

What is advertising discourse doing us?

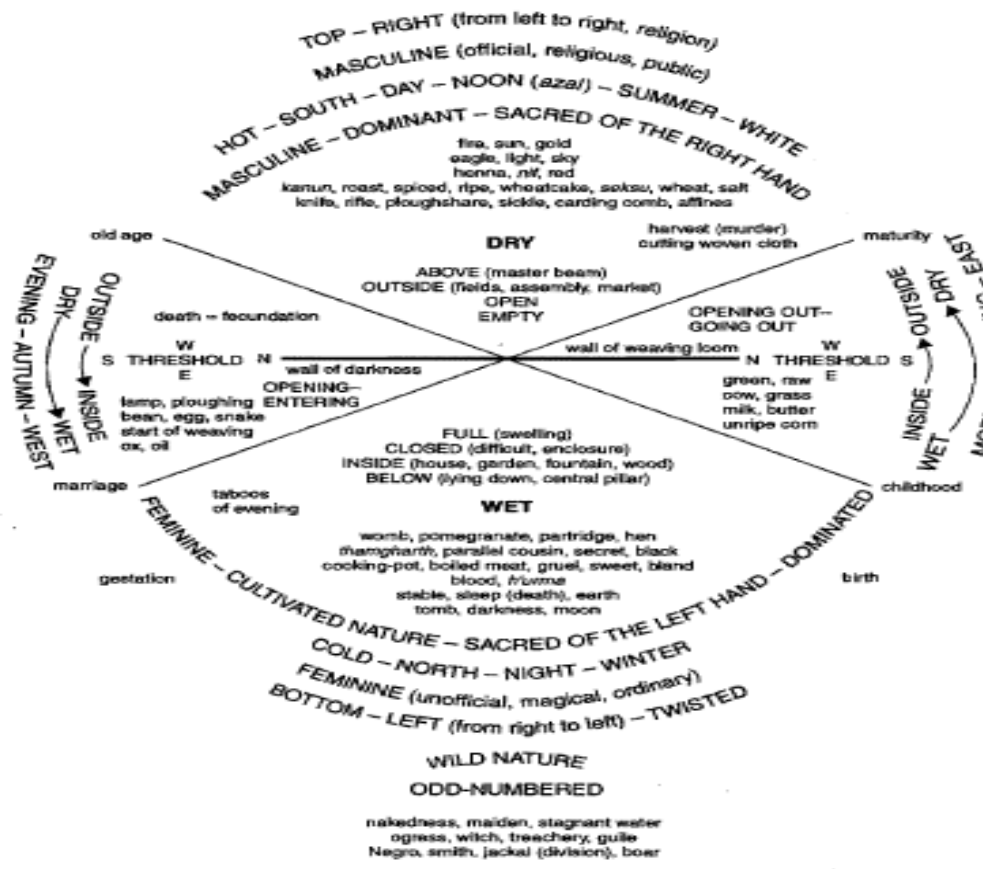
Julian Fernando Trujillo Amaya

This Boot Camp is based on a preliminary report of the research project named “Advertising Reasoning and Persuasive Communication” which first was advanced with the Research Group *Communication, Technology and Society* in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Pontifical Javeriana University (2004-2006), that was resumed into the Research Group *Hermes* (2007), and finally it was conclude in the Research Group *Analysis*, Department of Philosophy at University of Valle, Cali-Colombia (2009-2011), and now I would like to show to the *Distant Readings and Related Methods* at Concordia University.

My starting point was to assume that advertising discourse (Chandler-Munday, 2011) and publicity texts convey speeches and conjoin the construction of the collective imagination in our consumer society, dominated by the rhetoric strategies of the mass media: “Symbolic power-as a power of constituting the giving through utterances of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby action on the world and thus the world itself” (Bordieu, 1991:170) The advertising discourse not only constructs sense with persuasive purposes, configures imaginaries, promotes values, generates aptitude and makes society to act in a certain way, but also strengthens the construction of certain types of male and female identities (Barthel,1989:2).

In the advertising discourse as a symbolic instrument it is more important that a reasoning be interesting than that it be valid, the truth is less important than the persuasive effect (Bogost, 2012:110; Latour, 1993:205-206). This type of discourse displayed its power of persuasion and domination by promoting identity with its stereotypes and models, while determining the possible axiological universe for configuration of subjectivity in the world today. In this context, the woman has been a publicity ploy, the most widely used to achieve their ends: it is not only the target for product excellence but also the persuasive medium to promote various consumer items. “The division of (sexual and other) things and activities according to the opposition between the male and the female, while arbitrary when taking in isolation, receives it objective and subjective necessity from its insertion into a system of homologous oppositions (...) the division between the sexes appears to be in the order of things, as people something say to refer to what is normal, natural, to the point of being inevitable: it is present both –in the objectified state- in things, in the whole social world, and –in the embodied state- in the habitus of the agents, functioning as systems of schemes of perception, thought and action” (Bourdieu, 2001: 7-8).

