Employing Nature And Establishing Social Identities In Green Advertisements: A Review Article

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Abstract

Since ecology can be exploited by advertisers and corporations as a means to persuade consumers to purchase their products and services, the aim of this article is to explore ways through which nature is incorporated in green advertisements as a manipulative marketing tool to promote commodities and services. Images of attractive natural sceneries can influence the viewers by stimulating favourable emotions, which become associated with the advertised product. In addition, the interplay of images and texts, which convey environmental messages, can shape the ideologies of the recipients of green advertisements and influence their cognition by prompting the construction of specific mental representations. The article also focuses on showing how particular social identities are fostered by means of these nature-based advertisements, parallel to the global tendency to pursue a green lifestyle. Through the reviewed literature, this article aims at providing a comprehensive review of green advertising to pinpoint research gaps for further research in this area.

Keywords: Green advertising, persuasive strategies, ecology, social identity, ecolinguistics.

1. Introduction

Recently, ecological issues have received considerable attention. Consumers' understanding and consciousness of the significance of protecting the environment are reflected in their tendency to use more green products and less destructive ones to the environment. Mkik, Khouilid, and Aomari (2017) explain that the consumers' rising awareness towards the environmental problems is the reason which has directed many companies and corporations to emphasize the following goals in their marketing campaigns: showing social responsibility, supporting a better life quality for the future generations, fulfilling the customers' needs and meeting their expectations. Thus, both the consumers and producers have become keener on meeting safe environmental standards; subsequently, their recognition of the significance of shifting to eco-friendly services and green products is accelerating. This has led many corporations to highlight the environmentally friendly qualities of their commodities or sponsor environmental associations in order to link themselves to positive values (Coupland, 2003). Similarly, Hogben (2009) states that corporations try to foreground their adherence to the environmental standards in order to gain a desirable reputation. This is reflected in the textual and visual representation of the advertised facilities and products in the different media outlets such as advertisements (Livesey, 2002) and websites

(Coupland, 2006). As a result, green advertising has appeared parallel to many people's concern with the environmental problems. Banerjee, Gulas and Iyer (1995) assert that green advertising is expediting in correspondence with the eagerness of many producers and corporations to foreground the eco-friendly qualities of what they produce or serve.

In this regard, the current article is significant since investigating the ways nature is employed as a marketing tool in advertisements can provide insightful information about the impact of these practices on ecology. Moreover, identifying the persuasive strategies through which the advertisers manipulate the viewers of green advertisements can raise the consumers' awareness about their purchasing decisions. Furthermore, examining the social identities in green advertisements can provide information about the influence of these identities on the eco-system and on the social fabric of communities. The present article delves into the strategies employed in green advertisements, which rely on nature-related aspects to manipulate the viewers and shape their attitudes. Previous studies focus on examining aspects of green advertisements, in particular images and texts, yet these two elements are explored in separation. Consequently, the body of research lacks a comprehensive toolkit for investigating green advertisements. In addition, the current article presents a third element, which can be investigated when examining green advertisements, namely the mental representation evoked in these ads. Hence, the article incorporates three significant aspects, which can be explored in synthesis when investigating the persuasive strategies in green ads, namely the visual, textual and mental elements of nature-based advertisements. These three aspects can constitute a comprehensive toolkit to deeply understand the various dimensions of green advertisements. Moreover, the article presents recent studies, which explore the substantial impact of pursuing a green lifestyle on both society and ecology to raise awareness of the changes probable to occur as a result of this global trend in different life domains.

The article begins with an overview of the newly progressing discipline of ecolonguistics. Following this is a background on ways the environment is depicted in the media to pave the way to discussing the development of green advertising, its impact on the consumers' purchase decision and its connotation. The article then moves to identifying the persuasive strategies employed in green advertising, namely images and texts, which communicate ecological messages, along with prompting the construction of mental representation. Then the article demonstrates the relationship between green advertisements and social identity. It ends with identifying gaps for future research.

