

Strategy variations in roadside outdoor advertising: A psycholinguistic perspective of Czech, German and Bolivian campaigns

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This paper explores the role of consumer perception of self within a social setting and how it shapes marketing communication and advertisement strategy formation. The study reflects on current trends of social advertisements by examining traffic safety related messages of outdoor advertisement practices. Utilizing an alternative cross-disciplinary approach, it adopts psycholinguistic analytical tools for interpreting marketing communication strategies with respect to the consumer behavioral patterns. Samples of roadside outdoor advertisements from both the commercial and non-commercial sectors were collected within three different countries - Czech Republic, Germany and Bolivia. Traffic related messages and their conversational functions were analyzed to demonstrate the variation of the communication strategies used. The concept of “face” described by Brown & Levinson (1978) in their Politeness Theory, further developed by Ting-Toomey (1999) as the Conflict-Face-Negotiation Theory, was used for the interpretation of the advertising techniques. It is to argue that despite overt similarities of the message content and aim, significant differences in the utilization of strategies are adopted according to the type of the advertised subject, campaign objectives, related target market segments as well as the socio-cultural context. It is demonstrated that using an alternative approach to marketing communication can contribute to unfold a set of new techniques which can help to better understand the psychology of the consumer and develop relevant, customer targeted, modern advertising solutions.

1 Current trends in advertising

The development of free market and global business brings along an increasing public pressure for promoting democratic principles and empowering civic societies. This trend is easily notable in the current advertising practices. Originally pursuing a single goal - to help increase the profit of a business - current time advertising, stepping far beyond raising preference for a brand, has been saturating its messages with educating content (Kotler 2007, p. 606). To improve company image, numerous social issues as human rights, health, inequality, environment or public safety, to name a few, no longer become the domain of the non-profit sector, but also an inseparable component of a modern business communication.

This paper focuses on outdoor advertisement. It builds on the fact that despite the prone to the “blasé” effect (Cronin 2006) - a contemporary consumer attitude of inattention - outdoor advertisement is currently being of a greater importance to practitioners than printed or audio-visual media “due to its ability to reach consumers who are very mobile and exposed less frequently to traditional forms of media” (Francese 2003, p. 911). The purpose of this study is to pursue

strategies used in message formulations and their impact related to the advertising subject and its targeted audience. It bases upon Wilson & Till's research showing that unlike magazines, newspapers and television (Tipps et al. 2006; Goldberg and Gorn 1987), the effectiveness of outdoor advertising seems not to be influenced by where it is placed, but by the degree of consumer engagement that the messages succeed to invoke (Wilson and Brian 2011, p. 925). Rather than the background environment then, it seems that what matters is how creatively the message is formulated as to draw the consumer in.

A detailed analysis of contemporary outdoor advertising is difficult to find, though. A few studies focus on space while emphasizing the resident location or identity (Burrows and Gane 2006; Goss 1995), aesthetics or mobility of advertisement design (Cronin 2008) or the effects on driver attention and safety (Young et al. 2009; Taylor 1997; Taylor and Taylor 1994). Missing is the insight into the psychology of the consumer and related analysis of communication strategies with respect to further factors, such as the type of the campaigning subject, its targeted audience and the chosen communication strategy itself.

This article works with a selection of samples from profit and non-profit subjects while distinguishing between three types of advertisement: commercial, non-commercial and hybrid. Commercial advertisement is translated as a profit oriented marketing communication act promoting products, services or events. It is pursued as an activity of most frequently, but not exclusively, commercial subjects. Non-commercial advertisement, originally associated with the non-profit sector, state institutions or professional non-profit business associations, is known under a variety of terms, such as "social" advertisement, "philanthropic" advertisement, "protest" advertisement or "other" advertisements (Kaderka 2006 and Hajn 1998). A typical aim of this type of advertisement is "to stimulate donations, to persuade people to vote one way or another or to bring attention to social issues" (Bové and Arens 1992, p. 662).

Advertisements and their objectives, however, often intersect; to draw a clear line between commercial and non-commercial content becomes practically impossible nowadays (Kaderka 2006, p. 383). While non-profit organizations pursue direct or indirect commercial objectives and needs (Bové and Arens 1992, p. 666), for instance as fundraising practices, it is not unusual that modern, professional business subjects express an overt interest in issues of public affairs. Such advertising practices are defined as "transitional" or "hybrid" advertisement (Hajn 2002).

The hypothesis of this study builds on Hajn's (2002) definition of non-commercial advertisement. He defines it as a convincing process aimed toward influencing other forms of human behavior than those related to consumption or material values, by adopting the same methods and techniques of impact that are used in advertising goods and services (Hajn 2002, p. 258). This article claims that while commercial and non-commercial subjects currently pursue both profit and non-profit objectives in advertisement, they do not use the same methods and techniques as they still differ in the nature of their aims and motivations as well as their target market segment consumers differ in their perceptions and values.

