

University of Algiers II
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

**A Discourse-Semiotic Analysis of Socio-
Cultural Aspects of Television Advertising:
A Comparative Study of Two Ads**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Magister in Linguistics/Didactics

Submitted by:
Mr Mouloud Azzouni

Supervised by:
Dr Fatiha Hamitouche

2010

Board of Examiners

Chair: Prof. Faiza Bensemmane, University of Algiers II

Supervisor: Dr Fatiha Hamitouche, University of Algiers II

Examiner: Dr Fatma-Zohra Nedjai, University of Tizi Ouzou

Declaration

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

Algiers, July 4, 2010

Mouloud Azzouni

Dedication

For the sun, moon and planets that make up my galaxy: my dear mother Fatma-Zohra, my late father Ali, my brothers and sisters (Fatah, Souhila, Yamina, Cherifa, Chaabane, Lyès & Zineb). For the soul of the last of my grandparents, *yemma el-kebira*, who left us one year ago.

For the newcomers to the Azzouni family: Essam, Hassan and Mohammad & to every Azzouni worldwide I wholeheartedly dedicate this dissertation.

Acknowledgements

First, I am really grateful to Dr Hamitouche (my supervisor), for her kindness, understanding and valuable academic guidance. Then, to Professors Bensemmane (husband & wife), Professor Cherchalli, & Dr Boukhedimi, my teachers of post-graduate courses at the University of Algiers II, for all the things I learnt from them.

I am equally grateful to all my teachers of under graduate courses at Saad Dahlab University (Blida), and they are many. But the one who stands out and deserves special mention and thanking is Mr Erraki Abd-Errahmane (Abdou), my first English teacher ever, and the one to whom I owe the love of Shakespeare's language.

I am thankful to my friends Mr Mourad Khouliani & Mr Samir Beziou who have helped me solve problems with my computer, so many times, during the writing of this dissertation, and gave me valuable references and documents.

My grateful thanks go also to Ms Sabrina Ouadah, from Nedjma mobile company, who kindly provided a copy of the Nedjma TV ad much needed for the analysis.

Finally, my special thanks go to my dear mother, Fatma-Zohra, for her patience, untiring prayers and encouragements.

Abstract

Nowadays, as a direct consequence of revolutionary advances in technology, TV advertisements (ads) have become omnipresent in our lives. However, they are rarely studied in the context of Algerian academia despite their importance. Being complex 'coded' discourses, TV ads need to be 'decoded' in order to get their meanings. In an attempt to shed light on the meaning of TV ads, this dissertation proposes an interdisciplinary approach that aims to analyze TV ads by borrowing analytical tools from the fields of semiotics and discourse analysis. The dissertation is a qualitative comparative one, using a discursive-semiotic approach to explore the socio-cultural elements in two TV ads, one in English and the second in Arabic. It is divided into two main parts : a theoretical part and an analytical part.

The analysis of the two TV ads (one for the luxury watches Rolex, the other for a mobile telephone company, Nedjma) reveals the efficient use of a considerable amount of socio-cultural signs in the structure of both ads. But what is interesting is that each TV ad adapts those socio-cultural signs and symbols to the nature of the product/service being advertised, and to the environment or context in which it is going to be used. The result is a highly persuasive discourse, characterized by its multimodality. The TV ads benefit at full stretch by the potential for meaning-making, offered by the possibility of combination between different modes of representation (language, image and sound, for instance). The socio-cultural signs and symbols used in the discursive construction of the TV ads are themselves polyvocal. So, when used in combination they offer a wealth of possible meanings; and they create room for connotations. In fact, the analysis shows that it is connotation which takes primacy over denotation in both TV ads.

The contribution of this dissertation is that it compares the important socio-cultural elements in the building the discourse of two TV ads and points to areas of similarities and differences.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	III
Abstract	IV
List of Figures	IX
List of Tables	X
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Television Advertising at the Interface of Semiotics and Discourse Analysis	13
1. Semiotics: Theoretical Background	13
1.1 The European Semiotic Tradition	16
1.2 Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic Relations	17
1.3 The American Semiotic Tradition	19
1.4 Contemporary Semiotics	20
1.5 Signs and Codes	25
1.6 Semiotic Analysis	27
1.7 Denotation and Connotation	30
2. Discourse Analysis: Theoretical Background	32
2.1 Advertising and Advertising Discourse	33

Chapter Two: Semiotic Analysis of the Rolex Ad	37
1. Syntagmatic Axis	38
1.1 Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Rolex Ad	38
2. Paradigmatic Axis	48
2.1 The Golf Paradigm	49
3. Denotation and Connotation	51
4. Four Semiotic Modes of Signification	53
4.1 Image	53
4.2 Language	55
4.3 Music	57
4.4 Color	58
Chapter Three: Semiotic Analysis of the Nedjma Ad	60
1. Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Nedjma Ad	60
2. Syntagmatic Axis	69
3. Paradigmatic Axis	73
3.1 The Football Paradigm	73
3.2 The Paradigmatic Selection of a Celebrity: Zidane	75
3.3 Denotation and Connotation	77
4. Four Semiotic Modes of Signification	79
	VI

4.1 Image	79
4.2 Language	80
4.3 Music	83
4.4 Color	84
Chapter Four: Comparison of the TV Ads' Discursive Construction	87
1. Advertisements as Discourse	
2. Cohesive Tools	88
2.1 The Ball	88
2.2 Celebrities	89
2.3 Duration	91
2.4 Logo and Brand Name	91
2.5 Language: Anchor or Relay	93
3. Metaphor and Metonymy	96
4. Levels of Meaning	101
5. Intertextuality	102
6. Ideology and Signs	105

Conclusion	110
Bibliography	116
Appendix	124
Abstract in Arabic	126

List of Figures

<i>Fig. 1:</i> Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer & Gary Player, the “Big Three”	52
<i>Fig.2:</i> The Rolex Logo	53
<i>Fig.3:</i> An Oyster Rolex Watch	54
<i>Fig.4:</i> Rolex as Appears in the Golf Course, with the Logo	55
<i>Fig.5:</i> The Algerian National Colors	71
<i>Fig.6:</i> President Bouteflika Awarding Zidane the Athir Medal	76
<i>Fig. 7:</i> Rolex Watch in Wrist	97
<i>Fig. 8:</i> Image, in a Sepia Tone, Taken at Firestone Country Club on September 6, 1962	103
<i>Fig. 9:</i> Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, from Rolex Official Website	104
<i>Fig.10:</i> Poster of Zidane and the Children Used in Print Media & on Billboards	105
<i>Fig.11:</i> Tiger Woods	107

List of Tables

<i>Table 1: Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Rolex Ad</i>	39
<i>Table 2: Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Nedjma Ad</i>	60
<i>Table 3: Metonymies and Metaphors in the Rolex Ad</i>	98
<i>Table 4: Metonymies and Metaphors in the Nedjma Ad</i>	99

Introduction

Because we live in a world characterized by technological developments in the field of mass media, we are more and more exposed to advertising. Some people may like them and some not, but television advertisements (henceforth TV ads) have become so sophisticated, and so rich in socio-cultural significance that they call for analysis. The present dissertation intends to analyze and compare two different TV ads. The purpose is to try to unfold the extent to which their respective discourses are shaped, or at least influenced, by the socio-cultural context in which they are broadcasted. This involves an attempt to unravel the socio-cultural roots of each component in the TV ads through a discursive-semiotic analysis (with more emphasis on semiotics). The first TV ad, in English, was broadcasted on an American satellite channel (*CNN International*). It promotes a product, namely the world-famous Swiss watches 'Rolex'. The second, in Arabic, was broadcasted on Algerian satellite channels (*Algerian TV 3 & Canal Algérie*). It promotes the services provided by the mobile telephony operator *Wataniya Télécom Algérie* (known simply as Nedjma).

Based on a comparative study, the dissertation addresses the following research question:

To what extent is the discourse of a TV ad shaped by the socio-cultural context in which it is used?

This central question is itself divided into a number of sub-questions:

- What is the syntagmatic and paradigmatic structure of each TV ad?
- What are the cultural symbols present in the TV ad, and what are their denotations and connotations?

- What is the role of the socio-cultural context in the selection of a given paradigm in the TV ad?

- What are the similarities and differences between the two TV ads?

From a discursive-semiotic point of view, TV ads are structures made up of a number of semiotic signs co-operating to form a coherent discourse. Since semiotic signs, such as sounds and images, are hardly free of cultural conditioning, the main concern of this research is with the socio-cultural signification of the signifying elements (*i.e.* semiotic signs) that combine to make the discourse of the TV ad. Also, of central concern is the relationship between the TV ad and its socio-cultural context; since without a context no meaning can be produced. In this dissertation, the term context is defined, from a semiotic standpoint, as “the environment, situation, or process--physical, psychological, and social--in which interpretation unfolds” (Danesi 2004:21). The general approach adopted in this work is, therefore, a discursive-semiotic one; which benefits from a range of theoretical speculations by several scholars, including Barthes (1977), Forceville & Urios-Aparisi (2006), Danesi (2002, 2004), Van Leeuwen (2005), Kress & Van Leeuwen (2002, 2006) and Williamson (1978) among others. This qualitative dissertation is framed as an interpretive, descriptive comparative work, presented in predominantly narrative form.

This dissertation is an attempt to analyze two TV ads, taken from two different socio-cultural contexts, using the discursive-semiotic framework. It is also comparative and qualitative in that its aim is to deduce the differences and similarities that potentially exist in the two TV ads. It seeks to find out how the advertising message is formed and

given meaning. To use the words of Berger (2004), this involves “discovering the connotations of objects and symbolic phenomena and of the actions and dialogue of the characters in [the TV ads]” (Berger 2004:18) and how this relates to social and cultural issues. The analysis of each TV ad is done following two axes: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. This choice is motivated by the complementarity of the two axes in accounting for the hierarchy of meaning characteristic of TV ads. As suggested by Lévi-Strauss, “a syntagmatic analysis...reveals the...manifest meaning and...a paradigmatic analysis reveals the...latent meaning” (Lévi-Strauss cited in Berger 2004:25).

Generally speaking, signs can be either simple or complex. For instance, a TV ad can be considered as a very complex sign, containing in itself other signs, which make its analysis a complex task. The initial analytical task, then, is to identify the simple signs within the text and the codes within which these signs have meaning. Also, within these codes there is a need to identify paradigm sets as well as to identify the structural relationships between the various signifiers (or syntagms).

A semiotic analysis of a TV ad, then, addresses different layers of meaning. But this is impossible to be done if the TV ad is taken as a whole. Accordingly, for practical reasons, the present work uses a-shot-by-shot technique like the one suggested by Chandler (2001, [www](#)). The framework of Chandler (2001, [www](#)) was originally devised for purely semiotic analyses of TV ads. In this dissertation, however, it is adapted and used for a discursive-semiotic analysis. First, a description of all the people and objects in the TV ad is given. This first level is referred to as the surface level. Second, there is the attempt to unfold the advertiser's intended meaning, or the sales message that the advertiser is trying to get across. Third, the cultural or ideological meaning is

tackled, relying on the cultural background of the target consumers, because we all 'make sense' of ads by relating them to our culture and to the shared belief systems held in common by most people. This dissertation addresses the complexity of linguistic, extra linguistic and contextual components of these authentic, real-life forms of communication that are TV ads. In its structure, the TV ad relies on a complex semiotic mix, with a colorful and eye-catching visual organization. For this reason, Peirce's (1867) fundamental division of signs between icon, index, and symbol is applied to the study of the two TV ads, as well as his triadic model of meaning: sign, object and interpretant.

A TV ad is also a discursive space characterized by a typically social dimension, where the audience is assigned a role in the negotiation of meaning, in accordance with its socio-cultural context. Copley (2004) notes that "language is used as a model for all forms of cultural discourse and therefore semiologists borrow from the structural linguists" (Copley 2004:134). Indeed, for the analysis of cultural discourses as complex as TV ads, semiotics proves to be a valuable tool. By the same token, stemming from the trans-disciplinary background of the concept of discourse, discourse analysis can provide richness and analytic potential. For instance, "despite the theoretical and ideological diversity of these and other current approaches" in media studies in general, Van Dijk (in Jensen & Jankowski 1991) goes on to say that "we witness increasing integration of linguistic, semiotic, and discourse-analytical approaches" (Jensen & Jankowski 1991:109).

After stating the rationale behind the choice of the discursive–semiotic theoretical framework, the background of advertising in general and television advertising in par-

ticular, is worth brief mention. A word is equally worth saying about the discourse of advertising as a special type of discourse.

Boosted by the twin forces of globalization and informatization, television is invading our society, not only from within but from the outside world as well. We are invaded by multiple television images in our very homes. In this globalized 'Information Age', satellites carrying television signals enable people, on opposite sides of the globe, to be exposed to a wide range of cultural stimuli through media content. At present, TV satellite channels allow advertising messages to spread globally at a phenomenal rate. Broadly speaking, the content of media can be divided, according to Cotter (in Moder & Martinovic 2003), "into two main parts: news and advertising"(Moder & Martinovic 2003:417). Alternatively, one can add a third category called, "entertainment" (*ibid*). Consequently, advertisements are becoming omnipresent in the most personal settings in our lives, at home and in our leisure activities.

Advertising first appeared in print around the seventeenth century. Now, it has become acknowledged as a form of artistic expression. As technology developed, so too did advertising. At present, we are a long way since the first television was invented by John L. Baird in 1925. By the same token, TV ads have changed, becoming more subtle, and more entertaining than the crude hard selling of the 1950s and 1960s that they used to be. Accordingly, if we want to understand them, we need analytical frameworks. Semiotics and discourse analysis offer themselves as useful tools in this respect.

The discourse of advertising is not remote and specialized. It has become a prominent genre in contemporary society, of which people have vast and daily experience. At

least this is the assumption made by communication agencies producing ads. Usually, in advertising there is a message that is sent to a given audience through some medium. If the ad is commercial, then the message is persuasive. The aim is that a given logo or brand name becomes dynamically linked, in the mind of the consumer, with a host of positive associations, the roots of which are found in the socio-cultural context of the ad. Hackley (2005) notes that “advertising and communication agencies produce cultural texts that portray consumption by drawing on social practices and symbols...” (Hackley 2005:232). This means that every ad has content and meaning. The meaning of its message involves many signifiers corresponding, from the semiotics standpoint, to different modes of signification. In the same spirit, Tolson (1996) notes that “advertising is a form of rhetoric, dedicated to the arts of persuasion” (Tolson 1996:6). That is, a TV ad, for instance, is a means whereby the sale of a particular product or service is promoted. At present, TV ads frequently combine, in ways which are often memorable, enjoyable and amusing, very complex “audio-scripto-visual” messages. They have become constructions containing, in different ways and to different extents, different signifying elements: images, words and sounds. For present purposes of analysis, the modes to be taken into account are the following: written language, spoken language, static and moving images and music.

In the discourse of a TV ad, an infinite number of sign systems that have their own autonomy, line together and complement each other. They are integrated into a structured whole totality in which they complement, or contradict, each other in order to produce meaning. Therefore, in most cases, a TV ad is a highly complex medium that uses, among other things, verbal language, visual images, and sounds to generate im-

pressions and ideas in people. Two of the peculiar characteristics of TV ads are sound and motion. Although the language of image is the predominant language of advertisers, their use of a blend of language and paralanguage (physical gestures, eye contact, body language, evocative settings, clothing, etc.) serves to create an attractive and meaning-rich environment.

In principle, TV ads can be of different qualities. They may be either tacky and cheap in appearance, or clever and aesthetically pleasing, and obviously very expensive to create. In all cases, a TV ad is never a mere addition of different semiotic signs. Rather, the different elements (visual, motional, musical, and lingual) interact to produce their own effect in a wealth of possible manners. To be meaningful and effective, the latter interaction needs to operate in harmony with the socio-cultural context in which it occurs.

An effective TV ad can neither be created in a cultural void nor in a social vacuum. Rather, it is encountered in a given social context. It must also be anchored within a certain culture with all its sub-cultures. The signs and symbols particular to that specific culture add to its meaning. This suggests that TV ads, for instance, can better be understood if analyzed from a socio-cultural perspective. If one wants to know what a sign means in a given culture, one must look more deeply than the obvious. The obvious meaning is just the tip of the iceberg. Obviously, within a semiotic context, signs do not exist in isolation. They are rather part of a sign system or a code. In this respect, codes are derived from social and culture knowledge and they allow the organization of “our understanding of the world in terms of 'dominant meaning patterns” (Dyer 1986: 135). Thus, the signifying elements, in a TV ad, are interwoven in such a way

that one cannot remove an element without destroying, or at least, radically diminishing the meaning of the message intended to be conveyed.

The concept of code within a sign system holds a central place in semiotic analysis in that codes are the rules that both the transmitter and receiver are using when they attach an interpretation of the "meaning or content to a certain sign"(Dyer1986:131). Furthermore, as advocated by Leiss *et al.* (1986),"advertising is...an integral part of modern culture" (Leiss *et al.* 1986:7). This cultural dimension is fully exploited by the advertisers; and this idea is more explicit in Tolson (1996) who states that advertisers "give meaning to a product by developing associations in the mind of the reader/viewer. The associations are cultural". (Tolson 1996:3)

As for meaning, in most cases, advertisements are polysemic. That is to say, they are open to multiple interpretations. This is more so in the case of TV ads because they are complex blends of signs of different natures (visual and non-visual). Since in TV ads most signs operate on several levels, as already mentioned, it goes without saying that there is more in them than meets the eye. For this reason, when looking at these complex signs, one has to be aware of their polysemic nature. Nevertheless, the TV ad is generally made in a way "to make one interpretation seem more obvious, more natural" (Tolson 1996:10). This dissertation is geared towards uncovering this "obvious" and "more natural meaning" in relation to the corresponding socio-cultural context of the TV ad.

Be that as it may, the signs in images require cultural knowledge for their understanding because of their symbolic aspect. Hackley (2005) rightly argues that "advertising

can be regarded as a form of cultural text” (Hackley 2005:235). This means that, in order to accomplish an interpretation of a TV ad, we require knowledge of a language and knowledge of a culture at once. This adds, obviously, to the complexity of any attempt at analyzing TV ads, since in attempting an analysis, one must, not only consider the codes used, but also "the culture within which these codes and signs operate"(Fiske 1990:40).

It is essential to be aware that text cannot exist without context and vice versa. The main assumption is that, in TV ads, the text (*i.e.* advertisement) is subject and sensitive to the context. The context includes knowledge of elements existing outside the text (knowledge of the world) as well as how these elements contribute to create a certain frame of reference and/or a cultural identity. The culture in which a certain ad is created forms part of the context. The task of discourse analysis is to identify the cultural aspects and determine their role in the persuasive ads. In this respect, it is worth keeping in mind that the term culture is to be distinguished from the term society, for the two are not synonymous. Danesi (2004) states that:

Within a social collectivity, there can, and frequently does, exist more than one culture. In an opposite manner, several societies can be thought of as belonging to the same general culture—for example, European culture, Asian culture, African culture, etc. (Danesi 2004:35).

In this dissertation the Rolex ad is first destined to the American society, but not only. It is destined to other societies as well. All the societies belonging to, or influenced by, the Western culture, regardless of any geographical distance, are potentially targeted. Especially because the TV ad is broadcasted by an international satellite channel, transcending national boundaries and covering the four corners of the globe.

It is clear now that no single approach seems uniquely adequate for analyzing TV ads because they are, by nature, multimodal. However, a discursive-semiotic approach offers a robust theoretical framework for analyzing the socio-cultural elements at stake in the shaping of the discourses of TV ads. This is why this dissertation adopts an interdisciplinary approach which aims to combine semiotic and discursive insights. The approach is interdisciplinary in the sense that it involves the combination of two disciplines: semiotics and discourse analysis. That is to say, discourse analysis, having roots in linguistics, semiotics, anthropology, etc., is by itself interdisciplinary, as already noted by Van Dijk (in Jensen & Jankowski 1991), and it is further combined with semiotics. A synthesis of both disciplines provides the analyst with the instruments to approach the cultural elements in TV ads. On the one hand, from semiotics we draw the ideas of sign and text. Following Scott & Batra (2003), sign being defined as “anything that can stand for something else”, and text as “any purposeful assemblage of signs, whether written or spoken, linguistic or pictorial.” (Scott & Batra 2003:191). On the other hand, from discourse analysis we take the idea of interaction between text and context. Discourse being text and context taken together, interacting in a way which is perceived as meaningful and unified by the participants, it represents well the complexity of human communication as exemplified by TV advertising. In the light of this, TV ads, as a case in point, can be read as texts composed of signs and used in a given socio-cultural context. Thus, they are amenable to a discursive-semiotic analysis.

