

STYLISTIC AND SYNTACTIC STUDY OF ITALIAN AND ROMANIAN ADVERTISING SLOGANS FOR BEERS

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Abstract

Generally, the advertisements use persuasion to make the consumers buy products, regardless of their necessities. The advertisements for beer are no exception, too. This paper follows the advertising tendencies in Italy and Romania. Thus, we focused on a comparative study of a corpus of thirty slogans, half Italian, half Romanian, both stylistically and syntactically. After a thorough examination, we could identify the common traits used in drawing the target group of consumers, such as the presentation of century-old tradition of brewing to offer prestige or the inherent connection between beer and spending leisure time with friends. There were especially pointed out the features that make some slogans unique and which define the two nations. The slogans revealed collective character traits, such as the weaknesses of the Italians towards women and the Romanians' attachment to nature. From a syntactic point of view, both in Italian and Romanian ads, the short, concise sentences, made up of no more than six words prevail.

Key words: slogan, beer, Italian, Romanian, contrastive study

Advertising is an integrating part of our everyday lives. Wherever we may turn we are assaulted by images and slogans, promising new trends, fashion, better life and moments of pleasure. All the more, the slogans for food and beverages appeal to our senses to entice us to wish, to desire and turn this into a need. Following the trend, the slogans for beer are intended to boost our mood, make us think of moments of pleasure, intimacy, lust and even make us return to nature, to our nature, our wildest part. The target customers are men with all their characteristics.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The corpus of slogans chosen was taken from Romanian and Italian advertisements, more exactly slogans from large posters that were displayed in crowded places. We selected fifteen Italian ads and fifteen Romanian ones, all advertising beer. In this paper we presented them largely and then compared them, to see the resemblances and differences, pointing out their most distinctive traits. The analysis was made both stylistically and syntactically.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Beer in Italy

Italy, the long time considered the country of some of the best wines in the world, have recently turned to other liquors. Much to our

surprise, we have discovered that according to the *Oxford Companion to Beer* "As of 2010, beer surpassed wine as the favourite fermented beverage of Italians, a development that could scarcely have been imagined only twenty years ago." (Oliver G., 2011, p. 500)

In the light of these new facts, advertising beer in general, and especially the Italian beers, has taken this art to a new level. The fifteen slogans we have chosen to study belong to the top 5 sold Italian beers (Peroni, Moretti, Ceres and Lebia). Each one is unique in its own way, but, nevertheless, there are some specific traits we have discovered.

The advertisements of beer in Italy are generally short, as expected, no more than six-eight words. Their target audience is made up of a male public, interested in women, football and evening meetings. All tend to draw the buyers to their moments of pleasure and emotions.

1.1. Peroni

The Peroni beer is a worldwide known product of Italy. The connoisseurs of beer drinking are familiar with this product. In this ad, the use of superlative "piu' bevuta" stresses out the high standards of the beer, its long tradition as it takes years to become so famous and most bought product of its range and also it makes an appeal to authority – "Lo sapevi?"

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(Source <http://archiviostorico.birraperoni.it>)

The persuasion technique used to give the reader the illusion that the product is the best of its kind is the statistical claim. Nevertheless, it is not based on any scientific organization that is or should be present in the ad, so the information may not totally stand on solid ground. The interrogative rhetorical sentence might be used to put the reader in a startling position, the type of “How is it possible you did not know that Peroni is, so famous, good so that everyone drinks it?”

1. 2. Moretti beer

Of the total amount of Italian beer advertisements, 40% of them (six ads) belong to Moretti beer. Their way of tackling the slogans is quite different, as are more connected to football and friends. For example,

Chi mastica calico, beve birra Moretti.



(Source: <http://www.ganzomag.com/birra-moretti-vintage-italian-beer.html>)

According to Collins English Dictionary, the metaphor is “a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action that it does not literally denote in order to imply a resemblance”. In our advertisement, the expression “chi mastica calico” (those who chew football) is used as a metaphor, as people generally eat something during football matches just to enjoy and sometimes to temper their outbreaks. As football can be either played or watched, chewing it has an out of the ordinary effect. This ad has the conception of the masculinity of the consumers associated with their lifestyle. The beer is interconnected with football and the Moretti company has written another page in this chapter of emotions.



