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Opole

SHIFTING COGNITIVE FRAMES IN POLISH RADIO COMMERCIALS*

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Who inscribes the distinctions between fact and fiction, fantasy and reality, and why? From my perspective, it is social actors who make them, and they do so not because of epistemological clarity, but because of shifting cultural frames.

Jeffrey Alexander

1. Theoretical basis

This paper investigates the shifts of cognitive frames in radio commercials from the perspective of rhetoric, ideology [Van Dijk e.g. 1998] and Zabrocki's diacrisis [1980]. Diacrisis is a term transposed from the cybernetic theory of communication by Zabrocki. In the original formulation the term grew out of Zabrocki's studies of the concept of the phoneme as a component of the codal system [Bańcerowski 1980: 16]. Some of the fundamental diacritic terms which I will use later on in the argument are as follows: the relation of diacrisis, the diacritic pair, diffusivum and confusivum, diffusive range (load), diacritic paradigm, diffusive type.

Extending the stipulation by Orchard, I assume that in commercial, just as in political discourse,

* This study is part of a larger project on radio commercials. Małgorzata Haładewicz-Grzelak [2007] provides an analysis of enchantment strategies in radio commercials. For some aspects of linguistic market in radio commercials, a more detailed review of literature on the topic of sociopragmatics of the radio, as well as a detailed description of the compiled corpus and research procedure cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2010.

‘cultural difference’ becomes ‘cultural identity’ and functions as the basis of recognition: from the outside as basis for entitlement, and to demarcate a particular object of study, and from the inside, as the basis for solidarity and ‘belonging’ [Orchard 2005: 420].

The analytical axis for this study would then involve the coordinates of ideology – group identity – using and creating cultural resources.

The data base for the study is the corpus of 310 radio commercials collected from 20th November till 20th December 2007. The recordings (three 90-minute tapes) were first transcribed into one word document and then subcategorized according to particular research questions. I decided to draw data for the study from commercial broadcasting stations (RMF FM and Radio Zet) of nation-wide scope and three regional commercial stations (Radio Złote Przeboje, Eska and Radio Planeta) because these narrowcasting stations are nationwide and all can be also listened on-line, which makes them in fact of international scope. The stations’ format is targeted at different demographic slices, which in totality cover all the possible adult age groups of the inhabitants of the region.

There are basically two levels of analysis: rhetoric and ideological. The understanding of ‘rhetoric’ adopted in this paper follows from Eco’s paradigm: I assumed it to denote the repertoire of the techniques which have already been proven to work and which have been acquired by a community. As such, rhetoric is an inventory of codified solutions, the persuasion of which redundantly reinforces the underlying code [Eco (1991) 1996: 103]. The level beyond that is the level of ideology: the practical way of using rhetoric tacks reflects particular societal preferences. As stated by Van Dijk,

markets, politics, policies, exploitation, and marginalization all need an ideological basis. Such ideologies require production and reproduction through public text and talk, which in our modern times are largely generated or mediated by the mass media [Van Dijk 1995: 28].

Radio commercials are a linguistic strategy of selling commodities hidden in various discursive strategies, mainly extrinsic/intrinsic dialogues (e.g. amicable dialogues between neighbors). As such, they seem particularly suitable for diacritic studies of consumerism. Marx [(1867) 1906: 83ff] posits that every commodity is a “social hieroglyphic”, which implies that it is “as much a social product as language” which we may try to decipher. As Berland remarked,

music programming is not the main commodity produced by radio but is rather the means to the production of radio’s real commodity – the audience – to be sold to advertisers in exchange for revenue to the broadcaster [Berland 1990: 183].

Radio commercials are understudied in the research on consumer culture. Yet, they seem ideal for sociolinguistic studies on consumerism because the verbal/audile layer is necessarily the unique carrier of target values. What follows, the cultural framing has to be verbalized, rather than modeled semiotically, which makes linguistic analysis particularly suitable.