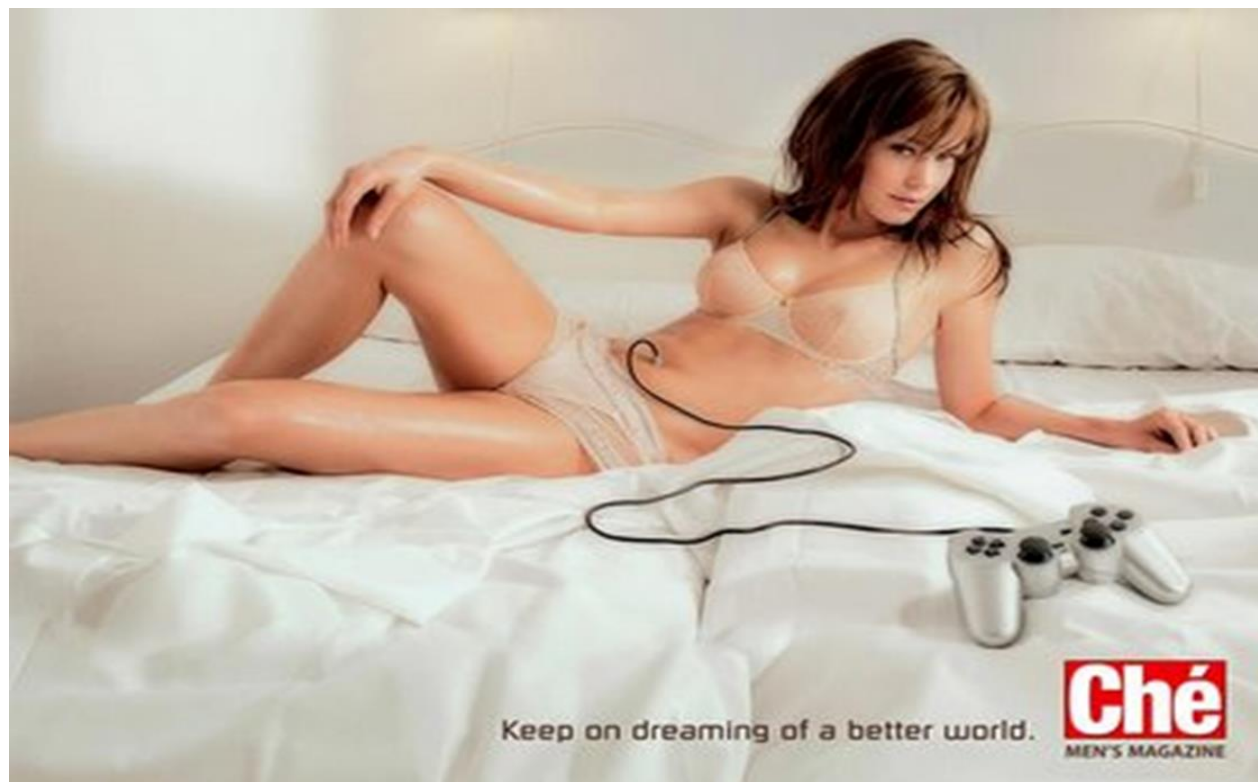
Cfr. Synoptic diagram of opposition (Bourdieu, 2001: 10).



Some examples from this diagram of opposition where the advertising discourse represents women running after men, as well materialistic or dominated women ready to be used or controlled, are the followings:







From this issues of research, the perspective of Critical Discourse Analysis from Rhetoric Communication Model (RCM) and archeological analysis appear as a useful approach for they offer excellent results, not only for analyzing texts and images adequately, but also for putting them in analyzable relations to socio-cultural processes and transformations. The Archaeology is the analysis of discourse in its archival form (Foucault,1998:290): “To analyze the facts of discourse in the general element of the archive is to consider them, not at all as documents (of a concealed significance or a rule of construction) but as monuments: it is-leaving aside every geological metaphor, without assigning any origin, without the least gesture toward the beginning of an *arche*, to do what the etymological game allow us to call something like archaeology” (Foucault,1998:310).

The results firstly showed that stereotype of femininity in advertisement present a variety of interesting implications and cause a lot of transformations on audience” (Tekvar, 2013; Mc Cracken,1993 Bell-Milic, 2002). There are also male representations within the framework of hegemonic, dominated and affective manhood, especially we can see a traditional stereotype which presents subordinated women, but also materialistic women who are look for men with a “big truck. It was also found that the advertising discourse include explicit symbols, which associate with fetishism and sexual fantasies (Elliott et al, 1995): “The use of language as a symbols means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols (...) wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric. And wherever there is meaning, there is persuasion” (Schiappa, 2001: 261).

According to Gaonkar “If it is through the resources of rhetoric that the dominant ideological meanings are fixed and made plausible against the natural polysemy of language, then, one must resort to rhetorical analysis and criticism to unpack and debunk those meanings. Thus, rhetoric as a critical practice, is made to set its course on the road to suspicion and becomes the discipline par excellence of debunking and demystification” (Gaonkar, 1993:60; Cfr. Gaonkar-Povinelli, 2003:386-387). In consequence, this probe examines the special argumentation of the advertising messages as part of a strategy of persuasion from a diagram which shows a Rhetoric Communication Model (RCM). It is based on a human interaction through the symbols of language in order to produce several transformations on the audience. The RCM could be understood from the results that announcers produce in the audience. This model shows that generally announcers tend to use their power and ideology to change people’s behavior and thought: “Rhetoric is transformed from a discursive instrument of politics into that which is constitutive of political discourse itself. This transformation is mediated through a certain equation between rhetoric, politics, and ideology” (Gaonkar, 1993:59).