(Source: <http://www.italgrob.it>)

This Moretti advertisement is not a singular example in their history. The other one, *Campioni d'emozioni*, also reinforces the continuous symbiosis between sport and beer. The same as the champions offer the viewers emotions and moments of joy. The same way this beer provides the consumers sensuous pleasure and good mood. This alcoholic beverage may also be closely related or can be the drinking element between friends and their meetings. Some examples in point are the ads *Birra Moretti. Un piacere da raccontare* or *Il piacere in abito da sera*. As we have already tackled the symbolism of night (close to evening) we'll no further develop it.

1. 3. Lebia beer uses persuasion techniques, in the form of the “we're different and unique” claim, to draw the attention of the consumers.

La birra oltre ogni aspettativa.



(Source: <http://www.sardegna2048.net/ichnusa-lebia-in-tutti-gli-scaffali-la-birra-sarda-che-fa-dimagrire/>)

It states that there is nothing else quite like this beer advertised and it is supposed to be interpreted by the buyers as a claim of superiority.

1. 4. Ceres beer

As the other two famous types of beer, Peroni and Moretti, tackle the masculinity side of the consumers, the Ceres had to deal with other subjects, such as weather and politics.

Non e` il caldo, e` l'umidita`.

It refers to the fact that a beer should be indulged into when the weather is hot or humid, Italy being well-known for its humidity.



(Source: http://www.corriere.it/cronache/16_febbraio_13/quello-spot-30777dcc-d290-11e5-be28-b2318c4bf6d8.shtml)

The other one, *Prima si vota, poi si beve. Non come le altre volte*, is a more elaborate one, the press there appeared the fact that who voted for a certain president would get a beer for free. Be it true or not, the advertisement is used as a warning for the consumers to be smart, intelligent and have a sobering thought.

2. Romanian beers

The National Institute of Statistics, cited by *Adevărul financiar* revealed at the end of 2014 that the first alcoholic beverage consumed in Romania is beer, surpassing by far the wine consumption. In the light of these facts, we consider our study to be justified.

The corpus of Romanian beer ads is made up of fifteen best-known ones, belonging to Ursus, Bucegi, Timisoreana, Silva, Ciucas and Ciuc.

2.1. Ursus beer

Of the five selected ads of this beer we consider worth starting with the most significant one,

Regele berii în România. (The beer king of beer in România)



(Source: <http://www.iaa.ro/Articole/Stiri/Graffiti-bbdo-realizeaza-prima-campanie-pentru-ursus/5535.html>)

There is a consistency between the slogan and the image. It is presented a bear with a crown on its head, so the animal and the beer merge to turn into the most iconic characteristics of man: power, strength, resilience. Although not acknowledged as the king of the woods, here, the bear infuses the beer (having its name) with attributes of high status, royalty, meant especially for a public with refined tastes for connoisseurs.

The noun *ambition* was chosen to be the linking element in two other ads:

Ambiția de a-ți face singur drum and

Ambiția. Primul ingredient al progresului.

The dictionaries compete among themselves in offering the best definitions to the noun *ambition*. The Cambridge Dictionary explains the word by: “a strong wish to be successful, powerful, rich; a strong wish to achieve something”, while the Oxford Dictionary considers it to be “an ardent desire for distinction, aspiration”. Both of them are right, the same way as both ads turn into a metaphor using *ambition* as the key-element for going forward, for progress the consumers are

drawn to the idea that through hard work and resilience they can become successful, the same way as this kind of beer has become.

Inter-textuality is used in another ad also to point out the idea of movement, but, at the same time that of stability: *Ursus trece, efectele rămân*. It is a correlation with a Romanian proverb, *Apa trece, pietrele rămân*, with the meaning that what is really important in life or what is well-grounded (such as education, family) remains for a long time, just like the stones. This beer is supposed not to be a light one, its effects for good-mood, cheerfulness thus remaining for a long time.



(Source: <http://proprianaliza.blogspot.ro/2012/11/facultate-publicitate-bera.html>)

Of all the advertising techniques used, the problem-solution discourse stands out by its singularity in the corpus of ads analysed in this paper. The ad *O bere cu prioritate. Utilă în combaterea migrenelor, alungă stresul și crește stima de sine*, presents the solutions at hand to the very “problems” one could have after having consumed a large amount of beer. Besides offering solutions, the buyer should consider that it is a different kind of beer, with healing powers and up-rising effects. We could also take into question whether the beer, in its own right, may cause headaches and thus could be an antithesis or at least a misleading piece of information between the message and the naked truth about beer consumption, whatever kind it might be.

2.2. Bucegi beer

The ads of Bucegi beer cannot be considered to have a unifying word or element.