Semioticians see signs where lay people see objects and things, whereas semiotics is the science of signs in which there is the fusion of form and meaning. Hence, the use

of semiotics provides the researcher with the power to isolate signs and their meanings within a given socio-cultural context. Semiotics also provides the theoretical tools for the analysis of signs and communication processes in advertising. It “expands the analytic horizon from the verbal message in the narrower sense to the multiplicity of codes used in persuasive communication” (Noth 1990:476).

What I am suggesting is that the codes and levels of meaning into which signs are organized form the basis of semiotic analysis. Semiotics certainly does bring with it tools for the analysis of culture that are refined enough and relevant for the analysis of TV ads. As Iberraken (2006) notes, semiotics is also an efficient tool for “criticizing ideology”. On the other hand, discourse, defined as a "structured semiotic operation which at one and the same time localizes the meaning in time and space"(Johansen & Larsen 2002:56), carries the implication for signs governed by social, historical and cultural forces at one and the same time. In a sense, discourses 'frame' our understandings because our interpretations are culturally situated.

As for the organization of the present dissertation, it is divided into two main parts. Part one is theoretical. It contains chapter one, entitled “Television Advertising at the Interface of Semiotics and Discourse Analysis”, which is meant to serve as a review of literature. It is an overview of the literature and provides the theoretical background that presents and discusses the use of semiotics and/or discourse perspectives and analyses for the study of television advertising. Part two is the comparison of the two ads. It is the actual discursive-semiotic analysis of two TV ads. In this second part, chapter two is devoted to the TV ad in English; and chapter three is to the TV ad in Arabic. The first TV ad advertises a luxury product, Rolex watches, whereas the sec-

ond advertises a service provided by a mobile telephony company in Algeria (Nedjma). The last chapter (chapter four) is devoted to the comparison between the discursive constructions of the two TV ads. The dissertation naturally begins with an introduction and ends with a general conclusion. To start with, in the chapter that follows, I sketch some of the relevant literature that relates to the subject of this dissertation.

Chapter One

Television Advertising

at the Interface of Semiotics and Discourse Analysis

1. Semiotics: Theoretical Background

Semiotics is generally defined as the study of signs and sign systems. It is a text-centered discipline grounded in the social sciences and devoted to the analysis of symbolic communication. It is an analytical approach. According to Danesi (2004), from the mid-twentieth century onward, “semiotics has grown into a truly enormous field of study, encompassing...anything that is used, invented, or adopted by human beings to produce meaning”(Danesi 2004:4).

Semiotics focuses on the structure of meaning-producing events, such as advertising, with the sign (both verbal and non-verbal) as its fundamental unit. In the semiotic jargon, the process of making and using signs is called semiosis. The different signs combine to form texts which carry messages. In contemporary semiotic theory, the term text has a broad meaning. According to Danesi (2004), for example, the word “embraces such things as conversations, letters, speeches, poems, myths, novels, television programs...and so on” (Danesi 2004:15).The meanings encoded in texts are called *messages*. Both the production of a message (or text) and its subsequent decoding by readers are governed by rules that are generally known to individuals who are from the interpretive community or culturally constituted code environment in which the message or text is exchanged. So, both production and interpretation of messages follow a number of culture-specific rules. McQuarrie & Mick (1992) note that “these

rules establish the manner in which signs combine into acceptable messages or texts and the correlation that signs can have with their potential meanings in specific contexts" (McQuarrie & Mick 1992:181). It is worthy to note, however, as did Danesi (2004) that "texts are composite phenomena — they are not interpreted in terms of their constituent parts..., but holistically as single signs" (Danesi 2004:15). This latter remark is particularly relevant in the case of TV ads.

As used in current media and communications research, semiotics is a type of social description and analysis which places specific emphasis upon understanding and exploring the patterns of signs and symbols in texts, what they mean and how they are used. For instance, semiotics considers advertising as a process of exchange of messages (or semiosis). As such, it has been the object of explicitly semiotic studies since the 1960s. For semioticians, ads are texts which users can be referred to as readers. How people might read and understand symbols and signs, and thereby make meaning from words, sounds, pictures and body language in texts, "some refer to this as 'deconstruction'- a term coined by Derrida" (Nilan 2007:61), whereas some refer to it as 'decoding'- a term coined by Williamson.

Various schools of semiotics have developed quite different approaches to the study of advertising. As noted by Chandler (2007), "the definition, scope and methodologies of semiotics vary from theorist to theorist" (Chandler 2007:211). Nonetheless, Noth (1990) notes that "there seem to be a common denominator in these approaches: the extension of the analysis from the linguistic message to larger spheres of semiosis, such as meaning on various levels" (Noth 1990:476). That is, the interpretation of the message is liberated from the bounds of the narrow linguistic sphere and made to es-

pouse a much wider one-- the semiotic sphere. In the latter, the message becomes polysemic. That is, having many potential meanings. What determines its interpretation is the socio-cultural context of its occurrence.

Because of its historical origins, semiotics has become closely identified with structuralism. However, Chandler (2007), states that “it is not tied to any particular theory or methodology” (Chandler 2007:212). Notwithstanding, it is true that there is much overlap between semiotics and structuralism. For instance, Hawkes (2003) advocates that “by and large, its boundaries...are coterminous with those of structuralism” (Hawkes 2003:101). Furthermore, the interests of the two disciplines are not fundamentally separate to the extent that, “in the long run, both ought properly to be included within the province of a third, embracing discipline called, simply, communication” (Hawkes 2003:101), especially that they share a number of fundamental concepts such as the concept of sign.

As already mentioned, semiotics is generally described as the study of signs. But for a sign to exist there must be meaning (or content) manifested through some form. Semiotics suggests that signs are related to their meaning by social conventions. The conventional dimension is important in the semiotic analysis, because a sign means something only by virtue of a convention among a community (or society), at a given time, in a given place. In other words, meaning can only be conveyed by codes in specific cultural contexts. This means that there are, at least in principle, as many codes as cultural contexts. Colombo *et al.* (2001) cite among the components of the code in a TV ad such things as:

1. editing effects (cuts, fades, dissolves, cutting rate and rhythm),

2. camerawork (shot size, focus, camera movement, angle, slope of framing),
3. manipulation of time (compression, flashback, flash-forward, slow motion), and
4. well defined choices of lightning, color, sound, graphics (text or cartoon) and narrative style.

The overlap between semiotics and linguistics is clearly visible at the level of terminology. Since Saussure, semiotic studies still draw heavily on linguistic concepts, so that many of the terms used in semiotics are linguistic ones. The concept of the sign is a good case in point. Semiotics postulates a relation between two terms, a signifier and a signified. This is explicit in the Saussurian tradition and implicit in the Peircian one. The process of interpreting something as signifying something else. In other words, any act of semiosis involves a real-time process of associating a signifier with a signified. However, Barthes (2006) adds a third dimension to the semiotic analysis. He states that

we are dealing, in any semiological system, not with two, but with three different terms. For what we grasp is not at all one term after the other, but the correlation which unites them: there are, therefore, the signifier, the signified and the sign, which is the association total of the first two terms (Barthes 2006:110).

This third dimension proves very useful particularly in the analysis of TV ads. The idea that a sign is worth much more than the sum total of its components is worthwhile. It is among the important contributions of the European structuralist tradition in sign studies. I devote the remaining space to this, and other contributions of both European and American traditions in semiology/semiotics.

1.1 The European Semiotic Tradition

Saussure calls the study of the life of the sign in society semiology. This term appeared for the first time in his writings, in a manuscript dated November 1894, and it contin-

ues to be used mainly by Europeans. Americans and their followers, on the other hand, prefer the term semiotics. In this dissertation, the two terms are used interchangeably. Saussure proposed a structural semiotic model in the form of a dyad, composed of a signifier and a signified. The study of sign systems derives from an initial perception that a sign has two aspects: an immediately perceptible signifier and an inferable signified. This distinction can also be expressed in terms of form and content. The terminological distinction between sign, signifier, and signified was not introduced by Saussure until late, towards the end of his Third Course (exactly on May 19, 1911). This terminological distinction (signifier vs. signified) is not new, and echoes with the Stoic doctrine of signs. Within the Saussurian tradition, the relationship between a signifier and a signified is not in any sense fixed or immutable. Rather, “it is constructed, based on our socio-political and cultural agreement and usage” (Musson *et al.* 2007:48). Saussure posits that meaning is created from the differences between signifiers. The differences are of two types: syntagmatic and paradigmatic. The latter distinction proves to be fundamental in any structuralist semiotic analysis.

1.2 Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic Relations

In Saussure's (1916) scheme, there are two types of relations holding between signs: relations of sequence and relations of association. Saussure saw the sign as participating, simultaneously, in two kinds of structures: one, its place in an organized inventory of signs, which he referred to as the axis of association; and the other, its place in an actual, outwardly visible form, which he called the axis of combination. However, the idea of meaning through combination or choice is not limited to language. Syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures are found in the composition of all kinds of signs.

Therefore, the notions of paradigm and syntagm can easily be extended to include the pictures of TV ads; and in any full semiotic analysis paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships have to be discussed since they are key structures in semiotics. The paradigmatic analysis involves the comparison and substitution of the sign's signifiers with alternative signifiers; whereas the syntagmatic analysis involves how the elements of the sign are structured sequentially and in comparison with each other.

Chandler (2007) gives the example of 'setting' as a potential paradigm in advertising.

He states that

if changing the setting used in an advertisement contributes to changing the meaning, then 'setting' is one of the paradigms; the paradigm set for the setting would consist of all of those alternative signifiers which could have been used and which would have shifted the meaning. (Chandler 2007:90)

The mode of television advertising is fundamentally one of sequential movement through time. It follows from this that each sign has a linear, or horizontal, relationship with the signs that precede and succeed it, and a good deal of its capacity to mean various things derives from this pattern of positioning. On the other hand, each sign in a given TV ad has been selected from a set of signs (*i.e.* a paradigm) which elements can all potentially fill the same slot in the TV ad. An important part of the meaning of the sign, mainly its cultural connotation, derives from this latter type of relationship. Chandler (2007) further advocates that in structural semiotics "these two structural 'axes' (horizontal or syntagmatic and vertical or paradigmatic) are seen as applicable to all sign systems". (Chandler 2007:84)

1.3 The American Semiotic Tradition

The development of semiotics as a discipline owes much to Charles S. Peirce. Peircean semiotics allows us to talk of all signs, whether linguistic or non-linguistic, as components of all forms of meaning. More importantly, Peirce provided the most comprehensive typology of signs so far devised (comprising 66 species of signs, as reported in Danesi 2004:27). But what is best known is his threefold system of classification. In the latter, signs are classified into three classes according to their relationship to their object: icons (having similarity relationships with their objects), indexes (having physical relationships with their objects), and symbols (having arbitrary relationships with their objects). This categorization of signs provides a richer context for understanding visuals and how they convey meaning than Saussure's signified and signifier, although Saussure's dichotomy is implied in Peirce's categories and it is at the basis of all semiotic analysis. Peirce's most fundamental division of signs between icon, index, and symbol has frequently been applied to the study of advertisements. Two of these types of sign, namely the index and the icon, are particularly useful in the analysis of TV ads. Noth (1990) explains how the three types of sign function complementarily in a TV ad. He says:

...Pictures of the product and its consumers, comparisons, metaphors, and other signs referring to their object by similarity belong to the domain of the icon in advertising. Symbols appear in the language, brand names, trademarks, and visual logos. In its most prototypical function, however, the advertiser's attempt to draw the consumer's attention to the product implies an act of pointing, which is the sign type of an index. (Noth 1990:480)

Peirce's work became known in the literature as semiotics, although he never used this term. He also introduced many important theoretical distinctions, among which his

previously mentioned famous trichotomy: sign, index, and icon. This is Peirce's second semiotic 'triad'. In the icon, the relationship between sign and object, or signifier and signified, manifests a similarity or 'fitness' of resemblance, to be acknowledged by its receiver. Danesi (2004) notes that “iconicity is evidence that human perception is highly attentive to recurrent patterns of color, shape, dimension, movement, sound, taste, etc.” (Danesi 2004:28). TV ads are among the richest cultural products in such recurrent patterns. Naturally enough, iconicity is omnipresent in the analysis of the two TV ads constituting the comparative study of the present work. However, in the index, the relationship is concrete, actual and usually of a sequential and causal kind. Notwithstanding, human consciousness is not only attentive to iconicity. It is also equally attentive to recurrent and cause and effect patterns characteristic of indexicality. Finally, in the symbol, the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary. The symbol stands for its referent in a purely conventional way. It requires the active presence of the interpretant to make the signifying connection. At this stage, it is important to note, as did Hawkes (2003), that

the 'triad' involves not mutually exclusive *kinds* of sign, but three modes of relationship between sign and object or signifier and signified which co-exist in the form of a hierarchy in which one of them will inevitably have dominance over the other two. As Jakobson observes, we can have symbolic icons, iconic symbols, etc. (Hawkes 2003:105-6)

1.4 Contemporary Semiotics

Different contemporary semioticians have marked, by their work, the field of semiotics, in general, and the study of advertising in particular. For instance, Roland Barthes is considered among the important figures that pioneered the field of advertising semiotics. It was he who drew the attention of semioticians to the value of studying advertisements. Some semioticians, such as Sonesson, consider his article “*La rhétorique de*

l'image" (1964a) at the origin of the field of the 'semiotics of publicity'. Barthes extends Saussure's structuralism to concerns about representation, images, codes, media and culture in everyday life. He focuses on the ideological functions of signs and, therefore, assigns deeper meanings to them than the common superficial ones. Barthes' semiotics relies much on discovering or disclosing the ideology hidden in the context. He maintains that signs within the boundaries of a given culture are not innocent. Rather, they are stuck in the complex networks of ideological reproduction.

In his fascinating analysis of myth, Barthes made a distinction between the signifier (denotation) and the signified (connotation), but he also described "a third level that he referred to as myth (using the term in the traditional sense of stories through which a culture explains aspects of its reality)" (Musson *et al.* 2007:54). He also suggests that the meaning from one sign can be used as the signifier of a higher order of the sign (Barthes 1972: 114). Elsewhere, Barthes considers myth, prevalent in mass communication and popular culture, as a mode of signification. He argues that "it is...by no means confined to oral speech. It can consist of modes of writing or of representations; not only written discourse, but also photography, cinema, reporting, sport, shows, publicity" (Barthes 2006:109).

For Barthes then, myth is potentially omnipresent in all modes of representation (verbal and nonverbal), but it is more so in multimodal texts such as advertisements. Hence its relevance, and importance, in the analysis of TV ads, which are multimodal texts *par excellence*. Ultimately, Barthes argues that mythology is part and parcel of semiotics. In his own words, he says " mythology...is but one fragment of this vast sci-

ence of signs which Saussure postulated...under the name of semiology" (Barthes 2006:109).

As an illustration, Barthes turns to the semiotic analysis of a particular advertising image—a Panzani advertisement. He distinguishes, in his analysis, between three messages. In the advertising image, a mesh grocery bag lies on the table; its contents: beautiful, fresh vegetables and a box of pasta displaying a brand name. Barthes proceeds by breaking this system of signification into three parts that he calls: the linguistic message, the coded iconic message, and the non-coded iconic message. The linguistic message--the Italian name that appears on the package of the pasta--itself operates on two levels: denotational, and connotational by signifying what Barthes refers to as "Italianicity". For Barthes, the coded iconic message is the totality of all the messages that are connoted by the image itself. The non-coded iconic message is simply the literal "what it is" of the photograph, the vegetables and sack and pasta that we "see" when we look at the image. (Barthes 1977:33-7)

In the Barthean myth, we find again the tri-dimensional Peircian pattern: the signifier, the signified and the sign. But, according to Barthes (2006), myth is a particular system, in that

it is constructed from a semiological chain which existed before it: it is a *second-order semiological system*. That which is a sign (namely the associative total of a concept and an image) in the first system, becomes a mere signifier in the second. (Barthes 2006:111)

Myth is also particular with respect to the relationship between signifier and signified. In the Saussurian scheme, this relationship is arbitrary. However, Barthes (2006) posits that

The mythical signification...is never arbitrary; it is always in part motivated, and unavoidably contains some analogy...myth plays on the analogy between meaning and form, there is no myth without motivated form. (Barthes 2006:119).

Finally, mention should be made of Barthes' concept of *anchorage* (cited in Chandler 2001: WWW). In TV ads, linguistic elements (spoken or written) can serve to anchor or constrain the preferred reading of an image, and conversely, the illustrative use of an image can anchor an ambiguous verbal text. In both TV ads (*see the comparative study*), there are linguistic elements serving as anchors.

Another emblematic figure in contemporary semiotics is Umberto Eco. Eco is a multi-gifted, multi-disciplinary man. His interests range from literature and philosophy to journalism and semiotics. This helped him to propose a broader approach to semiotics. His work in semiotics has contributed to the development of a philosophy of meaning. The importance he gives to interpretation is already apparent in his definition of the sign: "something that is interpreted" (Eco 1986:15). This broad approach to semiotics is defined in Eco (1976), where it is stated that semiotics concerns everything that can be perceived as a sign. Eco's fundamental postulate is that the sign is polyvocal. According to him, Polyvocality stems from the fact that many signifieds may co-exist in the same signifier. This is mostly typical of works of arts. By extension, this is also true about TV ads, which are nowadays considered parts of arts. Any work composed of an infinite set of signs, becomes an open work, offering a multiplicity of possible interpretations. So, when looking at signs one has to be aware of their polyvocal (or polysemic) nature, because there is an 'inherent ambiguity or instability of signs (Branston & Stafford 1996: 8). This ambiguity arises for two reasons. First the signs are open to interpretation and that interpretation can depend on culture as well as the

individual. Secondly the majority of signs we come across (for example, those used in the two TV ads of the case study) have numerous elements (images, captions, typography, colors), and each of those elements is 'capable of signifying in multiple ways' (*ibid*). Hence, the polysemic nature of signs.

Furthermore, Eco approaches semiotics not as a universe composed of signs, but as one composed of semiotic functions (or sign-functions). This derives from his broadening of the scope of semiotics to go well beyond the limits of the linguistic sign. A sign (or sign-function) is no longer conceived of as corresponding to a specific, frozen referent (which used to be the case for the linguistic sign). Rather, it can take on several meanings, or designates various realities within its socio-cultural context. Eco's theory emphasizes the non-universal nature of the sign's meaning, and for this reason, he speaks of sign-function. An analysis of TV ads in relation to different socio-cultural contexts cannot but be inspired by Eco's insights. Especially that Eco's semiotic research covers many areas, which almost give an encyclopedic panorama of the semiotic field. These areas include literary and text semiotics as well as semiotics of popular culture and the mass media.

In a more recent approach, so-called social semiotics, the idea of sign-use is replaced by sign-making. This position is a move away from the conventionally accepted view that there are (relatively) stable signs which are used in representation and communication. Instead, "signs are seen as constantly newly made, out of the interest of the (socially and culturally formed and positioned) individual sign-maker" (Kress & Mavers 2005:173).