2. Ecolinguistics

Ecolinguistics emerged as a new discipline of linguistic research in the nineties. Fill (2018) explains that Halliday has established a linguistic theory which challenges the traditional ways of thinking about language and relates language to social interaction. In his paper New ways of meaning, Halliday (1990) inspires linguists to take into consideration the relation between language and the ecological context. Halliday seeks to correlate language to the newly emerged challenges of the 21st century, and in particular the extensive destruction of ecology. Halliday (2001) argues that the language construes natural resources, such as oil, soil, water, and air as unlimited, unbounded items. Moreover, the ideology of growthism or growth, which opposes cautious management of the available natural resources, is endorsed through language. Thereby, language emphasizes the motifs of growthism, the unboundedness of natural resources, the passivity of nature, and the uniqueness of man, which all give man the right to expand in number, in power over other species, and in what is named the living standard. Problems resulting from such ideology are not confined to the interest of physicists and biologists only, but they also lie in the realm of applied linguistics. Hence, (Stibbe, 2014, p.124) maintains that ecolinguistics is concerned with studying issues which have resulted in "social injustice and ecological destruction". The ecolinguistic approach considers both the relationship between language and social context on one hand, as well as the relationship between the society and ecological context on the other hand. The linguistic domain of ecolinguistics

focuses on deeply analyzing the language structure which establishes and disseminates views about the world. On the other hand, the eco domain provides an "ecological framework" to examine how these views function in order to damage or preserve the environment (Stibbe, 2014, p. 120).

Therefore, ecolinguistics is concerned with the relationship between ecology and language. Although each of them might seem to belong to distinct paradigms, it is acknowledged that language influences ways we perceive the world. For instance, (Stibbe, 2015) perceives the language of advertisements as a tool which can entice the viewers to aspire for things they do not really need and for products harmful to the environment, or it can stimulate the viewers to respect nature. Moreover, the way people act is influenced by the way they think, so language can motivate people to ruin or to save the environment on which life relies. Thus, on one hand ecolinguistics is concerned with studying linguistic forms which promote attitudes that could lead to the destruction of the environment. On the other hand, ecolinguistics assists in the construction of new linguistic forms which encourage people to preserve nature. To realize this goal, ecolinguistics analyzes language to examine our everyday stories from an ecological viewpoint. Stibbe (2015) clarifies that these stories refer to everyday life experiences which shape our values and beliefs.

3. The Visual Representation of the Environment in the Media

Hansen (2018) maintains that recent research in ecolinguistics shows interest in ways the environment is visually represented in the media. This research focuses on three media types: news, films and advertising. Studies on the visual representation of the environment in the news covers how crucial environmental problems, such as climate change and global warming, are presented. They also focus on the factual representation of the environment in the media, the ways scientists, famous figures, and the public define ecological issues, the outcomes of these environmental problems, and the proposed solutions. On the other hand, research on the

visual representation of the environment in films, advertisements, and awareness-raising campaigns highlights how the natural environment is historically and culturally articulated and exploited in order to promote commodities or to endorse certain ideas, worldviews, and opinions.

3.1. The Development of Green Advertising

Crane (2000) provides a general definition of green advertising stating that it refers to integrating environmental aspects in the marketing actions and plans. A more detailed description of green advertising is presented by Banerjee et al. (1995) who propose that an advertisement is called green when one criterion or more of the following applies to it. First, it addresses, overtly or covertly, the relationship constructed between a commodity or facility on one hand, and the biophysical environment on the other hand. Second, it propagates following a green lifestyle, while accompanied by or not accompanied by focus on the advertised commodity/service. Third, it reflects an image of responsibility towards the environment. In a study conducted by Carlson, Grove, and Kangun (1993) on advertising, they determine five distinct core messages communicated through green advertisements: The first type of message focuses on the environmentally friendly qualities of specific products (focus is on the product itself). The second type highlights the eco-friendly process of production (focus is on the process). The third type is communicated through eco-friendly images (focus is on the image). The fourth type is conveyed through environmentally-related texts (focus is on environmental facts). The fifth one integrates the four types of messages.

Studies on green advertising indicate that using the environment to communicate particular messages can inevitably optimize outlooks and opinions about services, products and brands. Yet, green advertising can also delude customers if advertisers employ inaccurate or ambiguous statements or assertions, which can negatively affect the advertised product or brand (Matthes, 2019). Scholars give the term greenwashing to false or unclear statements (Carlson et.al, 1993).

