



Article

Ecolinguistic Stories of Resilience

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Introduction

By Valentina Boschian Bailo

This collection of short papers was written by post-graduate students of the University of Udine (Italy) as a project for reflecting on the ecosystem we all belong to. The aim of this ecolinguistic mosaic is offering a variety of viewpoints to raise awareness on the stories of ecosystem we find on the media. The texts were inspired by the book *Ecolinguistics* (Stibbe, 2015) and its ecosophy.

A multiplicity of discourses is the object of the collective paper: from corporate campaigns on education, advertisements, newspaper articles on consumeristic attitudes and pollution of the environment, environmental organisations' texts on endangered species and climate change. Controversial stories about life on our planet run across the texts analysed and are revealed in each tesserae of the mosaic; they are stories about 'progress' and 'quality life' where advancement and conservative ideas mingle, blend or clash.

Overproduction, overconsumption and ‘self-branding’ seem to underpin the race for consumerism as hunger for disposable objects or ‘social status’. However, individual satisfaction of unnecessary desires is only leaving devastation of the ecosystem behind itself, while no steps towards any shared and healthy progress and lifestyle are taken (Lakoff, 2010).

The mosaic demands that a variety of relationships with living and non-living beings is explored, and opportunities of contact with nature and activities with no impact on the environment be brought back to mind and re-valued as worthy of consideration and central to our lives. Shared well-being is promoted to enjoy and appreciate life to the full.

Despite the negative or ambivalent narratives that are embedded in the texts analysed here, the authors aim at providing a positive outcome for the criticisms they carry out. These papers were written to reveal, unpack and fight negative behaviours and stories while imagining a more sustainable world. The mosaic paper is a call for resilience and eco-justice; a renewed care towards the environment and the dangers of irresponsible human action are brought to the fore.

Some of the papers within this mosaic depict human beings engaged in individualistic behaviours and merely utilitarian activities, living in competition and distorted values. The authors oppose this idea of mindless and merciless individualism: the narratives they promote aim at restoring the sacredness of nature as collectively shared and of absolute value.

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“We grow ideas here”: Framing growth in Monsanto campaigns

By Agnese Cemulini



The advertisement shown here is part of a wider campaign started in 2011 by Monsanto, the American multinational specialised in the production of chemicals, to promote voluntary work in the city of St. Louis, Missouri, where the company was founded in 1901. The campaign featured participants who can be identified as employees and the attempt is

to show the more human side of the multinational and its social commitment.

To reach this ambitious goal, the multinational relies on the multimodal effect of the advertisement. “We grow ideas here”, the slogan, appears at the top of the ad (its greenish colour is enhanced by the big font size) and underlines “who” and “where” is involved. The inclusive pronoun “we”, together with the name and the role of the employee (“Facundo Oyenard, Financial Analyst”), highlights the work Monsanto (here, personified as Mr. Oyenard) does to “grow ideas here”, in the city of St. Louis. The short text under the slogan specifies the aim of Monsanto; that is, to support “fertile environments”. Those environments are, metaphorically, “local schools, universities and museums”, where “ideas” (target domain), like plants (source domain), can grow “freely”. Consequently, the “enlightened” approach of the company to education will support and justify the apparently beneficial narrative of “growth is good”. It is worth underlining how those inclusive environments “yield the potential for anything and anyone”, meaning that also the children of a seemingly foreign employee (his name suggests a Latino American origin) will have their potential recognised within the narrative of the “American dream”.

Visually, the layout of the advertisement creates an interesting effect. The photograph is a low-angle shot and it focuses on the grass on which the little girl walks. The angle chosen by the photographer underlines the direction of growth of both plants and humans (upwards). The upper section of the photograph is occupied by a cloudy sky and the slogan, in an attempt to attract the viewer’s attention and highlight the ideology of the campaign. The position of each person and the layout of the photograph have been carefully studied to convey a specific message. In the centre we find the employee who divides the photograph into two perfect halves: the bountiful vegetation we see on the right-hand side contrasts with the futuristic building we see behind the woman. That means that Monsanto is interested in creating “fertile environments” through voluntary work, but it cannot deny being one of the most powerful and pervasive multinationals in the world – future-oriented and technologically advanced.