1.5 Signs and Codes

The reflection on signs has a long history in Western philosophy. Historically speaking, it is Aristotle who laid the foundations for semiotics by defining the sign. Throughout history, this Western notion of sign has been further elaborated by philosophers from St. Augustine to John Locke (who proposed the name 'semiotics'). From these beginnings, the idea was picked up around the turn of the twentieth century by Saussure and Peirce. It is those two 'Founding Fathers' who led the foundations of the science devoted to the study of sign systems. Danesi (2004) defines the sign as “anything—a color, a gesture, a wink, an object, a mathematical equation, etc—that stands for something other than itself” (Danesi 2004:4). So, in its broadest sense, a sign is anything that stands for something else (*i.e.* an object or a concept). This very broad meaning calls for subdivisions. Quite often, semioticians use the subdivisions suggested by Peirce: icon, index and symbol.

Despite terminological differences between semioticians, they broadly keep the same fundamental distinction when describing the sign. They distinguish between the signification of the latter (its content or meaning) and the vehicle of this signification (its form). For Saussure, the former is referred to as the signified, the latter as the signifier. Signs are of two basic types. If a sign cannot be analyzed into constituent signs, then it is a simple sign. If it consists of two or more meaningful parts, then it is called a syntagm. Messages are made of signs (verbal and visual), and conveyed through sign systems called codes. In the same vein, Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006) state that “both language and visual communication express meanings belonging to and structured by cultures in the one society” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006:19). The more we share the

same codes in communication exchange, the closer our meanings will be. A code functions as a system of rules. For example, language is a code. The concept of semiotic code, however, is broader than just language and includes such sign systems as kinesics (or body language), sign language, algebra, etc.

The concept of codes, within a sign system, holds a central place in semiotic analysis since codes are the rules that both the transmitter and the receiver are using when they attach an interpretation to a certain sign. The codes are “unspoken rules that link signs to meanings” (Copley 2004:135). They are necessary for any communicative activity. It is worth noting, however, that there are as many codes (linguistic and non-linguistic) as there are activities and socio-cultural contexts. TV ads, in particular, are meeting points of a multiplicity of codes. For communication to take place, these codes must be shared by sender and receiver. In addition to the common code, communication involves a kind of cooperation between sender and receiver. Nilan (2007), citing Hall, states that

all images and texts are both encoded and decoded. They are coded in the production process and in their placement within a certain cultural setting. They are decoded by the viewers/readers/consumers. (Hall cited in Nilan 2007:63)

The meaning production process involves both senders and receivers. That is to say, meaning is created both through encoding by the source, and decoding by the receiver/reader. Cook (2001) mentions that the idea of “decoding” advertisements is owed to Williamson (1978). In his own words, he says: “The popular phrase Decoding Advertising was first used by Judith Williamson as the title of a book published in 1978, and it has been echoed widely in courses and publications ever since” (Cook 2001:67).

What is interesting in Williamson's approach is the attempt to unveil, through analysis, what she calls “the 'real' meaning of the words and images of an ad, and the 'real

world' to which the 'unreal' images of the ad refer (Williamson 1978 cited in Cook 2001:67). As a case in point, at the outset of her book, she examines two ads for two varieties of Chanel perfume (Chanel No 5 and Chanel No 19). The two ads are featuring two female celebrities as endorsers. The first one showing Catherine Deneuve, the second Margaux Hemingway. Williamson “‘discovers’ that both women are signifiers, the former signifying 'flawless French beauty', the latter the essence of being 'young American, way out' ” (Williamson 1978 cited in Cook 2001:67-8). The idea of a celebrity endorsing a product (or a service) in a commercial ad is central in the analysis of the two TV ads making the comparative study of the present dissertation (*see chapters 2 & 3*).

1.6 Semiotic Analysis

Semiotics is an interpretive approach, and semioticians forward the idea that meaning making is relational rather than referential. To study advertisements, then, is to decipher the 'framing of meaning'. Meanings are never produced in voids and vacuums. They are always produced in a socio-cultural context. So, we cannot help but interpret the semiotic signs in cultural terms. As Goldman (1998) states, and Atkinson (2002) reports, “meaning is always relational and contextual” (Goldman 1998:5 cited in Atkinson 2002). Furthermore, scholars such as Bourdieu (1991) are fiercely opposed to all those forms of semiotic analysis (owing their inspiration to Saussure) which are “purely ‘internal’, in the sense that they focus exclusively on the internal constitution of a text, and hence ignore the social-historical conditions of the production and reception of texts” (Bourdieu 1991:04). Accordingly, a semiotic text analysis scrutinizes the various signs in a text in an attempt to characterize their structure and identify poten-

tial meanings by relating them to their sociocultural context. What characterizes the semiotic analysis, in comparison with other approaches, are a number of features. These are summarized by McQuarrie & Mick (1992). They say that

The distinctive feature of semiotics relative to other approaches to analyzing texts is that semiotics places due weight on the constraints imposed by the structure of signs within a text, on the freedom of the reader to interpret the text in a variety of ways, and on the sociocultural context that jointly shapes the text and its potential readings (McQuarrie & Mick 1992:181).

Through a semiotic analysis, the nature and use of each code can be highlighted, thus making it explicit how signs are properly organized for the construction of sense. Semioticians look for the signs embedded in advertisements, note the codes that the signs operate within and refer to and then review how the users within a culture consume them. Given the fact that TV ads are multimodal by nature, their semiotic analysis contains many levels. Bignell (1997) states that there is need to

identify the visual and linguistic signs in the ad, to see how the signs are organized by paradigmatic and syntagmatic selection, and note how the signs relate to each other through various coding systems (Bignell 1997:34 cited in Atkinson 2002).

This is done bearing in mind the idea highlighted by Kress & Mavers (in Somekh & Lewin 2005), namely that in multimodal texts “each mode, language included, is a partial bearer of meaning only” (Somekh & Lewin 2005:172).

Visual texts are an important area of analysis for semioticians and particularly for scholars working with visually intensive forms, such as advertising and television, because images are such a central part of human communication sign system. Kress (in Copley 2001) suggests that, in the current communicational world, “image has ceased to be there as mere illustration...Image is now fully communicational in very many forms of text” (Copley 2001:67).

Nevertheless, semiotics applies to all modes of representation. Here, representation is defined as “a set of practices by which meanings are constituted and communicated” (Johnston *et al.* 2000: 703). Likewise, semiotics can equally account for language (spoken and written), image (motion and still), music, color, etc. This may explain why semiotics has influenced current analyses of advertising as a contemporary cultural form of communication.

In advertising in general and TV ads in particular, most signs operate on several levels: iconic as well as symbolic and/or indexical. Furthermore, perhaps the idea of a hierarchical structure of meaning is nowhere more tangible than in TV ads. This suggests that the semiotic analysis of a TV ad, for instance, may be addressing a hierarchy of meaning in addition to categories and components of meaning. Many semioticians have discussed various layers (or levels) of meaning in advertisements. For example, Noth (1990) emphasizes that

In the first phase of research, the semiotic concepts of connotation and ideology were considered to be the key to advertising analysis...The distinction between overt and hidden meanings in advertising is decisive. (Noth 1990:477)

In the same line of thought, Danesi (2004) posits that many ads can be interpreted at two different levels: a surface and a deep (or underlying) level. The surface level is the “actual ad text” (Danesi 2004:266). However, at the deep level, “the surface elements cohere into signifiers that conjure up an array of connotations in the underlying sub-text” (*ibid*). It is the task of the semiotic analysis to try to address this hierarchy of meaning in a TV ad, for instance. This is done through a syntagmatic as well as a paradigmatic analysis of the structure of the TV ad. The paradigmatic analysis involves the identification of the paradigms that are evident in the TV ad and what they have in

common. It involves also the identification of the context. This axis of analysis is also where the suggested connotative meanings appear. On the other hand, the syntagmatic analysis involves the identification and description of the syntagmatic structure and the form it takes. For instance, in the case of a TV ad, the montage. The purpose is to see whether the sequential or spatial arrangement of the elements influence meaning. Also, the different signifiers present in the syntagm are compared in terms of prominence. The aim is to see whether some are more important than others.

1.7 Denotation and Connotation

Signification occurs on two distinct levels: denotation and connotation. Since the earliest semiotic studies of advertising, Hjelmslev's (1961) semantic concepts of denotation and connotation have been used as tools of analysis. Adverts do not simply transmit denotative information (*i.e.* a literal meaning), but also have connotations, referring to meanings beyond the literal reading of the sign, meanings which are introduced by the reader/viewer stemming from existing conventions and codes. Danesi (2004) states that “the study of connotation constitutes the core of contemporary semiotics. This is because most of the meanings that signs bear in cultural settings are connotative” (Danesi 2004:13). Elsewhere, Danesi goes on to say that “from a psychological standpoint, the human mind seems predisposed to link meanings together in such ways.” (Danesi 2002:192).

In a TV ad, connotations and denotations are created by means of blending verbal and nonverbal signs; in addition to metaphor, metonymy, and a host of verbal techniques that are used effectively to generate connotative chains. Thus, the TV ad is placed

within a certain socio-cultural setting, because every community has its own set of socio-cultural customs, values and habits which is reflected in the sign system(or code) used for communication.

The relationship of denotation to connotation is useful as an analytical distinction while considering the intersection of culture and discourse in TV ads. For instance, Nilan (2007) explains how important the distinction between denotation and connotation is in Barthes' semiotic approach. He says:

[Barthes] claims that when we read signs and sign systems, we can distinguish between different kinds of messages. Denotation is the 'literal or obvious meaning' or the 'first-order signifying system'. Connotation refers to 'second-order signifying systems', additional cultural meanings we make from a given sign, where the context often alters the meaning. I.e. the same signifier can point to a number of different signified meanings depending on the situation or setting. (Nilan 2007:62)

Since denotation comprises the literal meaning of a sign, and connotation refers to units of content which lie beyond this primary level of meaning, according to Noth (1990), "the theory of connotation appears to be a most appropriate tool for the discovery of "hidden" layers of meaning in advertising" (Noth 1990:477).

In the Barthean scheme, the reader goes through various stages when he deconstructs the meaning of a sign. The first stage he called denotation, which refers to what is actually reproduced in the text -- what an image actually shows and what is immediately apparent rather than the assumptions the reader may make about it. The next stage that Barthes identifies, connotation, is where the reader adds his own pieces of information. He fills in what is missing from the denotation stage and attempts to identify what the sign is signifying. Connotation is, then, the meaning of a sign that is arrived at through the cultural experiences a reader brings to it. This position is close to that of Dyer (1986) who advocates that the target audience "uses cultural codes already in their

possession to interpret the sign by uniting signifier and signified” (Dyer 1986: 128). It is clear then that interpretations are culturally situated.

2. Discourse Analysis: Theoretical Background

Malmkjær (1995) mentions that the term discourse analysis was first employed in 1952 by Zellig Harris as the name for ‘a method for the analysis of connected speech (or writing)’ (Harris 1952:1 quoted in Malmkjær 1995:132). In a relatively short time, the field of discourse analysis has examined issues of structure and coherence, while also placing the discussion within a broader social context. “In its established usages, discourse referred both to the interactive process and the end result of thought and communication. Discourse is the social process of making and reproducing sense(s).” (Hartley 2002: 73)

At the beginning, discourse was defined narrowly, in relation to language only. But there are many broader definitions of discourse, which are not bound to language (both spoken and written). For example, Van Leeuwen (2005) claims that

A given discourse can be realized in many ways...or through *representations* ...These representations again can take many forms- conversations...advertisements...And they can be realized not only through speech and writing but also through sound and pictures, for instance in advertisement. (Van Leeuwen 2005:98)

Since the general theoretical notion of discourse has been achieved, attention can be turned to specific discourses, such as the discourse of advertising, in which socially and culturally established sense is encountered. So, discourse analysis is the practice of deciphering the meaning of texts, and texts can be of many different forms. A text literally means a written document such as a book. Yet, semiotics, the science of signs and signification, has progressively broadened the notion of text and has used it to study and analyze semiotic units having similar characteristics as a book, for example

coherence, closure and stratification of meaning. Films and TV ads are not texts from the empirical point of view, but they can be studied, from the methodological point of view, as if they were, because they have the same formal characteristics as texts literally defined.

2.1 Advertising and Advertising Discourse

An advertisement is an announcement which aims to promote the selling of a good, a product or a service. Malefyt & Moeran (2003) define advertising as follows:

In its broadest sense, advertising is the market communication of goods and services of various sellers. Advertising was first conceived as a means of generating demand in a capitalistic system by offering specific information on a product, service, or brand, often in a persuasive format. (Malefyt & Moeran 2003:2)

That is, advertising seeks to perform a psychological action, not only to make people know a product/service, but also to persuade them to buy it. The ways in which advertisements are interpreted can reflect people own “culturally-derived values” and their “culturally-learned fantasies and aspirations.” (Hackley 2005:5)

Although it is sometimes said that there have been ads at least since classical times, it is in the USA, around 1870, that modern advertising was born. Then and there, it took the form of catalogues sent to people by mail. However, advertising in the era of color magazines, television and internet is " a new phenomenon, both in nature, quantity and effect" (Cook 2001:6). After the Second World War, the main technological innovation was the advent of the television. Shortly after, in the 1950s, television advertising started. The advent of color TV accentuated the visual dimension of advertising. By the same token, advertising was transformed in character, and became much more various than a simple definition may suggest. Now, Danesi (2002) argues, television has become “probably the most effective contemporary medium for delivering product

imagery” (Danesi 2002:195). This is the natural outcome of television having an impact on large numbers of people.

In general, ads can be said to reflect pretty closely the current trends and values system of a society, though such patterns can be different depending on culture. Frith & Mueller (2003) note that each society “exhibits unique cultural characteristics that influence consumers’ needs and wants, their methods of satisfying them, and the messages they are most likely to respond to” (Frith & Mueller 2003:28). In fact, advertising and culture are so closely related according to many scholars. For example, Du Gay (2000) made a compelling case that "advertising is so ingrained within the public consciousness that it has become an intrinsic part of popular culture" (Du Guy 2000 in Springer 2007:350).

Advertising operates in all modes at once, and must be treated accordingly. The effect of the ad is not to be found in any of the three major modes alone (*i.e.* sound, language and image), but only in their combination. An ad is not a tangible or stable entity. It is the dynamic synthesis of many components, and comes into being through them. Its function is that of persuading to buy a product or a service.

A TV ad has to achieve the goal of persuasion in a limited time and space. Its average duration is about 30 seconds. Rutherford (1988) considers this as an impressive aspect of advertising given the constraints of space and time. To quote him, "what is so impressive about the advertisement is the way it packs so much meaning into...thirty seconds of time" (Rutherford 1988:106). This is a quite big work. This is the reason why, in general, ads are not individual creations, but involve the collaboration of many people.

Hackley (2005), quoting Cook (2001), qualifies advertising as ‘parasitic’, meaning that “it draws from, and refers to, other discourse forms. Intertextual references evince other ads or other genres” (Hackley 2005:25). For the purpose, intertextuality may be used “as a tactic to try to engage consumers with points of shared cultural reference” (*ibid*). As for content, advertisers rely on a few repetitive themes: happiness, youth, success, status, luxury fashion, and beauty, to cite the most common. In this respect, the selection of a theme for a successful TV ad, for instance, is at least partly determined by the socio-cultural context. Frith & Mueller (2003) rightly argue that

Advertisers, if they are to be successful in their efforts, must become culturally sensitive—that is, tuned into the nuances of culture. Among the important elements of culture marketers must take into consideration are the verbal language..., various forms of nonverbal communication..., as well as needs and values. (Frith & Mueller 2003:30)

It is explicit in Van Leeuwen (2005), for example, that TV ads are among the forms that discourse might take. Danesi (2004) goes even a step further by asserting that “advertising has become one of the most ubiquitous, all-encompassing forms of social discourse ever devised by humans” (Danesi 2004:259). Furthermore, advertising “discourse circulates in and across institutions and it is deeply embedded in the daily life and daily interaction of almost everyone” (Talbot 2007:5). Nonetheless, advertising as discourse is unique because it is very rich and complex. Indeed, Cook (2001) says, “part of advertising’s uniqueness as a discourse form derives from its capacity to combine language with music, pictures and substance or medium” (Cook 2001:231). A TV ad, for instance, potentially contains body language, spoken utterances, symbols, visual images, and other forms of semiosis (signs and symbols). All these are means of discourse according to Fairclough (2002).

Finally, the importance of the persuasive function of advertising is now acknowledged beyond the field of marketing. Although advertising has traditionally been a means by which goods, services, and corporate identity are sold, in recent years, however, it has become even more sophisticated and now is also used to sell image, ideas and ideals. This ends the theoretical part. The coming chapters are devoted to the comparative study.

Chapter Two

Semiotic Analysis of the Rolex Ad

Signs may be images, colors, gestures, sounds, or objects and their signification (or meaning) need not be only denotational. Semiotics has proved to be a useful way to describe and analyze these signs in their multiplicity and diversity. The semiotic approach allows us not only to understand their internal organization as systems, but also how this organization enables them to be linked to their wider socio-cultural context. From a semiotic perspective, every marketing message, such as a TV ad, has three basic components: an object, a sign or symbol and an interpretant.

The TV ad subject to analysis in this chapter is an ad for the famous Rolex watches that was broadcasted on CNN International TV channel. It was recorded on June 20, 2009. Its running time is 30 seconds. The object in this TV ad takes the form of Rolex watches-- the product that is the focus of the message. The sign is, in itself, a complex combination of many signs. The interpretant is the meaning derived, or the message conveyed. To represent the message that is delivered to the receiver(s), the most important signs that have been selected for this TV ad are of four types: image, language, music and color. They serve to encode the advertising message (*i.e.* putting thoughts, ideas, or information into a symbolic form).

The Rolex TV ad is a very skillful blend of image, language and music. For its analysis, semiotics lends itself as the appropriate framework, since it can “account equally for gestures, speech, image, writing, three dimensional objects, colour, music—a theory that applies to all modes” (Somekh & Lewin 2005:172). The purpose of the analysis is to unveil the meanings of the signifying elements in the TV ad. This

involves the consideration of two axes of meaning-making: the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic. Although originally formulated to cope with the linguistic sign, “the notions of paradigm and syntagm may be extended to the pictures of ads” (Cook 2001:66).

1. Syntagmatic Axis




The syntagmatic analysis studies the ‘surface structure’ of the text (*i.e.* the TV ad). This first level of analysis involves the supplying of the literal meanings of the signs present in the TV ad. It also describes the linear order into which they combine. In this sense, it is syntagmatic. The syntagmatic structure is found in the composition of all kinds of signs. Therefore, this TV ad is considered as an organized inventory of signs, and the relations of sequence between its elements are highlighted. As noted by Tolson (1996), a wider socio-cultural and symbolic level of meaning presupposes a literal meaning. Therefore, it is only on the basis of the first level that “we may then introduce other levels of meaning which are not literal, but symbolic” (Tolson 1996:6). Hence, the significance and usefulness of starting by the syntagmatic analysis.



1.1 Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Rolex Ad



This is a TV ad for the internationally renowned luxury wristwatches manufacturer “Rolex”. It was broadcasted through the medium of the satellite channel CNN International. The channel covers a very large audience of English-speakers in the four corners of the globe. The TV ad contains a number of important shots. A shot is defined here, following Thompson & Bowen (2009), as “the smallest unit of visual information captured at one time by the camera that shows a certain action or event”




(Thompson & Bowen 2009:1). So, to start with, here is a description, in the form of a shot-by-shot breakdown of the TV ad, compiled in *table 1* below.



