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English-Language Advertising Slogans and Their Ukrainian Translations: Comprehension Among Ukrainians

Abstract

The article deals with the study of advertising slogans. A selection of English-language slogans and their translations into Ukrainian are presented. Their categorisation according to phonetic, lexical and syntactical principles facilitates the comparison between the inner meaning of the English slogans and their reflection or transformation into Ukrainian variants. The article attempts to investigate the perception and understanding of advertising slogans in English and their Ukrainian variants by the general Ukrainian-speaking public.

Keywords: advertisement; translation; slogans; understanding

1 Introduction

Advertising has become an integral part of modern society and its penetration into various spheres of human activity is becoming increasingly apparent. As one of the most effective means of communication, advertising text should be considered in terms of its communicative value, the main task of which is to convince a person to make a decision in favour of the company which is being advertised (Blinkina-Mel'nik, 2003; Bovée & Arens, 1994; Musté et al., 2015; Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Tulupov, 2006 and others). However, the “Father of Advertising” David Ogilvy, an advertiser and the founder of the advertising agencies Ogilvy & Mather and Ogilvy PR, claimed that it is impossible to force people to buy a product; it is only possible to interest them in buying it (Ogilvy, 1985). Persuasion is a far from trivial task even when the advertiser and the audience share a common language. However, in the modern world integration and globalisation have led to the development of international trade and high-quality translation of advertising texts has become one of the necessary conditions for the success of an advertising campaign.

Generally, advertising texts are characterized by a typical compositional structure (the title, the subtitle, the main part of the text, the slogan and the echo-phrase) in which every component fulfils its own role in the advertising campaign of a particular product or service (Bovée & Arens, 1994; Skračić & Kosović, 2016). As it is not possible to describe in detail all the components of advertising texts in one article, let us focus on the slogan, as it is an extremely important component. The aim of this article, therefore, is to investigate the perception and understanding of English-language advertising slogans and their Ukrainian variants by average Ukrainians. The tasks of the article are to compare the inner meaning of advertising slogans in English with their Ukrainian translations and to examine their comprehension by Ukrainians, with the help of empiric research.

2 Slogans and Their Features

Advertising slogans vary in structure, purpose and level of expressiveness of the advertising message, which results in a variety of definitions of the concept (Abdi & Irandoust, 2013; Alekseeva, 2005; Dyer, 1995; Leech, 1972; Medvedeva, 2008; Mokshantsev, 2000; Ogilvy, 2012; Zirka, 2012, etc.). Most researchers agree that a slogan is a short phrase which is easy to remember and which is the verbal equivalent of a logo, reflecting the concept of the company and its strategy (Abdi & Irandoust, 2013; Bovée & Arens, 1994; Imshinetskaia, 2006; Morozova, 2001; Musté et al., 2015; Tulupov, 2006 and others). A slogan is often a short figurative expression, an aphorism or a catch phrase, as expressiveness is of key importance (Imshinetskaia, 2006; Morozova, 2001; Musté et al., 2015 and others). It can also be stated that a slogan is a concise statement, quite clearly isolated from other parts of the text, both graphically and semantically (Blinkina-Mel'nik, 2003; Bovée & Arens, 1994; Luk'ianets', 2003; Morozova, 2001; Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Skračić & Kosović, 2016 and others).

Since the slogan is a concentrated expression of the content of the advertising campaign, it should include as many relevant and significant advertising units as possible in order to reflect all the important information for the potential consumer (Bartosik, 2020; Skračić & Kosović, 2016; Zirka, 2012). According to I. Morozova (2001), the main significant units are those elements of information pertaining to the product or service being advertised, without which the slogan will not be able to fulfil its task — to stimulate the consumer to buy the advertised product or service. Thus, the researcher includes the unique selling point and the brand name among the main significant units. These two units, the author notes, are the necessary minimum. Without them it is impossible for the slogan to perform its advertising functions. In order to start thinking about the advertising message, the consumer must at least know who is addressing him or her (the brand name) and how this uninvited interlocutor may be of interest to him or her (the unique selling point) (Morozova, 2001).

3 Comparing English-Language Slogans and Their Ukrainian Variants

In view of the intercultural nature of advertising communication, which due to globalization processes is focused on the peculiarities of the reproduction of advertising texts in different languages, the study of English-language advertising slogans and their translation into Ukrainian is becoming increasingly relevant. Nevertheless, there are some cases in which slogans can be left without translation. For example:

- the target audience of the campaign speaks a foreign language in which the slogan is written. Therefore, the slogan must be extremely concise to be well perceived and remembered by the consumer, for whom this language, though familiar, is not their native language (“*Nokia. Connecting People*”; Nike — “*Just Do It*”);
- a company completely refuses to adapt the slogan to emphasize its internationality and globality. As a rule, such slogans are not very difficult to understand. However, their meanings can be difficult to translate (Apple Computer, Inc. — “*Think different*”; Mazda. “*Zoom-Zoom*”);
- the foreign language form of the slogan is conceptually justified. This happens when the main selling point of the advertised brand is its foreign origin and the foreign slogan is used to emphasize this. In such cases, foreign words that do not translate serve as an exotic frame for the product, reflecting the colouring of the country of origin (Alekseeva, 2005, p. 239). Examples include slogans advertising wines with a Spanish phrase (“*Campo Viejo. Pure Spanish Character*”) or with an Italian one (“*Bella Sera. It's going to be a beautiful evening*”), or German-only slogans — advertising Volkswagen (“*Das Auto*”) and others. In addition, well-known Latin expressions (“*Omnia Omnibus Ubique*”) are not translated as they can please the consumer by hinting at his or her erudition and, as a result, induce the consumer to make the purchase.

In cases in which a slogan is translated, the translation process can prove problematic. When adapting already existing slogans, there are often problems and misunderstandings between the translator and the client. The client often requires pragmatic equivalence, without full awareness of how languages differ from each other phonetically, syntactically and grammatically. The brevity and the aphoristic nature of slogans impose certain restrictions on the translator, especially in terms of the length of the advertising phrase. Therefore, the task of the translator is quite difficult, as the maximum amount of the information in a minimum of words has to be conveyed.

Consider the slogan of LG Electronics — “*Life’s Good*” — as an example. The slogan emphasises that life is wonderful, especially when using LG products. Additionally, the initial letters of this slogan remind the audience of the company: “*L*ife’s *G*ood” — LG. The Ukrainian variant of this slogan is «*Життя прекрасне*» [Zhyttia prekrasne] (i.e. “Life’s beautiful”), which conveys the idea of the good life but which misses the word play of the original.

It should be noted that slogans based on brand names are practically impossible to translate without losing the connection to the latter. To demonstrate this, one may compare the slogans of two companies — Canon and Nikon. For the English-speaking audience the slogan “*You can*” has at least two meanings. The first meaning is that the consumer feels the strong confidence that having bought any Canon product he or she will cope with it without any problems and will achieve perfect results. The second meaning is that the slogan rhymes to some extent with the brand name. When a potential buyer is ready to purchase something, there is a high possibility that he /she will opt for a Canon product as the slogan has stuck in his / her head and the consumer will be sure that it was his or her own decision. The Ukrainian version of the slogan “*You can*” is translated as «*Ти можеш*» [Ty mozhes] and the Ukrainian-speaking audience misses the second meaning — the wordplay with the brand name. Nikon has the slogan “*I’m Nikon*”. In this way, the brand name is not lost in the translation — «*Я є Nikon*» [Ya ye Nikon]. Simultaneously, the identification of the purchaser with Nikon products helps the buyer feel certainty and self-reliance.

Other examples of slogan translations similar to the Nikon example include the slogan for the Christian Dior brand: “*I love Dior*” — «*Я люблю Діор*» [Ya liubliu Dior] and the slogan for the Gillette brand: “*Gillette: The best a man can get*” — «*Жилетт: найкраще, що чоловік може отримати*» [Zhylett: naikrashche, shcho cholo vik mozhe otrymaty] among others.

Advertisers demand that translators provide not only grammatically correct translations, but also that they preserve wordplay, literary devices and adherence to the principle of minimalism (Alekseeva, 2005; Bovée & Arens, 1994; Mokshantsev, 2000 and others). However, M. M. Blinkina-Melnik says, “the first rule of a translator is that any wordplay is translated.” The author also emphasises that it is impossible to develop a universal recipe for translation and adaptation of slogans and texts as it all depends on the specific situation and the translator (Blinkina-Mel’nik, 2003, pp. 85–86).

Nevertheless, the main difficulty is that it is almost impossible to meet this requirement without significant damage to the marketing components (i.e. the four Ps of marketing — product, price, place, and promotion). Any advertising text is overloaded with functionally significant tools and the aim of each tool is to convince people to buy the product or service. This so-called “supersaturation” creates an inevitable conflict between content and form, which leads either to a loss of meaning or to noticeably heavy-handed sentences. The choice between authenticity or free adaptation also depends on the target audience of the product.

To illustrate these problems it is necessary to compare some already existing slogans in English and in Ukrainian. To make it easier they have been grouped according to phonetic, lexical and syntactical principles.

In terms of phonetic factors, three features often used in advertising slogans are onomatopoeia, alliteration, and euphony. Onomatopoeia is an interesting but complicated phenomenon in advertising, which can be demonstrated by comparing the slogans of Schweppes and Mazda.

The slogan for Schweppes is “*Schhh... You know who*”. In this slogan “*schhh*” represents the sound of the gas which comes out of the bottle when you open it but it also simultaneously helps us recollect the name of the brand — *Schweppes*. The Ukrainian version of this slogan is «*Шууу...*

Знаєте хто — Швепес» [Shshsh... Znayete khto — Schweppes] or, to emphasise the foreign origin of the product, the onomatopoeia is given without translation “*Schhh... Знаєте хто — Schweppes*”. In this case the onomatopoeia is given correctly in both English and Ukrainian.