2 Communication strategies and the notion of face

This paper focuses on visual forms of roadside outdoor advertisement that communicate traffic-related messages. As static in nature, visual advertisement defines as an indirect, non-personal way of promoting products, services or ideas. Since verbal reactions to these forms are rather rare, they are traditionally treated as a one-way communication for reading and visual perception (Kaderka 2006, p. 384). However, based on the general aim of advertising to invoke a reaction of a consumer that responds to the message the advert sends in various types of preferably desired behaviors, this study treats advertisement as a standard two-way communication process. To get an insight into the

psychology of the consumer, a psycho-linguistic approach based on face related theories is adopted for analysis.

Assuming a simple fact that “people in all cultures try to negotiate face in all communication situations” (Ting-Toomey 2004, p. 218), the notion of face or self-image as a universal phenomenon was originally described by Brown and Levinson (1978) in the Politeness Theory further elaborated by Ting-Toomey (2004) into the Conflict Face Negotiation Theory. Both theories recognize positive (we-face) and negative (I-face) oriented sentiments. The positive face reflects how the participants see themselves as part of a social group based on their desire to be approved and included as a reliable, competent, intelligent, responsible or moral participant of the social interaction. The negative face, on the other hand, reflects the participants’ natural desire for autonomy, that is, the right to protect their time, energy, space and property. The authors claim that all participants in the communication process, to a certain degree, employ both, their positive and negative face feelings at all times.

From the perspective of the face negotiation theory (Brown and Levinson 1978; Ting-Toomey 2014), each communication act is potentially face-threatening. By offering or non-offering, we interfere with the recipient’s either positive face (e.g., people generally like to get offers) or negative face (e.g., people do not want unsolicited offers). Similarly, by criticizing, we violate the recipient’s perception of either positive face (e.g., people do not like negative evaluations) or negative face (e.g., people tend not to like to change their behavioral patterns or habits). Likewise, we do and do not want to get invited, do and do not like to get advice, or do and do not want to get requests, all based on the immediate context.

To mitigate the impact of a potential face threatening act (FTA), communication strategies are used. According to Brown & Levinson (1978), one has a choice between fully direct non-mitigated messages, through those that, still being explicit, use various techniques to mitigate the impact, up to the very indirect ones, avoiding interference with the recipient’s face (Figure 1). The first, most direct on-record messages are classified as bald with no redressive action (1) (Brown and Levinson 1978, p. 99). These are constructed as a basic performance of the speech act with a minimum of language elements necessary for intelligibility of the encoded message. Verbs tend to be in the form of “directives” (Austin 1962; Searle 1967), that is, in 2nd person singular or plural that guide, instruct, govern, direct (e.g., ‘help me’, ‘slow down,’ ‘drive carefully,’ etc.). In their simple form, they are void of face mitigating communication techniques, and thus, represent the heaviest imposition on the target’s perception of face. On record, formulations tend to occur either in situations between subjects with very close relationships and a great knowledge of context, or in situations of unequal distribution of power as a tool to exercise this power based on personality traits or social, economic or political status.

Another on-record category is described as strategies with redressive action which are defined as positive or negative politeness. Positive politeness (2) fosters the addressee’s perception of positive face through a variety of techniques, such as compliments, praising, in-group identity markers (e.g., we, let’s, together) and the like. These either preface (e.g., ‘it is a nice product, but I do not need it anymore’) or are embedded (e.g., “we need to decide”) into the formulation. Likewise, negative politeness (3) orients on minimizing imposition on the negative face by acknowledging the addressee’s autonomy feelings. Techniques include conventional phrases, apologies, hedge words, conditionals, impersonal statements, etc. (e.g., ‘it would be quite nice if you/someone could help me a little bit’). Both positive and negative techniques frequently use “assertives” (Austin 1962; Searle 1967), verbs that state, claim or enunciate facts and beliefs by using other voices than 2nd person singular or plural linked to other contextual subjects (e.g., ‘we are responsible’, ‘it is important’, ‘the guide said’, etc.). Positive and negative politeness strategies express face respect, and can be widely traced in every day practices seeking positive outcome or mutual agreement.

Finally, at the other end of the directness scale are strategies categorized as off-record (4) (Grice 1975; Brown and Levinson 1978). These include messages with their meaning encoded into indirect formulations that, without a specific knowledge of social, cultural or other context or wit, become

difficult to decode to the addressee or even unintelligible. These include various encoding techniques such as hints, metaphors, language quizzes, equivocations, exaggerations, hyperboles, jokes, etc. (e.g., 'early birds gets the worm' mentioned by a boss in a reaction for a late arrival to work). Most verbs used in off-record formulations tend to be in the form of assertives, those that shift attention from the direct address. Off-record strategies are usually adopted as a face avoiding technique in situations with a perceived high risk of a potential addressee face loss and are also typical for practices with a positive end intention.