Table 1: Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Rolex Ad (adapted from Chandler 2001, www)




Shot	Screen Image	Audio/Text	Summary
N°1		Philharmonic classical music	Close-up shot. Profile of three golf players walking side-by-side
N°2		Philharmonic classical music	Same close-up shot. The word 'Nicklaus' appears in the foreground.
N°3		Philharmonic classical music	Cut to a mid-shot. View from front of spectators looking at Nicklaus about to shoot the ball. Trees appear at the background. Nicklaus is the only to appear in full view. The spectators are in the background. The color green (of




			<p>the grass and trees) is dominant.</p> <p>The name 'Nicklaus' is also apparent.</p>
N°4		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Same medium-shot. But Player appears instead of Nicklaus, dressed in black and wearing a golf hat and golf shoes all in white. Player hits the ball. The word 'Player' appears in the foreground.</p>
N°5		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Same mid-shot. But instead of Player, it is Palmer who appears, wearing black trousers, black shoes and a red shirt, as the shooter of the ball who has just finished the swing. The word 'Palmer' appears in the foreground.</p>
			<p>Cut to a close-up of Nicklaus, Palmer and Player. The three are walking side-by-side, in full golf</p>





<p>N°6</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>dress, along a green golf course. Many fans appear, in the back- ground, following them. Behind, there appears the green of trees. The word 'legends' is visible in the foreground.</p>
<p>N°7</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>The same close-up shot except that there appears the shade of a golf ball in the foreground with no words.</p>
<p>N°8</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Close-up of a golfer wearing a striped shirt (green and light blue) and a golf hat in a position that indicates he has just completed a golf swing .He appears twisted, holding his golf club over his shoulder and across his back. Three faces (two men and a wom- an) appear in the background star- ing admiringly.</p>

<p>N°9</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a long-shot. In the foreground appears the logo and brand of Rolex. A faceless golfer, dressed in black, appears in the background, standing on the green grass and shooting the ball. A number of spectators appear on the left side.</p>
<p>N°10</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. The back of another golfer, wearing black trousers, a red shirt, white trainers and a black golf hat, is shooting the ball. The green color (of the grass and the bush) is dominant.</p>
<p>N°11</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. The face of the golfer with the red shirt and black golf hat appears. In the background also appear the faces of the spectators (fans). The golfer appears in a position suggesting</p>

			<p>he is to take off his hat. The word 'great' appears in the foreground.</p>
<p>N°12</p>	 	<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>The same close-up. Another golfer, wearing a blue shirt, appears taking off his white golf hat smilingly as a form of greeting. In the background appear the shades of the spectators (fans). The word 'great' appears in the foreground.</p>
<p>N°13</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. A golfer appears alone, wearing a light blue shirt and hat with black trousers, and holding his golf club following a shot. The word 'names' appears in the foreground, while the background is filled by the blue of the sky.</p>

<p>N°14</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a long-shot. The spectators (fans) are moving.</p>
<p>N°15</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. A golfer, with a yellowish shirt and a black hat, after a shot in a position that indicates he has just completed a golf swing being twisted and holding his golf club over his shoulder and across his back. Yellowish grass also appears on the course edge as the background. In the foreground appears the word 'are'.</p>
<p>N°16</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a low-angle, extreme close-up of a Rolex watch, with a golden frame. In the background appear parts of a green board. The Rolex logo and brand name appear. Also appears the word 'timeless' in the foreground.</p>

<p>N°17</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a long shot. In the foreground, there is a yellowish area (sand), then a green area (grass). In the background, there appear a great number of spectators on the bleachers of the golf course. The word 'timeless' appears in the foreground.</p>
<p>N°18</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to an extreme close-up. An image of an Oyster golden Rolex watch takes up the full space.</p>
<p>N°19</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. A golfer, with a black golf hat, shoots the ball. There appears the shade of the golden frame of a watch.</p>
		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. A golfer, with a dark, blue hat and a red shirt. He is facing the viewer, with his gaze</p>

<p>N°20</p>			<p>focused in the distance, holding his golf club and looking at the extent and precision of his shot.</p>
<p>N°21</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. A young golfer, with a black hat and a yellowish shirt, appears in the foreground handing-out a booklet to an anonymous hand. In the background appears the golf course with some yellowish areas and some green areas. A number of people appear in the background.</p>
<p>N°22</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Same shot, but the booklet appears to have a green paperback cover. Also the shade of a golf ball appears in the foreground.</p>
<p>N°23</p>		<p>Philharmonic classical music</p>	<p>Cut to a mid-shot. The brand name, the logo of Rolex, as well as the motto 'a crown for every achievement' appear. The grass-green color of the logo is taking</p>

			the form of real grass in the back-ground.
--	--	--	--

To sum up, the ad unfolds to the image of three golf legends (*Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, and Gary Player*). It begins with a Close-up shot, the profile of the three golf players walking side-by-side on a golf course. This already sets the scene for the theme of golf. Next, the camera shifts to a mid-shot. It is a view from front of spectators looking at Nicklaus about to shoot the ball. Trees appear at the background and emphasize the dominance of the green color. Nicklaus is the only to appear in full view, and behind him we see the spectators (fans). Nicklaus, Palmer and Player, along with other anonymous golfers, appear shooting the golf ball in turns. Then, there is a cut to a close-up. It is a front view of Nicklaus, Palmer and Player walking side-by-side on a green, grassy golf course. Many fans appear, in the background to follow them. Then there is a cut to a close-up. We see a golfer, wearing black trousers, a red shirt and a black golf hat, taking his turn and shooting the ball. The green color (the grass and the bush) is dominant in this scene. Then a number of close-ups come in a succession. We see the face of the golfer with the red shirt and black golf hat. He is about to take off his hat. In the background also appear the faces of the spectators (fans). Then, another golfer, wearing a blue shirt, appears actually taking off his white golf hat, as a form of greeting. In the background appear the shades of the spectators (fans).

Towards the end of the ad, there is an important cut to an extreme close-up of a Rolex Oyster watch, with a golden frame. Parts of a green board appear in the background.

The word 'timeless' appears on the screen as well. The last scene is a cut to mid-shot. In it, there appear the logo and brand name of Rolex, with the grass-green color taking the form of real grass in the background, and a motto: "*A crown for every achievement*".

From the semiotic point of view, the main important signifiers to appear in the ad, as a syntagm, are: the three golf celebrities, the golf ball, the golf course, the fans, the Oyster Rolex watch, the green color and of course the logo and brand name of Rolex.

2. Paradigmatic Axis

The paradigmatic analysis seeks to identify the various paradigms (or pre-existing sets of signifiers) which underlie the manifest content of the Rolex ad. This aspect of structural analysis involves "a consideration of the positive or negative connotations of each signifier, and the existence of 'underlying' thematic paradigms". (Chandler 2007:87)

This is applied in the analysis of both ads in this case study. The analysis involves, for instance, "comparing and contrasting each of the signifiers present in the TV ad with absent signifiers which in similar circumstances might have been chosen", and considering the socio-cultural significance of the choices being made. (Chandler 2007:87)

For this purpose, the structuralist semiotic 'commutation test' is used in order to identify distinctive signifiers and to define their significance. That is, determining whether a change on the level of the signifier leads to a corresponding change on the level of the signified.

2.1 The Golf Paradigm

Sport is probably among the few subjects that fascinate everyone in the world. It is of interest to all social classes, though interests may differ in form and extent across different social layers. Thus, it “offers a compelling resource for advertisers because of the meanings and passion that consumers already invest in teams and players” (Kennedy & Hills 2009:132). Many people now feel more concerned by sport than almost anything else in their lives. It is this feeling that is mobilized by the Rolex TV ad, which creates a powerful and complex message through a skilful mixture of pictures, language and music.

The Rolex ad uses sport, in general, and golf in particular, as a major cultural signifier. In it, there are two distinct pictorial perspectives. There is the social world of golf (players, fans & course) and the product (Rolex watches). The association between the two is not fortuitous. Rather, it is clearly motivated by socio-cultural factors. A Rolex and a golf game are not seen simply as a watch and a sport, but rather as a sign system conveying meanings related to matters such as status, taste, sophistication, etc. The people, who appear in the TV ad, endorsers and fans alike, are representative of a social type, namely, the social elite. Consumers purchase Rolex watches and assume that these products will signify a certain social class, status and lifestyle. They believe in the idea expressed by Berger (2004) that “when you have appropriated the signifiers, you have captured, so to speak, the signified” (Berger 2004:09).

By applying the ‘commutation test’, as used by structuralists, we see that golf was selected from a set of possible sport paradigms which include, for instance, basketball and baseball. In the USA, the former “has become the urban, African-American sport

par excellence” (Bairner 2001:106). The latter appeals “primarily to members of the working classes, especially new immigrants” (Lewis 2007:5). Golf, on the other hand, is closely allied with “the affluent and native born” (Lewis 2007:5). This idea of associating golf and social elite was further enhanced by a couple of facts: first, many American presidents have associated themselves with this sport. Both President Eisenhower and his successor President Kennedy, for instance, were good golfers (Lewis 2007: viii). Second, the USA is home to the Masters and the U.S. Open -- the two most prestigious tournaments of golf in the world.

Since Rolex is targeting the upper social classes, and golf is an elitist sport, naturally enough, it is the golf paradigm which has been used in the TV ad. Furthermore, within the golf paradigm itself, the selection of Nicklaus, Palmer and Player as endorsers is not random either. Like all celebrities, the three golfers have both a social identity (as they appear to others) and a private identity (as they appear to themselves). The TV ad uses an existing sign system (*i.e.* the aura of Nicklaus, Palmer and Player) and translates it into another system: the world of Rolex watches (*i.e.* consumer goods). The appeal of three celebrities as iconic representation is exploited at full stretch. The first player, Nicklaus, nicknamed “The Golden Bear”, “has been considered the greatest golfer of all time since the mid-1970s” (Kalb 2006:17). The second, Palmer, “was a magnetic personality who brought fans to the television set” (Kalb 2006:83). The last golfer (but by no means least), Player, nicknamed the “Black Knight”, was for years the best and most popular golfer of the world. It was professional golfer Arnold Palmer, for instance, who really put The Masters on the map. He was followed by Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player, and together they were known as the “Big Three”. In the

nine years beginning in 1958, when Palmer won his first Masters, the “Big Three” (*see fig. 1*) won eight times, ushering in what was later referred to as “the golden age of golf ” (Henderson 2009:553-4). So, at a first semiotic level, their images are used in the ad to function as icons. At a second semiotic level, the three stand for the ‘myth’ of celebrity as defined by Barthes (2006).

3. Denotation and Connotation

The TV ad suggests, by analogy, that the Rolex golden watch performs like the Golden Three; and that the Golden Three perform like the Rolex golden watch. That is, there is a strong association between the achievement in golf and the performance of a Rolex watch. To borrow Williamson’s (1978) words, there is a process of “translation” between the area of goods and the area of social life, whereby “values from different areas of our lives are made interchangeable” (Williamson 1978:25 cited in Kennedy & Hills 2009:122-3). Hence Rolex, as a brand, has attained its status as cultural icon by acquiring meaning that reaches far beyond the physical act of consumption.

The linking of Rolex watches with exceptional individuals and achievements has a long history. In fact, all begun in 1927, when a young woman (Mercedes Gleitze) swam through the icy waters of the English Channel wearing a Rolex Oyster. That exceptional achievement marked the beginning of the long tradition of linking Rolex with celebrities. By purchasing the Rolex watch, the TV ad suggests that the consumer is buying the status and success of Nicklaus, Palmer or Player (*see fig. 1*).



Fig.1: Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus & Arnold Palmer, the “Big Three”

(Source: www.australianseniorgolfer.com.au)

As Kennedy & Hills (2009) note, the TV ad presents connections by juxtaposition, leaving the consumers to fill in the gaps, by constructing the meaning for the product on the basis of what they already know. At the semiotic level, the viewers of the TV ad, it is assumed, rely on a set of associations. At the discursive level, they rely on a set of connotations, all of which are anchored in the socio-cultural environment of the TV ad.

As mentioned before, the notion of connotation was elaborated by Hjelmslev and applied in the work of Barthes, and others, to the whole cultural field. It refers to the cultural meanings that become attached to words, and other forms of communication, involving the symbolic, historic and emotional matters related to them. The connections that the TV ad seeks to make belong to another sign system in which Nicklaus, Palmer and Player are celebrity golfers, epitomizing the glamour and success of golf. This is what Barthes (2006) refers to as ‘mythology’. Danesi (2004) posits that “most of the meanings that signs bear in cultural settings are connotative” (Danesi 2004:13).

For example, the TV ad uses color repetition to lend symbolic value to the product, as when the green of the Rolex logo (*see shots 9 & 23*) repeats that of the grassy golf course in the previous images. Harmony between the product and the context is effect-

ed by the echo of the color of the grass in the color of the Rolex logo. So, in this TV ad, the green color (mainly of grass on the golf course) strongly connotes with the grass-green of the background in the Rolex logo (*see fig. 2*).



Fig.2: The Rolex Logo

(Source: www.rolex.com)

4. Four Semiotic Modes of Signification

The term mode is used here to refer to the choice between four means of communication: image, language, music and color. Each may be further subdivided in various ways. Music may be orchestral or solo, amplified or acoustic, pictures may be still or motion, cartoon or photographic; language may be sung (in which case it overlaps with music), spoken or written or signed; and each of these may be further subdivided (Cook 2001:42). What makes, indeed, a mode mode-like is “its availability as a resource for making signs in a social-cultural group”. (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:346)

4.1 Image

Images are signs, and semiotic theory explains the communicative functions of images using the same constructs that explain the function of words. Arguably, images “can take the form of rhetorical figures, and rhetoric explains the function of these figures using the same tools as for words” (Scott & Batra 2003:216). In the present TV ad, the

images of Nicklaus, Player and Palmer are iconic in that they represent the signifieds, but simultaneously, they also signify their status in society indexically. Furthermore, they also point indexically to the whole community of golf (*i.e.* golfers and fans as well). Also, the product has a dual and ambiguous identity. According to Cook (2001), “by having its own brand-name written on it, every product is both itself and an ad for itself” (Cook 2001:30). For instance, this TV ad uses an iconic image of the product to identify it without ambiguity. The Rolex Oyster watch (*i.e.* the product) appears three times in the TV ad. The first, it appears on the wrist of an anonymous golfer. Then, in the form of a clock in the golf course (*see fig. 3 & 4*), and last on its own, taking the totality of space, in *shot 18*. In all three cases, the image works as an icon because the signifier is an image of the signified, but simultaneously it works as an index to refer to all Rolex collections (e.g. Oyster, Cellini and Tudor). Additionally, the low angle of the shot (*see fig.4*), looking up to the object, suggests greatness. A Rolex is presented as a symbol of greatness.



Fig.3: An Oyster Rolex Watch

(Source: www.rolex.com)

Apart from the image of the products, there is also an important place for the logo as an image. The logo functions as the face of the brand so that the brand can be seen. If a brand is to be successful, brand awareness (being able to recall an example of the

brand) must be connected to a brand image. The logo is central to the brand image, and repeated exposure to the logo is the key to brand awareness. The logo can be understood as an indexical sign of the producer of the product (Kennedy and Hills 2009: 166). In this TV ad, the logo of Rolex is salient around the middle (*see shot 9*) and at the end (*see shot 23*).



Fig.4: Rolex as Appears in the Golf Course, with the Logo

(Source: The Rolex Ad)

4.2 Language

Language, the purely linguistic semiotic mode, is present in this TV ad only in the written form. The three proper names *Nicklaus*, *Player* and *Palmer* are the first linguistic signifiers to appear in the TV ad in this order. Because they are proper names of golf celebrities, there is no ambiguity in the relationship between signifier and signified. But with the word '*legends*', which appears after, the signified is not as straightforward. The signifier '*legends*' may refer to the Big Three, and in this case the meaning would be '*Nicklaus, Player and Palmer are legends*'. But '*legends*' could equally refer to the Rolex watches in which case the meaning becomes '*Rolex watches are legends*'. The next word to be used in the TV ad, and which is also ambiguous, is

'great'. If understood to be the beginning of the expression '*great names are timeless*', it would be an attributive adjective, used as a pre-modifier for the noun '*names*'. But if taken individually, '*great*' would be an approving exclamation, possibly said by the spectators, or the fans, following a successful shot. This is more likely so, because the image coinciding with the word is that of a golfer taking off his golf hat, smilingly (*see shot 12*). In the Western culture, this happens as a greeting or as a response to a greeting. The two other words that are ambiguous in the TV ad are '*names*' and '*timeless*'. '*Names*' can refer to the Big Three, and other golf icons, which seem to resist the passing of time and thus remain '*timeless*'. Or, '*names*' can refer to brand names, such as Rolex, which also resist the passing of time as well as the changes in fashion trends to seem '*timeless*'. The signifier '*crown*', in the caption '*A crown for every achievement*', has also two possible signifieds. Fiske (1990), referring to Barthes (1964), states that "the signs in the visual images are confirmed by the caption" (Fiske 1990:110). As a metaphor, the word '*crown*' would refer to any material or moral distinction prizing a great achievement, for example in the field of golf. As a metonymy (*see chapter 5*), it would refer to a Rolex watch; because a crown appears as part of the logo just above the text (*see shot 23 & fig. 2*). The crown, which is a part, stands for the whole logo by a process of metonymy and the logo points to the product indexically. These are called puns, and in a pun, one signifier relates to two signifieds. Puns simultaneously surprise and entertain, expressing multiple meanings with a single word or phrase. The general image of celebrity is reinforced by the caption, which is an example of hyperbole:

'A crown for every achievement'.

4.3 Music

In modern advertising, music has an important role. Not only is it highly entertaining, making the ad more attractive, but it is also an effective way to engage the attention of the target audience. For instance, in the Rolex ad, music fulfils a decisive role in a way that complements and emphasizes the function of image and language. Like language, music is essentially a semiotic system. Yet unlike language, music cannot be interpreted with any degree of consensus as referring to specific states or events in the world. In this sense, “music has a syntax, but no semantics” (Cook 2001:50). However, music “does have, as language also has, connotations” (Cook 2001:50). The classical, philharmonic music used invokes the TV ad’s themes of celebrity, elitism, affluence, etc. In the Western cultural tradition, classical music belongs to so-called high culture, along with fine art and great literature. And “as a system of cultural symbols, music is inseparable from its cultural context, the values, attitudes and beliefs ... of the people who create it” (Cook 2001:208). Thus, the meaning of the accompanying piece of music, in the sense of its connotation, seems to be completely determined by its associations with the images and the verbal text.

Additionally, the association of a given music with the identity of a certain product/producer may aid product recall. This is much likely so when we consider the case of Rolex trying to link its identity to classical music as well as elite sports (golf, yachting, etc.). Apart from sport celebrities, many endorsers of Rolex are classical musicians (*see official website <http://www.rolex.com>*).

4.4 Color

Probably, color is the characteristic mode for the age of multimodality. “It can combine freely with many other modes...but not exist on its own. It can survive only in a multimodal environment” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:351). At the denotation level, colors are “gradations of hue on the light spectrum” (Danesi 2004:69). However, their socio-cultural meanings rest on associations. Indeed, color “has an associative value, as when we associate red with flames or blood, or other phenomena of high symbolic and emotive value” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:355).

There are many colors used in the Rolex TV ad. Yet, the ad is dominated by the green color. The use of colors in the TV ad has a threefold function: practical, esthetic and symbolic. At the practical level, colors permit a smooth shift from one shot to the other. Esthetically, they keep the harmony and beauty of the TV ad. At the symbolic level, colors (especially green and yellow) are used to create and maintain the association between people, products and brand name. Kress & Van Leeuwen (2002) note that color, as a semiotic resource, is motivated in its “constitution by the interests of the makers of the signs, and not at all arbitrary or anarchic” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:345). This is why corporations are increasingly using specific colors or color schemes to denote their unique identities. Color in this TV ad is connecting objects (*i.e.* Rolex watches) with a lifestyle and a social world (*i.e.* the lifestyle of the elite and their social world). Esthetically, green, composed of the primaries yellow and blue, is said to harmonize with red, the third of the three primaries. Furthermore, in the hierarchy of colors, “green is the ‘bourgeoisie’ ” (Kandinsky 1977 quoted in Kress & Van Leeuwen 2002:354). In this sense, and in respect of the connotative associations of the

signs, green connotes with the upper social class targeted by the TV ad. The other color to have a highly symbolic value is yellow (with its variants). This color echoes with the color of gold, and Rolex Oyster Watches are golden. Also, the brand name 'Rolex', in the logo, is in yellow, which furthers the association between Rolex, gold and elite social class. As for the colors of the clothes worn by the golfers, broadly speaking, colors are fulfilling a practical and an esthetic function except for Player. Gary Player has been called the Black Knight because one of his superstitions is to always wear black. To feature him in the TV ad, dressed in black, adds to the authenticity (and hence persuasiveness) of his image, and enhances the association between Player the golf icon and Player the endorser of Rolex.