The slogan for Mazda is “*Zoom-Zoom*”. Onomatopoeia here is used to demonstrate the force and power of the car which is speeding along with a low loud humming or buzzing sound. This example of onomatopoeia is quite familiar to a native speaker of English and that is why this slogan is understandable for any English-speaking potential buyer. For a Ukrainian audience, however, this slogan, which was left untranslated, is meaningless. In the Ukrainian language it could have been conveyed with the expression «*вжиз-вжиз*» [vzhyh-vzhyh] or a similar expression. This example of onomatopoeia use, in contrast to the one mentioned above, shows that translators should pay more attention to onomatopoeia to avoid senseless slogans that carry no connotations to potential buyers.

Alliteration is often used in English slogans but seldom appears in their Ukrainian variants:

- Revlon (mascara): “*Take your Lashes to Luxurious Lengths*” — «*Зробіть вії розкішно довгими*» [Zrobit vii rozkishno dovhymy] (i.e. “Make your lashes luxuriously long”);
- Toyota: “*Today. Tomorrow. Toyota*” — «*Сьогодні. Завтра. Тойота*» [Sohodni. Zavtra. Toiota];
- Honda Pilot: “*Ride ready*” — «*До їзди готовий*» [Do yizdy hotovy] (i.e. “Ready to ride”) etc.

As can be seen in these examples, the alliteration of the original English slogans is absent in the Ukrainian variants.

An example of euphony is the slogan for the Whiskas brand of cat food: “*Whiskas. What cats want*” is translated as «*Ваша кицька купила б Віскас*» [Vasha kytska kupyla b Viskas] (i.e. “Your kitty would buy Whiskas”). Here we can see two significant words — «*кицька*» and «*Віскас*». The first word shows that this product is for cats, but not for all cats — only for your unique pussy-cat because for your pet you always choose the best. The second important word is «*Віскас*». In spite of the fact that this name does not have any connotations for Ukrainians (cf. “whiskers” and “Whiskas”), due to this slogan everybody understands and remembers that it is the brand name of the perfect food for your cat. This understanding is shown by the large number of puns, jokes and anecdotes in Ukrainian in which this slogan is used (Diadechko, 2011).

The slogan of the laundry detergent Tide (P&G Company), “*If it’s got to be clean, it’s got to be Tide*”, is translated as «*Чистота — чисто Тайд*» [Chystota — chysto Taid] (i.e. “cleanness — cleanly Tide”). As can be seen, the Ukrainian variant of the English slogan differs from the original slogan. Meanwhile, its Ukrainian variant unites the word «*чистота*» (“cleanness”) with the brand name «*Тайд*» (“Tide”) and due to this the brand name connotes with a product which can make one’s clothes spotless. Additionally, in order to underline the state of cleanness the wordplay of the words «*чистота*» (“cleanness”) and «*чисто*» (“cleanly”) is used and for Ukrainians the latter has an additional spoken connotation — ‘only’. Thus, the Ukrainian variant of the slogan contains the meaning that only with Tide will clothes be perfectly clean.

With regards to lexis, choosing the right word for the slogan translation is important as it helps to create a long-lasting impression or even a vivid picture of the advertised product and will later help to sell it. There are different ways of grabbing the attention of potential customers, such as catch phrases, idioms, wordplay, polysemous words among others.

The slogan of the soft drink Sprite (Coca-Cola Company), “*Obey Your Thirst*”, was at first translated as «*Слухайся своєї спраги*» [Slukhaisia svoiei sprahy] but was then changed to «*Sprite. Не дай собі засохнути*» [Sprite. Ne dai sobi zasokhnuty] (i.e. “Sprite. Don’t dry yourself out”). The latter variant of the translation proved to be more effective for the following reasons:

- it contains the brand name (“Sprite”), which helps buyers to differentiate it from other brands of soft drink;
- the brand name is written in English to indicate its foreign origin;

- wordplay is used to create a humorous effect — «засохнути» means “to dry out” and in this way a person is compared to a plant which can die without water. The slogan therefore contains an appeal to avoid this problem simply by buying the advertised drink.

Summarising this example, this slogan has proven to be attractive to the young generation. Furthermore, one more positive factor — the target audience — is added to this slogan translation.

The next example is the well-known slogan of McDonald's, “*I'm Loving It*”. This slogan contains the intentional mistake of using the stative verb ‘love’ which is not usually used in continuous (progressive) forms. This mistake, however, might be one of the factors which explains why this slogan catches the attention and is so well-remembered. In the Ukrainian variant it is translated as «*Я це люблю*» [Ya tse liubliu] (i.e. “I love it”). Thus, the English verb ‘love’ is translated with the help of the Ukrainian verb «*люблю*» but the English verb is used in the present continuous tense to show that the person is getting pleasure from being in McDonald's and eating his or her food at this very moment. All these meanings can be conveyed with the Ukrainian verb «*подобатися*» (‘podobatysia’; i.e. ‘like’) or even with the more emotionally strong phrase «*Я в захваті*» (“Ya v zakhvati” ”; i.e. “I’m excited”) because both the verb «*подобатися*» and the phrase «*Я в захваті*» show that the action is taking place now, at this moment, while the verb «*люблю*» signifies the feeling of great, constant (or even permanent) and long-lasting passion. This example of slogan translation therefore does not carry the original slogan's connotation.