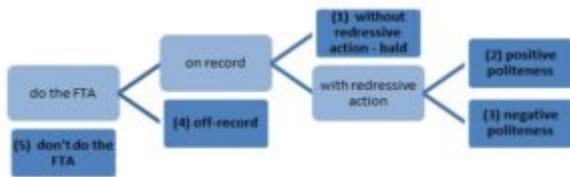


Figure 1: Possible strategies for doing FTA
Source: Brown and Levinson (1978, p. 77)

This study shows that understanding the processes behind the consumers' perceptions of self-image can contribute to understanding and development of current marketing practices as it yields valuable information about the psychology of the consumers within various market sectors and segments. The face oriented psycholinguistic approach analyzing marketing messages from the perspective of their potential impact on the consumers' face sentiments or concerns, represents a unique methodological approach for differentiating, as well as projecting strategies between the commercial and non-commercial advertisement practices.

3 Traffic related messages: forms and characteristics

People spend considerable amounts of time driving. Traffic brings along risks of accidents, therefore, traffic related messages addressing safety issues frequently appear within the public space. Actors of the traffic become targets of a wide range of convincing strategies of both commercial and non-commercial subjects. Roadsides, bridges, street illumination poles or public transportation stops are used for signs, billboards or posters communicating varied interests, aims and purposes. Frequently used forms of traffic related messages are warnings and reminders about possible risks or advice for a safer driving.

All forms of socially oriented messages, including the traffic related, pose a potential face threat to the recipient. As Banyte, Paskeviciute and Rutelione put it, such messages "cannot be used as a means to moralize", and if done so, the threatening content "should be as delicate as possible so as not to evoke hostile, unwanted response from the audience"(2014, p. 42). Seen through the lens of the politeness theory, warning, reminder and advice represent a potential positive as well as negative FTA to the recipients. They violate the addressees' perception of self as being a safe, responsible, capable and skillful driver. In a transferred meaning, they imply that one may not be flawless. At the same time, by being warned, reminded or advised, the drivers are urged to adapt their behavior, that is, step out of their usual practices by slowing down, watching out, passing less frequently, or paying more attention, which however all mean to risk a late arrival, longer drive, missed or postponed activities (such as a telephone call), monotonous drive, etc. In sum, traffic related messages pose a positive face threat through their moralizing or lecturing character as well as a negative face threat by limiting driver autonomy through implied amendments to driving habits or behavior. When used in marketing communication, a suitable strategy needs to be adopted accordingly.

The objectives of traffic related messages vary. They can aim toward addressing a social issue, traffic safety in our case, by various non-commercial subjects, such as non-profit organizations or state. They can, however, be a public relation strategy adopted by a commercial body aiming toward gaining a customer favor. The following analysis demonstrates that based on the character and objective of the campaigning subject, as well as its targeted market segment characteristics, strategies aimed toward the recipient's face vary accordingly.

4 The subjects and analysis

The analysis investigates the variation in strategies used in three types of advertisement - commercial and non-commercial and hybrid. Traffic-related messages used are varied samples of roadside billboards and bridge commercials collected from three different countries - Czech Republic, Germany and Bolivia. The campaigning subjects vary in their ownership status representing a business (CZ), state (GE) and a state-owned business (BO).

The first subject of analysis is the Kooperativa "Mosty" (Bridges) campaign, a part of an outdoor marketing series initiated in the Czech Republic in the fall of 2011 and continuing until today in several variations. Through moralizing messages on bridges of the frequented roads and highways, it prompts for a better driving behavior. Each bridge commercial contains a slogan and the Kooperativa logo behind the text (Figure 2). The text creation was executed through the Kaspen/Jung von Matt agency; after a year from its successful realization, the general public was invited into a competition for selected location adaptations (such as the bridge on Highway 1 at Prague Chodov and Anděl). A follow-up campaign Bridges in Press ran through printed and social media. 19 samples out of 55 collected slogans were used for the analysis.



Figure 2: Samples of the Kooperativa "Bridges" campaign in the Czech Republic
Source: mediaguru.cz (2012)

The second set of samples is the "Runter vom Gas" (Throttle back) campaign realized through the German Ministry of Traffic (Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung (BMVBS) and the German Traffic Safety Council (Deutscher Verkehrssicherheitsrat (DVR)). The campaign was launched in 2008 as a long-term project aimed toward addressing a high occurrence of deadly accidents on roads in Germany. Around 800 billboards were distributed across the country. The present campaign consisting of three samples of roadside billboards from the 2013 and 2014 series run under the motto "Scheinbar schöne Welt" (Glamorously nice world). Each one of the three solutions contains a visual part showing happy carefree scenes of friends, families or partners which are contrasted with textual messages pointing to the imminent death reality (Figure 3). They are to remind of the high risk of potential accidents in order to promote traffic safety measures, special attention is aimed at young beginner drivers. Logos of the funding organizations are presented in the lower right corner of the billboards.