Therefore, greenwashing can be described as tending to delude the consumers about the ecological benefits of a commodity/ service, or about the green behavior of companies (TerraChoice, 2009). Accordingly, research in the field of green advertising has gained a lot of attention in order to understand the strategies through which marketers and corporations manipulate the perception and the behavior of consumers.

3.2. The Impact of Green Advertising

Matthes (2019) defines the impact of green advertising as the endeavor to manipulate the perceptions, styles and attitudes of the consumers by foregrounding the eco-friendly qualities of services and products during the processes of producing, distributing or recycling them. In this regard, Matthes (2019) explains that consumers are influenced by attempting to promote the eco-friendly features in the offered product or service. Promoting green products satisfies the needs of the environment-conscious customers by enabling them to purchase products which do not harm the environment (Eneizan, Wahab, Zainon, & Obaid, 2016).Thus, green advertising has become a significant marketing means which reflects the corporations' high awareness of environmental issues in order to gain a reliable reputation and attract consumers. Eneizan et al. (2016) point out that corporations foreground adopting these eco-friendly practices in green advertisements to improve their reputation and acquire a positive image among green customers. The prosperity of green marketing can encourage more companies to support eco-friendly products, which could lead to reshaping of the market trends to fulfil the needs of green customers. Moreover, adopting green marketing techniques can promote the social goodwill and protect the natural resources. Nonetheless, Mkik et al. (2017) argue that some corporations pursue an eco-friendly behavior not for the sake of saving the environment but rather for saving their businesses and gaining profits. In other words, some corporations associate themselves with eco-friendly images to gain an agreeable reputation, but without actually corresponding to the environmentally friendly standards (Easterling, Kenworthy, & Nemzoff, 1996). As a result, Eneizan et al. (2016) state that green consumers could encounter difficulty in distinguishing eco-friendly products from other ones despite their preference for green products. Since green advertising is progressing in diverse life domains such as cars, food, and housing to encourage customers to adopt eco-friendly behaviours (Eneizan et al., 2016), it has become crucial to investigate the dimensions of green marketing in academic research to acquire better understanding about the practices of corporations and the purchasing decisions of consumers.

3.3. The Connotation of Green Advertising

Green advertisements can give rise to positive meanings, which are triggered by favourable emotions and psychological simulations (Chang, 2005). According to Meyers-Levy and Peracchio (1996) green advertisements create positive connotations by constructing links between the consumers' experiences and past memories; subsequently, on one hand consumers recall the information in the advertisement faster, and on the other hand they establish positive connotations and attitudes towards the advertised brand. Kao and Du (2020) determine three prominent emotion responses prompted by exposure to green advertisements, in particular moral emotions, social emotions, and ecological emotions. First, moral emotion response pertains to raising the consumers' self-conscience of responsibility towards saving the natural resources. Second, social emotion response relates to people's perceptions of the social action required to protect the environment and control pollution. Finally, ecological emotion response reflects concerns about the environmental problems and care about nature. These generated emotional responses affect the consumers' willingness to purchase green products and help the advertised brand to gain sustainable competitive image. Therefore, Erdogmus, Lak and Çiçek (2016) argue that marketers rely on positioning their advertised products as green ones in the mind of the consumers to enhance the impact of green advertisements. Since green advertisements can evoke positive connotations, Liao, Wu, and Pham (2020) confirm that people show willingness to pay more money to purchase green products for the sake of gaining the

associated psychological benefits such as self-satisfaction. This satisfaction arises from their positive emotional state when they support the environment and maintain the well-being of man, along with other creatures. In other words, pursuing a pro-environmental behavior prompts feelings of self-satisfaction.