Wordplay is often used in slogans. “*Impossible is Nothing*” (the slogan of Adidas) is translated as «*Неможливе можливо*» [Nemozhlyve mozhlyvo], which means that impossible is possible, in other words, you should not think that something is impossible because everything can be achieved. The connotation of the original slogan is therefore preserved. The slogan for the Mentos brand of sweets, “*The FreshMaker*”, was translated as «*Ментос — свіже рішення*» [Mentos — svizhe rishennia]. By using the brand name (for better identification of the product) and with the help of a pun («*свіже рішення*» which means “fresh decision”, i.e. ‘decision’ has the connotation of something cool, clean and new) the slogan catches the attention of potential buyers.

To demonstrate that wordplay is not always a simple phenomenon, let us take the slogan of the Škoda car brand, “*It's Škoda. Honest*”. From the English slogan the conclusion can be drawn that when a person sees a smart and almost ideal car, it is definitely a Škoda. The Ukrainian variant of this slogan «*Шкода. Без обману*» [Shkoda. Bez obmanu] (i.e. “Škoda. Without deceit”) is also rather laconic but maybe it could benefit from being less brief because the brand name sounds like the Ukrainian word meaning ‘damage’, ‘harm’, ‘injury’ etc. Because of the wordplay potential buyers may get the idea that they are being honestly warned about possible problems with the car, which is definitely not the idea of the original slogan.

The use of idioms, proverbs, sayings and catch phrases is also a frequent feature of slogans. The slogan for KFC, “*Finger lickin' good*”, is translated with the help of the similar Ukrainian saying «*Пальчики оближеш*» [Palchyky oblyzhesh], which means that the food is so tasty that you want to lick your fingers after having eaten it. The connotation of the slogan and its translation are therefore similar. “*Start Judging by the Cover*”, the slogan for Heineken, is similar to the English idiom “Don't judge a book by its cover”. However, whereas the idiom warns against prejudging someone or something based on appearance, the slogan encourages consumers not to hesitate and to believe that the perfect cover (the Heineken label on the bottle or can) contains the perfect product. The Ukrainian equivalents of this proverb are «*Не суди книгу по обкладинці*» [Ne sudy knyhu po obkladyntsi] and «*Зустрічають по одягу, проводжають по розуму*» [Zustrichaiut po odiahu, provodzhaiut po rozumu] but they both have the meaning “Don't believe your first impressions”. Nonetheless, it was this meaning that was used in the slogan translation — «*Довірся першому враженню*» [Dovirsia pershomu vrazhenniu], which means “first impressions count / believe the first impression”. Thus, the original slogan and the translated slogan carry a similar connotation.

An interesting slogan is that of the Mars chocolate bar, “*A Mars a Day Helps You Work, Rest and Play*”. It coincides with a well-known English proverb, “An apple a day keeps the doctor

away”. The Ukrainian variant of this proverb is «Хто яблуко в день з’їдає, про того лікар забуває» [Khto yabluko v den zidaie, pro toho likar zabuvaie] (i.e. “the doctor forgets about those who eat an apple a day”) but it sounds too serious and reminiscent of a doctor’s orders. To convey the idea that everything will be perfect and to attract the attention of the young generation the spoken phrase «Марс — все буде в шоколаді!» [Mars — vse bude v shokoladi!] (i.e. “Mars — everything will be in chocolate”, where the phrase ‘be in chocolate’ means to be nice, effortless and even luxurious) is used as the slogan for Mars bars in Ukraine. In spite of the fact that the Ukrainian variant does not contain a similar translation, it nevertheless carries the connotation that consuming a Mars bar (the brand name is given) means that everything will be comfortable, pleasant and trouble-free.

One more example of a witty usage of a saying is “*Go with the flow*”. It means ‘to blend in’, i.e. a person does not have to make their own decisions, they simply do the same as their peers. Diesel, an Italian clothing company, has this saying as its slogan for their range of denim clothing but with one difference — they have changed the letter ‘o’ into the letter ‘a’ in the word ‘flow’. As a result, their slogan has the opposite meaning. “*Go with the Flaw*” means that a person should be an individual and, despite all of his or her faults and health problems, being unique is better than just being perfect. The message of the slogan is “do not be like others”, the complete opposite of the saying on which it is based. The Ukrainian version of this slogan is «Закохани в недосконалість» [Zakokhani v nedoskonalist], which means “in love with imperfection”. The Ukrainian variant carries the connotation of the original slogan that it is not necessary to be ideal because everyone is already ideal. One’s physical impairment or otherness only proves his or her uniqueness, which he or she should be proud of.