Figure 3: Samples of the German Ministry of Transport “Runter vom Gas” Kooperativa “Bridges” campaign

Source: dvr.de (2013)

The third set of samples are two Entel company bridge commercials from the city of La Paz in Bolivia taken in the fall of 2014. Entel is the major Bolivian telecommunications company who has held a dominant position in the market with 100% coverage of the national territory since its nationalization in 2008. Since 2010, the company has been allocating high budget for various solidarity campaigns, traffic safety being one of the target issues. Each sample contains a textual traffic related message and the Entel company and its products logos (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Samples of the state-owned Entel company bridge commercials in Bolivia

Source: author

The following analysis of the variation in advertising strategies of varied campaigns is grounded in the theoretical framework of “face”. The analyzing criteria is the degree of directness embedded in the verbal and visual message formulations: 1/ on-record without redressive action, 2/ on record with redressive action (positive or negative politeness) and 3/ off-record, including the identification of the face locus (positive or negative face oriented messages). The degree of directness is measured by the corresponding techniques used: 1/ bald formulations (on record - without redressive action), 2/ mitigated formulations using positive or negative politeness techniques (on record - with redressive action) or 3/ indirect face avoiding formulations (off record), all described above. To assess the degree of directness then, the shape of the verb, being either directives (typical for more direct formulations) or assertive (typical in more face-aware or face-avoiding formulations) is analyzed.

5 Kooperativa bridges campaign: Czech Republic

Most of the Kooperativa Bridges slogans across the Czech highways and speedways communicate a warning, reminder or advice. The first observable pattern in their formulations is the tendency to avoid language formulations containing directives. Rather, slogans adopting assertives can be observed, such as “D1 is here probably to get as little Praguers to Brno as possible” instead of saying “Drive carefully, highway D1 is dangerous”, “When cars appear in the left lane, you are not on the highway anymore” instead of instructing “Make sure you keep in the right lane”, or “Even the king of the roads can get a check mate” instead of saying “Beware, even you may end up in an accident”, to name a few.

Avoiding directives translates into a tendency to avoid the recipients’ negative face violation. And indeed, all the formulations seem to appeal on positive face sentiments predominantly as they tend to apply strategies that claim a variety of in-group memberships, such as local community specifics. One such example is in the slogan “D1 is here probably to get as little Praguers to Brno as possible” placed on a bridge next the Chodov shopping center in the direction to Brno which draws upon the widespread general frustration with the dismal state of the D1 highway as well as popular jokes reflecting regional tensions between Brno and Prague. Another example is a slogan placed in one of

the Prague neighborhoods Anděl ('Angel' in English) stating "Even in the Angel neighborhood, you may end up in hell". Similarly, the series "Tea - rum - crack" also links with the local consumers' traditional sentiment as it not only refers to a traditional child singsong, but also refers to an alcoholic drink (punch) traditionally consumed during cold winter days among the Czechs. The reference to traditional sentiments is accentuated by the fact that to understand all these messages, one needs to be cognizant of the local specifics and/or claim a certain degree of local identification. Another positive politeness strategy in-group membership technique is the focus on various interest groups or professions. Slogans such as "On D1, even the king of the roads can get the checkmate" or "The pirates of the roads frequently wreck" as well as "Micro sleep usually has mega consequences" link the recipient with various specific interest identities, such as chess players, individuals enticed by pirate stories, technically oriented people, etc.

The avoidance of direct face violations is apparent from the tendency to go off record, that is, to adapt various indirect techniques. These are numerous adaptations of quizzes, metaphors, equivocations, jokes, proverbs, and the like. Among those are the sequences "D1 - km/h - BLB - ABS - ARO - JIP - RIP", or "140 - 150 - 160 - 158 - 155 - 150". First, in the form of a quiz, they carry a pregnant positive face locus. To be decoded, they require a certain amount of knowledge and wit, but if not decoded at once, they still appear playful. Upon decoding, the consumer perception of self gets bolstered and entertained. Second, the end message leads to dissociate with the negative content referring to fatal consequences of irresponsible driving (e.g. dumb people end at the cemetery as in the sequence from BLB (a check equivalent of a dope), JIP (ICU - intensive care unit) to RIP (rest in peace), or fast drivers end in an ambulance car as in the rising sequence from 140 to 160 referring to a high speed and dropping subsequently through local emergency numbers 158 (police), 155 (fire department) to 150 (ambulance). Thus, these quizzes appeal on the consumer capability, reliability, moral face or other positive face sentiments at the same time.