2. Cognitive niches

My understanding of the term ‘culture’ is cognitive. I follow Shore in assuming that:

culture is an extensive and heterogeneous collection of models, models that exist both as public artifacts in the world and as cognitive constructs in the mind of members of a community [Shore 1996: 44].

As such, linguistic manifestations can be treated as a convenient point of vantage to study and analyze these underlying models, taking particularly into account the very peculiar aspect of the radio commercial impact.

First, the status, internal organization and mental functions of the ideologies need to be studied in terms of social cognition. Second, the conditions and functions of ideologies are obviously not only cognitive but also social, political, cultural and historical. And third, ideologies are formed, changed and reproduced largely through socially situated discourse and communication [Van Dijk 1998: vii].

To start with, the collected data seem to testify that the borrowings in commercial discourse might imply creating cognitive niches. Namely, some aspects of the cultural superstrata are more prominent and they tend to suppress and expand into other realms of the market. These subdued elements still survive but the two are kept distinct. The tendency can be exemplified on the use of carols in Christmas commercials. Basically, only two themes were used in the database: Jingle bells and Let it snow. Jingle bells has become in fact the consumerist anthem of the Christmas hype in Poland. Some of the ads in the corpus even did not mention the word “Christmas” or “Santa Claus” (Pol. Święty Mikołaj) explicitly, it was enough to have Jingle Bells as the diegetic soundtrack. On the other hand, the soundtracks for Christmas commercials never involved our Polish carols at all. It must be pointed out here that in the Polish tradition carols are still a very popular Christmas attribute. The fact that nobody dared to involve ‘national’ carols in radio advertising might be interpreted that on some level we still prefer to keep our tradition intact and the two registers (marketing hype and a celebration of a holiday) are somehow differentiated.

A cognitive niche is thus created: a Polish carol, e.g. *Przybieżeli do Betlejem*, and an American carol, e.g. *Jingle Bells*, display heteronymous constituent segments with respect to the contextual distribution on the linguistic market. The period when the carols are performed (Christmas time) would be, in Zabrocki’s terminology (cf. Bańczerowski [2007] for a detailed exposition) a *confusivum*, common base, and the pragmatic distribution – *diffusivum*. *Jingle Bells* and *Let it snow* might be thus an example of a diacritic paradigm: substitutive distribution.

Bourdieu claims that the competitive system allocates a lot of space to credit. The process of imposing justification takes place through the struggle of competition and is reinforced through all forms of cultural proselytism aims at creating and instilling the assertion (claim) as a need prior to the resources

for proper satisfaction of this need [Bourdieu (1979) 2005: 209]. The analyzed discourse reveals the spiral connotation drive: producer → Christmas → gifts → shopping → producer. The ads encourage all types of consumption abuse and at the same time, the companies offer the remedy for the induced ‘illness’. The excerpts in (I) show some examples of this tendency:

- (I) 1. Szanowni Państwo, w tym gorącym okresie świątecznych zakupów zapraszamy do skorzystania z naszego 10% rabatu [in this hectic period of Christmas shopping we invite you to use our 10% discount].
 2. A: Rozpoczęła się gorączka świątecznych zakupów. Wszyscy tylko o jednym: skąd brać pieniądze, a pani zachowuje stoicki spokój!? B: Mam powody: płacę kartą kredytową X i rozkładam spłatę nawet na 3 lata, dlatego cieszę się świąteczną atmosferą [A: The shopping fever has started, everybody goes: “how can I get money” and you keep calm!? B: I have my reasons: I pay with the X credit card].
 3. Moja głowa! Nie musi być tak źle. Gdy łykniesz X z puszki [...] teraz możesz się już napić [...] Dobrze popić. Bierz w trakcie, nie po fakcie [(pneumatic hammer and a plane in the background) A: My head! Dem: It does not have to be that tragic, just take a gulp of X from the can – now you can have your drink. X: Take while you drink, not afterwards].