Chapter Three


Semiotic Analysis of the Nedjma Ad




This is a TV ad for the mobile telephony operator Nedjma. The ad was first broadcasted on the Algerian Television on May 18, 2006. Its running time is 66 seconds. Since there are many voices in the TV ad, I am using labels in order to distinguish between them. The words uttered by the different people are in Arabic. Accordingly, I am also using the following Arabic labels (in Arabic script) to introduce the different voices: الأطفال؛ الطفل؛ بعزيز؛ زيدان؛ صوت نسائي. The labels are written in bold characters and italicized. In the remaining part of the work, whenever needed my own English translation is provided into square brackets.




1. Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Nedjma Ad






The shot-by-shot analysis of the Nedjma Ad is summarized in table 2 below.




Table 2: Shot-by-Shot Breakdown of the Nedjma Ad (adapted from Chandler 2001, WWW)






Shot	Screen Image	Audio/Text	Summary
N°1		<i>الأطفال:</i> هاك هاك [This way, this way] لا أنا الي نعرف نخدم [No, it's me who knows how to	Mid-shot of four children, three sitting down on the doorsteps of a small door and the fourth standing up. The four are discussing playfully.






		do] ما تعرفش [You don't know]	
N°2		بغريز: زقا حس الصبي اليوم تديري حالا [The child's voice loudly said 'today you are to do well']	Cut to a close shot. A view of one of the children, wearing a green shirt and holding a plastic wrapping of milk.
N°3		بغريز: راني في يامات حلال [I'm in good days]	Another close-up as the plastic wrapping is in the hands of the other child, wearing blue jeans, a black jacket and torn slippers, all of which are not fitting his size. The plastic wrapping has become a hand-made football.
N°4		بغريز: ذاك الصغر الغالي [That dear childhood]	A close-up on the third child, wearing a shirt in the colors of the Algerian football team, and a chain around his neck.

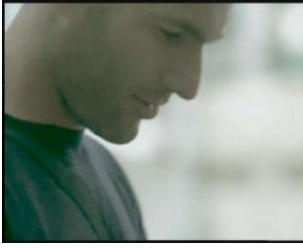



<p>N°5</p>		<p>الأطفال: اووو ابيي [Ooo, hey !] الطفل: باسي باسي باسي [Pass ! Pass ! Pass !] بعزيز: اليوم في قلبي لآمان [Now, I'm in peace]</p>	<p>Cut to a medium shot. The four children appear playing on the street. Two are playing with the hand-made ball, and two are playing with a traditional handmade chariot. In the foreground appears a woman with a white traditional veil holding a traditional bag.</p>
<p>N°6</p>			<p>Close-up on the child wearing the Algerian football team shirt (on the chariot). The child is holding up both hands and screams joyfully. He is wearing short orange trousers.</p>
<p>N°7</p>		<p>بعزيز: و شمس بلادي تلالي [My country's sun is shining]</p>	<p>Cut to a long-shot. The chariot is put aside and the children appear playing football. Some graffiti appear on the wall.</p>





N°8			Cut to a close-up. One of the children appears, wearing an orange shirt and smiling.
N°9			Cut to a mid-shot. From the darkness of an underground parking appears the shadow of a man.
N°10			Cut to a mid-shot. The man is getting out of the parking, but we see just his back. He has an orange bag. On his right, there is a motorcycle and next to it, there is a metallic ladder.
N°11			Cut to a close-up. A child appears wearing a green shirt and a black bobble hat.
N°12		<p>الطفل:</p> <p>اي عمو باسي</p> <p>[Hey, uncle ! pass the ball]</p> <p>بغيريز:</p>	Cut to a mid-shot. The hand-made ball falls next to a man. Only his feet appear. He is wearing black trousers and white trainers. Part of the orange bag also appears.

		<p>أنت عزيز يا محبوب</p> <p>[You're dear and loved]</p>	
N°13			<p>Cut to a close-up. Two children appear behind a metallic fence, one is wearing the Algerian team shirt and the other is wearing a green shirt.</p>
N°14			<p>Cut to a close-up. The face of Zidane appears. He is looking upwards.</p>
N°15		<p>الأطفال:</p> <p>ايبيه زيدان</p> <p>[Hey Zidane!]</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. The other two children appear behind the metallic fence screaming joyfully. The first is wearing an orange shirt, while the second is wearing a hat and a vest both colored in white.</p>
		<p>بعزيز:</p> <p>خلي تتكلم القلوب</p>	<p>Cut to a long-shot. Zidane appears, from back, with his orange</p>

N°16		[Let hearts speak]	bag, about to shoot the ball to the four children facing him, on the parking terrace.
N°17			Cut to a mid-shot. Zidane appears playing with the ball skillfully.
N°18		<p>بغزير: مهما الشمس تطول في الغروب</p> <p>[Whatever time sunset takes]</p>	<p>Another mid-shot, in which appears a board in the foreground. Some scripts appear on the board in both Arabic and French. Zidane appears still playing with the children's ball.</p>
N°19			Cut to a close-up. The face of the child wearing the shirt of the Algerian team appears behind the metallic fence.
N°20		<p>بغزير: ترجع تضوي على بلادي</p>	Cut to a mid-shot. Zidane shoots the ball in direction of the children.

		[It'll light again my country]	The ball falls again from the terrace.
N°21		بغريز: أصلك جزائري فرحان بيك [Your Algerian origin is proud of you]	Cut to amid-shot. Zidane appears with his orange bag, climbing the metallic ladder with the ball in his hands.
N°22			Cut to a mid-shot. Zidane meets the four children on the terrace.
N°23			Cut to a close-up. The child is taking-off his shirt, with the colors of the Algerian football team, and giving it to Zidane.
N°24			Extreme close-up. The shirt of the Algerian football team appears. The Algerian flag, with the word 'ALGERIE' is clearly apparent on the shirt.

N°25		<p>بغريز: شوف النور الي عليك</p> <p>[Look at the light shining upon you]</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. The face of Zidane, with a loving gaze, appears.</p>
N°26			<p>Cut to another close-up. The first child is wearing a white under-shirt, and his neck-chain appears now to have a star. Of the second child, we see only his orange shirt.</p>
N°27		<p>زيدان: نحبها</p> <p>[I love it]</p>	<p>A close-up. Zidane kisses the shirt with the Algerian National colors. Then, he kisses the child.</p>
N°28		<p>بغريز: راهو كل شي بين يديك</p> <p>[Everything is within your</p>	<p>Cut to a close-up. The first child holds the star of his neck-chain in his hand to show it. The orange shirt of the second child appears.</p>

		hands] <i>الطفل:</i> و انا انحب الي يحبها [And I love those who love it]	
N°29			Cut to a mid-shot. Zidane hugs all the children.
N°30			Cut to a close-up. Zidane appears talking to the child with the orange shirt.
N° 31		<i>بغريز:</i> تبع النجمة الي تضويك [Follow the star that light you]	Cut to a long-shot. Zidane appears sitting, on the chariot, with the four children next to the wall. A painted goal (two goalposts and a crossbar) appears behind them.
N°32		<i>صوت نسائي:</i> نجمة [Nedjma] نحبها و نحب الي	Cut to a mid-shot. The logo and brand name of Nedjma, with the caption ‘ نحبها و نحب الي يحبها ‘.

		يحبها [I love it and I love those who love it]	
--	--	---	--

2. Syntagmatic Axis

The syntagmatic axis is the axis of signs combination. To emphasize what has already been mentioned (*see chapter 1*), on this axis each sign is related to what precedes or follows it and thus generates meaning. Syntagms also allow signs to be organized. A syntagm is thus defined by “its opposition to that which follows or proceeds it” (Dyer 1986: 126), so that a syntagm in advertising is in fact the advert - or the advert series “as they appear on the screen” (*ibid*). A syntagmatic analysis, then, involves the study of spatial as well as temporal relationships between the different signifying elements.

For instance, the message in the present TV ad a chain of visual, verbal and aural signs which are organized and interact with one another to produce a meaningful whole. The TV ad opens with a mid-shot of four children discussing playfully and making a hand-made ball. The combination of the children’s image with the football already sets the scene for the TV ad, by announcing that the theme of football is used. At the semiotic level, the image of the children is an icon, whereas the image of the ball is an index which refers to the sport of football. However, at the symbolic level the children stand for young Algeria whereas the ball, being hand-made, stands for the popular masses. It is known that in popular areas and among less privileged classes, children used to

make balls by recycling materials such as paper, cloth and plastic. This idea is furthered by plastic wrapping (filled with paper) of milk used also as an index. On the plastic wrapping we can read easily ‘Lait Pasteurisé’ and ‘حليب مبستر’ respectively in Standard French and Standard Arabic. Milk wrapped in this way is typically consumed by laypeople in Algeria.

With respect to the image of children, clothing is also used as an important cultural signifier. Among the four, three children are well-dressed and reflect the fashion of their age. However, the fourth is wearing out-of-fashion clothes and torn slippers which are not fitting his size. Semiotically speaking, the three children refer indexically to the better-off, while the fourth child is an index which points to the poor fringe of the Algerian society. At the symbolic level also, the colors of the clothes include green, white, red and orange. The latter is the color of the mobile telephony company Nedjma, while the former are the three Algerian national colors (*see fig. 5*). From a semiotic viewpoint, the orange clothes refer indexically to the orange of the company’s logo. In turn, the orange of the logo stands as a symbol for the whole company (*see shot 32*). Likewise, the clothes in green and white in addition to the red star in the logo, all point indexically to the Algerian flag.



Fig.5: The Algerian National Colors

(Source: www.world-free-printable-flags.com)

Additionally, the flag as such is used as a signifier in the TV ad. It appears clearly on the shirt of the Algerian football team worn by one of the children. This is meant mainly to strengthen the association, in the minds of the viewers, between the company (Nedjma) and the country (Algeria). By the same token, it is meant to associate, symbolically, the service provided by Nedjma with the national feelings of the targeted consumers.

Then, with a shift of the camera to the street, by means of a cut to a medium shot, other elements in the Algerian culture appear. The handmade chariot, the Algerian traditional white veil and the traditional shopping bag (called respectively *hayek m'ramma* 'حايك مرممة' and *koffa* 'قففة' in Algerian Arabic) are such elements. Their use is meant to create a sense of authenticity in the TV ad. The traditional shopping bag and veil belong to the Algerian tradition especially in Algiers and its neighborhood. The last important scene shift in the syntagmatic organization of the TV ad is realized through a cut to a long-shot. It shows an empty space used as a football pitch by the children. The latter shot echoes many common scenes, in popular areas, of children playing

football on streets and public places. The four children appear playing football, while putting the handmade chariot aside.

Then, a cut to a close-up shows one of the most important signs in the Nedjma ad for the first time: the face of Zidane. Zidane is looking upwards, and through a cut to a close-up, the two children appear behind a metallic fence screaming joyfully: hey Zidane! Hey Zidane! At this stage, there is a successful combination of image, language and music. The image of Zidane, with his orange bag, climbing the metallic ladder to meet the children is synchronous with the popular music of Baaziz and its lyrics which say: 'أصلك جزائري فرحان بيك' [your Algerian origin is proud of you].

That is, "*the Algerians are proud of you and love you Zidane as you are coming towards them*". This sentiment is shown to be reciprocal. Zidane also loves Algeria and Algerians. These feelings are expressed in the TV ad first by image and then explicitly by words. A cut to a close-up shows the child taking off his shirt (in the colors of the Algerian football team), and giving it to Zidane. The Algerian flag and the word 'ALGERIE' are clearly apparent on the shirt. Zidane kisses the shirt, says in Algerian Arabic 'نحبها', [I love it], and then kisses the child.

Just after, another important sign in the syntagmatic structure of the TV ad is introduced. In a cut to a close-up, the child appears holding the star of his neck-chain in his hand to show it (*see shot 28*). The orange shirt of the other child appears next to him. He kisses the star and says in Algerian Arabic: 'وانا انحب الي يحبها', [and I love those who love it]. Bearing in mind that orange is the color of Nedjma, that a star is part of its logo, and that a star is called 'نجمة' [nedjma] in both Standard and Algerian Arabic,

there is a nice and subtle play of words and signs in this syntagmatic sequence. A point to which I shall return in the analysis in chapter four.

The last two shots are a condensation of the most important signs used in the TV ad. Zidane is sitting, on the handmade chariot, with the children in their ‘stadium’ with a painted goal behind them. Then, the logo and brand name of Nedjma appear. A motto appears written on the screen: ‘نحبها و نحب الي يحبها’ [I love it and I love those who love it]. The same words are said by a female voice-over.

3. Paradigmatic Axis

The paradigmatic axis of analysis is the level at which associations and connotations appear. In a TV ad many signs, of many different types, are used to make up a message—a selling message. Obviously, all the signs present in a TV ad are related to each other, but not only. They are also related to other signs which are absent from the TV ad, but present in the socio-cultural environment in which it is used.

There are very few forms of social life that can move relatively easily across socio-cultural boundaries. Arguably, sport is one of those forms. While we can think of advertisements as containing a selling message, we need to consider not just the content of advertising, but its form as well. The surface meaning of a TV ad, for instance, is only one level of signification. The way the TV ad is constructed, as well as the paradigm within which it functions are equally meaningful as will be described below.

3.1. The Football Paradigm

One of the special things about the football game is that it can be played by everyone; and any observer cannot but acknowledge that football has clearly a dominant place in

present-day Algerian culture. It has become more than a game—a passion. Historically speaking, football was the first organized team sport to be introduced in Algeria. That was around 1910 according to Seddiki (1982). Nevertheless; the roots of its prominence (as a sport and as a symbol) go as far as the Algerian War of Liberation. One cannot ignore the fact that ever since its foundation (in April 1958); the FLN football team has become a symbol for Algerian freedom fight, especially abroad. Thus, it has established, in the minds of the Algerian people, a link between football and the nation-state that was kept and enhanced ever since. This is how the football team created by the F.L.N. (Front de Libération National) became a symbol for the whole nation. After independence, the symbolic character of sports in general, and football in particular, has been enhanced by the succeeding political regimes. Ben Bella, first President of independent Algeria, was a former footballer who played for ‘l’Olympique de Marseille’ as a professional. Furthermore, all presidents, from Ben Bella to Bouteflika, have patronized the football competition called ‘Cup of Algeria’, and were keen to personally handle the cup to the winner. Consequently, football has become a prominent component in the Algerian culture. To support the national football team has become a way to show one’s nationalism. To go a bit further, one may say that no other cultural component can mobilize the Algerian people as does football. Witness for this the Algerian masses that went in streets, by the millions, to celebrate the victory over Egypt at the end of the 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifications (Algeria won 1 nil). So, it is no wonder that the Nedjma TV ad is using an existing sign system, the aura of the international footballer Zinédine Zidane, and translating it into another system: the world of mobile telephony. In fact, Nedjma is trying to exploit, to the maximum, the

fact that there is a continual process of translation between the world of goods and services and the world of celebrity and fame. This is the very idea expressed by Williamson (1978) when she says: “Advertisements are constantly translating between systems of meaning, and therefore constitute a vast meta-system where values from different areas of our lives are made interchangeable.” (Williamson 1978, cited in Kennedy & Hills 2009:122-3)

It is not Zidane’s physical appearance that is important as much as what his image signifies in the sign system of celebrity football. The question that comes to the mind at this point is: why Zidane and not someone else? The following paragraph is devoted to the answer.

3.2 The Paradigmatic Selection of a Celebrity: Zidane

The beginning of the 21st century has seen celebrity obsession dominating advertising. Companies were competing to have their products or services endorsed by sport personalities and other celebrities. In the case of Algeria, if there is a sport that is ever to mobilize people most, it is football. But at the time the Nedjma TV ad was conceptualized (*i.e.* 2006); Algerian football was at the midst of a very difficult phase of its history. Algeria was absent from important international competitions, such as the FIFA World Cup and the CAF African Cup, for a long time. Furthermore, since the golden generation of Assad, Madjer and Belloumi, no outstanding footballer emerged in Algeria. On the other hand, there was Zidane who was considered by many to be among the best football players ever. It is he who led France to a memorable World Cup in 1998 by scoring two goals in the final (against Brazil). His individual awards include the European Footballer of the Year (Golden Ball 1998) and FIFA World Player of the

Year (1998 & 2000). More importantly, he was from Algerian descent (he was born June 23, 1972, in Marseille, France, in a family of Algerian immigrants). For this reason, Zidane has become a symbol, almost a myth, for millions of Algerians, especially the younger generation; because they saw in him a kind of compensation, in the absence of a ‘genuine’ Algerian symbol. Nedjma selected Zidane as a celebrity for its ad for this motivation; and has also explicitly emphasized the fact that Zidane has Algerian roots in its TV ad. The company has also benefited from the official political interest in Zidane which coincided with its advertising campaign. In 2006, following the FIFA World Cup, President Bouteflika sent a greeting message to Zidane which said, among other things, “since you have never forgotten the country of your origin, Algeria and Algerians are proud of you. They do not forget you” (Fates 2009:16, *my translation, French original*). The same year, Zidane is treated as a national hero and awarded the highest distinction in Algeria, the Athir Medal, by the President himself (*see fig.6 & El Moudjahid, 11 July 2006, for example*). The combination of all these circumstances made the selection of Zidane the best available option for the company. In its TV ad, Nedjma is presenting Zidane as a national sporting hero of the national sporting pastime (football).



Fig.6: President Bouteflika Awarding Zidane the Athir Medal

(Source: www.billeltourdz.skyblog.com)

3.3 Denotation and Connotation

Connotations are the secondary, cultural meanings of signs. In this TV ad, many of the signs used have socio-cultural connotations in addition to their denotation or basic, literal meaning. To start with, the image of Zidane is the signifier that has most importance in the TV ad along with the logo of Nedjma. The pivotal image of Zidane connotes with fame, success and a certain sense of patriotism. The idea emphasized in the TV ad is that, although he is a footballer of a world stature, he has never forgotten his Algerian origin. On the contrary, he is very proud of it. Also, the fact that he says, in the TV ad, 'نحبها' [I love it] in Algerian Arabic and not in French, reinforces the same connotation. Two other signs bearing a strong socio-cultural connotation are the traditional white veil and the traditional shopping bag. In fact, the written literature on those traditional artifacts is rather scarce. Nevertheless, according to elder Algerian people, the use of the traditional shopping bag goes back to the Ottoman era. The traditional white veil is perhaps even older. At any rate, by the 18th century, the traditional white veil was well established as the costume worn outside the home in Algiers (Belkaid 2003). The white veil connotes with the beauty and purity of the Algerian woman. Supposedly also, Algiers owes, at least partly, its famous nickname 'Algiers the White' to the widespread use of the white traditional veil. The white of the veils mirrored the white of the walls and thus created a nice panoramic view in which the white color was dominant. Later, during the War of Independence (1954-62), both of them were used, especially in Algiers, for the transportation of arms and secret documents. At the social level, the veil and the bag are closely associated with visiting fam-

ily or relatives. Moreover, to visit other people, traditionally the Algerian woman always put on her veil and took something in the bag as a gift. In some sense mobile telephony (the service provided by Nedjma) is now doing something similar. That is helping to keep social ties between people. This TV ad takes fuel from the collective memory of the Algerian people. It uses shared prior cultural experience to attribute meaning to the symbolic representation of its service. So, the veil and shopping bag are associated with all those positive connotations in the minds of the Algerian people. Furthermore, all the colors used in the TV ad have positive connotations. As mentioned before, white connotes with purity and beauty, green, red, and white (taken together) connote with nationalism and patriotism, while orange connotes with fascination, happiness and creativity. The whole is accentuated by the striking pleasant general atmosphere established by the joyful laughter and cries of the children; as well as the cheerful smile of Zidane.