Other off-record strategies include various humorous or joking slogans constructed as local adaptations on proverbs or language anagrams, such as "Out of sight, out of road", "Not using the safety belt is a dangerous game", "You will not frame your photo from a radar", "With slick (worn) tires, one can just slide", "God's radars grind slowly but surely", "Do not let your ego drive", "It is better to have a smile on your face at the destination than an airbag" or "It sucks to stick on someone's butt". By referring to the local proverbs, these samples carry an overt positive face in-group force.

The strategies identified in the samples above indicate the campaign objectives. The tendency to target positive face sentiments (social inclusion, competence, responsibility) through indirect techniques (hints, quizzes, language anagrams, etc.) seem to aim at gaining selected the recipient favor. In sum, the slogans resonate with those identifying themselves as smart (those who decode the quizzes), responsible (disassociating from being BLB, driving 160, being ego-centric, etc.), or as chess players, Praguers, Brno inhabitants, Anděl neighborhood residents, 'pirates', parents, traditional Czechs, etc. What's more, being placed in areas of the most frequented highways, they seem to address those who likely own a car or possess a job that provides a car and who commute within longer distances in the country. Therefore, rather than aspiring a widespread behavior change toward safer driving, the company communication strategies appear to seek affirmation of a selected market segment. In other words, the slogans do not provoke but please and entertain. A pro-consumer, commercial motive is also evident from the campaign timing, as it is regularly released in the autumn months, a time when new contract drafting is launched (Flema Media Awards, 2013).

Similar conclusions can be drawn from professional as well as public reflections of the campaign. Within the professional evaluations, the campaign won prizes mainly for its 'creativity' rather than impact. Indeed, it received a Nutcracker award (Louskáček) in 2012, a traditional review of Czech creativity in advertising run by the Czech Art directors club and AKA, the Creative Copywriters Award (Zlaté pero) in 2013 as well as the best outdoor creating act in 2012 in stylistic and argumentation quality.

Its commercial objective was further confirmed by Flema Media Awards agency (2013) pointing out that the distinctive advertising style of the campaign helped Kooperativa become well recognized among drivers. According to this agency, the campaign built Kooperativa a clear differentiation within the market, since most of the respondents recognized the slogans and associated them with the company.

A generally positive acceptance of the slogans can be followed within public discourse. Although no formal data is available, prevailing positive reactions can be traced within social media. They indicate the positive face force and corroborate the amusing character and popularity (e.g., “funny – I like them”, “I enjoy them”, “Kooperativa is playful, it is a go”, “this really is success”), confirm argumentative creativity (e.g., “we can see that advertisement can be creative as well as to the point”, “philosophical, wise, fun” or “I like advertisements that have wit and transmit an interesting idea”, “Kooperativa is creative and to the point, and thus, attacks the drivers’ ego and pushes them to think about their behavior” or “amuses and maybe makes you think”), as well as revealing the social identity sentiments (e.g., “these [slogans] proof how creative we are in the Czech Republic as well as how targeted and honest advertisement can be”). In contrast, a lack of impact was mentioned in some of the reactions, e.g., “I admit some of the slogans are super, but why do we use bridges for advertisement only? Why do we not use them for teaching drivers how to behave in traffic jams, react to accidents or ambulance as they do in Austria?”

6 Runter vom gas campaign: Germany

The Runter von Gas campaign adopts a wider range of techniques. First, a combination of verbal and visual communication tools is used. The verbal part takes upon the form of warnings in a cause and effect format (“One drives aggressively, two die”, “One pushes through, three die” and “One gets distracted, four die”) to remind the traffic part-takers how close the risk of accidents with fatal consequences in case of irresponsible driving is. The direct reference to death embedded in the messages, a rather taboo and socially avoided topic in most of the western cultures, poses a strong imposition on a negative face of the recipients by triggering their emotions and comfort zone.

Correspondingly, a redressive action taking the form of a negative politeness technique called impersonalization (Brown and Levinson 1978, p. 196) can be traced in the verbal formulations to mitigate the impact of the FTA. In particular, it is the implementation of the neutral, 3rd person singular through a milder “one rushes” and “two die” while avoiding the direct 2nd person “you” or imperatives, e.g., “if you rush, you kill two people,” “slow down or you kill two people.”

The textual messages contrast with the visual solutions. While the verbal part triggers the negative face sentiments and adopts negative politeness techniques, the visuals carry a strong positive face content. Depicting scenes with family and friends, in particular, two relaxed partners, or a family of three with a hero father, a partner and a baby child as well as a party of four happy friends, they all appeal on the positive face in-group identity emotions, e.g., love or bond. The texts also accentuate the positive face locus of the pictures. Through the impersonalization, the messages create ambiguity about whom they are referring to, and thus, blur the responsibility among the depicted actors. And indeed, upon a closer examination of the images, it is never the driver alone depicted as responsible of the undesired behavior, but the whole party in the car – a lady with a pensive diverted look appearing indifferent to her partner’s way of driving, a smiling mother giving her driving partner an admiring look as well as the other girlfriends’ entertained face expressions. It is the sense of responsibility, reciprocity or care, further positive face sentiments that are embedded in the images.