The last example of the lexical group which should be examined is the creation of new words. Strictly speaking, they are not really new as they contain parts of already-existing words, or a word from a foreign language is used according to the grammar rules of the target language. An example is the slogan for the Snickers chocolate bar — “*Hungry? Grab a Snickers!*”. In the Ukrainian version it turns into «Не гальмуй! Снікерсуй!» [Ne halmui! Snikersui!], which like the original consists of two parts. The first phrase «Не гальмуй!» is a colloquialism and has two meanings: “don’t brake” and “don’t be slow”. The second part of the slogan is «Снікерсуй!». Here, the brand name is used as a verb and this verb is used as a command to induce a person to eat the chocolate bar. The verb is conjugated according to the rules of Ukrainian grammar with the personal ending “-уй”, which shows that the order is given to the second person singular, i.e. it is given to a peer or a familiar person.

In the Ukrainian version of the slogan we can see the usage of the brand name in a very original form. As a rule, foreign words are difficult to remember but a witty solution — creating a ‘new’ Ukrainian verb — and the presence of a rhyme make this slogan memorable and, as a result, makes it easy to differentiate the product from other similar ones. The Ukrainian variant of the slogan is focused on the young generation, which likes something new, original and with some hints of humour. For this reason, both a colloquialism and an address to a peer are used here and the translation successfully conveys the idea of the original slogan.

The next group to be examined is the syntax group. In both English and Ukrainian advertising slogans, symmetric constructions are used. A symmetric construction is one in which the sentence is divided into resembling parts through the use of punctuation. The use of punctuation marks has become more common in slogans. The full stop is the most frequently used one but commas, ellipsis, and dashes can also be seen. For example, the slogan for the wireless Bluetooth earbuds, AirPods (Apple Inc.), is “*Wireless. Effortless. Magical*”. It consists of three parts, each containing one word. Additionally, the first two words have the same suffix, ‘-less’. The Ukrainian version of this slogan is «Ніяких проводів. Ніяких складнощів. Чиста магія» [Niiakykh provodiv. Niiakykh skladnoshchiv. Chysta mahiia] (i.e. “No wires. No efforts. Pure magic”). It also consists of three parts but each part has two words, with the word «НІЯКИХ» having the same meaning as the suffix ‘-less’. In order to preserve the symmetric construction, the word «чиста» (as a spoken word it means ‘pure’) is added to the word «магія». It can therefore be concluded that the Ukrainian

slogan translation contains the same construction and the same meaning as the English slogan. Thus, the translation is correct.

In the case of ellipsis in the English slogan for the Kit-Kat wafer bar of Nestlé, “*Have a break ... have a Kit Kat!*”, the Ukrainian translation contains a comma «*Є перерва, є Kit Kat*» [Ye pererva, ye Kit Kat] or a dash «*Є перерва — є Kit Kat*» (i.e. “There is a break (,/—) there is a Kit Kat”). These punctuation marks create a slight shift in the slogan connotation — from a mild proposal of taking a break and eating a Kit-Kat (three dots in the English slogan) to a statement of fact (the comma) or confidence (the dash) that if you have a break you will have a Kit Kat (in the Ukrainian variant of the slogan).

It should also be noted that symmetric syntactic constructions often include words with the same, similar or opposite meaning. The slogan for Kodak, “*Share moments. Share life*”, is translated as «*Поділися моментами. Поділися життям*» [Podilysia momentamy. Podilysia zhyttiam] (the translation is identical). Both the English and the Ukrainian slogans consist of two parts and each of these parts has two words with the same first one: “share” and «поділися». The slogan for KFC: “*Share the taste, share the passion*” is translated as «*Розділи смак, розділи пристрасть*» [Rozdily smak, rozdily prystrast] (the translation is identical). All the parts start with the same verb — “share” and «розділи». In spite of the fact that both languages have a different number of words — the English slogan has two parts and there are three words in each of them while the Ukrainian translation contains two words in both parts of the slogan — it should be noted that the syntactic symmetry is preserved in the translation, as each part of the Ukrainian sentence contains the same number of words.

The English slogan for the Lee brand of jeans, “*Move Your Lee*”, is translated into Ukrainian with the help of symmetric construction and the words «рухай» (‘to move something’) and «рухайся» (‘to be moving’), which have a similar meaning — «*Не просто рухайся. Рухай своє Lee*» [Ne prosto rukhaisia. Rukhai svoje Lee] (“Don’t just be moving. Move your Lee”).