The choices made by the copy of the advertisement seem to reflect some conservative ideas (probably also shared by Monsanto). The only family portrayed in the whole campaign represents this heterosexual couple with two children, one of whom is carried by the anonymous mother, whose identity as a caregiver is particularly reinforced. In this case, only the maternal figure seems to be responsible for the growth of the children. The opportunity of growth offered by Monsanto, therefore, does not seem to be inclusive enough and leaves space for further reflection on the controversial nature of the advertisement.

Reference

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Cars do not embody values

By Giulia Tonelli

An advertisement for the Mercedes SLK. The image shows a yellow Mercedes SLK car floating in the air, suspended by several thin white ropes. To the left of the car, a skydiver is also floating in the air. The background is a desert landscape with sand dunes and a large mountain peak under a bright, low sun, creating a dramatic, high-contrast scene. The text is overlaid on the image: "As extreme as you." in black serif font, and a larger block of white text at the bottom: "The new Mercedes SLK is as wild as you want it to be. With a retractable hard top, an hp supercharged engine and undeniable style, the SLK will take you anywhere you go."

In this article I will analyse a car advertisement where the image and the text are closely interconnected. The text can be divided into two parts: the almost central expression “As extreme as you” in black fonts and the sentences at the bottom in white fonts. The contrast between dark and light is very powerful and foregrounds both the car, lit up by the rising sun, the skydiver and the two pieces of text.

The central expression is a comparison of equality between the car and its owner who is addressed with the personal pronoun “you”. In this way, the reader imagines him/herself as the owner of the car and, at the same time, as the man placed at the top left. Indeed, we can identify it as a ‘demand picture’, since the skydiver is looking at the viewer as if he wanted to establish a relationship with him/her. It is certain, however, that the principal addressee of the advertisement is a man, given that the human being depicted is a young man and the keywords used to describe both the car and its owner are characteristics of hegemonic masculinity discourse (“extreme”, “wild”). This piece of text is also linked with the image because the comparison is repeated in visual terms, through the parallel between the man and the car, which is ironically represented hanging from the ropes used in

parachuting. The equation is negative according to an ecolinguistic point of view, because it turns the car into an extension of the owner, rather than a mere object to be utilised.

The text at the bottom, on the other hand, repeats the equivalence using the term “wild”, but implies also an evaluation: “old is bad” or “new is good”. In order to be satisfied, you have to buy this new car, whose brand is written in bigger, bold fonts. That kind of evaluation is negative, because it favours a consumerist behaviour that is related to disrespect towards the systems that support life. In order to promote the product, the commercial employs attractive descriptions: “extreme”, “wild”, “supercharged engine”, “undeniable style”. It eludes the downside: the pollution the car produces both in its fabrication, use and demolition. Moreover, the only relationship enabled is between the owner and the car, suggested by the sentence “the SLK will take you anywhere you go”.

Considering the high facticity patterns, we assume that there is no possibility for human beings to reach satisfaction through the contact with nature, other living beings or the more-than-human elements, and through activities that have no destructive impact on the environment. The background landscape is only outlined: we recognise the shape of the mountains and the sunrise, but there are no detailed natural elements. It serves only in the contrast between shadow and light mentioned above.

Concluding, this is a destructive discourse also because, rather than promoting intrinsic values, it revolves around extrinsic ones, such as power, status and prestige, which are not targeted at the common well-being but are only centred on reaching individual satisfaction.

Reference

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The day after Thanksgiving

By Melanie Magistro

A very black Friday Indeed: Has Consumerism taken over?

People trampling each other in box stores, adults stealing from children, people camping out for days on end just to get first dibs on basic commodities. Are these scenes from an apocalyptic universe in which humans have abandoned common decency for the sake of survival? Nope, think again. These are all common occurrences on a uniquely American sacred tradition – Black Friday.