Although most of the techniques described above represent an on-record communication with positive or negative politeness, redressive techniques, an indirect, off-record strategy can be identified, as well. As it is unlikely that every irresponsible drive could result in fatal accidents, the slogans represent a hyperbole not reflecting an accurate reality. By overstating, the message is

losing its relevance, if taken from the linguistic point of view.

In sum, the *Runter vom Gas* campaign adopts multiple strategies in the form of on-record strategies with redressive negative and positive politeness action, as well as off-record indirect techniques avoiding direct FTAs which indicates that the campaigning subject is also exercising a high interest to build the relationship with the end consumer.

The range of the adopted strategies, including the negative face locus differentiate the German from the Czech campaign. While the *Kooperativa* messages adopt a careful positive face oriented communication clearly avoiding direct face attacks, the *Runter vom Gas* campaign seems to work toward a wider impact. Besides the positive face locus hidden in the visual solutions, the slogans carry direct negative face sentiment triggers that challenge the recipient's emotions and autonomy feelings. Both, the Czech and German campaigns work with a rather taboo notion of death, but one avoiding its direct implications for saving the recipients' negative face, whereas the other uses techniques to trigger the negative face sentiments. In other words, rather than to please or entertain, as seen in the *Kooperativa* samples, the *Runter vom Gas* messages seem to provoke toward an influence to reach a broader social coverage rather than a selected market segment. The reactions of the professional and public scene, again, mirror the character of the strategies used. The *Runter vom Gas* campaign, while using a wider range of strategies than *Kooperativa*, including the negative face triggers, relatedly receives a more varied range of reactions. First, a year after its launch, the campaign received a number of awards apprising 'efficiency' such Golden Social Effie award in 2009 for efficiency and significance in the category of social projects. The accent on effect is also apparent from the main prize won at the International Festival For Road Safety Campaigns 2009 in Tunis or from the Silver Otto Car-Trophäe at the international Auto Vision Festival in Frankfurt in 2009. The statistical data collected by local public opinion research institutions (Institute für Demoskopie Allensbach, Bundesanstalt für Strassenwesen, Universität Mainz) confirm the efficiency value reporting that, in 2013, the number of deadly accidents in Germany decreased by 10%.

Varied public reactions to the campaign can be found corresponding to the wider range of strategies applied. According to a public opinion survey from 2013 (Instituts für Demoskopie Allensbach in Zusammenarbeit, Bundesanstalt für Straßenwesen, and the Institut für Publizistik der Universität Mainz), 92% of the respondents evaluated the billboards as one of the most important and influential contact medium. Over 70% knew the campaign and evaluated it as very valuable. 20% claimed that the campaign became a topic of their family and friend discussions. And finally, 71% believed that the campaign has led to more responsible driving (runtervomgas.de, 2016).

The survey noted a number of critical reactions as well. Some of the recipients argued that the billboards' exaggerated and rather fictive reference to death did not reflect the reality, mislead the drivers and even made them more unsure and afraid. Godeon Böss from the *Die Welt* journal described the placards as a "perverse Autobahn-Kunst". Such reactions point out the somewhat emotionally intrusive, shocking character derived from the negative face locus.

7 Entel bridge commercials: Bolivia

Seen from the perspective of the strategy use, the state owned Entel commercials in Bolivia stand in an overt contrast with the two campaigns above. To begin, both of the slogans "Use a safety belt every time you drive" and "Respect traffic signals, stops and traffic lights" show little implementation of face work techniques. To prompt the drivers to a desirable behavior, they adopt bare basic linguistic structures just necessary to convey the message. An off-record negative politeness technique classified as "conventional directness" (Brown and Levinson 1978, p. 137) can be considered as the slogans refer to the generally known driving rules. However, as every driver receiving a license is likely to be aware of the obligation to respect signs as well as to buckle up, the messages obviously carry no further added element. Therefore, their simple unambiguous content

formulated with the use of directives (imperatives “respect”, “use” instead of “it is obligatory to use” or “it is obligatory to respect”) make these slogans raw, on-record formulations void of face work which positions the communication strategy at the very top of the directness scale (see Figure 1). Compared to the Bridges or the Runter vom Gas campaigns, thus, the Entel solutions seem to lag behind from the perspective of both creativity, as well as efficiency. They do not provoke, as they do not entertain. This is further accentuated by the absence of accompanying visual forms which would be particularly suitable for Bolivia. According to the UNESCO set standards for illiteracy (unecso.org), Bolivia has been balancing at the edge of the 4 % illiteracy (3,8% in 2014). Based on this, it can be expected that some proportion of the traffic participants may not be able to read and visual guidance would be more than relevant, especially for the obligation to use the safety belt with passengers.