(Source: <http://berarul.ro/bera-bucegi/>)

Împreună la bine și la rău (*Together in good and bad times*) ad is a clear piece of intertextuality with the expression used when a couple gets married; the same way as a partner, this liquorice will stand by one’s side to support him, to cheer him up or help him drown his own sorrow. Here the beer is the embodiment of femininity and female partners, and it can be

interpreted as a symbolic wedding between the product and the consumers.

The rhetoric devices have long been used in advertising and different types of repetition are at everyone's hand. Nevertheless, in our corpus of ads, one of the Bucegi stood out by the use of epanalepsis, which is a figure of speech in which the same word both begins and ends a phrase, clause or sentence:

Bucegi. Inima Bucegilor



(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YG526CZ8fIQ>)

Here, besides epanalepsis, there is also present a play upon words by associating the name of the beer with famous mountains of Romania, so as to become a brand of the country, making it a beer brewed by and only for Romanians.

2.3. Timisoreana

In order to have a greater impact on viewers, some ads have linking words. For example, *Timișoreana nepasteurizată. Secretele nu se spun, se gustă* and *Gustă secretul berarilor* use the same word "taste", thus appealing to the gustatory perception of consumers. The attention is also drawn by the secret involved when tasting the beer as if no one should know about it, yet everyone drinks it.



(Source: <http://www.trilululu.ro/imagini-reclame/bera-timisoreana>)

As far as tradition is concerned, Timișoreana brand also stands out, being quite singular in presenting this type of ad. The viewer is invited not to taste, but to live a three-century story. In this context, the meaning and use of word „cumpătat” enhance even more the spirit of the past and tradition, as it has an archaic resonance, in comparison with the new form, “with moderation”.

2.4. Ciucaș beer

The entire name of this beer is Ciucaș Brașov. So it stood to reason for the advertisers to use all beauties of this town in their ad: the breathtaking surroundings of the mountains in the

background and the stag (which is also the emblem of a famous music festival, The Golden Stag, held in Brașov).



(Source: <https://www.iqads.ro/creatie/30441/ciucas-bera-favorita-a-naturii-key-visual>)

At first glance, we could see the similarity between the promotion of this type of beer and that of Ursus. If the latter was entitled to use a wild animal in their presentation due to the name of the product, we consider that Ciucaș used the stag to relate both to nature and the festival. Both slogans,

Berea favorită a naturii

Bere de la munte

set the brewing process in the mountainous surroundings of Brașov town and also point out the purity of the water used.

It is also used the “vague claim” type of persuasion: *Berea favorită a naturii* (*The favourite beer of nature*). The reader is at a loss, as we cannot imagine how “nature” could drink or enjoy this beer. The ad presents a stag and mountains, so.....quite confusing as the drinkers should be the animals? We tend to consider that the wild nature of persons seems to stand out after drinking Ciucaș, or only the ones with a strong character.

2.5. Ciuc beer

The advertisements and slogans that have recently been promoted by Ciuc beer turned out to be quite a success.



(Source: <http://www.mariciu.ro/razboiul-berilor-stejar-vs-ciuc/>)

Belonging to the premium segment as beverage, the consumers of Ciuc are considered to be friendly, mature, and optimistic men. One of their TV ads has become proverbial in time: *Ciuc. Încă una și mă duc!* shows the impact that media can have on viewers. But here we deal with written, posted slogans, and indeed they have one that had a great impact, the same as its TV counterpart:

Berea se bea pentru că te face mai atrăgător gust. Doar gustul contează.

The striking element is the very fact that it has a part of the slogan corrected with a line, pointing out that a beer cannot make one handsome, or attractive, or smart; the real aim for

drinking is the taste; in the end, all that matters is the taste.

3. Elements used to capture the consumers' attention: contrastive study

3.1. The connection between beer and women can mostly be found in Italian slogans and especially in Peroni's. They have a long tradition of using the same words both for beer and women: *La bionda è solo Peroni, Bionda o bruna perché sia..... birra*. The sensorial effect is enlarged by the use of beautiful ladies as objects of desire in all their ads.



(Source: <http://www.lastampa.it>;
<http://archiviostorico.birraperoni.it>)

On the other side, the Romanian ads are far more reserved... We could find only one, slightly related to femininity through marriage, a marriage between the consumer and beer: *Bucegi. Împreună la bine și la rău*.

3.2. The consumers are drawn to pleasure in intimate moments through the use of metaphors in both types of slogans:

e.g. *Peroni. La notte ha un altro gusto.*



(Source: <https://www.linkitb.it/author/linkitb/?lang=en>)

Timișoreana. Secretele nu se spun, se gustă.