The wide variety of discursive strategies about products available in the market for industrialized societies clearly suggests that materialism and sex move the world in which we live. My objective in this probe is to analyze different transformations produce by advertising discourse to understand the relationship between language and the social dimension of gender. It is a fact that the world has long been divided by a gender-line leaving many times men and women playing in different place of the hierarchy of social life (Vazquez-Hermosilla, 2012). The advertising discourse is a symbolic power, in other words, it has a power of constructing reality: “symbols are the instrument par excellence of social integration: as instruments of knowledge and communication, they make it possible for there to be a consensus on the meaning of the social world, a consensus which contributes fundamentally to the reproduction of the social order” (Bordieu, 1991: 166).

Symbolic instruments and division of the labour of domination (Bordieu,1991: 165).

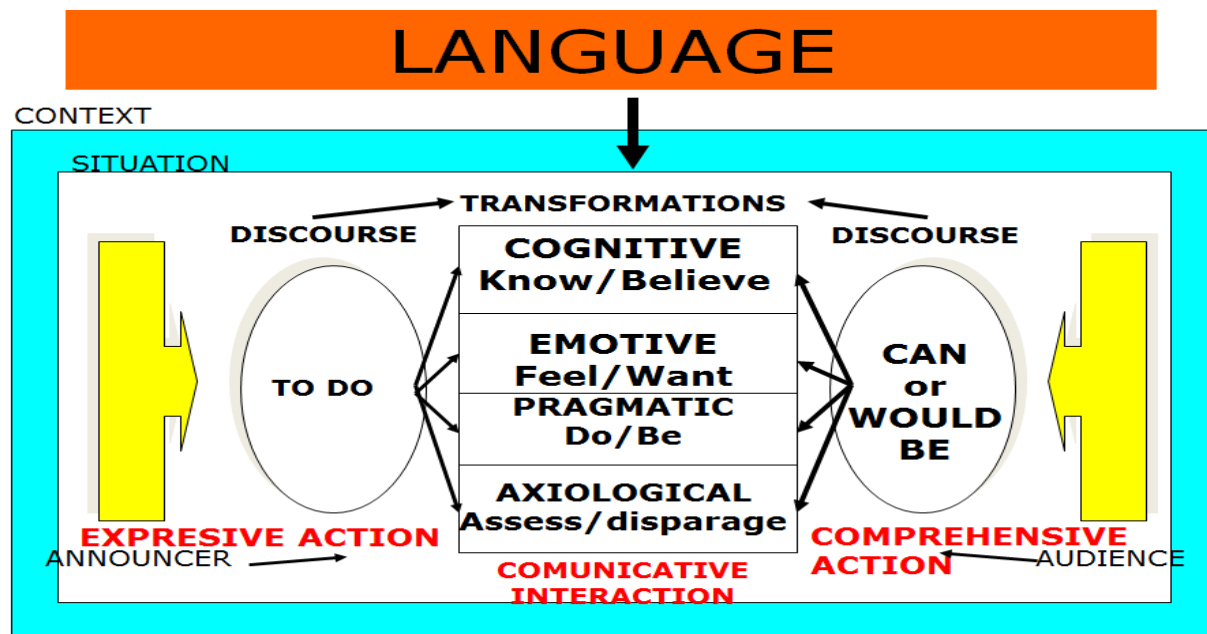


Thus, it seemed possible and pertinent for me to ask, what is the female identity of woman that promotes advertising? What woman is the one that makes us believe or know the advertising? What makes us feel and want with respect the woman? What system of values is obtained? What are the reasons for action that provides the advertising discourse? What does it pretend us to do? How does the advertising argumentation make us be? Based on these issues and the advertising announcement of Chysler, made by the Silva Advertising Agency (Juan Manuel Gonzalez, creative director, Carlos Carvajal, copy writer, and Jeronimo Fernandez, graphic designer) and winner of the call "Advertising SOHO style" in early 2002, I designed a series of questions about what transformations this advertising text produced over those who tried to understand it.



The first phase of the investigation consisted of collecting interpretations of different subjects on the same advertising image for the purpose of observing the levels of agreement and disagreement in modes of understanding of this sense in the advertising text. To this end, university students from Graphic Design Communication of the *Autonoma de Occidente University* were taken as focal groups between the years 2002-2003. This exercise continued on 2004 with students of Communication from the *Pontifical Javeriana University*. To all this early work, additional information that supplied in-depth interviews with various specialists in Social Sciences in 2005-2006 was joined.

The contrast between one starting source and another allowed contrast that, regardless of variations in answer modes, the answer could be classified into four different categories types. A first cognitive category in which the central issue that gains the attention of the interpreter are the beliefs and knowledge that conveys the advertising text; another second emotional category, where the key are the passions, emotions or feelings that aims to provoke or presupposed in the target text; the third category is the pragmatic, where it is placed in game identity and leeway recipient subject of discourse, and finally, a fourth category that include axiological values and hierarchies of values by which tries to assess or belittle something unfold, guy, disposition or action. These categories can be visualized in a scheme like the following:



Once including responses in the previous taxonomy, we proceeded to find and describe the common features between the responses and thereafter had to select those questions-answers that seemed to reiterate or insistently repeated by responses and respondents, while we made explicit the issues that they seemed to respond, finally, we designed a second instrument of inquiry with the derivatives questions and we turned it into a second questionnaire that was raised over a hundred people, their responses were reclassified, organized and systematized in a final core questionnaire which was then applied to 400 university students between 17 and 25 years old, women and men, in strata 3, 4, 5 and 6. The socio-economic stratification is the classification of residential property should receive public services. The socioeconomic strata in which you can sort the homes and / or land is 6, so called: 1: Low-low: 22.3%; 2: Low: 41.2%; 3: Medium-low: 27.1%; 4: Medium: 6.4%; 5: Mean-Height: 1.9%; 6: Height: 1.2% (CONPES 3386)