The slogan for Microsoft Office 2003, “*Your potential. Our passion*”, is created with the help of a symmetric construction with opposite-meaning words (‘your’ and ‘our’) and this is preserved in the translation — «*Ваші можливості. Наша пристрасть*» [Vashi mozhlyvosti. Nasha prystrast] (the translation is identical) «ваші» — «наші». One more such example is the slogan for the Olympus Company: “*Your vision. Our future*” — «*Ваше бачення. Наше майбутнє*» [Vashe bachennia. Nashe maibutnie] (the translation is identical), in which the opposite-meaning words are ‘your’ and ‘our’ and «ваше» — «наше».

Having analysed the selected English-language advertising slogans and their Ukrainian variants, we proceeded to conduct empiric research in order to ascertain their comprehension by Ukrainians. For these purposes the slogans were divided into eight groups: ‘International’ (“*Just Do It*”, “*Think different*”, etc.), ‘Exotic’ (“*Campo Viejo. Pure Spanish Character*”, “*Das Auto*”, etc.), ‘Phonetically emphasized’ (“*Zoom-Zoom*”, “*Today. Tomorrow. Toyota*” — «*Сьогодні. Завтра. Тойота*», etc.), ‘Syntactically emphasized’ (“*Wireless. Effortless. Magical*” — «*Ніяких проводів. Ніяких складнощів. Чиста магія*», “*Your potential. Our passion*” — «*Ваші можливості. Наша пристрасть*»), ‘Grammatically emphasized’ (“*Obey Your Thirst*” — «*Sprite. Не дай собі засохнути*», “*I’m Loving It*” — «*Я це люблю*», etc.), ‘Stylistically complicated’ (“*Schhh... You know who*” — «*Шии... Знаєте хто — Швепс*», etc.), ‘Lexically complicated’ (“*Finger lickin’ good*” — «*Пальчики оближеш*», “*A Mars a Day Helps You Work, Rest and Play*” — «*Марс — все буде в шоколаді!*», etc.) and ‘Creative’ (“*Hungry? Grab a Snickers!*” — «*Не гальмуй! Снікерсуй!*», etc.).

4 Empiric Research

During 2020 we conducted empiric research aimed at studying the perception and understanding of English-language advertising slogans and their Ukrainian translations by average Ukrainian citizens. In order to obtain valid empiric results in our study, a significant number of respondents (1098) of different ages and genders were involved. They were grouped into:

- group E1 — 144 respondents aged 14–17, male;
- group E2 — 140 respondents aged 14–17, female;
- group E3 — 138 respondents aged 18–25, male;
- group E4 — 142 respondents aged 18–25, female;
- group E5 — 140 respondents aged 26–40, male;
- group E6 — 130 respondents aged 26–49, female;
- group E7 — 128 respondents aged 41–60, male;
- group E8 — 136 respondents aged 41–60, female.

The main method of recording the results of slogan comprehension was the semantic differential (SD). In addition to using the standard 25-scale version of text comprehension analysis (Zhuravlev, 1991) and the 5-scale personal differential (Shmelev, 2002) we have developed special variants. These are a 30-scale bipolar variant of SD, the scales of which orient the respondent to evaluate various parameters of slogans, particularly the rational-logical and emotional parameters, and a 24-scale unipolar variant of SD with the same content scales.

Respondents rated the content of English-language advertising slogans and their Ukrainian translations on 30 bipolar scales, which were combined after factor analysis into 8 blocks of factors that characterize the assessment and understanding of a slogan.

1. ‘International’: easy — simple; strong — weak; comprehensible — incomprehensible; recognizable — unrecognizable; predicative — non-predicative; truncated — extensive.
2. ‘Exotic’: usual — unusual; interesting — uninteresting; realistic — unrealistic; deep — superficial; ordinary — mystical; one-dimensional — multidimensional.
3. ‘Phonetically emphasized’: complex — simple; difficult — elementary; natural — unnatural; real — fictional; close — distant; compressed — paradigmatic.
4. ‘Syntactically emphasized’: logical — illogical; intelligent — unintelligent; monological — dialogical; one-dimensional — multidimensional; simple — complex; real — fantastic.
5. ‘Grammatically emphasized’: natural — fictional; everyday — exceptional; real — unreal; simplified — complicated; expanded — compressed; vital — unnatural.
6. ‘Stylistically complicated’: simplified — enchanting; real — fantastic; compressed — expanded; psychological — non-psychological; pessimistic — optimistic; sad — cheerful.
7. ‘Lexically complicated’: existing — fictional; abstract — concrete; deep — superficial; clever — primitive; conversational — scientific; vulgar — sustained.
8. ‘Creative’: successful — unsuccessful; creative — uncreative; close — distant; constrained — free; slogan-reflection — slogan-creation; serious — prudent.

As a result of grouping scales by the selected factors, and by the average assessments of the scales that were a part of one factor, a table for each respondent was built, presenting the connotative assessments of the slogans according to all the selected factors. The connotative assessments thus reflected respondents’ attitudes towards English-language advertising slogans and their Ukrainian variants, their understanding of the given slogans, and so on.