At the end of this section, a word should be said about the very brand name of the company—Nedjma. In fact, Nedjma connotes with one of the founding works of Algerian literature of French expression entitled *Nedjma*. It is a well known and popular novel written by Kateb Yacine that was first published in 1956. In the novel, Nedjma is also the name of a female character. There is a long-standing controversy about the significance of the novel; since its world authorizes several possible readings. For example, Nedjma can stand symbolically either for the country—Algeria, or for the rising star of Algerian nationalism. Also, Nedjma is partly Arab (her potential father ‘Si Mokhtar’ is an Algerian), partly French (her mother is French, possibly of a Jewish origin). So, she can represent the heterogeneity of Algerian culture and identity

as well (Gikandi 2003:361). Obviously, this adds to the connotative load expressed by the TV ad. (I shall return to this point with more depth in chapter four).

4. Four Semiotic Modes of Signification

The message in this TV ad is conveyed through a skilful blend of signs. The signs belong to four major modes of signification: image, language, music and color.

4.1 Image

Image is the most important semiotic mode in the TV ad of Nedjma. This is seen in the great number, and rich variety, of shots used in the TV ad and in the part played by image in the structure of its discourse. The signs sometimes are simple and work either as icons, indexes or symbols. Sometimes they are more complex and simultaneously belong to more than one category. For instance, the image of Zidane operates on several semiotic levels. It is an iconographic element at the simplest level of reference (Zidane as a footballer), but at a more complex level it carries a rich variety of symbolic meanings (masculine symbol, metaphor for success, etc). Chronologically, the first image to appear in the TV ad is the image of the four children. As an icon, the children stand for what they are. That is, just four children. But this sign is also used indexically because it suggests an additional meaning. As an index, this image points to all Algerian children. As a symbol, however, the children stand for young Algeria. Algeria is a young country in the sense that it won its independence less than fifty years ago. But not only. Algeria is also young because 62% of its total population is aged between 15 and 64 (Kurian 2007:33). By large the great majority. This fringe of the society constitutes the main target of the TV ad.

In this TV ad, the clothes worn by the children indexically underline their social position (poor, rich, etc). The hand-made ball, in addition to its iconicity, points indexically both to the sport of football and to the popular class within the Algerian society (*i.e.* those who cannot afford to buy a real ball). The woman's white traditional veil, the traditional shopping bag and the traditional chariot all point indexically to the Algerian culture, especially its part related with the popular masses. However, the image of Zidane, pivotal in the semiotic structure of the TV ad, is clearly iconic as well as symbolic. The shirt of the Algerian national football team and the star in the chain around the neck of the boy are equally important indexes. Additionally, the five-point star has a symbolic value in the Algerian society with regard to religion. It is a symbol of the five pillars of Islam, especially when associated with the crescent as in the Algerian flag. The shirt points to the country, Algeria, whereas the star points to the telephony company Nedjma. The logo of the company works also as an index. Finally, the TV ad, as a whole works as an index which points to the availability of a service of mobile telephony.

4.2 Language

Language is powerful and omnipresent in this TV ad's structure. There is language in the spoken form, manifested in the lyrics of the song throughout the TV ad, the shouting of the children, in addition to the final spoken slogan. The lyrics and all the words or expressions said by the children, the female voice-over and Zidane are all in Algerian Arabic (*i.e.* the non-standard and more popular form of Arabic also known as *Darija*). This is the most widespread form of language in Algeria. It is used and understood by all the fringes of the Algerian society (except some native speakers of Berber).

However, a word of caution should be said about accent. The child who says ‘ وانا انحب ’ (see shot 28) is using an accent which is closer to Tunisian Arabic than to Algerian Arabic. It seems to me that Karoui & Karoui (the Tunisian company that produced the TV ad) has hired Tunisian children instead of Algerian ones. Consequently, the accent in the spoken language has come out as a wrong note.

There is also language in the written form. The graffiti on the walls, the script on the board, the writings on the shirts and the final written slogan are all instances. The written form is more varied, however. The graffiti takes the form of words and letters in French and Arabic, such as: ‘GEMA’, ‘VIVA’, ‘مراد’ and ‘قع’ which means ‘all’; and which occurs in the following expression: ‘قع fort بزاف’. This utterance is very representative of the kind of code-mixing frequent in the speech of Algerians ‘قع fort بزاف’ [all very outstanding]. The script on the board is in Arabic and French also. We can read ‘PARKIG’ [*sic*], ‘20DA’ as well as ‘موقف’. On the green shirt of the first child, we can read, in English, ‘State of California Spring Break Escape’. The inclusion of English as a sign in the structure of the TV ad may have many possible meanings. Considering form, the use of English on a green shirt may point semiotically to the Algerian speakers of English, who are growing in numbers since Algeria belongs to the so-called “expanding circle” (Kachru & Nelson, in McKay & Hornberger 1996) where English is taught as a foreign language. Considering the content of the message, it may refer, indexically, to those well-off Algerians who can afford the cost of a ‘spring break escape’ to the ‘state of California’. It can equally refer symbolically to California, and America, as a dream or as a myth. Or else it can refer to the concept of distance being redefined by the advent of mobile telephony. One may live in Alge-

ria and have acquaintances and relatives in America and yet remains ‘close’ to them thanks to mobile telephony—thanks to Nedjma, for instance.

On the white shirt of the second child we can read in Standard Arabic ‘الجزائر’, and in Standard French ‘ALGERIE’ on the foreground of the Algerian flag. This works as a strong symbol of the Algerian community and nation-state. As for the logo and brand name, they are in both Standard Arabic and Standard French. So, we have the use of many language varieties: Arabic (both Standard and non-standard), Standard French and Standard English. Standard Arabic is the official and national language in Algeria. It is used in a diglossic relation with Algerian Arabic (the non-standard); whereas French and English are additional or foreign languages. Nonetheless, French has more importance; and is more widespread in the country for historical reasons. Again, this points indexically to the Algerian complex sociolinguistic and socio-cultural realities. Algerian Arabic (*Darija*) points to the popular fringe of the society, which is the majority, since it is spoken by 86% of the total population (Kurian 2007:34). However, the standards of French and English point to the other fringes (to different extents of course), upper on the social heap, all of which targeted by the message contained in the TV ad. At this point, I would argue that the important place taken by Algerian Arabic (*Darija*) in the Nedjma ad is maybe ushering a new era where *Darija* is more present as a form of language in advertising. Things were very different, say, two decades ago when advertising was almost the exclusive realm of Standard Arabic and Standard French.

4.3 Music

Music of various types can be a psychological cue for gaining attention and enhancing visual images. In this TV ad, music is taken as a social practice rather than as an aesthetic text. Its structure is a social construct Tagg (in Dalmonte & Baroni 1992). As such, it is almost always discussed in terms of its social use and the meanings that are attributed to it in specific social contexts. Music is highly connotative, and it is this aspect of meaning which is most relevant to this analysis. It tends to mirror the much larger set of socio-cultural reality of which it is a significant part.

The music used in this TV ad is popular, typical of the music found generally in the centre of the country and in Algiers more particularly and known as '*chaabi*'. It is in the most popular city of Algiers, '*Al-Qasbah*' and by one of its sons El-Hadj M'hamed Al-Anka, that this popular form of music was pioneered at the beginning of the 20th century. Originally called '*mdih*' [meaning 'praise'], then *chaabi* [meaning 'popular'] beginning from 1947; it has remained very popular ever since. The song in the TV ad is composed and interpreted by the popular artist Baaziz, in a style very keen to *chaabi*. The selection of popular music rather than, say, classical music is motivated by the belief that it is originally conceived for mass distribution to large and often socio-culturally heterogeneous groups (Tagg 1987). This is precisely what characterizes the audience of this TV ad. Nedjma provides the service of mobile telephony, and its potential customers are all the Algerian people with all their heterogeneity.

The music is meant to attract the audience, to create a light atmosphere, and to generate a positive response from the target audience. This goes in line with what is advo-

cated by Berger (2004) who says: “Music and sound effects are used to generate certain responses in audiences--based in large part, on culturally acknowledged associations between given sounds and certain emotions”. (Berger 2004:12)

Music and lyrics, in this TV ad, unify the different shots and help to the coherence of the whole. Because the lyrics are important, for they bear a major part of the message, the music proceeds at a normal pace to enable the audience to understand them. The pace does not change from beginning to end. The words of the song are very simple. They are in Algerian Arabic which make the audience at ease and help it easily identify with the TV ad. In a nutshell, the music and lyrics fulfill a decisive role in a way they complement and emphasize the function of image and language.

4.4 Color

Color, a physical phenomenon with strong cultural connotations, is a great persuasive device. Colors are not meant just for appearance, as mere decorum--they have significance. They are part of an organized system of signifiers which form significant cultural and aesthetic codes, and they have the potential to tell whole stories. Colors being a powerful psychological trigger, people do react to them because they evoke emotions that words and images sometimes cannot achieve. Colors impact our thinking, our actions as well as our reactions. Their influence is often subliminal, however. Arguably, the reaction to colors is basically uniform all across society, at least within the same country. From the semiotic perspective, the important colors in this TV ad are white, green and red (the Algerian national colors), along with orange (the color of Nedjma). These color representations could, on one side, put to the foreground the ties with na-

tional identity and love of the country (Algeria), leaving a patriotic fingerprint; and on the other side, associating this feeling with the identity of the company (Nedjma).

As already mentioned, white is a color associated with peace and purity. In the Algerian culture, it is also one of the three national colors. Green is a symbol of hope, the color of Islam and it is used on the Algerian flag to symbolize this. Red is highly emotional and passionate and is a symbol of courage and liberty. This symbolic meaning fits perfectly in the Algerian cultural context. Algeria is a nation-state that won its independence at a very high price—one million and a half martyrs, no less.

On the other hand, orange is the color chosen by Nedjma to stand for its symbol. It is good because it is a mixture of yellow and red. So, as a secondary color rather than a primary one, it combines the energy of red with the happiness of yellow. You get some of the passion of red with the sunshine positive feel of yellow. Orange represents enthusiasm, fascination, happiness, creativity, and is associated with warm, active and exciting qualities. Additionally, it attracts the eye without being as aggressive as red, for example, and stimulates mental activity. The mobile phone company Orange has already used the “positive associations with the colour orange to brand its range of products” in Europe (Kennedy & Hills 2009: 166). Probably its success has suggested to Nedjma to do the same thing with Algerian consumers. Arguably also, orange is the color associated with affordability in the USA. It is associated with accessible price goods and services. However, no decent proof has been offered, as yet, that Algerians have the same perception. This needs further investigation.

Finally, something should be said in relation to the use of color as a temporal signifier. Usually, color is used in film and TV advertising to signal the present, while black &

white/sepia signals the past. The Nedjma ad is in color which means that all the signs used in it are representing present-day Algeria. In this sense, the white veil (*hayek m'ramma*), the shopping bag (*koffa*), the hand-made ball and the hand-made chariot may be criticized as anachronisms. Nowadays, the *hijab* has replaced the *hayek*; the plastic bag the *koffa*, while the hand-made ball and chariot have been discarded altogether. What I am suggesting is that all those signs have been used for their positive connotations; but that was at the expense of the authenticity of the TV ad. It was possible, for example, to keep the same signs but to feature them in a sepia tone rather than in color. They would then evoke a kind of nostalgia, which is not bad for a TV ad. This brings to an end the semiotic analysis. The next chapter is devoted to the advertisement discourse.

Chapter Four

Comparison of the TV Ads' Discursive Construction

1. Advertisements as Discourse

A distinction is often made in linguistics between *text* and *discourse*. This distinction can be useful in an exploration of advertising discourse and its circulation. We can use the term discourse to mean “a cultural activity” (Talbot 2007:9); that is, the process of interaction between an ad and its interpreters. On the other hand, all social practices, including advertising, entail meaning; and meanings shape and influence what we do. In this sense the discursive dimension is omnipresent, as “all practices have a discursive aspect” (Hall 1992:291 cited in Hall 1997:72). In turn, a given discourse can be realized in many ways through *representations* which, themselves, can take many *forms* (conversations, advertisements, etc). Additionally, there is the possibility of their realization in different media. Van Leeuwen (2005) notes that social practices “can be realized not only through speech and writing but also through sound and pictures, for instance advertisements” (Van Leeuwen 2005:98). This explains what has already been noted by Cook (2001) about the scope of discourse analysis, namely that “although the main focus of discourse analysis is on language, it is not concerned with language alone” (Cook 2001:3). Television advertising by itself, as a specific kind of discourse, aims to persuade potential buyers. In other words, it is essential to remember who the addresser is; and who is the addressee with respect to the aim of the communication. The particularity of the discourse of the two TV ads under study is that a dense connection is made between discursive and social realities thanks to a mix of

language, image and sound. Although the three modes of representation are not used in equal proportions, the separate components form an effective and unified message. My analysis of this message is by no means the only possible reading. As rightly noted by Coupland & Jaworski (in Cobley 2001), “One of the fundamental principles of discourse analysis is that there are no definitive readings of social...events” (Cobley 2001:138).

At large, TV ads are characterized by a couple of important features. First, they are formally heterogeneous. They bring together a diversity of modes of expressions (sound, language, image, etc); and the work of the advertising discourse is to produce coherence out of this formal heterogeneity. Second, what might be called their ‘intertextuality’: their employment of formal and semiotic features found across the range of cultural production. In the following sections, I turn to the manifestation of the above mentioned features with regard to the two TV ads.

2. Cohesive Tools

2.1 The Ball

To start with, at the very heart of both TV ads there is a ball. In the Rolex ad, the golf ball is shot by the golfers, in turn, and it leads the viewer from the beginning of the ad until its end. At the start we have the three celebrities; at the end we find the logo and brand of ‘Rolex’. It is a clever way to make, and sustain, the association between the product and the celebrities. The golf ball works like a thread, or a ‘cohesive tool’, which keeps the different parts of the ad’s discourse together. Likewise, the foot ball in the Nedjma ad fulfills a similar function, but in a different way. The foot ball estab-

lishes the theme (*i.e.* the football game) and leads the viewer to the celebrity, Zidane. It does not refer directly, however, to the service being advertised. This is done by other devices.

2.2 Celebrities

Celebrities, to quote with approval Taylor & Li (2008), “function in consumer culture as a connecting fiber between the materiality of production and culturally contextualized meaning of consumption and its relation to collective identity” (Taylor & Li 2008:133). Whereas for Danesi (2004), to get a product endorsed by a celebrity is a form of integrating advertising into social discourse (Danesi 2004:272). This means that the chosen celebrity has to be meaningful to the society of consumers to be able to influence their choice of product/service. In many cases this involves the presentation of the celebrity from a specific perspective.

For instance, in the Nedjma ad and with regards to the celebrity, some aspects of the personality of Zidane are obscured in favor of others. For instance, the fact that Zidane is a French footballer is obscured, on purpose, in the discourse of the TV ad. However, the fact that he is of Algerian origin is (over)emphasized both overtly and covertly. First, overtly through the lyrics of the popular song used in the TV ad. Then, covertly through signs and symbols which are interpretable as indicators of Zidane’s Algerian origins, such as when he kisses, proudly and lovingly, the shirt of the Algerian national football team. Because language is important as a symbol of identity, Zidane is made to speak in Algerian Arabic (*Darija*), he who was born in France and knows very little Arabic. This has the effect of enhancing the persuasive power of the TV ad’s dis-

course. Because in speaking in the language of the people, the heavy negative burden of history that exists between Algeria and France is avoided altogether. This would make the discourse of the TV ad more easily acceptable by the Algerian people, since they are to identify themselves with the 'Algerian' hero Zidane, not the French.

On the other hand, in the Rolex ad the origin of the three celebrities is not referred to at all, neither explicitly nor implicitly. Although it is well known, at least for insiders, that Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer are Americans, whereas Gary Player is South African, this is of little importance here. For in the discourse of the Rolex ad, the three are not used only as local, national symbols, but as international icons for the upper socio-economic classes targeted by the TV ad worldwide. The three golf icons have an international aura, especially Nicklaus who has been awarded many Lifetime Achievement Awards in different countries including China, Mexico and Ireland. However, there is a subtle, yet interesting, similarity between Zidane and Nicklaus (The Golden Bear). It is their involvement, on a national and international level, with various charitable causes and philanthropic efforts. For instance, Nicklaus patronizes a philanthropic foundation (the Nicklaus Children's Health Care Foundation), which supports numerous pediatric health-care services; whereas Zidane dedicated all his income from the Nedjma ad for a philanthropic association (run by his father) taking care of Algerian children victims of the May 21, 2003 earthquake in Boumerdes. The presence of the philanthropic element, though in a subtle way, enhances the power of discourse to arise positive emotions and associations with regard of the product/service being advertised. This may also explain, at least partly, the choice of children (rather than adults) to participate side by side with Zidane in the Nedjma ad.

2.3 Duration

For the duration of the two discourses, the Rolex ad lasts 30 seconds, whereas the Nedjma ad lasts 66 seconds. This means that the discourse of the Nedjma ad is more than two times longer than the discourse of the Rolex ad. This is because the two ads are neither structured in a similar way, nor broadcasted in the same social and media environment. Time is not only that part of existence measured in minutes and hours. The notion of time is cultural as well. In the West, ‘time is money’ and everything has to go fast. However, in our culture people do not worry too much about time. Things go slowly and people take their time. Furthermore, the Rolex ad is designed for an audience characterized by high levels of literacy (both traditional and media literacy). For example, in the USA 99% of people are literate (source, *CIA: The World Factbook 2010*, www). This is why the Rolex ad relies heavily on the image as the main component of discourse, then on written language; whereas spoken language is completely discarded. However, the Nedjma ad relies on image, spoken language (in its dialectal form) and then on written language. This is because the ad is designed for a country (Algeria) where traditional illiteracy is still very high, let alone media illiteracy. Figures, provided by the *CIA: The World Factbook 2010*, show that only 69.9% of Algerians are literate.

2.4 Logo and Brand Name

‘Rolex’ as a signifier occurs eight times in the advertising message. Two times written on a golf ball, three times on advertising boards (two close-ups and one extreme close-up), two other times on real Rolex watches (one close-up and one extreme close-up)

and once in the logo (close-up). It occurs in the same written form because it is meant for a socially homogenous audience (*i.e.* upper social classes), characterized by a high degree of literacy. The use of close-ups and extreme close-ups is meant to make the written word 'Rolex' easily readable by the viewers. The logo and brand name, together, appear first in *shot 9*, and then in *shot 23* with the slogan 'a crown for every achievement' beneath it. In both cases, salience is given to the logo and brand over the other signifiers. In *shot 9*, salience is achieved through focus (logo in the foreground); whereas in *shot 23* it is realized through shot-size and foregrounding as well.

However, the brand name 'Nedjma' occurs five times in four different semiotic modes. In the logo, it occurs linguistically, written once in Arabic and once in French. It occurs also in the song, as part of the lyrics, when Baaziz sings: *تبع النجمة الي تضويك*. It is also said by a female voice-over, as part of the final slogan: *نجمة، نجبها و نحب الي يحبها*. And it occurs in the form of a five-point star in the neck-chain of one of the children (the image of the five-point star is a physical reiteration of the company's name) (*see shot 26*). The fact that the signifier 'Nedjma', which means 'star' occurs five times echoes and connotes with a five-star service. This is a very positive association in relation with the quality of the service provided by Nedjma for its customers. Contrary to the Rolex ad, the Nedjma ad is designed for a socially heterogeneous audience. Hence the use of different modes to communicate its brand name in order to assure that it is going to be memorized by the maximum of potential customers. Perhaps the most interesting occurrence (among the five), is the one of *shot 28*, where the technique of evoking words by images is used. Indeed, the brand name (Nedjma) is evoked through the image of the child holding, and kissing, the five-point star of his neck

chain. It seems to me that *shots 27 & 28* are the focal points of the Nedjma ad. For in them the essence of the advertising message is condensed. In those two shots, we have the important signs referring to the country (Algeria), the company (Nedjma) and the celebrity (Zidane).