3. Consumerist shifts in cultural repertoire

Next I will address the issue how the code of consumerism transforms the cultural repertoire and turns the community into a clique. Such a transformation reaches deeply into the level of socio-cognitive models. To recall,

a model is a representation (in the episodic part of long term memory) of an experience, that is, of an event observed, participated in, or read/heard about by a social actor. As such, models represent contextual interpretations and evaluations of such events, which are by definition unique and personal [Van Dijk 1995: 31].

In this connection it would appear that the commercials under analysis took the function of a sort of repository of cultural heritage which on the surface strengthen communicative bonds but on the deeper level their function is in fact to manipulate the established connotations and to channel them onto the target commodity. This consumerist teleology is the ground on which I assume them to be a manipulation of the models; ‘models’ in the understanding as offered by Van Dijk [e.g. Van Dijk 1995], which on some level operates with the distinction inclusion versus exclusion:

this informal discussion shows that the notion of group, and the principles and practices of group identification, inclusion and exclusion, access and acceptance, and many other social practices and processes are intimately linked to fundamental group ideologies. They involve representations of identity about who We are and what They are, and especially about what is good for Us and what is not good for Us. Sharing exclusive or preferential access to scarce resources with others will not generally appear to be good for Us [Van Dijk 1998: 160].

Community is therefore:

‘imagined’, mediated through the imageries of the ‘mediascape’, ideologies of the ‘ideoscape’, and ever-shifting demographics of ethnicity (‘ethnoscape’) and information [Srinivasan 2006: 502].

The ideoscape in the corpus was created both by the verbal and nonverbal means. For example, the diegetic sound in the recorded radio ads could often be recognized as an excerpt of the soundtrack of national screened epopees or of classical hits or the vestiges of opera arias (not only in ballet adverts) – the excerpts which would be deeply rooted in social consciousness.

On a cognitive level there is no thematic connection between a particular commodity and the cognitive connections established by a particular piece by e.g. Verdi or a soundtrack from a national epopee. The ads begin to establish this connection in their secondary orality, this is why unfortunately classical music more and more often becomes connoted with marketing campaigns¹. The discourse in (II) shows how the model of tradition is manipulated to achieve a marketing effect:

(II) Jasiu, masz pan paszport niemiecki? B: Ano mam, panie majster. A: No to weź kajecik i pisz. Prace w Holandii można zdobyć siłom i godnościami osobistom. B: Panie majster, a nie prościej przez X? C: Posiadasz paszport niemiecki? Praca w Holandii czeka. A: Zapisaliśta? Nie? No a teraz do roboty [(male voices) A: Johnny, have you got a German passport? B: Sure, I have, foreman. A: So take your notebook and write: the work in Holland can be obtained by force and by personal charm. B: Foreman, would it not be simpler through X?]².

The English translation of this dialogue does not make much sense because the proposition belongs utterly to the hermeneutical horizon of Polish communicative community: it hints at and recalls once-famous cabaret dialogues by Jan Kobuszewski, an incomparable actor and comedian. Other examples of using community cultural repertoire in radio ads include phrases from Polish mega-hits in the 80`s: *Przeżyj to sam* (‘experience it yourself’), currently used

¹ Similar process had already taken place with for example the name of a cleaning liquid. The name probably was taken after a robust Roman soldier. The generic name however has uprooted completely its basis and currently the commodity in question (Ajax) absolutely does not connote with its original but solely with itself.