Although limited data is available for assessing efficiency, some justifications can be made on the basis of the socio-cultural or political context. Entel currently enjoys a state guaranteed position on the local market. Originally state owned, it was privatized in 1995 as a subsidiary of Telecom Italia, but nationalized again through a unilateral nationalization act in May 2008 by a decree issued by the government (BNamericas.com). Based on this, Entel has been enjoying a position of a confirmed political and economic power. This may substantiate for a lack of incentive to compete over the customers’ favor within a free trade environment.

The low effort of more creative and efficiency driven strategies, nonetheless, seems to be in contrast with the company’s corporate acts. According to local reports (telecompaper.com, boliviasc.org), the company has been investing high amounts of money in various solidarity actions and campaigns since 2010. Although conclusive interpretations cannot be made, it is the international context that may shed some light on these controversies. As reported by the Telecom Italia Group in 2010, the owner of Entel between its privatization in 1995 and the nationalization in 2008, an international arbitration against the Bolivian State was launched in 2010 claiming reparation for the expropriation, to protect their foreign investment (telecomitalia.com). Based on these circumstances and a current political climate in the country being criticized internationally for some of their autocratic leadership practices, it seems that rather than the customer or trade oriented factors, a more complicated set of objectives, beyond the conception of this paper, project into the prospective campaign.

8 Conclusion

Three types of roadside advertisement series with seemingly identical objectives – to address traffic safety issues – were analyzed. Seen through the lens of psycholinguistic tools, the study unfolded significant differences in each of the presented campaigns depending on the subjects’ commercial status, related target groups, objectives as well as wider context. Commercial advertisement strategies shown in the Kooperativa Bridges campaign unfolded an obvious tendency to avoid face threatening situations. They tend to utilize indirect off-record techniques with a positive face locus. Their center of marketing attention seems to be the customers and their favor which is being nurtured through a very careful, indirect, and playful communication aimed to satisfy the desire to be liked, entertained, praised or complimented. The targeted consumer seems to be not everyone, but a selected market segment, who is treated as rather frail in their face related sentiments. Non-commercial advertisement illustrated in the case of the state Runter vom Gas campaign, on the other hand, adopts a wider scale of strategies with an evident audacity to be less face indirect. In its prevailing on-record approach, a positive face content embedded in the visuals accentuates the negative face locus of the textual part. A combination of positive and negative face mitigating techniques then, triggers the recipients’ comfort zone and emotions which extends the impact at a wider range of recipients and respectively social coverage. The state-owned Entel company samples accentuate the significance of the campaigning subject’s

legal status. From the perspective of communication strategies, their traffic oriented bridge commercials stand in a striking contrast to the two previous examples. A direct on-record approach with an absence of a face oriented redressive action indicates a low desire to gain consumers or affect their behavior. Enjoying a politically confirmed monopoly position on the market, thus, seems not to yield a need to fight over consumers, and from the perspective of advertising impact, poses a question of aim and effect.

9 Discussion

It is also important to discuss the limitations of the study which, at the same time, may open topics for further investigation. To shed more light at the difference between commercial and non-commercial marketing communication practices, first and most significantly, more samples need to be analyzed. Beyond the visual outdoor communication techniques, campaigns run through varied channels and media, such as press, audio-visual or social media, each contributing with distinctive approaches and techniques.

Secondly, the interpretative value of the analysis may be impaired considering that the analyses were presented through English translations from languages representing three different language groups - Slavic, Germanic and Romance. The current study nonetheless, builds on the fact that all three languages come from the Indo-European group using comparable grammar structures. They all conjugate verbs in both singular and plural forms while distinguishing between gender (male, female, neutral). They all differentiate between directives and imperatives, as well as work with other forms of verb aspects (passive voice, modals and conditional, etc.). All of them also adopt techniques for indirect language such as hedge words (quite, like, rather, more, less, etc.), conventional phrases (please, thank you, sorry), use proverbs, metaphors, jokes, and the like. From this perspective, all three samples allow for a general face work strategy comparison, although less is known about the pragmatics and local variations. This opens space for a more profound research. Thirdly, as the culture and national values certainly play a significant role, the current study adopts a global perspective. The world is interrelated through globally shared practices, the relationship between the Czech Republic and Germany in particular, has recurrently shared past as well as modern history. Similarly, even the Bolivian practices, considering the global dimension of Entel's current history, allow for a global perspective. Nonetheless, socio-cultural practices vary locally and, undoubtedly, are a potential for a deeper analysis.

