажів, хочуть бути поінформованими та мати змогу скористатися привабливою пропозицією. Часто коментарі можуть бути імпульсом для відправника: змінити стратегію або модифікувати її, щоб вона відповідала потребам поточних клієнтів, а також покращити якість продукції чи послуг.

Ключові слова: е-брендинг, семантика, прагматика, інтернет, переконання.