4. The Persuasive Strategies in Green Advertising

4.1. Images of Nature

Matthes (2019, p.93) identifies three kinds of processes, employed in green advertising, to function as persuasive techniques. First is the "argument-based processes", which foreground the functional qualities of the advertised product related to the environmental benefits. Examples of these functional qualities are producing, supplying or recycling products in an eco-friendly manner (Matthes, Wonneberger, & Schmuck, 2014). Second is the "heuristic processes" which refer to using direct clues as for example environmental tags, labels or endorsements (Matthes, 2019, p.91). Third is the "affective processes" (Matthes, 2019, p.91). They evoke positive emotions in reaction to environmental information (Hartmann, Eisend, Apaolaza, & D'Souza, 2017). To illustrate, images of nature can stimulate pleasant, optimistic emotions (Matthes et al., 2014). Such positive sentiments and emotions pass on and correlate to advertised product. As a result, the advertised product or brand generates positive affections once a person is exposed to it. Images of nature can prompt positive affections reminiscent of those which occur in real life experiences (i.e. the virtual becomes genuine in the recipients' perception); hence, approving attitudes towards the product or the brand are established (Hartmann et al., 2017).

Thus, visual images in green advertisements are pivotal attention grabbers (Hartmann, Apaolaza-Ibanez, & Alija, 2013). In this regard, Hartmann et al. (2013) conduct a study which shows that, in comparison to other images, images of nature have resulted in remarkably higher recognition of the advertising message. This research also signifies that images of nature can prompt the construction of an appealing atmosphere, with no diversion from the key message of the advertisement. Other studies show that even when some green advertisements include ambiguous statements, false information about the qualities of the product, or exaggerated messages, incorporating images of nature in the advertisements can still create favourable attitudes. For instance, in a study conducted by Schmuck, Matthes, and Naderer (2018), it is shown that even though when ambiguous meanings are accompanied by beautiful natural scenery, they can still prompt positive attitudes towards the product or the brand. In other words, images of nature can inhibit the critical views aroused by false statements.

4.2. The Interplay of Language and Images in Green Advertisements

As visual images have the power to affect the attitudes and viewpoint of the viewers of green advertisement, the linguistic patterns of these advertisements are equally powerful. In this concern, Stibbe (2015) emphasizes that similar to visual images, which reveal cues about the impact of green advertisements, language is as indicative and significant since it can inspire us either to damage or to respect the environment. With reference to the integration of images and language in green advertisements, Joy, Sherry and Deschenes (2009) maintain that both images and language influence consumers extensively by motivating particular behaviours towards the environment. In the same line, Ranjan (2010) notes that advertisements impact the attitude and perception of the consumers through integrating multiple semiotic resources such as colors, words and images. Furthermore, both visual images and language are capable of shaping ideologies. Stibbe (2015) perceives ideologies as systems of principles and beliefs, which define the worldviews of a community and which society members share. For example, Chawla (2001) points out to the ability of advertisements to stimulate feelings of dissatisfaction, after fulfilling particular levels of consumption. Accordingly, advertisements can turn into an environmentally destructive discourse by persuading consumers to purchase commodities they have not perceived as important before viewing the ad (Stibbe, 2015). For instance,

Stibbe (2015, p.25) asserts that one ideology which advertisements transmit is that "PURCHASE OF A PRODUCT IS A SHORTCUT TO WELLBEING". Consequently, Stibbe (2015) highlights the importance of increasing people's awareness of how ideology is communicated through discourse, which Fairclough (1992) calls Critical Language Awareness. The main aim of ecolinguistics is to reveal and repel negative discourses such as that of consumerism. It also aims at examining and endorsing positive discourses. Since advertisement discourses are multimodal, language along with images can communicate ideological meanings. Revealing the underlying ideologies, which these visual and textual elements imply, is of great importance.