Crazed hordes of consumers busted down the doors of department stores again this year in search of good deals. Price cuts could be found on everything from televisions, to game systems, to SUVs. It was the binge shopper's wet dream. According to the AP, \$11.4 billion dollars was made by stores on Friday alone. Although, not everyone sees such ravenous consumer culture in a positive light.

“It's a toxic mix that tells us too much about the state of our own culture. The kickoff to the shopping season is crucial to the overall health of our economy, but at the same time the annual spectacle is sending strong signals that something is deeply wrong.” Writes Andrew Leonard in [Salon.com](#).

For many, what is so “deeply wrong” about the spectacle is its practical take-over of an entire holiday, Thanksgiving. A holiday that is supposed to be focused on family and being, um, thankful, nonetheless. It seems as each year goes by and the more this quasi-holiday becomes engrained into the cultural fabric of our country, we focus less and less on the tenets of thanksgiving and more so on scoring a sweet deal on an LCD TV.

“Black Friday could not be contained to a mere 24 hours. It is Consumerism. It wants more. It always wants more. Nothing is sacred to it, nothing is valuable.” Writes Matt Walsh for the [Blaze.com](#). “So, now, Black Friday has eaten Thanksgiving alive.”

The day following Thanksgiving is best known as Black Friday. Every year, it inaugurates the holiday shopping season through many offers on every kind of goods. Lately, several online and offline shops have started conceiving it as an entire week of great deals, since one day did not seem to be enough anymore. Consumers consider it as a remarkable opportunity to purchase everything they want, and also what they do not need.

In the headline, John Revak announces that this Friday is “very black”, thus using an implicit appraisal item; defining something as “black” usually implies a negative connotation. Through this linguistic device, he anticipates his perspective on the topic of the post.

The journalist begins his text by describing images that seem to be taken from an apocalyptic scene. He would justify such actions if people were trying to survive in difficult living conditions, but they were not. In fact, he witnessed these behaviours during Black Friday and he uses metaphors as an effective tool to show what this tradition brings. Revak thus proposes a framing in which the target domain is Black Friday and the source frame

is the Apocalypse.

In the following section, he establishes the participants' identity by referring to people as "consumers". Moreover, through the appraisal item "crazed" and the description of their behaviour, he represents consumers as egotists who are ready for everything just to satisfy themselves. Their identity is rendered even more negative because of their stealing from children and trampling on each other. They reach satisfaction only through purchasing, no matter what obstacles they must overcome.

Then the journalist reports the opinion of Andrew Leonard, an American journalist whose perspective is immediately clear, for he refers to this tradition as "toxic". This powerful appraisal item displays how Black Friday is more than negative: it is poisonous, dangerous and should be avoided to maintain well-being. This post tries to promote the idea that well-being should be linked, for instance, to spending time with the family on Thanksgiving and not to camping out of stores to buy, probably, unnecessary goods. Revak thus suggests a new way of valuing behaviour: Thanksgiving spent with family is good, instead of Black Friday is good. Black Friday is taking over this holiday, an action which is perceived as "deeply wrong" since people focus more on purchasing than on the actual meaning of Thanksgiving. This occurs because people feel that more is better than less, therefore they have to take advantage of this chance: if the prices are low, they can buy more, which is even better.

Matt Walsh presents the last critical opinion of this post. The presence of modality in his first sentence already establishes high facticity, but the following absence of modality takes it to the highest level. He criticises Black Friday by referring to it as "Consumerism", by saying that it cannot be satisfied, exactly like consumers, and that nothing is sacred to it, not even Thanksgiving. He concludes using a catchphrase: "Black Friday has eaten Thanksgiving alive." Through this personification and the powerful metaphor evoked by it, Walsh manages to summarise all the negative aspects of this merciless tradition.

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Winning, but at what price?

By Giulia Regini

Meet the winners and losers of Black Friday 2017

The shopping holiday generated a record \$5 billion in sales on Black Friday alone. Here's what else you need to know.