According to Tanaka (2013), there has been great advancement on research for preferential choice in field of marketing. However, since Coombs (1950; 1964), who introduced the unfolding technique on preferential choice data, until Fong, DeSarbo, Park, and Scott (2010) with a new Bayesian vector Multidimensional Scaling model which was applied to data from a five-point Likert scale survey, we can see the importance of Likert scale and Coombs technique in order to captures the intensity of feelings for a given item in research that employs

questionnaires (Kruskal-Wish, 1978). Without forgetting that the main purpose was to analyze and critically interpret the beliefs, values, rules, actions and identities that manages advertising discourse solicitation by its symbols and images, my research also addressed to measure the degrees of membership (agree or disagree) to the interpretations proposed by the advertising text, based on a Coombs-Likert type scale. This scale is used to determine certain attitudes or dispositions of a subject through their conduct in a particular test, where the subject is asked to consciously locate in a position along the variable continuum that the scale is measuring. Following Likert's suggestions for its measuring of attitudes scale (Likert, 1976), we proposed a series of interpretations presented by way of statements or trials are built on some of the four semiotic categories analyzed and to which they are asked a reaction to interpreter subjects. It is presented each interpretation and each interpreter is asked to express its reaction choosing one of the five positive or negative points of the scale to the ones that have been previously assigned a numerical value whose correlate is a consideration on the accession (agreement and disagreement). The scale was the following:

- 5 totally in disagreement
- 4 almost totally in disagreement
- 3 roughly in disagreement
- 2 somewhat in disagreement.
- 1 very Little in disagreement.
- 0 neither agree nor disagree.
- +1 very Little in agreement.
- +2 somewhat in agreement.
- +3 roughly in agreement
- +4 almost totally in agreement.
- +5 totally in agreement.

The advertising text selected is a challenge for both superficial understanding and more elaborate critic interpretation. This is a mixed advertising that combines the referential, the oblique, the mythical and the substantial noted by Jean-Marie Floch (1990). It aims to match reality, requires the recipient to think beyond what has the linguistic and the iconic, stimulates imagination and fantasies to unspeakable desire presupposes erotic associations, although it focuses on the benefits and virtues of the product.

Over a white box, the text presents two figurative icons, as resembling and denotes a key and a Jeep. The key, which is really small, appears enlarged in its proportions, with a clear hyperbolic effect, and conversely the Jeep, really great, appears diminished in size, although located in the key place in the structure of advertising text and occupying the point closing for image reading in the traditional morphology. The identity of the product is reinforced by verbal and symbolic means, properties and methods of use are replaced with a slogan that attempts to synthesize all these aspects: "Jeep there is only one; 5 cm is enough to madden a woman Jeep7Grand Cherokee".

The slogan is a practical enthymeme or incomplete reasoning that leaves implicit and budgets for the recipient to elaborate them. The thesis seems to be a hypothesis or implication: "If you have a key (a car) and this car is Jeep7Grand Cherokee, you can drive girls crazy (you can make them to

want or desire you)”. In the message operate synecdoche and metonymy as rhetorical figures, part (key) for the whole (car); argumentative scheme also operates a fact-as a result assumes that just the fact of having a Jeep7Grand Cherokee for the recipient achieve a maddening effect on women. In the message synecdoche and metonymy operate as rhetorical figures, part (key) for the whole (car); argumentative scheme also operates a fact-as a result assumes that just the fact of having a Jeep7Grand Cherokee for the recipient achieve a maddening effect on women. It suggests a means-end diagram as proposed to have a certain car is the means to get to "drive" women crazy, or it may be considered as a complex practical reasoning as follow:

Rule: Everyone who has a Jeep7 Grand Cherokee drive women crazy.

Case: Here's a Jeep7 Grand Cherokee and I can buy it; then

Result 1: I buy, in fact, a Jeep7Grand Cherokee (If an only if I can): Action

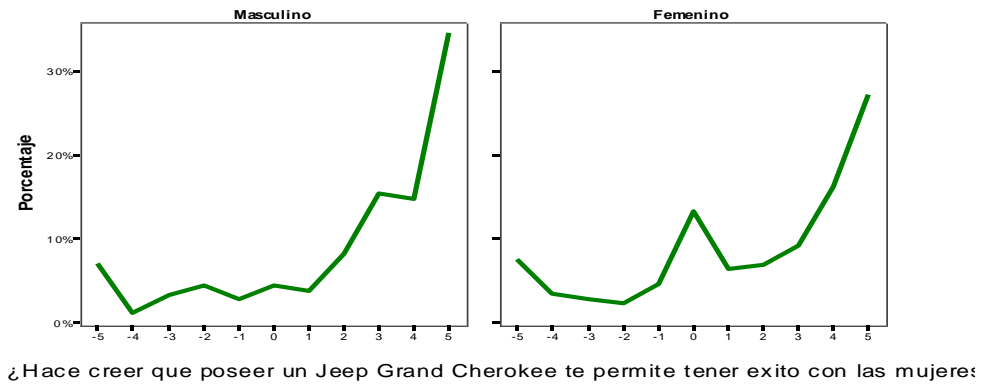
Result 2: I wish a Jeep7Grand Cherokee: Desire.