4.3. The Mental Representation Evoked in Green Advertisements

Matthes (2019) draws attention to the significance of the implicit attitudes evoked in the cognition of the viewers of green advertisements. Implicit attitudes are defined as instinctive affective responses triggered by specific associations, which get unconsciously activated concurrent to encountering a closely related stimulus (Gawronski &Bodenhausen, 2006). These implicit attitudes evoked towards the environment, particular products, or brands can be determined by examining the spontaneous, automatic inferences and associations established in the mental representations evoked in the consumers' cognition (Matthes, 2019). In this regard, Stibbe (2015) sheds light on the concepts of frames and metaphors as important aspects in constructing mental representations, depicting realities and shaping ideologies. With reference to frames, Lakoff (2006) views them as mental configurations, which enable us to perceive and figure out realities. Stibbe (2015) perceives a frame in terms of a story relevant to a specific area in life, which get triggered by certain words. Stibbe (2015) clarifies that the word story reflects various meanings by theorists who have studied frames. For Fillmore and Baker (2010) a story is a collection of beliefs, behaviour, and understandings; Blackmore and Holmes (2013) believe that a story relates to affections, reminiscences, and above all, values. Lakoff and Wehling (2012) propose that a story is a system of ideas which enable us to make sense of the world. With regard to metaphors, Stibbe (2015) emphasizes the importance of understanding meanings transmitted through metaphors. They facilitate cognition and perception of the various experiences which exist in the world. In showing the relationship between frames and metaphors, Stibbe (2015, p 64) argues that metaphors work in a similar way to that of frames where "metaphors use a frame from a specific, concrete and imaginable area of life to structure how a clearly distinct area of life is conceptualized".

4.3.1. Frames and ecolinguistics

Stibbe (2015) argues that as the relationship between discourse and ecology can be examined, so can the relationship between ecology and frames. A number of studies examine commonly used frames from an ecological approach. The aim of these studies is to foreground the frames which encourage protecting the ecosystem and detect the problematic ones. Blackmore and Holmes (2013, p.42) maintain that the values embodied by frames are of great importance, and they provide the example of the "UK government initiative the Red Tape Challenge" to illustrate the impact of frames on ecology. According to this initiative, too many regulations or bureaucratic rules can harm businesses and cause damages to the economy. Hence, the society should be freed from excessive regulations, which Blackmore and Holmes (2013, p. 43) call a "burden". Blackmore and Holmes (2013, p.43) propose the frame of "green foundations" as an alternative to "red tape" since the former frame can indirectly give rise to the meaning of endorsing "green foundations-laws" which ensure the wellbeing of man, natural landscape, and eco-system.

4.3.2. Conceptual metaphors in advertisements

In cognitive linguistics, metaphors play a significant role in facilitating the conceptualization of various experience domains (Lakoff& Johnson, 1980). The employment of metaphors in advertisements can perform three main functions. First, according to Stamatelou

(2015) advertisements can create a favourable, appealing image of the advertised product, brand or service by employing metaphors that relate to concepts with which the target consumers are already familiar. Second, Forceville (2006) holds that high-priced advertisements make many advertisement producers go for ones with limited time and space to reduce the cost. They compensate for this restriction in time and space by employing metaphorical language, which can effectively condense as much information within a limited time and space. Third, Kövecses (2003) maintains that various, abstract, emotional experiences are often expressed by metaphorical language. In this regard, Zaltman and MacCaba (2007) confirm that metaphors perform a distinguished function in advertising. The effective implementation of metaphors in advertisements can activate the viewers' emotions. Consequently, creators of advertisements select cues to act as an emotional stimulus and include them in advertisements. Accordingly, advertisements can become more powerful and influential through the employment of metaphors. This vital role of conceptual metaphors is confirmed by Rodríguez (2018) who has examined metaphors in environmental advertisements and proves that metaphors is an eminent cognitive tool which makes the advertisement more engaging and appealing in an implicit way. Hence, it can be argued that exposure to green advertisements which contain metaphors can influence consumer perceptions and attitudes.

4.3.3 Conceptual metaphors and ecolinguistics

According to Stibbe (2015), the most common metaphors, in which ecolinguistics is interested, are the ones that establish our perceptions of nature. In this concern, Verhagen (2008) states that one of the main goals of ecolinguistics is to reveal the embedded ideologies communicated through metaphors on nature. Many studies in this area investigate
the source frames which establish the target domains of ecosystems and nature. It is found that the source frames include "a garden, an island, a spaceship, a lifeboat, a clock, a storehouse, a work of art, a library, a web, a community, a

tapestry, an organism, a person or a goddess" (Stibbe, 2015, p. 68). Furthermore, these studies indicate that the most common source frames belong to one of the following five categories: "places, machines, goods, organisms and networks, with a few outside these categories such as a competition" (Stibbe, 2015, p.68). Studies in ecolinguistics explore the appropriateness of the employed metaphors through examining ways these metaphors raise awareness towards environmental issues, represent the human-nature relationship (i.e. whether man is part of or detached from nature), and establish respect towards other species (Stibbe, 2015).

