

***Beyond Words:  
A Multimodal Approach to Translation  
Applied to Global Standardised Advertising Campaigns  
in International Women's Magazines***

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## **Abstract**

This thesis draws critically on approaches to globalisation, translation and advertising to analyse current translation practices using multimodal advertising texts. The purpose of this study is both to show evidence of the need to approach advertising translation from an interdisciplinary and intersemiotic perspective, and to remark on the need to incorporate such an approach into translation training and practice. It is developed in the broader context of globalisation and its impacts on socio-economic changes and cultural interaction worldwide. The intensification of global communications together with technological advances enhance the steady flow of knowledge and information, whilst at the same time there is a tendency to accentuate commonalities between cultures, clearly illustrated by standardised strategies used in global advertising campaigns.

However, one key obstacle in the spread of standardised messages is language diversity, something that has caused translation to gain an active role in global advertising since it facilitates dialogue between global companies and international consumers; thus, translation has not only become an activity that overcomes linguistic and cultural barriers but also a commercial tool. This thesis focuses on the translation of advertisements as an intentional communication act that involves a team process into which translation may be integrated. Translation encompasses concepts that go beyond linguistic matters such as contextual issues and extralinguistic communication sign systems. The translation of advertisements is a growing area of study, with current research mainly limited to the study of linguistic matters. Consequently, in order to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of multimodal translations (text and images in this study) in a professional context, this research incorporates concepts and knowledge from visual analysis and advertising.

This thesis suggests a multimodal method of analysis consisting of different phases integrating visual analysis as a part of the translation process. The

proposed methodology is illustrated by a corpus of Spanish-English pairs of standardised print advertisements from the beauty and cosmetics sector. The conclusion is that it is vital to consider the extralinguistic aspects surrounding a multimodal text from both a descriptive and critical perspective in order to read connotative information from words, images and the text-image unit. Translation training might also benefit from including this multimodal approach and further collaborative work must be done between translators and marketers to better understand and consolidate the role of translation in this area.

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