² My research was done in the region of Opolian Silesia in 2006. It was a peculiarity of the region till that time that the inhabitants could obtain a German passport on the basis that they provide documents that they had ancestors who had lived or worked in the area contained within the borders of the German state as it stood until 1937 (law 116 of the German constitution). Altogether my research showed five different job agencies based in Opole and one in the vicinity, which offered work abroad for the German passport holders, competing heavily in the local broadcasting stations. Diachronically speaking, however, the ad is a relic. Due to the EC latest regulations, European job markets have opened to Polish nationals, regardless of the fact whether they hold a German passport or not. Currently aired ads advertising the job agency in question use the same formulations, omitting the phrase in the coda “for the German passport holders”.

in a commercial of one of the mobile-phone companies³. The same practice was employed with the lines from Shakin' Dudi hit: *Au sialala mam dwie lewe ręce, Au sialala nie mam pieniędzy* ('sialala, I have two clumsy hands, I have no money'), which was supplied with the commercial commentary: 'That's no problem. X's hits are hitting prices: we hit prices professionally'. The grafting, rather than crating strategy, is evidenced in the fact that very often the original message is utterly twisted. Exceptionally, we might mention here Jerzy Owskiak's charity *cheval de bataille* "Oj, będzie się działo" ('lot's of interesting things to happen'), which has been recently used in a TV ad of one of low alcoholic beverages. The irony of the borrowing is implicated in the fact that the gist of ideology of Jerzy Owskiak's monumental social enterprise is the assumption that young people are perfectly able to have fun without recourse to alcohol.

In the similar vein, radio ads made use of the most famous fairy tales, some of the examples are given in (III):

- (III) 1. I wtedy Szewczyk Dratewka zawołał: jak mogłem być takim baranem? Daj spokój, wyprowadzamy się. Wściekasz się, bo gdzie indziej zapłaciłeś za dużo? [(male voice)
A: And then Valiant Shoemaker shouted: how could I be such as asshole [ram]?
B: (children, highly discontented) Stop it, we are leaving! Dem: Are you going mad because somewhere else you've overpaid? You should have done your shopping at...].
2. Smok, zanim skonał pod ciosami dzielnego Rycerza, zaryczał: chyba mnie porąbało! [The dragon, before he perished under the sword of the Valiant Knight, had roared: I must be nuts [chopped up]! (children highly discontented). Yes..].

This type of ads particularly exemplifies the thesis first formulated in the study of visual advertising:

some ads may be as complex as fine art, requiring subtle investigations of how they do what they do [...]. A game is created in which the viewer is challenged to map values of an image onto the product which may well go beyond what Paterman [1983: 191] calls 'a default assignment' [Marlow 2001: 38].

The texts shift the frames connoted with childhood, storytelling or being looked after onto a commercial situation. Additionally, the concept of error is crucial in the frame. In the fairy tale, Valiant Shoemaker did precisely the right thing, he knew the trick to win. Similarly, the Dragon was framed in the original tale but after the cognitive manipulation and linguistic play (to be chopped up in Polish is an idiom for losing one's marbles) he brings himself to reason: decides on the right place to go shopping.

The complexity of appeal, verging on pragmatic commentary, was implicit in the phrasing of the ads of one of the household appliances stores cited in (IV):

- (IV) Listopadowa afera cenowa w sklepach X: 500 cen, które wstrząsnęły Polską rewelacja... [The October price affair [fraud] in the X chain: 500 prices which have shocked Poland].

³ By the way, the authors of the song might not be particularly happy about the context the quote was made use of: the song itself is admonition to experience a 'real' life, and to feel empathy; it was probably intended to be a protest song.

The ad performs double action: first, it is pre-assumed that Polish political scene is replete with scandals. This can be interpreted as constituting a sort of a negative bond. Then the rhetoric provocation “October price affair” – patterned after recurring headlines such as, e.g. *afera łapówkowa* (‘a bribe affair’), *afera korupcyjna* (‘corruption affair’), *sex-afera* – turns this bond into a positive, comic one. As a result, a community of clients of X is created, a community distanced to the political scene and invited to a game.

It seems unquestionable that ads are becoming part of the verbal repertoire of a newly created communicative community⁴. This aspect is however more salient in TV advertising, where particular slogans in fact enriched the cultural repertoires of a speech community, e.g. X: *napięcie rośnie* (X: ‘the tension is mounting’), often used in informal conversations. However, the communicative bonds evolved as well: the group is centered on a commodity. The simulated communication in commercials thus contributes to the ambient of cliques rather than communities. Taylor assumes that:

we also tend to be rather territorial and cliquish. What better way of establishing and maintaining the clique than speech habits (along with other manifestations of group identity, such as clothing)? [Taylor 2002: 15].