5. Green Advertisements and Social Identity

Certain identities are ingrained in cultures and societies, where people are either encouraged or compelled to develop these identities (Darier, 1999). In the field of green advertising, Crompton and Kasser (2009) posit that environmental advertisements aim at emphasizing particular identities. Stibbe (2015, p.107) views identity as "a story in people's minds about what it means to be a particular kind of person, including appearance, character, behaviour and values". Hence, as some identities, which people develop, motivate environmentally destructive attitudes and behaviours, others encourage protective ones to the eco-system. For instance, developing the identity of the unsatisfied consumer can be environmentally destructive if people comply with the cognitive models of this type of consumers. In contrast, Szasz (2011) points out that advertisements, which encourage people to purchase eco-friendly products, can enhance the identity of the responsible consumer who cares about the environment. In other words, what people buy articulates their identity. According to (Stibbe, 2015) these identities can be examined by investigating how discourse label people into distinct types, each of them conforms to certain values and behavior. It is worth mentioning that discourse does not only describe already existing identities, but it also establishes and supports such identities. This is realized through fostering particular mental models in people's cognition. Therefore, ecolonguistics can examine ways language of a society establishes environmentally

destructive identities as well as ways language assists people in resisting such identities and in constructing ecologically beneficial ones.

5.1. Example of New Green Lifestyle Trends and Their Impact on Social Identity

One of the domains of green advertisements, which has recently affected social identity, is that of gated communities. Low (2003) defines gated communities stating that they are residential constructions isolated from the crowded city. Recent research on social identity provides considerable attention to those identities emphasized in green advertisements promoting gated communities, which foreground environmental factors such as greenery and brisk air. Gated communities is a lifestyle direction which has emerged and spread worldwide as part of the contemporary urban residential expansions to enjoy a better life quality (Metwally & Abdalla, 2013; Salah& Ayad, 2018). The prominent feature which advertisements foreground to market gated communities is the unbounded natural resources such as the green landscape, shimmering lagoons, abundant sunlight and clean air. Advertisements of gated communities shed light on the residents' capability of enjoying a luxurious, splendid lifestyle full of leisure activities and surrounded by high wall gates to secure their privacy. Inhabitants of these communities can also enjoy a healthier, less crowded and greener life. Thereby, gated communities are perceived as a safe way to escape pollution, noise, problems and crowdedness (Metwally & Abdalla, 2013; Almatarneh, 2013).

Due to the impact of green advertisements, which propagate gated compounds, on social identity, this area has become the focus of many studies. Almatarneh and Mansour (2013) examine the social identities accentuated in the green advertisements proliferating gated communities in Egypt. The study finds that green marketing of gated communities highlights the inhabitants' access to pristine natural scenery where they can interact with nature. The salient social identity of the residents of gated communities, which these advertisements foreground, is that of prestigious,

secured and homogeneous people who share the same social identity. The advertisements also highlight the western, modern lifestyle. Nonetheless, recent research maintains that gated communities could result in the isolation of particular social groups since these communities can label a prestigious social status, which could lead to a transformation in the fabric of society (Ghonimi, El Zamly, Khairy & Soilman, 2011; Nas, 2017). Thus, Ghonimi et al. (2011) recommend putting strict regulations to ensure the development of all community members, and not only a small social group. Moreover, Nas (2017) notes that green-gated communities could lead to a transformation in the social landscape since they grant their residents the opportunity to enjoy both ecological spaces and modernity of the city; consequently, people are encouraged to inhabit such kind of communities. However, it should be taken into consideration that at the same time these communities have become a brand identity tool. They endow the residents, who pursuit a greener lifestyle, with a prestigious social status. Therefore, to trace the influence of promoting this kind of life, Nas (2017) suggests conducting field studies to analyze ways residents of green communities identify themselves and the impact of that on social segregation in the societies, which market this lifestyle.