Result 3: I believe that if I have the intention of getting a woman, then I need a Jeep7Grand Cherokee: Intention.

A new form the “incontinence” is here possible, because if the audience does not possess the competence and economic capital (he or she cannot buy the car), then he or she would not avoid holding the wish about this car, but could not get this car. Anyway the audience assumes the representation and identity purposed by the reasoning implicit in the advertising discourse. Clearly the argument is 1) directed to the audience with a particular economic level, 2) capital to a male audience, and 3) runs this gender identity reflects a specific cultural setting.

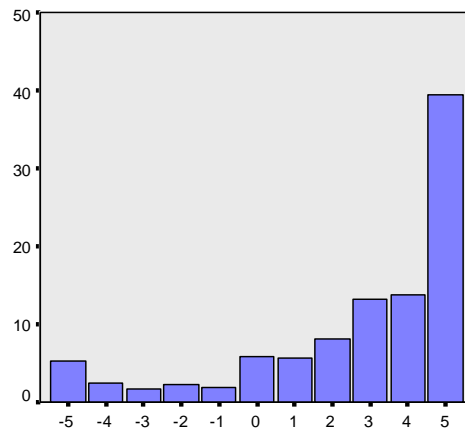
Both male identities centered on the phallus and compensatory symbols, and women identity like the materialistic, interested, and forever unsatisfied for the man and his penis, complement a masterful rhetoric process of advertising communication. After this brief description-interpretation let's look at some ways of understanding and interpretation given in the questions of the survey and the analysis of their pragmatic changes in target:





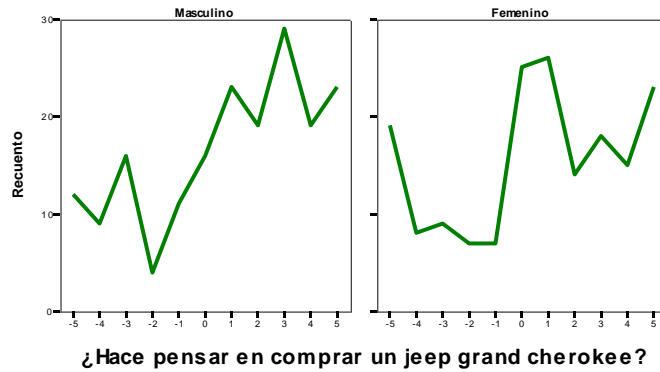
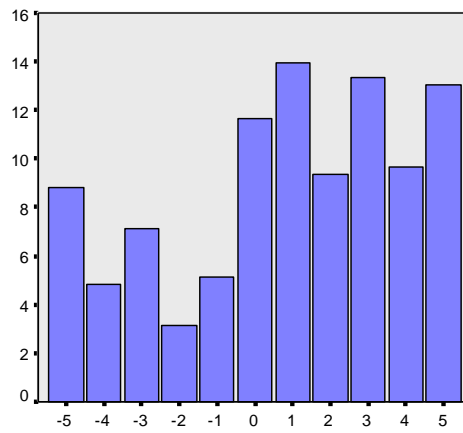
The graph shows that there is a tendency for women to remain neutral regarding the success produced by owning a Jeep and we can even see that there is a growing female group tends to doubt this effect.

¿Hace creer que las mujeres son materialistas e interesadas?



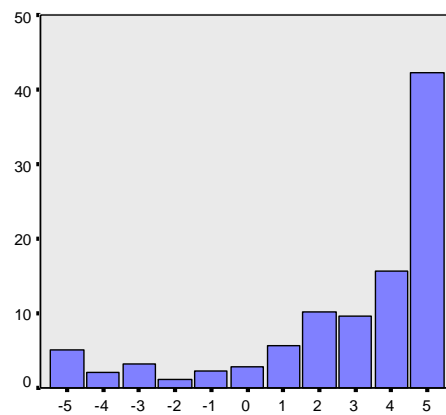
The bars show that advertising produces a strong tendency to believe that women are materialistic and interested.

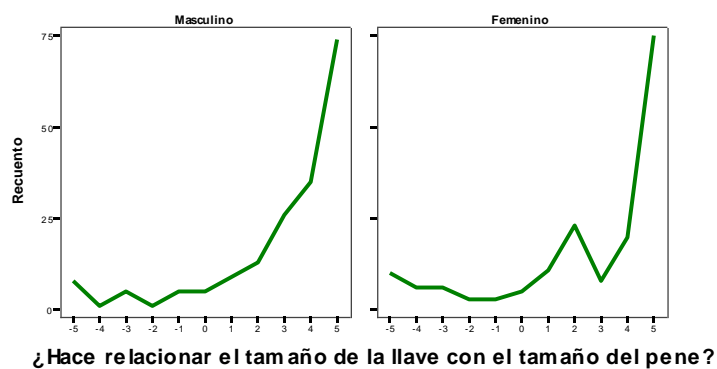
¿Hace pensar en comprar un Jeep Grand Cherokee?