I thus perceive community as inclusive, while the clique as exclusive. The clique only admits those who can afford the consumerist race. For example, the ringtones exchange clique naturally excludes people who do not have mobiles. What follows, the above quoted examples of cultural repertoire of a speech community were in fact transformed by the consumerist code from the level of the community into the level of clique.

4. Consumerist shifts in ideology

The study has also addressed the claim that:

locally and in actual practice, the role of the media is less positive. It has frequently been documented that ethnicism and racism are exacerbated by at least some of the media, as well as by the political and social elites that control them or have preferential access to them (van Dijk 1991, 1993). [Van Dijk 1995: 28]

The process is evident in the examples of racialized discourse [Van Dijk 1992: 251] from my database. I was able to record one ad in mountaineers’ dialect (an ad of a tourist resort), one in Silesian dialect – a low-prestige vernacular of the region (a local retailer of chimneys), one was a simulation of a speaker from

⁴I follow Zabrocki in differentiation between speech community and communicative community. “Language community is [for Zabrocki – M. H.-G.] a kind of superstructure imposed on a communicative community [...]. A communicative community, in turn, is, to a great extent, a product of extra-communicative factors such as geographical, economic, political, religious, ideological and cultural” [Bańcerowski 1980: 18].

Congo (a solarium ad), one a simulation of a Romany woman telling the fortune (a house appliances retailer), one ad involving Italian accent (a bank), one had Japanese in the background (a make of a car), one probably Finnish (a Christmas promotion of cell phones), and one was a simulation of an American accent (a coughing syrup).

From the structural point of view, all these commercials used a method which might be called linguistic replacement rather than real use of another linguistic variety (cf. Bleichenbacher [2007] for the detailed discussion of the linguistic replacement in another instance of secondary orality: the movies). The particular strategy is an example of an artificial code switching because the coda part of the ad, which is vocalized by the demiurge (I call 'demiurge' a male voice at the end of each commercial that reveals the name of the commodity and informs where the addressors can purchase it), was always in standard Polish. Furthermore, even to a lay listener, the addressors were only imitating the accent of the target nationality (with the possible exception of the inter-text in Finnish).

There are four ads which might be relevant for the ideological analysis: the one involving a simulated Gypsy's voice, a talk in Silesian, a simulation of a speech of a newcomer from Congo and a simulation of an American accent. The phrasing of these ads implies that the media seem to engage in the reproduction and generating the stereotypes and prejudices against the Others. The texts are ideologically marked and I assume that such level of ideological loading would not be possible in other, less palpable, ephemeral and by that, more prone to societal verification, mass media outlets. The ads in (V), (VI) and (VIII) do not show the hypothetical 'outsiders' in a favorable light:

(V) Daj mileńka, ja ci powrózę. Ty mileńka szukasz zadowolenia. I ty jego mileńka znajdziesz, on blisko jest, on dużo ma i kompetencje ma jak trzeba i imię jego na M się zaczyna. Idź za znakiem X, szukaj X gazetek, tam znajdziesz zadowolenie [Come, deary, I'll tell you your fortune. My dear, you seek satisfaction. And you will find him(it). He(it) is close, he is big, and has all the necessary experience, and his name begins with M. Follow the X, look for the flyers, there you will find satisfaction. X: We sell satisfaction].

The Romany woman is telling the fortune, stereotyping the conviction that this is what Gypsies are normally best at. The ad in local vernacular (a variety of Silesian ethnolect), reinforces the conviction that a Silesian person has inferior cognitive abilities to a speaker of Standard Polish:

(VI) Przecie godom tobie trepie, że... [I'm telling you, you old ram that...] plus: ty to kiepie to się znasz a centrolne ciągle mosz [you dumb man you think you know your way around but you still have the central heating].