6. Research Gaps

Because of the recent awareness of the importance of saving the natural resources and maintaining the well-being of creatures, many studies are concerned with examining environmental related issues. In the realm of advertisements, some researches in the literature aim at investigating advertisements from an ecolinguistic perspective. Some of these studies, which focus on exploring the adherence of corporations to the environmental standards, prove that advertisers employ eco-friendly claims in print advertisements to acquire a positive image (Hogben, 2009). Other studies investigate green advertisements from either the perspective of marketers to examine the main strategies on which they rely to proliferate green products (Castle, 2017), or from the perspective of consumers' attitudes, perception and awareness of the eco-friendly products (Liao, Wu, & Pham, 2020; Mkik et al., 2017; Alniacik &Yilmaz,

2012). In the same line, Zhang (2018) examines print advertisements to explore the phenomenon of ecologization, which refers to the reservation of the environmental natural resources in the process of socio-economic development. The study shows that the majority of recent real estate advertisements accentuate the concept of growthism rather than the ecological aspects of the advertised commodity; in addition, most of these advertisements ignore the human-nature relationship. Therefore, the study recommends foregrounding the ecological attributes of the advertised real estate; hereby, the advertisement can exhibit a balance between the economic and the social privileges, while shedding light on the ecological aspects. Other researches concentrate on the way ecological contexts are incorporated in real estate print advertisements (Gad, 2018) or on the way landscape principles are reflected in promotional advertisements, which propagate urban projects, and the influence of these advertisements on natural resources (Maruani &Cohen, 2013).

Despite the significance of examining the potential effects of synthesizing the visual and textual aspects, which transmit ecological messages, and despite the influence of green advertisements on preserving the ecological resources and improving health, research conducted in this area is still inadequate (Matthes, 2019). Similarly, Stöckl and Molnar (2018) state that few linguistic researches explore the integration of textual and visual elements in green advertisements in spite of the power of both images and texts in influencing the recipients of these advertisements. Therefore, examining ways in which green advertisements incorporate texts and images related to ecology in order to communicate particular meanings, shape ideologies, and promote commodities can provide deep understanding of the strategies followed by marketers and corporations to manipulate the viewers. Consequently, the consumers' heightened awareness of how they are manipulated by the persuasive strategies employed in green advertisements can enable them to figure out the misleading greenwashing techniques, in case they exist in the green advertisements to which they are exposed.

Another important dimension, which needs exploration, is the cognitive meanings communicated through green advertisements. Matthes (2019) asserts that the majority of studies concerned with investigating green advertisements do not focus on the recipients' cognition, which is one of the elements that raises the consumers' attention to the content of the ad. Moreover, an insightful research area, which can enrich the studies conducted on green advertisements, is to systematically investigate how advertisements manipulate the environmental resources to propagate their commodities and services through the interplay of images with texts of environmental aspects along other cognitive elements to activate specific mental representations. When exposed to a multimodal advertisement, the recipients are encouraged to establish particular cognitive configurations based on the content of these advertisements. This process of constructing sophisticated meanings communicated by advertisements entails the necessity to go beyond examining the linguistic features and investigate how complex meanings are established by prompted input spaces and frames. Research, which does not focus solely on studying the language of advertisements, can help gain insight into how these advertisements influence the recipients' worldviews and beliefs (Powell, Boomgaarden, De Swert, & de Vreese, 2015). Thus, when examining advertisements, integrating analysis of the visual and the textual content, which represent the micro-level, along with cognitive analysis that represent the macro-level, can provide insightful results. In this respect, frames and conceptual metaphors are meaningful cognitive tools, which can prompt the construction of specific mental representations and implicit attitudes towards the advertised commodity (See section 4.3). This is a significant research gap since the textual, visual and cognitive dimensions of green advertisements, which make the advertisement more appealing, can remarkably affect customers' behavior and attitude.

Furthermore, to the authors' knowledge research on green advertisements focuses mainly on print media (Hogben, 2009; Zhang, 2018; Gad, 2018), with few exceptions (Nas, 2017).