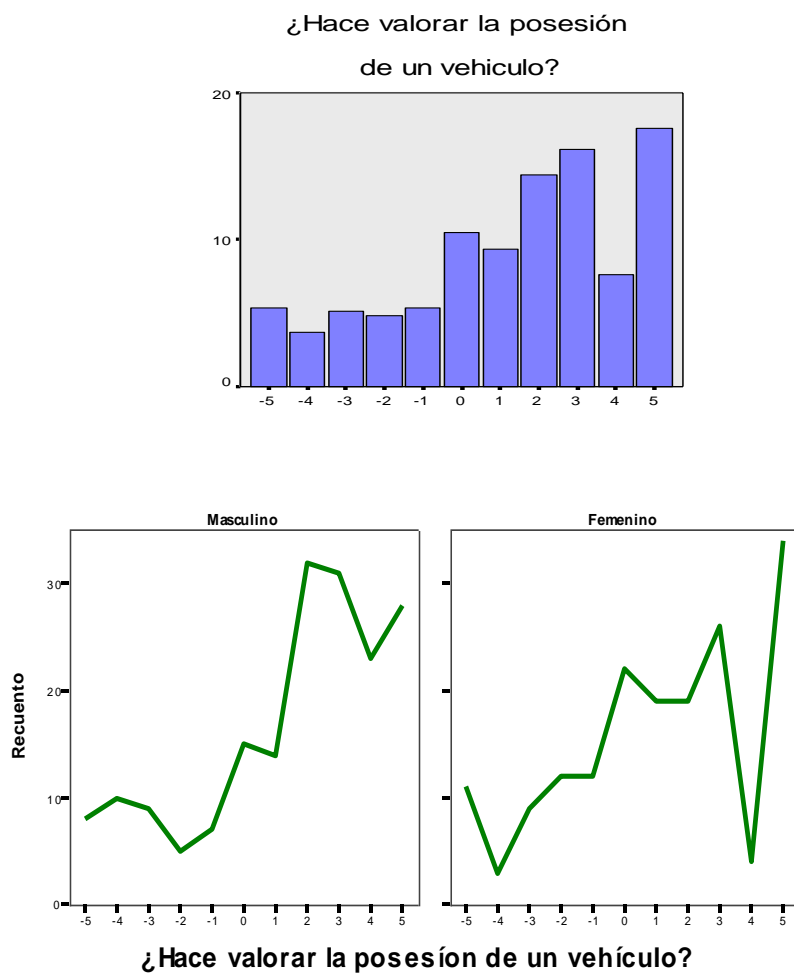
The graphs show that men are more likely to consider buying a JGCH from the advertising discourse.

¿Hace relacionar el tamaño de la llave con el tamaño del pene?



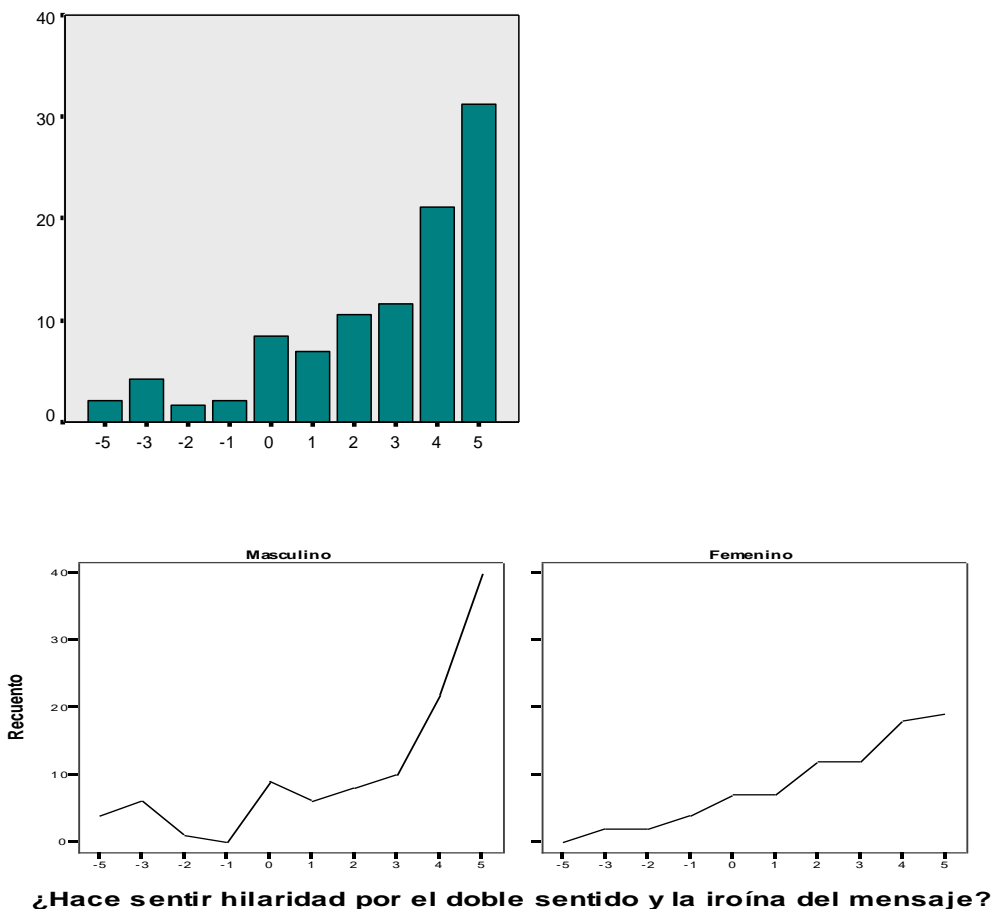


Both graphical and bars present the strong tendency to relate the key and the size of the penis, which shows great effectiveness in communicating an indirect sense with gender implications.