2.5 Language: Anchor or Relay

As for language structure, it is standard in the Rolex ad; however, it is non-standard in the Nedjma ad. For example, the rules of spelling, grammar and pronunciation are hardly respected. This seems to go in line with what Danesi (2002) has noted, namely that “the sentence structure of ads and commercials is usually informal and colloquial, unless the ad is about some ‘high-class’ product” (Danesi 2002:194). Furthermore, there is a difference between the ways visual and verbal signs are interpreted. The visual signs invite, in the first instance, our recognition, whereas the verbal signs inevitably involve a more complex process of decoding. This is because, as rightly explained by Tolson (1996), “whereas the visual sign can be said to resemble its denotation...for the verbal sign there is no such resemblance, and the reader will need to have access to the language codes from which the words have been chosen” (Tolson 1996:6). However, the language used is not essentially meant to provide information. Rather, it tries to generate a kind of emotional response.

In both TV ads, the linguistic message presents two functions: sometimes it functions as an ‘*anchor*’; and sometimes as a ‘*relay*’, to use Barthes’ (1977) terminology. There is a continual interaction between visual and verbal communication, where one is used to anchor (limit) or relay (reinforce) the other. This is supported by the position of

Kress & Van Leeuwen(1998), who claim that images alone are “too polysemous” to arrive at a definite meaning and that consequently “language must come to the rescue” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 1998:16). In fact, in both TV ads language elaborates the meaning of the image sometimes by being an ‘anchor’, others by being a ‘relay’. The two functions seem to be equally important; with the linguistic message guiding the audience’s interpretation. Thus, although it is possible that the average viewer of *CNN* or *Algerian TV* will not be aware of the terms discussed in this dissertation, or the technicalities involved in this process, he or she will still be aware of the mutually complementary relationship between words and imagery in the discursive construction of the TV ad. The general code used to understand the linguistic message is the knowledge of English, Arabic and French and their writing systems. The assumption here is that the code is available to the target audience.

For instance, there is a caption (*i.e.* a short on-screen text that relates to the visual image) anchoring the product/service at the end of both TV ads. Both captions are strategically and appropriately placed - the words ‘*Rolex*’ and ‘*a crown for every achievement*’ as well as ‘*نجمة*’ and ‘*نحبها و نحب الي يحبها*’ appear in English and Arabic scripts respectively. Both brand names *Rolex* and *Nedjma* are written in the same typescript used in their logos. Also, there are nice puns in both captions. Originally, a pun is a play on words, sometimes on different senses of the same word and sometimes on the similar sense or sound of different words. But in these TV ads, it involves a combination of words and images.

To start with, in the *Rolex* ad metonymy, (a kind of connotation where one sign is substituted for another with which it is closely associated) plays an important role in the

elaboration of discourse. There is a crown in the Rolex logo; and a crown is normally something worn by monarchs. So already it carries a positive connotation of distinction, achievement, etc. Accordingly, by a complex metonymical process, the word 'crown' refers to the crown in the logo. Then, the crown (the image) refers to the logo as a whole, which, in turn refers to the company. At the end, this maps to the metaphor '*a Rolex is a crown*'.

In the Nedjma ad, the word 'نجمة' being polyvocal, it refers to the mobile telephony company, but possibly also to Algeria as a country. Since in Arabic both words 'نجمة' and 'الجزائر' are singular feminine, the relative pronoun 'ها' in the slogan 'نحبها و نحب الي' can refer to both equally. Hence the nice pun. This seems to confirm Forceville's (1996) remark that "visual puns and metaphors have become a common and complex feature of much contemporary advertising" (Forceville 1996 cited in Cook 2001:61). Elsewhere, in the lyrics, there is a subtle reference to the difficult period that Algeria was living in, coupled with a message of hope. The lyrics say:

'مهما الشمس تطول في الغروب، ترجع تضوي على بلادي'

[Whatever time sunset takes, it'll light again my country]. The link between this couple of lines with a third which occurs towards the end of the song; and which says:

'تبع النجمة الي تضويك'

[Follow the star that light you], maps to a nice metaphor which is '*Nedjma (the company) is a shining star*'. The meaning is: like the sun which shines on the whole country, bringing light and hope, Nedjma also brings hope to Algerian people. Additionally, there is a call for Algerian people, via the use of the imperative 'تبع' [follow], to

trust Nedjma and buy its service because it will enlighten their lives like a shining star enlightens dark nights.

3. Metaphor and Metonymy

Metaphor was traditionally viewed as a figure of speech characteristic of language alone. Linguists had massively studied this persuasive rhetorical tool in its verbal manifestations. However, there is potential for metaphor to occur in other modes than language alone, at least according to Lakoff (1993) and Lakoff & Johnson (1980). Metaphor is based upon the principle of similarity, whereas metonymy on the principle of association. The elaboration of discourse may be the outcome of topics leading to one another either because of similarity or contiguity. Jakobson says that “the metaphoric way would be the most appropriate term for the first case and the metonymic way for the second, since they find their most condensed expression in metaphor and metonymy respectively” (Jakobson (1971), cited in Amouzadeh & Tavangar 2004:148). Metaphor then, performs a substitution by connecting two things that have some initial similarity in content. From a purely semiotic standpoint, by extension of Saussure’s (1916) description of the sign as signified/signifier, in a metaphor, “a signifier refers to two signifieds by virtue of a shared component in the signifieds though not in the signifiers” (Cook 2001:67). It is worth noting, however, that “metaphor and metonymy are often mixed together, and sometimes a given object might have both metonymic and metaphoric significance” (Berger 2004:29). For example in *fig.7*, the image is easily identifiable with a golf player by the metonymy ‘*hand stands for golfer*’, a variant of the metonymy ‘*part for whole*’. The hand is the source of the metonymy and also

part of the source of the metaphor that is developed as the hand is wearing a Rolex watch. The metaphor is '*wearing a Rolex is being a celebrity*'.

Both TV ads are rich in metaphors and metonymies. For example, the Rolex ad creates the metaphor '*a Rolex watch performance is a golfer's performance*' in order to transfer the technical qualities of the golf player to those of the Rolex watch. In this metaphor the target takes on the role of the Rolex watch and the movements of the golfer are cues to the source domain of the metaphor. The representation of the watch follows two metonymies: '*logo for product*' (the word 'Rolex' in white capitals, the official typeface of the brand, with a green background, *see shot 23*); and '*part for whole*' (Oyster watch for all Rolex watches). The image of the icon golfers represents the main features the advertisers want to be associated with the product: sophistication, precision and strength. The most important metaphors and metonymies are summarized below in *table 3*.



Fig.7: Rolex Watch in Wrist

(Source: The Rolex Ad)

Table 3: Metonymies and Metaphors in the Rolex ad (adapted from Forceville & Urios-Aparisi 2009)

Figure	Figure in TV ad	Explanation
Metonymy 1a: <i>logo for product</i>	'Rolex' for Rolex watches	Visual representation of the source (logo). Target (company) implied.
Metonymy 2a: <i>part for whole</i>	The golfer wrist (with a Rolex) for the golfer (<i>fig.6</i>)	Source (the wrist with the Rolex) visually represented. The target (all golf players) implied.
Metonymy 3a: <i>part for whole</i>	The Oyster for all Rolex watches	Source (an Oyster) visually represented. Target (all Rolex watches) implied.
Metaphor 1a	The 'Big Three' for upper social classes	Source (the three celebrities) visually represented. Target implied
Metaphor 2a	The green color for money (Dollars in USA)	Source (the grass green of the golf course) visually represented. Target implied.

Metaphor 3a	The yellow color for gold (golden watches)	Source (the yellow of sand and clothes) visually represented. Target implied.
-------------	--	---

On the other hand, the Nedjma ad also contains interesting metaphors and metonymies. For example, the five-point star is a visual metonymy: *star for Nedjma*. Other types of relationship play also a role, such as those that link the image of the four children who appear in the TV ad to the totality of young Algerians. We recognize here relationships typical of part to whole or what the jargon terms metonymy. Probably, one of the most interesting metaphors is that of ‘*Nedjma for Algeria*’. The most important figures are summarized in *table 4*.

Table 4: Metonymies and Metaphors in the Nedjma ad (adapted from Forceville & Urios-Aparisi 2009)

Figure	Figure in TV ad	Explanation
Metonymy 1b: <i>logo for company</i>	Logo with the words ‘Nedjma’ & ‘نجمة’ for the mobile telephony company.	Visual representation of the source (logo & brand). Target (company) implied

Metonymy 2b: <i>Part for whole</i>	The four children for all Algerian youth	Source (the children) visually represented. Target (Algerian youth) implied
Metonymy 3b: <i>Part for whole</i>	The veiled woman for all Algerian women (with regard to gender not the veil)	Source (the woman with the traditional veil) visually represented. Target (all Algerian women) implied.
Metonymy 4b: <i>Emblem for country</i>	The national football team shirt with the flag and name of the country on it.	Source (shirt in national colors & flag) visually represented. Target (Algeria) implied.
Metaphor 1b	Zidane for celebrity	Source (Zidane) visually represented. Target (celebrity) implied.
Metaphor 2b	Nedjma for Algeria	Source (Nedjma), a metonymy for <i>Nedjma</i> , the novel. Then the target, Algeria, derived metaphorically.

Metaphor 3b	The star (of the neck chain) for Nedjma (the company)	Source (a five-point star) visually represented. Target implied.
-------------	---	--

4. Levels of Meaning

The discourse of both TV ads is highly connotative. It relies much more on the socio-cultural connotations of the elements used than it does on their denotations. For instance, none of the TV ads is giving facts (*e.g.* price). Rather, they use signs and representations that are suggestive to the target audience. This may have many reasons. On the one hand, in a TV ad time is very limited. This means that it is difficult to give much detail and fact about the product or service being advertized. The focus is rather on the whole selling message, not on the factual details. On the other hand, there is a growing body of legislation, especially in the West, for the protection of consumers. To avoid any legal problem, the advertisers exploit at full stretch the polyvocality of the sign they are using. They suggest meanings and involve the readers/viewers into their interpretation according to their socio-cultural context. This is an important characteristic of advertising discourse: their real meaning is subliminal. For instance, in a TV ad, the apparent meaning is just the tip of the iceberg. If one wants to know what a TV ad means in a given cultural context, one must look more deeply than the obvious.

Furthermore, this reiterates the various levels of meaning which are present in a given sign, as was most predominately argued by Barthes (1977). Using Barthes' concepts, it

is possible to summarize the significance of the implicit socio-cultural overtones of both TV ads. Primarily, the two TV ads, taken as wholes, provide the simple denotative meaning: the first is an ad for a product (Rolex watches) and the second is an ad for a service (Nedjma mobile telephony). This is, according to Barthes (1977), the first, uncoded level of meaning. However, both TV ads are given connotative meaning, through a number of specific signifiers, all of which have a strong relationship with the socio-cultural context in which the two TV ads are broadcasted. For example the choice of different settings or locations for the two TV ads is socio-culturally significant. For the Rolex ad, which advertizes a luxury product destined to the upper socio-economic classes, the golf course connotes with fame, celebrity and wealth. Whereas the street for the Nedjma ad has a different connotation. It connotes with people, all people without distinction. This is because the company wants to promote a ‘popular’ image of itself; since the service being advertized is aimed to all people, not just for the rich or just for the poor.

5. Intertextuality

Since no discourse can be created from a void, all discourses “have a history” (Van Leeuwen 2005:98). Hence, any text is potentially influenced by other prior texts. Intertextuality, then, is the conscious or unconscious use in texts of material from other, previously, created texts. To emphasize a quotation from Berger (2004), “all creative work is, ultimately, intertextual. That is, all texts are related to other texts, to varying degrees” (Berger 2004:27). Accordingly, intertextuality is the study of all textual influences of absent texts on a current text, because, when producing a text, the creator would have already assimilated a great number of texts that have become dissipated in

his own creation to varying degrees. How a text builds on texts that are paradigmatically related to it in various ways is sometimes called ‘vertical’ intertextuality (Johnstone 2008:164). What helps in appreciating intertextuality, then, is familiarity with the genre. In the field of advertising, it is important to remember that each ad does not exist as a singular entity, but in relation to other texts. It is not a prerequisite, however, for the viewers/readers to have looked at other texts beforehand in order to understand the text under consideration.

For instance, in the Rolex ad, the image in *shot 6* works intertextually, because it echoes other ones, much older, dating back to the time where the three golfers were seen on golf courses side by side. It echoes, for example, an image taken in 1962 when the three icon golfers were at the height of their fame. The word ‘legends’ on the foreground of the shot furthers this idea. They seem to resist the passing of time, they are legends. Almost the only difference is that the shot is in color whereas the photo is in black and white (*see shot 6 & fig. 8*).



Fig.8: Image, in a Sepia Tone, Taken at Firestone Country Club
on September 6, 1962

(Source: www.corbisimages.com)

In the same TV ad, the classical philharmonic music also works intertextually because it evokes the fact that Rolex also sponsors classical music (*see fig. 9*). This has the effect of strengthening the association between golf as an elite sport, classical music as an elite art and Rolex as a luxury product specially designed for the elite.



Fig.9: Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, from Rolex Official Website

(Source: www.rolex.com)

As for the Nedjma ad, there is first the brand name ‘Nedjma’ which works intertextually, since it evokes one of the founding Algerian francophone literary works, Kateb Yacine’s *Nedjma* (1956). Despite controversy over the meaning of ‘Nedjma’ in the novel, it is said to symbolize Algeria. Furthermore, a closer look at the graffiti shows the name ‘Mourad’ (written in Arabic script ‘مراد’). Mourad is one of the characters in *Nedjma* (1956). The TV ad being made in Spain, all that appears, including the graffiti on the walls has been staged on purpose, to give an impression of authenticity for the TV ad. That is, that the TV ad is taking place in an authentic Algerian context. Then, one may wonder whether the choice of this name, Mourad, from a plethora of other possible names, was not done precisely with the purpose of evoking the name of the character in *Nedjma* (1956). Hence, it may be argued that the name ‘Mourad’ has an intertextual function within the structure of the TV ad.

Finally, *shot 31* works intertextually with a still photography used as a poster. This Nedjma ad was part of a long campaign that lasted three years, starting in 2006. During this period, a poster was covering billboards and newspapers throughout Algeria (*see fig.10*). The TV ad and the poster were meant to work complementarily, since one evokes the other. Naturally, the animated image, in *shot 31*, works intertextually with the still image in the poster.



Fig.10: Poster of Zidane and the Children Used in Print Media & on Billboards

(Source: www.karouikaroui.com)

6. Ideology and Signs

For many authors, “ideology is common sense, the normal perceptions we have of the world as a system, the naturalized activities that sustain social relations and power structures, and the patterns of power that reinforce such common sense” (Blommaert 2005:159). Indeed, “discourse (or semiotic behaviour at large) has been identified by almost every major scholar as a site of ideology” (Blommaert 2005:158). Authors articulating such views include: Bourdieu (1990), Althusser (1971), Barthes (1972), Williams (1973, 1977) and Foucault (1975) (all cited in Blommaert 2005:159). Kress & Mavers (in Somekh & Lewin 2005), however, attract our attention to the fact that

representation is always motivated, never neutral: “that which is represented in the sign, or sign complexes, realizes the interests, the perspectives, the positions and values of those who make signs” (Somekh & Lewin 2005:173). Language, for instance, “is an instrument of control as well as of communication” (Hodge & Kress 1993:6).

Ideologies, then, are codes that reinforce or are congruent with structures of power. Van Dijk (in Moder & Martinovic 2003) claims that “power relations are discursive” and that “discourse does ideological work” (Moder & Martinovic 2003:353). Advertisements in general, are not only trying to sell only a product; but also an ideology as well, that is often linked with the product. It can also be argued that the ad “contains ideological codes due to the sub-codes of individualism, freedom, patriarchy, class and gender involved - after all, all codes can be seen as ideological” (Chandler 2001, www).

In fact, advertising in general, and multimodal ads (such as TV ads) are very effective as vehicles of ideology. In the same spirit, Kennedy & Hills (2009) give an interesting explanation for that, linking the structure of ads to their effectiveness. They are worth quoting with some length:

Advertisements’ lack of explicit narrative links between objects is part of their effectiveness as ideology. If they do not make explicit their claims, they cannot be questioned. If they present connections by juxtaposition, leaving us as consumers to fill in the gaps, we become implicated in the advertisements ourselves. We construct the meaning for the product on the basis of what we already know. (Kennedy & Hills 2009:123)

For instance, the Rolex ad features some women among the spectators, which suggests that it is not biased for gender. However, no black appears in the TV ad, neither among the spectators nor among the players. By the time the Rolex ad was aired (2009), Tiger

Woods, who is a black golfer (*see fig.11*), was the career victories leader among active players on the PGA Tour (the tax-exempt membership organization of professional golfers). He is the career money list leader as well. In 2009 also, he was Player of the Year as selected by PGA Tour (Jack Nicklaus Award), PGA of America and Golf Writers Association of America for the 10th time. So, a golfer of his stature, could have been selected along with the ‘Big Three’ and then he would have represented all those people who are very rich, but black. Notwithstanding, the TV ad seems to vehicle an ideology that wealth does not constitute the only ‘capital’, to use Bourdieu’s terminology, needed to belong to the social elite. To be so, one needs to be white, regardless of talent and material capital. This suggests a kind of racial segregation.



Fig.11: Tiger Woods

(Source: www.gambling911.com)

Similarly, the woman with the white traditional veil in the Nedjma ad stands symbolically and metonymically for all Algerian women (as already mentioned, with regard to gender not the veil), who constitute 49.5% of the total population (Kurian 2007:33). Also, the voice-over which utters the slogan is feminine; and this suggests a gender egalitarian ideology in the discourse of the TV ad. But, as in the Rolex ad, no black appears in the TV ad, despite the fact that black Algerians constitute an important

number. All the Algerians from the Sahara are excluded from representation in the discourse of the TV ad, although they constitute potential customers for Nedjma like their fellow white citizens from the north. This may be interpreted as a kind of negligence from the conceptualizers of the TV ad. It does not seem to be a racist stance because in more recent TV ads for Nedjma (conceptualized by the same company Karoui & Karoui), Algerian people with black skin do appear.

As for language, the only form of language to be present in the Rolex ad is the standard written. This can be explained by the fact that the ad is designed for a social elite characterized by a high level of literacy. But it can be argued that the discourse of the TV ad is trying, though implicitly, to impose the standard form of the language as the only legitimate. This would be clearly an ideological position. However, in the Nedjma ad the spoken and non-standard forms of language are the dominant. Incidentally, this happens to be the linguistic ideology adopted by Kateb Yacine, whose work is intertextually evoked in the discourse of the Nedjma ad. Kateb Yacine is well known to be a fervent defender of the use of non-standard Arabic (or *Darija*) instead of Classical Arabic, that the vast majority of Algerians, he claims, “[can] not understand” (Gikandi 2003:362). Furthermore, the discourse of the Nedjma ad tries to account for the complexity, and diversity, of the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria, but it fails to do so accurately. Standard French, Standard English as well as Arabic are present in the TV ad. Naturally enough, Arabic is represented in its standard and non-standard forms because it is the official and national language, and spoken by 86 percent of the population (Kurian 2007:34). However, the other 14 %, who are speakers of different dialects of Tamazight are not represented in the discourse of the Nedjma ad. It seems

to me that this is another omission as in the case of black people. Probably this stems from the fact that the TV ad has been produced by a Tunisian advertising company (Karoui & Karoui), not an Algerian one. It seems that they have missed to cope accurately with some of the dimensions of diversity in the Algerian socio-cultural context.

Conclusion

The two TV ads analyzed in this dissertation illustrate the combined use of different semiotic resources within a single discursive process. The analysis gives a good insight into the presence and role of the socio-cultural elements in their discursive construction. Having attempted to carry out a discursive-semiotic analysis of these two TV ads, one feels to be more aware of what is involved in the structuring of advertisements, and how closely that structuring, if the ad is to be successful, is dependent on socio-cultural values. This topic has been worth investigating since it has demonstrated the power of advertising as well as the wealth of meaning suggested by a plethora of semiotic signs. From the semiotic standpoint, those signs are found to be of different types: symbols, indexes and icons. But in many cases, the signs are so complex that they function on more than one level, iconic and indexical at once, for example.