Research on green advertisements should extend to other media sources, as for example online advertisements to deepen the studies on green advertising (Segev, Fernandes, & Hong, 2016). A significant area in examining online green advertisements is to investigate those ones which appear on popular social platforms. Recently, the internet has influenced ways people interact with the outer world and collect information about different aspects in life (Tan & Yang, 2014). Online platforms have widely spread to include various communication channels such as blogs and social network. Internet has also impacted the purchasing and financial activities of many people. As a result, internet marketing (IM) has emerged in reaction to this expansion of online platforms. It is defined as the strategy of using the internet to engage customers and communicate information about different products and services (Eid & El-Gohary, 2013). In this respect, Chong, Bian, and Zhang (2016) confirm the capability of IM in improving companies' development and growth. Accordingly, many companies create websites and use social media as marketing tools. Pinterest, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook are examples of the different social platforms. Studies show that consumers' purchasing behaviors are far more influenced by social media and other online platforms than by conventional advertising (Richard & Habibi, 2016). One main reason for this influential role of IM is that social media platforms have millions of users. Statista Research Department (2021) reports that around 3.6 billion users access social media all over the world in 2020; this number is estimated to reach 4.41 billion after four years. Moreover, studies find that approximately 49% of the consumers make their purchasing decisions based on online reviews which they perceive as a trusted source of information (Zhang, Trusov, Stephen, & Jamal, 2017). Consequently, marketing managers have started to pay more attention to the significant impact of online consumer reviews in order to increase the scope of people's awareness about the advertised brands and products, and hereby to increase their profits (Malbon, 2013). For instance, 88% of marketing managers advertise their products or services via Facebook social platform (Coleman & Heriot, 2013). Consequently, social platforms have become part of the marketing plans employed to engage

consumers and establish brand awareness (Kang, Tang, & Fiore, 2014). This has granted corporations and marketing managers a wider chance to interact directly with customers and to respond promptly to negative opinions or comments (Zhu & Chen, 2015). Therefore, investigating online green advertisements which appear on widespread social websites, such as Facebook and Instagram, can expand the results of research which examines green advertisements. This investigation can also provide a deep vision of ways social media marketing is employed as a powerful tool to proliferate this global tendency to preserve the ecological resources.

Finally, research on social identity does not give adequate attention to examining identity in green advertisements from a cognitive perspective, and in particular the identity which the viewers of the advertisements are encouraged to develop through evoking specific frames in the images and texts of the advertisements. Investigating identity from a cognitive approach can widen the research which examines social identity and provide a deeper understanding of this topic.

7. Conclusion

To sum up, in light of the worldwide tendency to preserve the natural resources and enjoy a greener, healthier life, green advertisements have gained wide popularity. They become an efficient, manipulative tool employed by advertisers to gain a positive image. Green advertisements expose consumers to images of nature accompanied by texts, which highlight the eco-friendly aspects of the advertised commodity or service. Although incorporating images of nature and texts, which carry ecological meanings, is influential, there is still a need to explore how green advertisements manipulate the environmental resources to promote commodities through the integration of images and texts, along with the activation of specific mental representations. In other words, examining green advertisements from both a multimodal and cognitive perspectives can enrich the scope of research in this field, especially with the considerable attention given to environmental advertising. Furthermore, due to the accelerating impact of social platforms, there is a need to

examine online green advertisements, which appear on social media; consequently, covering various media sources can expand the findings of research in this area. Finally, examining social identities in green advertisements can provide insight into the valued identities, which the viewers are encouraged to develop. More specifically, exploring these social identities from a cognitive perspective is a rich research territory that can provide insightful results about the social changes that can occur parallel to the increasing consciousness towards ecological issues and the growing trend of pursuing a green lifestyle. The current article attempts to study the various dimensions of green marketing. The article mentions one example to show the impact of green advertisement on social identity, namely gated compounds. However, the impact of green advertisements on social identity can be further explored in other life domains, which pertain to products costumers use more frequently, such as nutrients and vehicles to acquire a more comprehensive view on ways social identity is influenced by green advertisement, especially among the different social classes.

Word Count: 7954

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