The perception and interpretation that establish both male and female gender respondents about owning a car are similar. They tend to value owning a car, although the graph shows that the trend is more pronounced in men surveyed.

¿Hace sentir hilaridad por el doble sentido y la ironía del mensaje?



The critic interpretation of this advertising image shows that this type of advertising promotes a certain image of the woman (gender identities), encourage a type of wishes (and frustration), produce laugh through the irony and the double sense (with sex symbols), and also promotes some sort of materialistic and consumerist aspirations and yearnings. This advertising makes society believe that women are materialistic and self-interested, makes this rating have car, makes you want a car, and suggests that having a car is enough to get please a woman, among other transformations and interpretations generated in the minds of the audience or recipients of advertising.

CONCLUSSIONS:

Through contingency tables that show the joint distribution between different correlated responses, we can extract the general conclusions of all research. Note that the variables were recorded into three categories: In Disagreement, in which categories -5,-4,-3,-2 and -1 are, Medium, in which category 0 enter, and finally, In Agreement, in which enter categories 1,2,3,4 and 5. From all the data we obtained the following conclusions:

1. From the joint distribution between the answers of the question "Does it make to believe that owning a Jeep Grand Cherokee allows you succeed with women?" and answers of the question "Does it make to believe that women are materialistic and interested?", we can see that 70.5% of the 400 from which we have information say that advertising makes them believe that owning a Jeep Grand Cherokee gives them success with women while reporting makes them believe that women are materialistic and interested. However the 4.2% say the opposite. 10% say the advertisement makes them believe they have a JGCh. enable them to be successful with women but if say the ad makes them believe that women are materialistic and interested.
2. Through the joint distribution between the responses of the question "Does it make to want a Jeep Grand Cherokee"? and answers of the question "Does it make to wish to drive a woman crazy?", we observe that the 43.7% of 400 which have information say that advertising makes society want to have a Jeep Grand Cherokee and at the same time drive a woman crazy. In contrast 12.1% say the opposite. 14.7% say the advertisement makes want to have a JGCh., but they do not claim that the advertisement will drive a woman crazy.
3. The joint distribution between the answers of the question "Does it make the audience to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee"? and answers to the question "Does it make the audience to think about buying a Jeep Grand Cherokee?", it shows that 49.5% from the 400 we have information, say that advertising makes society to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee and at the same time they say that the advertising makes society to think about buying a Jeep Grand Cherokee. In contrast the 15.6% confirm the opposite. 97.7% say that the advertising doesn't make society to want to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee, but confirm that the advertising makes society to think about buying a Jeep Grand Cherokee.
4. The joint distribution between the answers of the question "Does it relate the size of the key with the size of the penis"? and the answers of the question "Does it claim argue that the size of the penis it is not important but the money and the material possessions (p.ej. a car)?", we can see that 62.6% that the 400 from the ones we have information say that the advertising advertisement relate the size of the key with the size of the penis, and at the same time they say that the advertisement argue that the size of the penis is not important but the money and material possessions. In contrast, 3.2% confirm the opposite. 11.8% say that the advertisement doesn't argue that the size of the penis is not

important but the money and possessions are, but they confirm that the advertisement does relate the size of the key with the size of the penis.

- The joint distribution between the answers of the question “Does it make assess the possession of a vehicle?” and the answers to the question “Does it disparage not having a car?”, it shows that 47.3% of the 400 from the ones we have information say that the advertising advertisement makes to assess the possession of a vehicle and at the same time they say that the advertising advertisement makes to disparage not having a car. In contrast 10.1% confirm the opposite. 17.6% say that the advertisement doesn’t make to undervalue not having a car, but they confirm that the advertisement makes to value the possession of a vehicle.

Chi-squared Test of Independence

Men	Cognitive Transformations				Emotive Transformations				Pragmatic Transformations				Actiological Transformations		Intentions and Addresses Advertising Message					
Category	Pro 1	Pro 2	Pro 3	Pro 4	Pro 5	Pro 6	Pro 7	Pro 8	Pro 9	Pro 10	Pro 11	Pro 12	Pro 13	Pro 14	Pro 15	Pro 16	Pro 17	Pro 18	Pro 19	Pro 20
-5	4,7	7,5	3,8	2,8	3,8	12,3	3,8	9,4	6,7	6,7	2,8	3,8	5,7	13,2	0	3,8	1,9	1,0	0	4,8
-4	0,9	5,7	0,9	0,9	0	5,7	1,9	3,8	4,8	1,0	,9	2,8	0,9	2,8	1,0	1,9	0	1,0	0	0
-3	1,9	2,8	2,8	1,9	5,7	7,5	1,9	2,8	8,6	7,6	1,9	2,8	3,8	8,5	1,9	1,9	1,9	0	1,0	2,9
-2	0,9	2,8	3,8	0	0,9	12,3	1,9	2,8	4,8	2,9	0	1,9	1,9	3,8	0	2,9	1,0	1,0	1,0	1,9
-1	2,8	1,9	2,8	0,9	0	0,9	0,9	4,7	6,7	2,9	0,9	0,9	2,8	2,8	0	3,8	0	3,9	2,9	1,0
0	5,7	11,2	4,7	3,8	8,5	18,9	10,4	13,2	13,2	9,5	4,7	13,2	8,5	14,2	0	7,6	3,8	13,5	4,8	1,9
1	1,9	6,6	4,7	1,9	5,7	7,5	11,3	9,4	9,5	13,3	4,7	4,7	7,5	8,5	0	5,7	5,7	3,9	6,7	4,8
2	5,7	15,1	7,5	5,7	7,5	6,6	11,3	7,5	11,4	11,4	7,5	5,7	19,8	14,2	5,7	4,8	4,8	13,6	6,7	6,7
3	19,8	10,4	13,2	20,8	9,4	9,4	16,0	16,0	11,4	18,1	12,3	15,1	14,2	5,7	16,5	27,6	9,5	18,4	26,7	20,0
4	13,2	13,2	17,9	11,9	20,8	7,5	21,7	8,5	8,6	13,3	23,6	11,9	17,0	14,2	24,8	20,0	14,3	13,3	13,2	13,2
5	42,5	22,6	37,7	42,5	37,7	11,3	18,9	21,7	12,4	13,3	40,6	30,2	17,9	12,3	56,2	20,0	57,1	26,2	33,2	41,0