The solarium ad is particularly informative in this respect:

(VII) Cześć, mam na imię Said i przyjechałem z Kongo. W Polsce chciałem znaleźć biała żona, ale nic z tego, bo tutaj najfajniejsze dziewczyny są jakieś brązowe. Prawie jak u nas, a wszystko przez X. Solaria X. Dem: Poczuj się jak w tropikach [Hello, my name

is Said and I came from Congo. I wanted to find in Poland a white wife but nothing came out of it, because here the greatest girls are somewhat brownish, just like where I came from. All due to Solarium X. X: feel the taste of tropics].

The racialization is performed through ‘spoiled Polish’ in particular incorrect declension in znaleźć *biała żona instead of the correct białą żonę (nominative instead of accusative) and the matrimonial purpose of the visit to Poland, which, to my intuition at least, puts the speaker in a somewhat disadvantageous position.

To compare, the ad in (VIII), where the addressor speaks with a simulated American English accent goes as follows:

(VIII) Kochani, bawimy się w strażaków? Kevin, ale mnie boli gardło. Pożar na ulicy gardłowej? Dzwonimy po strażaków? Z X? Szykować X! Uwaga, gasimy palący ból gardła! [(male voice) My dears, shall we play “fire brigade”? Kevin, I have a terribly sore throat. Fire on throat street! (a sound of a siren). Are we calling fire brigade? With X? Get ready with X! Watch out, we are extinguishing the scorching sore throat! (Dem: standard Polish accent, commercial information)].

I interpret this ad as simulating a party talk or a talk of a father to his children. Both topics have very positive connotations in Polish society. The prestige load is thus much higher than in the previously quoted items. The senders of the discourse evidently used the stereotype of an American who enjoys, and has resources, for entertainment and/or for attending to his children.

5. Commercial diacrisis and conclusions

The two media: TV and radio impose their idiosyncratic properties of the transmission substance on the message itself. The contrastive specification of the two might provide vital insights about mass media mechanisms per se. As Overby and Barth point out,

there is reason to believe that radio advertising may be qualitatively different from campaign advertisement via television. Because radio allows a far more nuanced targeting of audiences – what is best described as narrowcasting – its use and effects as a political campaigning tool are potentially different from those chronicled in studies of television broadcasting, raising both interesting empirical questions about the strategic utilization of radio advertising [Overby and Barth 2006 : 452].

The collected database also enabled me to subcategorize the ‘niches’ according to the products that were advertised. The result is reported below in the form of a schematic ‘commercial diacrisis’ for Polish market (winter 2006):

–The ‘tycoons’ (TV only, diffusive) are: washing powders and bleaches, household appliances, ladies’, men’s and babies’ hygiene products, shaving accessories, sweets and snacks, toy industry, beverages⁵.

⁵ Since the research was conducted in the winter, it excludes the ads of refreshments which do not appear until late spring, but it might be hypothesized that they belong to this category as well.

- Confusive advertising (both TV and radio – without specification whether it is a local or national broadcasting station): banking (credit grants and credit cards exclusively), pharmaceuticals (immunology boosting pills and syrups, sedatives, painkillers, blood circulation problems remedies), charities, hypermarket chains, cars and car accessories, insurance.
- Diffusive (radio advertising only, mainly local): job agencies (only for German passport holders at the time of the research, local scope), car dealers', clothing retailers, beauty parlors, discos, pizza bars.

The subcategorization furthermore shows considerable similarities between the pharmaceutical ads and the banking ads:

- both advertise equally heavily on TV and radio (confusive),
- both show similar competitiveness index [cf. Haładewicz-Grzelak 2010] and both use similar resources of the linguistic market (conflating), e.g. the majority appeal ('half of the population has already trusted X') or amicable extrinsic dialogues: the helpful tip from a good friend or a neighbor.