3.3. Another element used to catch the viewers' attention is the long-standing tradition of brewing. Even if they are not as ancient as in other countries, nevertheless they offer prestige and higher rank among other brands of beer, both in Italy and in Romania:

e.g. *Timișoreana. Vino să trăiești o poveste de 3 secole. O bere cu tradiție se bea cumpătat.*

Moretti. L' autentica. (Recipe since 1859).



(Source: <https://www.birramoretti.com/>)

Peroni. Una storia italiana

3.4. It should have been strange not to link beer with leisure time, as it is the first reason for which, from our point of view, it is consumed: to relax, to have a better mood, to chat and enjoy time with friends. So, this element is one of the most used both by Italian and Romanian brands in order to persuade the viewers.

e.g. *Moretti. Campioni d'emozioni*

Una piacere da raccontare.

Bucegi. Să ne fie de bine.

We can conclude that, if the Italians are more attracted to women than the Romanians (or at least this is the idea that comes out of these slogans), the latter are people of nature, deeply rooted in their native mountains and forests (see Bucegi and Ciucaș slogans).

4. Syntactic features – contrastive analysis

Among the most common syntactic features that are to be found in all forms of written advertisements, there are to be mentioned the short sentences, elliptical sentences, compound sentences, interrogative, conditional and negative sentences.

4.1. As well imagined, the short sentences are the most occurring type. They are usually headlines which quite often are not accompanied by a longer informative text. Half of the slogans, both Italian and Romanian, under study belong to this group:

La passione è per noi.

La bionda è solo Peroni

Il piacere in abito da sera. (Moretti)

Bere din lumea nouă. (Ciuc)

Bere de la munte. (Ciucaș)

Gustă secretul berarilor. (Timișoreana)

Regele berii în România. (Ursus)

4.2. Compound sentences are not frequently used in printed media advertisements. There are sentences that have more than one verb. The sentence may take the form of a dialogue, rhyme or fact presentation. Besides the fact that long sentences might get the readers bored, it also implies higher costs for advertising. Thus, even if the Italians are well-known as very talkative persons, their advertisements look quite the opposite. We found only two ads for this category, both belonging to Moretti:

Chi mastica calico, beve birra Moretti.

and

Birra Moretti. L'autentica. (Recipe since 1859). Birra Moretti is a quality beer made in the traditional way. It is the result of a production process that has remained almost unchanged since 1859.

The most interesting thing is that the long sentences following the headline are in English, quite rare case in the advertisements of Italian beers.

As for the Romanian ads, two stand out, too:

O bere cu prioritate. Utilă în combaterea migrenelor, alungă stresul și crește stima de sine (Ursus)

and

Vino să trăiești o poveste de 3 secole. O bere cu tradiție se bea cumpătat. (Timișoreana)

4.3. Interrogative sentences. Generally speaking, questions are used to intrigue the addressee. Of the many forms of interrogative sentences that can be found in ads: that vary from multiple choice test questions to suggested answers to questions and rhetorical ones, only the last one is to be mentioned in our study:

e.g. *Chiamami Peroni. Sarò la tua birra. Sono la birra più bevuta in Italia. Lo sapevi?*

We could not find any Romanian slogan in our corpus to belong to this group.

4.4. Negative sentences are the least used syntactic feature. Probably this is so, because of the strong negative effect it might carry. Anyway, when this type of sentence is used, it comes together with a positive phrase that changes the effect. Examples in point are:

Non è caldo, è l'umidità. (Ceres)

Secretele nu se spun, se gustă (Timișoreana)



(Source:

<http://www.pubblicitaitalia.it/2016071559683/digital/ricerche-2/ceres-tuborg-e-peroni-le-migliori-birre-sui-social>)

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the article was to analyse the language of advertising in Italian and Romanian in order to see the specific traits of the two cultural systems. The conclusions after studying the corpus of slogans are that the two languages exhibit both similarities and differences.

Similarities:

1. Both Romanian and Italian advertising slogans are used to connect beer to leisure time, friends and good mood.

2. The presentation of long-standing tradition in brewing beer is made in order to be considered valuable and of high-quality.

3. Syntactically, both Italian and Romanian slogans extensively use short sentences. The compound sentences are quite rare, only two out of fifteen for each country. The negative sentences barely appear (one Romanian, one Italian).

Differences:

1. The Italian slogans highlight the attraction of men towards women, while the Romanians are more attracted to nature and friends/ parties.

2. The Romanians are more drawn to tradition.

3. The Romanian slogans do not use interrogative sentences.

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