Finally, the limitations of the politeness theory need to be mentioned. Originally, the notion of face was long accounted for being a "universal" phenomenon, that is, a definite variable which can help predict the recipients' perceptions and their prospective reactions in planning their speech across "quite unrelated languages" (Brown and Levinson 1987, p. 55). Its universality, however, has been disputed in later studies. Some scholars (Goldsmith 2006) claim that other variables such as personal, geographic, religious or contextual impair the cross-cultural validity of the theory. Other studies (Dunn 2011), in contrast, demonstrate a practical value of the theory for developing general communication skills of individuals across cultures. This view promotes a rather psychological than culturally derived value of the face theory.

The similar applies to the practical use of the theory for marketers from both commercial and non-commercial sectors when they strive to communicate their needs and desires within the public space. Understanding the psychological processes that guide the consumer perceptions of self, the psycholinguistic perspective can not only contribute to analysis, but also enhance efficiency if incorporated into the efforts toward a marketing communication strategy creation.

Poznámky/Notes

Appendix: Traffic-related message in their original languages

1 Kooperativa Bridges - Czech

- Účelem D1 zřejmě je, aby se do Brna dostalo co nejméně Pražáků
- Když v levém pruhu jezdí auta, už nejste na dálnici
- I král silnic může dostat mat
- Účelem D1 zřejmě je, aby se do Brna dostalo co nejméně Pražáků
- Také na Andělu můžete skončit v pekle
- Čaj - rum - bum!
- I král silnic může na D1 dostat mat
- Piráti silnic často ztroskotají
- Mikrospánek mívá meganásledky
- D1 - km/h - BLB - ABS - ARO - JIP - RIP
- 140 - 150 - 160 - 158 - 155 - 150
- Sejde z očí, sjede z cesty
- Nezapnutý pás, nebezpečný špás
- Fotku z radaru si za rámeček nedáte)
- Se sjetými pneumatikami se můžete akorát klouzat
- Boží radary melou pomalu ale jistě
- Své ego za volant nepouštějte
- Je lepší mít po skončení jízdy na tváři úsměv než airbag
- Lepit se někomu na zadek smrdí.

2 Runter vom Gas - German

- Einer rast, zwei sterben
- Einer ist abgelenkt, vier sterben
- Einer drängelt, drei sterben

3 Entel bridge commercials - Spanish

- Cada vez que conduzcas utiliza el cinturón de seguridad.
- Respeta las señales de tránsito, las paradas y los semáforos.

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Klíčové slová/Key Words

marketing communication, advertising strategies, social advertisement, roadside outdoor advertisement, politeness

marketingová komunikace, reklamní strategie, sociální reklama, venkovní silniční reklama, zdvořilost

JEL klasifikácia

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Résumé

Komunikační strategie venkovní silniční reklamy: Psycholingvistická analýza sloganů české, německé a bolivijské kampaně

Předložená studie reaguje na současné trendy sociální reklamy a prostřednictvím psycholingvistických metod analýzy komunikačních strategií přispívá k hlubšímu porozumění zákonitostí marketingové komunikace ve veřejném prostoru. V práci jsou předloženy ukázky z vybraných kampaní venkovní silniční reklamy realizovaných jak nekomerčními, tak komerčními subjekty, a to s cílem identifikovat zákonitosti v aplikaci konkrétních technik reklamních sdělení. Příklady sloganů zaměřených na dopravní bezpečnost byly lokalizovány ve třech zemích – České republice, Německu a Bolívii. Analýza vybraných vzorků sleduje jednotlivé komunikační strategie s ohledem na psychologii a vnímání konzumentů. Za účelem identifikace konkrétních technik obsažených v uvedených vzorcích je aplikován koncept tzv. ‘tváře’ popsany nejprve v teorii zdvořilosti Brownové a Levinsona (Politeness Theory, 1978) a později rozšířené o Ting-Toomeyové teorii vyjednávání tváře (Face-Negotiation Theory, 1999). Autorka argumentuje, že navzdory zdánlivým podobnostem v obsahu a cílech sdělení jednotlivých kampaní jsou analyzované vzorky názornou ukázkou rozdílnosti využitých komunikačních strategií. Tyto strategie jsou aplikovány v souladu a na míru charakteru realizujících subjektů, jež jsou nejen ovlivněny socio-kulturním kontextem, ale především sledují rozdílné cíle a míří na rozdílný segment trhu. Navržený přístup k analýze reklamních technik tak demonstruje, že využitím alternativních přístupů napříč vědeckých disciplín lze přispět k širšímu pochopení psychologie zákazníka a rozšířit tím moderní marketingovou komunikaci o nová řešení.

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Recenzované/Reviewed

22. február 2016 / 7. marec 2016