In this connection, the following diffusive types, i.e. subsets of diacritic pairs, the diffusive of which exhibit the same proportion in the number of constituent elements, can be singled out:

Confusiva: banking/credits/cars,
 music/cell phones/clothes/radio,
 newspapers/TV,
 charity/TV/cell phones/ catering chains,
 shopping/credit cards.

Implosions: art, technology register → shopping, cell phones.

Commodification of tradition.

Diffusive range or load of a confusivum (the set of all confusiva with which this confusivum can combine to form a word (element) [cf. Bańcerowski 2007: 4] with respect to the radio commercials discourse is as follows (most frequently used techniques):

- 1) dialogues/offer to help: medicaments/diet supplements, credit offers/work,
- 2) metonymy: cars, beauty parlors,
- 3) art connotations: shops, collections of clothes, beauty parlors,
- 4) customization: cars, internet options, cell phones.

As pointed out by Orchard,

The complexities of unravelling the force and import of the use of the term 'culture' in a given theoretical context are well known. It operates as at once what is taken for granted, the tacit dimension of everyday practices and behaviour, and what has been thought about most, what is most conscious and developed (Eliot, 1948: 120). Moreover, it is frequently the interrelation and overlap between these senses that is most significant, as the founder of cultural studies, Raymond Williams, stressed (1976: 91) [Orchard 2005, 419 f.].

The reported analysis concentrated on investigating some aspects of interrelation of culture and commerce. The study showed some mechanisms of the ideological manipulation immanent in constructing a radio ad. A key coordinate

was the commercial diacrisis, subsuming the axis inclusive: exclusive. For example, the inclusiveness parameter was grafted onto the Jingle bells theme: only the American themes were used as a diegetic sound in commercials. It is out of question that the senders of the ads should not know the traditional Polish carols. Accordingly, I interpret the situation as creating a new inclusiveness bond. The senders were aware of a tight impermeable cognitive frame in which the traditional carols are ingrained. The only solution seems thus to shift the frame into another cognitive niche, designed for the commercial purpose.

The emphasis was not that much on identifying the social actors, as on trying to shed some light on the social code. The research on consumerism is peculiar in this respect that, I would risk the claim, that there is no pre-determined role of being a consumer and being a manufacturer. In other words, the fact of being a manufacturer does not exempt from being a consumer. On the contrary, there seems to be an economic backlash: the more economic resources the members of a consumerist society possess, the more consumptive potential this gives them.

Such a perspective by no means implies that it is merited to posit a culture/ /commerce binary. That is precisely what the topic 'shifting cognitive planes' implies. Crucially, the reported argument posited that it is the action of shifting planes that is of paramount importance here. The game element, present both in art and in a commercial, might be no different. The only difference is in the type of bonds that result. Culture can thus be interpreted as a conglomerate of diffusive/ /confusive elements, which form a sort of continuum.

The emphasis was on the role of a 'genetic code' – the substance of the message in the data source, which

controls the mutation of the real into the hyper-real, just as the other, micro-molecular code controls the passage of the signal from a representative sphere of meaning to the generic sphere of the programmed signal [Baudrillard 1983: 55].

From such a perspective, consumerism can be envisaged as a sort of a pragmatic code, transforming and re-transforming one type of values into another.

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Summary

Shifting Cognitive Frames in Polish Radio Commercials

The theorization on culture and consumerism has rarely involved the study of radio commercials. This study aims to investigate shifting cognitive frames through a sociolinguistic analysis of a corpus of Polish radio commercials. The corpus was compiled during Christmas marketing hype in 2006. The discussion evolves on the rhetoric and ideological frames. The emphasis is placed on the evolution of communicative bonds, stereotyping and the manipulation of ideoscape. The analysis relies on Zabrocki's theory of diacrisis and van Dijk's view on ideology. Consumerism is assumed to be a sort of a pragmatic code, transforming and re-transforming one type of values into another.