Respondents also participated in a study conducted on a modified version of the personal constructs method by G. Kelly (1955). All the slogans offered to the participants were grouped into 12 groups of 3, and respondents were required to make a triadic choice and to indicate the quality by which two slogans from each triad are opposed to the third, i.e. to model personal constructs. Here is an example of a fragment of the protocol of one of the respondents: ‘International’ and ‘Exotic’ slogans — a deep intuitive understanding of the world; ‘Phonetically emphasized’ and ‘Grammatically emphasized’ slogans — realism, monologue; ‘Stylistically complicated’ and ‘Lexically complicated’ slogans — self-absorption, dialogicality; ‘Syntactically emphasized’ and ‘Grammatically emphasized’ slogans — actualization of personal thinking, conscious desire to find a solution to the problem.

The number of non-synonymous personal constructs was estimated for each respondent according to the materials of his/her protocol. This indicator testified to the respondent’s cognitive

difficulty in differentiating English advertising slogans and their Ukrainian translations — it correlated with his/her assessments of frames for each of the eight selected factors. It was revealed that the cognitive complexity of the respondent in the process of understanding English advertising slogans and their Ukrainian variants correlates with such parameters as his/her ‘assessment’, ‘realism’, ‘vitality’, ‘versatility’, and so on. Thus, there is a direct link between the cognitive and emotional evaluation of the understanding of English advertising slogans and their Ukrainian translations. The depth of understanding of a slogan determines the attitude towards it, and a positive attitude supports the emotional fixation on the work, i.e. the desire to comprehend the slogan.

Respondents were asked to rate each of the English advertising slogans on 54 unipolar eleven-point scales (5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0, -1, -2, -3, -4, -5). The obtained total group data matrices were subjected to a factor analysis procedure. As a result of data processing after the rotation of factor structures according to the Varimax principle, four relatively independent, orthogonal factors were identified, the interpretation of which is given below.

It should be noted that there did not appear a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents in any group. In addition, the results are identical for young people in groups E1–E4 (respondents aged 14–25), as well as for respondents aged 26–60 years (groups E5–E8). These respondents have a certain level of education, professional experience, and personal experience, which also greatly facilitate their understanding of slogans.

We will now describe the results obtained from the respondents of groups E1–E4. The first factor ‘Content’ (38.4% of the total variance), the second factor ‘Sense’ (28.3% of the total variance), the third factor ‘Psychologicality’ (24.8% of the total variance) and the fourth factor ‘Dialogicality’ (12.1% of the total variance) all contain the inclusion of the following scales, listed in descending order of the weight of the factor load (cf. Table 1):

The factor ‘Content’ (F_1) and the factor ‘Meaning’ (F_2) reflect the Osgood (Osgood et al., 1957) base factor ‘Evaluation’. Let us place English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_1 – F_2 (cf. Figure 1).

Figure 1. Fixation of English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_1 – F_2 (for groups E1–E4).

Table 1. The obtained results for respondents of groups E1–E4.

Factor “Content”		Factor “Sense”		Factor “Psychologicality”		Factor “Dialogicality”	
Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load
Easy	0.97	unusual	0.94	fantastic	0.89	logical	0.87
Simple	0.95	unfamiliar	0.93	optimistic	0.88	successful	0.85
Strong	0.93	interesting	0.92	deep	0.87	creative	0.83
Comprehensible	0.90	unrealistic	0.91	cheerful	0.85	close	0.80
Recognizable	0.86	deep	0.90	light	0.84	free	0.78
Predicative	0.83	mystical	0.87	close	0.83	slogan-reflection	0.76
Truncated	0.80	multidimensional	0.86	compressed	0.81	serious	0.75
Lucky	0.78	logical	0.85	clever	0.80	slogan-creation	0.74
Interesting	0.75	abstract	0.83	abstract	0.78	comfortable	0.72
Pleasant	0.70	pleasant	0.76	free	0.77	active	0.69
Real	0.69	emotional	0.75	real	0.76	prudent	0.63
Expanded	0.62	realistic	0.69	pessimistic	0.75	unsuccessful	0.62
Non-predictive	0.58	usual	0.65	distant	0.74	uncreative	0.58
Weak	0.55	superficial	0.58	expanded	0.73	distant	0.55
Unrecognizable	0.53	ordinary	0.55	unintelligent	0.59	hidden	0.54
Incomprehensible	0.50	one-dimensional	0.52	concrete	0.56	constrained	0.53

The factor ‘Psychologicality’ (F_3) and the factor ‘Dialogicality’ (F_4) reflect the Osgood base factor ‘Activity’ (Osgood et al., 1957). Let us place English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_3 – F_4 (cf. Figure 2).

As can be observed in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respondents in adolescence and young adulthood best understand English advertising slogans belonging to the categories ‘International’ and ‘Exotic’. The former are most in line with the preferences of young people, as respondents aged 14–25 are interested in international vocabulary and use neologisms, even in everyday speech. Exotic slogans are also very meaningful for them and these slogans are easy to perceive and understand.