From the discursive perspective, however, the discourse of the two TV ads is characterized by its multimodality. The combination of many modes (language, image, sound) increased the potential of meaning creation and interpretation. At large, communication can be conceptualized and transmitted using the iconic (or imagic) mode as well as the linguistic one. The image is necessary to show what it represents. Language, however, permits the clarification of signification. Advertisers do use both in order to elaborate their discourse, especially in TV ads where communication can be visible and legible at once. Nevertheless, image has an important place in the structure and discourse of both TV ads because in a limited amount of time, vastly more information can be communicated through image than through language. Image is also ad-

vantageous from another perspective. The symbolic world created by image permits to overcome the obstacle of the diversity of national languages and dialects. Thus, it permits the advertising message to reach the maximum of people.

Likewise, the discourse of both TV ads is heavily connotative. It is not factual and hence its reliance on connotation more than denotation. Also, the discourse of both TV ads belongs to the so-called persuasive discourse; and it uses emotional and image-based appeals. Both TV ads try to persuade viewers to buy a given product or service through subtle persuasion. Emotional appeals are often referred to as 'soft sell'. In fact, there are two contrastive selling methods: hard sell and soft sell. The former functions by providing high information content, repeating product logo, price and information about the product, etc. The latter usually functions by providing low information content. The first TV ad is aimed at a wealthy luxury-seeking audience. And luxuries, such as Rolex watches, lend themselves more easily to soft, tickle selling. The basic soft-sell technique is associating product, person and lifestyle. The TV ad implies, softly, that possession affects the possessor; and its brilliance lies in a couple of things: firstly, its ability to leverage the symbolism of a concrete product (Rolex watches) with an abstract concept (the myth of celebrity). Secondly, its reliance on image, more than on language, in the structure of its discourse. Furthermore, even the language used is exclusively written, thus also visual or imagic in a sense.

In turn, this kind of structure seems to confirm two ideas: first, visual images are more powerful than words. In fact, this image-over-the-word concept has become a fundamental principle in commercial TV advertising and surely justifies investment in sophisticated film techniques such as those used in the Rolex ad. Second, language alone

can no longer give us full access to the meanings of many contemporary multimodal messages (*e.g.* TV ads). In such texts, each mode, language included, is but a partial bearer of meaning. In the Rolex ad picture and sound are the essence of the communication: creating mood, imparting information, persuading and making claims so strongly that language is featured only in a peripheral way.

Conversely, the second TV ad does not target a specific fringe of the society. Rather, it is aimed at all categories of Algerian people. This is natural since the kind of service (mobile telephony) being advertized is needed, and used, by the great majority of Algerian people. The difference, in comparison with the Rolex ad, lies in the role played by language in its discursive construction. In the Nedjma ad, language has a much more important place. It is used in the spoken as well as the written form; and it is further characterized by what the linguistic literature refers to as ‘code-mixing’. That is, the use, in the same discourse, of Standard Arabic, Darija and Standard French, for instance. This is because the Algerian audience is heterogeneous in respect of the degree and extent of literacy. Algerian Arabic (*Darija*) is mostly spoken, as for the written form, some people use Arabic, others French and some use both.

It has become clear now that the two TV ads are targeting different audiences. The audience of each TV ad is made up mainly by the potential consumers of the product/service being advertized. In both cases, the analysis shows that TV advertisers are aware, to a great extent, of the socio-cultural environments in which the TV ads are to be broadcasted and the impact they want them to have on potential customers. Hence, the advertisers are more sensitive to the different potentials for meaning-making with image, color, language and sound, in multimodal texts such as TV ads, for instance.

What determines the choice, in fact, is the nature of the product/service combined with the nature of the audience (*i.e.* potential consumers).

Since Rolex watches are designed for upper social classes, worldwide, the TV ad has selected socio-cultural signs meaningful to this specific fringe of consumers. Starting with the selection of an elite sport (golf) and not ending with the selection of golf icons as endorsers. Indeed, Rolex targets the upper classes, not only in the USA, but in the four corners of the globe. Hence, the choice of the medium (*CNN International*), which broadcasts for the whole world, to ensure that the advertising message is to reach the maximum of potential consumers. Then, hiring three golf celebrities, as endorsers of the product: two Americans and a South African. The third celebrity, it seems, is meant to emphasize the international dimension of the advertising discourse. It is also noticed that the signs and symbols selected are those which do not have only a local significance; but rather an international as well. For example, the use of the green color as a metaphor for money and wealth, stems from the fact that the US. currency is green. But since the Dollar is an international currency, this metaphor can be understood in the USA as well as abroad.

On the other hand, the Nedjma ad is advertising a service which is available only in Algeria. But within the boundaries of the country, the advertising message targets all Algerian people, in all their diversity. Nedjma, the company, wants to present a popular (not an elitist) image of its brand. This is why it has selected a number of popular socio-cultural signs which have a great significance for the Algerian ordinary people. Firstly, it has selected the most popular sport in Algeria (football) as theme. Secondly, it has chosen Zidane, a world football celebrity from Algerian origin, as endorser. Last

but not least, it has used a number of important popular cultural symbols, such as the popular music '*chaabi*', the traditional veil '*hayek m'ramma*', the traditional shopping bag '*koffa*', the handmade ball, etc. It is to be noted that the popular signs used are local, with no international dimension. This has been dictated by the fact that the service of mobile telephony provided by Nedjma is only destined for local consumers. At this level, one may say that both TV ads belong to culture-specific ads (with one difference), not to standardized ones. The difference is that the Nedjma ad is bound by geography, Algeria; whereas the Rolex ad is not bound by any. It reaches beyond the boundaries of the USA because it is aimed at a social class which transcends national boundaries.

This dissertation does not claim to be an exhaustive and a definite analysis of the two TV ads; and perhaps no single dissertation could do so. Therefore, this discursive-semiotic analysis may not appear to be conclusive, but it is important to remember that TV ads are extremely complex and contain many concepts and ideologies. It has been shown that the combination of semiotics and discourse analysis can give a deep and significant analysis of TV ads. In this dissertation, the analysis offers great insight into the discourse of signs and the way they are structured in a TV ad. It has also enabled us to establish that TV ads have more than one meaning, depending on how they operate, how signs and their 'ideological' effects are organized within the advertising message, and in relation to their production and circulation. To end with a note of caution, one may quote approvingly Cook (2001) who says:

Discourse- especially discourse as complex as advertising- always holds out more to be analysed, leaves more to be said...It would be both depressing and self-deceptive to

believe that one could exhaust all the aspects of the genre, and present an answer to all the problems it poses.(Cook 2001:5)

Furthermore, discourse analysis and semiotics being very broad and varied, touching different fields and subjects, this tentative analysis has its limitations. As noted, it is not meant to be exhaustive. It is rather meant to examine, on the one hand, how some signs and aspects of TV ads relate to the socio-cultural environments and audiences they are intended for. On the other hand, it shows how they succeed, in subtle psycho-sociological ways, to achieve an effect on their audiences and potential clients.

This being said, there is still room for further research for students interested in discourse and semiotics as there is a lot to discover about what goes on 'behind the scenes' of advertising.

Bibliography

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and philosophy* (trans. Ben Brester). London: New Left

Books

Amouzadeh, M. & Tavangar, M. (2004). 'Decoding pictorial metaphor: Ideologies in

Persian commercial advertising'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*

7(2), 147-174

Atkinson, J. (2002). A semiotic analysis of the representation of 'the family' in

children's commercials. Retrieved from:

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Students/jra0001.html> (accessed May 2, 2010)

Bairner, A. (2001). *Sport, nationalism, and globalization: European and North*

American perspectives. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Barthes, R. (1964a): 'Rhétorique de l'image'. *Communications*, 4, 40-51

Barthes, R. (1964). *Eléments de sémiologie*. Paris: Seuil.

Barthes, R. (1972). *Mythologies*, (trans. A. Lavers). New York: Hill & Wang.

Barthes, R. (1977). *Image, music, text*. London: Fontana Press.

Barthes, R. (2006). Myth today. In Jaworsky, A. & Coupland, N. (Eds.).

The discourse reader. Second edition. London & New York: Routledge.

Belkaid, L. (2003). *Costumes d'Algérie*. Paris: Editions Du Layeur

Berger, A. (2004). *Media analysis techniques*. London: Sage

Bignell, J. (1997). *Media semiotics: An introduction*. Manchester: Manchester

University Press

- Blommaert, J. (2005). *Discourse. A critical introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The logic of practice*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge & Malden, MA: Polity Press
- Branston, G & Stafford, R. (1996): *The media students' book*. London: Routledge
- Chandler, D. (2001). *Semiotics for beginners*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/S4B/> (accessed April 15, 2009)
- Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics. The basics*. Second edition. London & New York: Routledge
- CIA (2010). *The world factbook*. Retrieved from:
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html> (accessed June 5, 2010)
- Cobley, P. (Ed.). (2001). *Semiotics and linguistics*. London & New York: Routledge
- Colombo, C.; Del Bimbo, A. & Pala, P. (2001). 'Retrieval of commercials by semantic content: The semiotic perspective'. In *Multimedia Tools and Applications*, 13 (2001) 93-118
- Cook, G. (2001). *The discourse of advertising*. London & New York: Routledge
- Copley, P. (2004). *Marketing communications management: concepts and theories, cases and practices*. Amsterdam: Elsevier
- Dalmonte, R. & Baroni, M. (Eds.) (1992). *Secondo convegno europeo di analisi musicale*. Trento: Università degli studi di Trento (article in English)

- Danesi, M. (2002). *Understanding media semiotics*. London: Arnold
- Danesi, M. (2004). *Messages, signs, and meaning: A basic textbook in semiotics and communication*. Third edition. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press Inc.
- Du Gay, P (2000). *The production of culture/cultures of production*. Buckingham: Open University Press
- Dyer, G. (1986): *Advertising as communication*. London: Routledge
- Eco, U. (1976). *A theory of semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press
- Eco, U. (1986). *Semiotics and the philosophy of language*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, Midland Book Edition
- Fairclough, N. Jessop, R. and Sayer, A. (2002) . 'Critical realism and semiosis' , *Journal of Critical Realism* 5(1), 2-10
- Fates, Y. (2009). *Sport et politique en Algérie*. Paris: L'Harmattan
- Fiske, J. (1990). *Introduction to communication studies*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge
- Forceville, C. (1996). *Pictorial metaphor in advertising*. New York: Routledge
- Forceville, C. J. & Urios-Aparisi, E. (Eds.) (2009). *Multimodal metaphor*. Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish*. New York: Random House
- Frith, K. T. & Mueller, B. (2003). *Advertising and societies. Global issues*. New York, Washington, D. C., Berlin: Peter Lang
- Gikandi, S. (Ed.) (2003). *Encyclopedia of African literature*. New York: Routledge

- Goldman, R. (1998). *Nike culture*. London: Sage
- Hackley, C. (2005). *Advertising and promotion. Communicating brands*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage
- Hall, S. (1992). The west and the rest: Discourse and power. In S. Hall & B. Gieben (Eds.), *Formations of modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press/Open University
- Hall, S. (1997). The spectacle of 'other'. In S. Hall (Ed.). *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practice*. London: Sage
- Harris, Z. (1952). 'Discourse analysis'. *Language*, Vol. 28, (1), 1-30
- Hartley, J. (2002). *Communication, cultural and media studies. The key concepts*. Third edition. London & New York: Routledge
- Hawkes, T. (2003). *Structuralism and semiotics*. London & New York: Routledge
- Hodge, R. & Kress, G. (1993). *Language as ideology*. Second edition. London: Routledge
- Hjelmslev, L. (1961). *Prolegomena to a theory of language*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press
- Iberraken, M. (2006). *Sémiologie du cinéma. Méthodes et analyses filmiques*. Alger : OPU
- Jakobson, R. (1971). *Word and language*. The Hague: Mouton
- Jensen, K. B. & Jankowski, W. (Eds.) (1991). *A Handbook of qualitative methodologies for mass communication research*. London & New York: Routledge
- Johansen, J. & Larsen, L. S. (2002). *Signs in use. An introduction to semiotics*. London & New York: Routledge

- Johnstone, B. (2008). *Discourse analysis*. Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell
- Johnston, R.J., Gregory, D., Pratt, G., & Watts, M. (2000). *The dictionary of human geography*. 4th edition. Oxford: Blackwell
- Kalb, E. (2006). *Who's better, who's best in golf?* New York, Chicago & London: McGraw-Hill
- Kandinsky, W. (1977). *Concerning the spiritual in art*. New York: Dover Pub.
- Kennedy, E. & Hills H. (2009). *Sport, media and society*. Oxford & New York: BERG
- Kress, G. & Mavers, D. (2005). Social semiotics and multimodal texts. In Somekh, B. & Lewin, C. (Eds.). *Research methods in the social sciences*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage
- Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (1998). 'Front pages: (the critical) analysis of news paper layout', in Bell, A. & Garrett, P. (Eds.). *Approaches to media discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2002). 'Colour as a semiotic mode: Notes for a grammar of colour'. In *Visual Communication*, Vol. 1 (3), 343-368
- Kress, G. & Van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*. London & New York: Routledge
- Kurian, G. T. (Ed.) (2007). *Encyclopedia of the world's nations and cultures*. New York: Facts On File, Inc.
- Lackoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press

- Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In Ortony, A. (Ed.).
Metaphor and Thought. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Leiss, W.; Kline, S. & Jhally, S. (1986). *Social communication in advertising: persons, products and images of well-being*. London & New York: Methuen
- Lewis, C. M. (2007). *Don't ask what I shot*. New York, Chicago & London:
McGraw-Hill
- Malefyt, T. & Moeran, B. (Eds.). (2003). *Advertising cultures*. Oxford & New York:
BERG
- Malmkjær, K. (Ed.) (1995). *The linguistics encyclopedia*. London & New York:
Routledge
- McQuarrie, E. & Mick, D. (1992). 'On Resonance: a critical pluralistic inquiry into advertising rhetoric'. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(2), 180-97
- Mckay, S. & Hornberger, H. (Eds.) (1996). *Sociolinguistics and language teaching*.
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge
- Moder, C. L. & Martinovic, A. (2003) (Eds.). *Discourse across languages & cultures*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins
- Musson, G.; Cohen, L., & Tietze, S. (2007). 'Pedagogy and the "linguistic turn". Developing understanding through semiotics'. *Management Learning*, 38(1), 45-60
- Nilan, P. (2007). 'Applying semiotic analysis to social data in media studies'. *Jurnal Komunikasi Massa*, 1(1). 60-74
- Noth, W. (1990). *Handbook of semiotics*. Indiana: Indiana University Press

- Peirce, C. S. (1867). 'On a New List of Categories'. *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 7, 287-298.
- Rutherford, P. (1988). 'The culture of advertising'. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 13(3), 105-108
- Saussure, F. de (1916). *Cours de linguistique générale*. Paris: Payot
- Scott, L. M. & Batra, R. (2003). *Persuasive imagery. A consumer response perspective*. Mahwah, New Jersey & London: L.E.A. Pub.
- Seddiki, H. (1982). *Rachid Mekhloufi. L'imagination au bout du pied*. Alger: SNED
- Somekh, B. & Lewin, C. (Eds.) (2005). *Research methods in the social sciences*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage
- Springer, P. (2007). *Ads to icons. How advertising succeeds in a multimedia age*. London & Philadelphia: Kogan Page
- Talbot, T. (2007). *Media discourse. Representation and interaction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Tagg, P. (1987). 'Musicology and the semiotics of popular music'. *Semiotica*. 66, (1/3), 279- 98
- Taylor, P. A. & Li, H. J. (2008). *Critical theories of mass media: Then and now*. Berkshire & New York : Open University Press
- Thompson, R. & Bowen, C. J. (2009). *Grammar of the shot*. Second edition. Amsterdam, Boston & Heidelberg: Elsevier
- Tolson, A. (1996). *Mediations. Text and discourse in media studies*. New York & London: Arnold

- Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*. London & New York: Routledge
- Williams, R. (1973). 'Base and superstructure in Marxist cultural theory'. *New Left Review* (87), 3-16.
- Williams, R. (1977). *Culture and society 1780–1950*. Harmondsworth: Penguin
- Williamson, J. (1978). *Decoding advertisements: Ideology and meaning in advertising*. London: Marion Boyars
- Yacine, K. (1956). *Nedjma*. Paris: Seuil

Appendix

- A copy of the Rolex ad + a copy of the Nedjma ad (on CD)

تحليل خطابي سيميائي للعناصر الاجتماعية و الثقافية للإعلانات التلفزيونية.

دراسة مقارنة لإعلانين تلفزيونيين

ملخص

لقد أصبحت الإعلانات التلفزيونية تملأ حياتنا كنتيجة مباشرة للتقدم التكنولوجي الثوري في وقتنا الحاضر. لكن هذه الإعلانات نادرا ما تدرس داخل إطار الأوساط الأكاديمية الجزائرية بالرغم من أهميتها. إن الإعلانات التلفزيونية عبارة عن خطابات مركبة و مشفرة. و لأجل فهم معناها، تحتاج الإعلانات التلفزيونية إلى عملية نزع لتلك الشفرة.

في محاولة لإلقاء بعض الضوء على دلالة الإعلانات التلفزيونية خصوصا، تقترح هذه الرسالة مقارنة متعددة، الغرض منها هو تحليل الإعلانات التلفزيونية باستعارة الأدوات التحليلية من تخصصي السيميائيات و تحليل الخطاب. الرسالة موسومة " تحليل خطابي سيميائي للعناصر الاجتماعية و الثقافية للإعلانات التلفزيونية . دراسة مقارنة لإعلانين تلفزيونيين" ، و هي دراسة مقارنة كيفية، تستعمل المقاربة السيميائية للخطاب من اجل تحليل العناصر الاجتماعية و الثقافية في الإعلان التلفزيونيين. أما الإعلان، فالأول باللغة الانجليزية بينما الثاني

باللغة العربية. تنقسم الرسالة إلى قسمين رئيسيين: قسم نظري و قسم مخصص للدراسة المقارنة. و يظهر تحليل الإعلان التلفزيونيين، الأول الذي يخص الساعات السويسرية الفاخرة رولكس، و الثاني الخاص بمتعامل الهاتف النقال في الجزائر نجمة، التوظيف الذكي لعدد معتبر من الرموز الاجتماعية و الثقافية في بنية الإعلان التلفزيونيين كليهما . لكن المثير للانتباه هو أن كل إعلان تلفزيوني يوائم هذه الرموز الاجتماعية و الثقافية وفقا للمحيط الذي يستعمل فيه الإعلان، و وفقا لطبيعة المنتج أو الخدمة موضوع الإشهار. و النتيجة هي خطاب ذو طابع إقناعي يتميز بأنه متعدد الوسائط. إن وسائط التعبير المتعددة تستعمل رموزا مختلفة لصناعة المعنى. لكن بالرغم من أن هذه الرموز تحتمل أكثر من معنى، فإن استعمال كل وسيط تعبيرى منفردا لا يتيح إلا هامشا بسيطا للمناورة بالنسبة للمعلنين. لكن بما أن الإعلانات التلفزيونية متعددة الوسائط بالطبيعة، فإنها تستثمر إلى أقصى حد ممكن الإمكانيات التي يتيحها المزج بين وسائط متعددة، خصوصا اللغة و الصورة و الصوت لخلق الدلالات. فالرموز الاجتماعية و الثقافية المستعملة في البنية النصية للإعلانات التلفزيونية متعددة المعاني في حد ذاتها. لذلك، عندما تستعمل تركيبيا مع بعضها البعض، تتيح ثراء كبيرا في إنشاء المعاني، و تتيح مجالا للإيحاء بصفة خاصة. و في الواقع، فإن التحليل يظهر بان الإيحاءات هي الأكثر أهمية في الإعلان التلفزيونيين كليهما. و بالنتيجة، تظهر هذه الرسالة دور و أهمية العناصر الاجتماعية و الثقافية في بنية خطاب الإعلانات التلفزيونية.