The values in the table are given in percentages

Percentages between: 0% -10% 10%-20% 20%-30% >30% Dependency relationship between gender and the question (Chi-squared Test of Independence)

Women	Cognitive Transformations				Emotive Transformations				Pragmatic Transformations				Actiological Transformations		Intentions and Addresses Advertising Message					
Category	Pro 1	Pro 2	Pro 3	Pro 4	Pro 5	Pro 6	Pro 7	Pro 8	Pro 9	Pro 10	Pro 11	Pro 12	Pro 13	Pro 14	Pro 15	Pro 16	Pro 17	Pro 18	Pro 19	Pro 20
-5	0,0	6,0	2,4	4,8	0	8,3	9,5	17,9	8,5	4,9	6,2	4,9	3,7	8,5	0	3,7	2,4	7,3	0	6,1
-4	0,0	1,2	4,8	2,4	0	1,2	0	6,0	1,2	3,7	2,5	1,2	0	1,2	0	0	1,2		1,2	2,4
-3	3,6	3,6	3,6	1,2	2,4	2,4	3,6	13,1	8,5	4,9	2,5	7,3	0	8,5	1,2	1,2	1,2	2,4	1,2	4,9
-2	7,2	2,4	3,6	2,4	2,4	3,6	11,2	6,0	7,3	3,7	1,2	2,4	7,3	9,8		2,4	2,4	2,4	3,7	2,4
-1	1,2	4,8	2,4	2,4	4,8	2,4	1,2	3,6	2,4	2,4	1,2	4,9	8,5	1,2	3,7	0	1,2	6,1	3,7	2,4
0	4,8	16,7	6,0	9,5	8,4	11,9	22,6	13,1	14,6	17,1	1,2	18,3	11,0	14,6	3,7	6,1	12,2	12,2	6,1	7,3
1	7,2	9,5	7,1	8,3	8,4	10,7	9,5	8,3	12,2	13,4	4,9	6,1	13,4	8,5	2,4	11,0	6,1	9,8	4,9	3,7
2	12,0	13,5	8,3	4,8	14,5	11,9	11,9	7,1	9,8	9,8	13,6	12,2	13,4	9,8	3,7	12,2	7,3	4,9	8,5	3,7
3	12,0	16,7	11,1	9,5	14,5	7,1	8,3	8,3	15,9	12,2	7,4	6,1	18,3	11,0	12,2	17,1	6,1	13,4	20,7	11,0
4	11,3	8,3	17,9	11,9	21,7	11,9	7,1	6,0	4,9	13,4	16,0	13,4	3,7	7,3	29,3	24,4	8,5	13,9	20,7	12,2
5	38,6	21,4	31,0	42,9	22,9	20,6	14,3	10,7	14,6	14,6	43,2	23,2	20,7	19,5	43,9	22,0	51,2	25,6	29,3	43,9

The values in the table are given in percentages

Questionnaire

Cognitive Transformations

Pre. 1: "Does it make to know about a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 2: "Does it make to know about features of the Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 3: "Does it make to believe that owning a Jeep Grand Cherokee allows you succeed with women?"

Pre. 4: "Does it make to believe that women are materialistic and interested?"

Emotive Transformations

Pre. 5: "Does it make like a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 6: "Does it make to want a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 7: "Does it make to wish to drive a woman crazy?"

Pre. 8: "Does it make feel hilarity because of the double sense and irony into the message?"

Pragmatic Transformations

Pre. 9: "Does it make the audience to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 10: "Does it make the audience to think about buying a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 11: "Does it make the audience to get a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 12: "Does it make the audience to think about getting a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Axiological Transformations

Pre. 13: "Does it make assess the possession of a vehicle?"

Pre. 14: "Does it disparage not having a car?"

Intentions and Addresses Advertising Message

Pre. 15: "Does it make think to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 16: "Does it make to have the intention of buying a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 17: "Does it relate the size of the key with the size of the penis?"

Pre. 18: "Does it make think to buy a Jeep Grand Cherokee?"

Pre. 19: "Does it argue that the size of the penis it is not important but the money and the material possessions (p.ej. a car)?"

Pre. 20: "Does it claim that the size of the penis it is not important but the money and the material possessions (p.ej. a car)?"

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