Psychologically and dialogically filled for adolescents and young people are, above all, ‘Lexically complicated’ slogans, which includes proverbs, sayings, idioms, phraseological units and clichés. ‘Creative’ slogans for young people are largely dialogical. This can be explained by the fact that young people themselves strive for creative expression of their opinions or points of view, so ‘Creative’ slogans are well-received by these respondents.

The factor load and distribution of data by factors in respondents aged 26–60 years are somewhat different.

The first factor ‘Content’ (37% of the total variance), the second factor ‘Sense’ (27.1% of the total variance), the third factor ‘Complexity’ (25.8% of the total variance) and the fourth factor ‘Predicativity’ (10.1% of the total variance) contain the inclusion of the following scales, listed in descending order of the weight of the factor load (cf. Table 2).

Let us place English advertising slogans in the semantic space ‘Complexity’ (F_3) — ‘Predicativity’ (F_4) (cf. Figure 4).

Figure 2. Fixation of English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_3-F_4 (for groups E1–E4).

Figure 3. Fixation of English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_1-F_2 (for groups E5–E8).

Table 2. The obtained results for respondents of groups E5–E8.

Factor “Content”		Factor “Sense”		Factor “Psychologicality”		Factor “Dialogicality”	
Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load	Scales	Weight of the factor load
Real	0.96	natural	0.94	comfortable	0.87	logical	0.78
Complex	0.95	successful	0.91	intelligent	0.85	dialogical	0.76
Multidimensional	0.94	fictional	0.89	fictional	0.84	active	0.73
Optimistic	0.90	interesting	0.88	close	0.83	slogan-action	0.69
Compressed	0.87	close	0.86	abstract	0.82	cheerful	0.65
Psychological	0.86	strong	0.84	free	0.79	comfortable	0.62
Deep	0.85	pleasant	0.83	compressed	0.77	serious	0.59
Expanded	0.84	psychological	0.80	predicative	0.73	monological	0.58
Predicative	0.82	serious	0.79	constrained	0.68	sad	0.55
Successful	0.80	real	0.77	complex	0.65	slogan-creation	0.54
Interesting	0.78	multidimensional	0.75	simple	0.62	entertaining	0.53
Slogan-reflection	0.76	logic	0.74	difficult	0.61	pessimistic	0.51
Slogan-action	0.75	unreal	0.68	elementary	0.59	uncomfortable	0.50
Serious	0.74	free	0.65	expanded	0.58	natural	0.48
Simple	0.72	distant	0.60	non-predicative	0.55	simplified	0.46
Entertaining	0.69	abstract	0.56	unintelligent	0.53	compressed	0.45

For people aged 26–60, ‘Phonetically emphasized’ and ‘Grammatically emphasized’ slogans are more understandable and acceptable, which indicates the ability of respondents to compare the phonetic structure of language and syntactic construction of phrases with their transfer from English to Ukrainian. ‘International’ and ‘Syntactically emphasized’ slogans, which are located in the semantic fields ‘Complexity’ — ‘Predicateness’, are also largely understood by this age group.

Let us place English advertising slogans in the semantic space ‘Content’ (F_1) — ‘Sense’ (F_2) (cf. Figure 3).

5 Conclusion

Summarising the examples presented above, we can conclude that in the Ukrainian variants of English advertising slogans alliteration is rare while euphony and onomatopoeia are both used. The latter, however, is not always understandable for potential consumers. In terms of lexis, a great variety of wordplay (especially with a humorous effect), sayings, idioms, proverbs and even so-called ‘new words’ can be found. Symmetric syntactical constructions mostly contain full stops but commas, ellipsis and dashes are also used. Additionally, these constructions often include words with the same, similar or opposite meanings.

After conducting empiric research aimed at studying the perception and understanding of English advertising slogans and their Ukrainian translations, the conclusions were as follows: For Ukrainian adolescents (14–17 years) and young adults (18–25) ‘International’ slogans, ‘Exotic’ slogans, ‘Lexically complicated’ slogans and ‘Creative’ slogans are easy to perceive and understand. For people aged 26–60, ‘Phonetically emphasized’ slogans, ‘Grammatically emphasized’

Figure 4. Fixation of English advertising slogans in the semantic space F_3 – F_4 (for groups E5–E8).

slogans, ‘International’ slogans and ‘Syntactically emphasized’ slogans are more understandable and acceptable.

It may be concluded, therefore, that translating slogans is a complicated task, due to their brevity and saturation, and it significantly differs from other types of translation. The success of any advertising slogan which is being translated depends on the harmonious connection of the main idea with various literary devices, even if they differ from the original slogan. The slogan should be translated as a specific commercial proposal, with a deep understanding of the intercultural differences and not as a thoughtless word-for-word translation of the original. Following this article’s attempt to investigate the perception and understanding of English advertising slogans and their Ukrainian variants by average Ukrainians, possible practical solutions for the overcoming the described difficulties are a prospect for further research.

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