Over the last few years, some have suggested that Black Friday has lost its prominence in the holiday shopping season. But after a blockbuster week, it's fair to say that Black Friday is back – only this time it's making big waves online. [...]

For retailers that missed the mark and are still working through loads of inventory, worry not. Online sales for most big retailers are extending throughout the week. And beyond that, eight of the 10 busiest shopping days, including Super Saturday (which this year falls the day before Christmas Eve) still remain. [...]

Winner: Amazon

Amazon started well ahead of the mark this year, offering 50 days of Black Friday that culminated over the weekend. And so far it has paid off handily – but Walmart isn't quite going down without a fight. [...]

Winner: Best Buy

While many retailers struggled this year to generate a good reason to head into its stores, Best Buy had some of the longest lines of eager shoppers waiting outside stores for early doorbusters on Thanksgiving Day, according to a review of social media posts compiled by Business Insider. [...]

Loser: Weak websites

Every year, at least one retailer's website crashes under the strain of a digital stampede. [...]

Overall websites seemed to handle the increased web and mobile traffic without a hitch; The average webpage load time continued to be less than four seconds, which Catchpoint considered strong. The holiday season is far from over, and retailers hoping to turn from losers into winners should make any last minute efforts to increase their e-commerce and mobile commerce experiences. Winter is coming.

Until a few years ago, Black Friday was the day that, thanks to tempting promotional sales, marked the beginning of the United States Christmas shopping season. Nowadays, it is an event that is long-awaited by consumers and retailers from all over the world. Since it seems so important for our economy, I decided to report some relevant passages of an article about this year's Black Friday.

The headline of the article presents the topic using a foregrounded metaphor: Black Friday is not only an intense day of shopping, but a global competition in which every retailer aspires to be a winner. The lead shows that the only way to be included among the

winners is to contribute in a consistent way to the final sales total. According to the first paragraph, the retailers who “missed the mark”, and are now portrayed as desperate, still have the chance to be happy again because the sales will continue during the week. Throughout the whole article, the initial metaphor assumes a stronger and stronger significance through expressions such as “without a fight”, “struggle”, “eager shopper”, and “crashes under the strain of a digital stampede”; these words refer more to a war than a day of shopping and present the competition as an inevitable battle. The word “stampede” brings to mind a chaotic and tumultuous situation, but it is the only reference to the irrationality that characterises Black Friday. In fact, the whole article provides a series of precise data, giving the impression that Black Friday is an organised financial operation and not, as is often the case, a day of maniacal and useless purchase. Information about retailers’ activity is the only important issue here, but I do believe there are other aspects we need to consider. Did consumers really need the goods they bought? What are the environmental and human costs of such an intensive production? This article perfectly adheres to one of the stories we are sadly living by: economic growth is good. This imposed belief suggests that, as long as the economy of a country is growing, the quality of life is improving as well. Unfortunately, it is not that easy because, as a common expression reminds us, money (and goods) cannot buy happiness.

The last sentence of the text, “Winter is coming”, is a reference to a catchphrase from the famous TV series *Game of Thrones* and maybe it is an attempt to make the reader smile. However, when encountering such texts, we need to go beyond the shiny surface and understand whether the story we are told is a truthful picture or just a convenient version of events. In this case, I think the writer gives the reader an interesting report of Black Friday sales, but an attentive reader should be aware that, although many mass media are very careful not to mention this, sales entail transportation, production, human and environmental costs.

We need to understand that there will not be any winner if we continue exploiting our planet for the sake of an impossibly ever-growing economy. That is why, at a time characterised by a climate emergency, we should really stop and think of the consequences that our daily choices have on our own planet.

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Global warming doesn't exist

By Giulia Bozza



These are two tweets written by Donald Trump in 2012, few years before his election as President of the United States of America. In spite of their brevity, they are dense and relevant messages about global warming and I selected these in particular in order to discuss the intent of Trump to frame this issue according to his opinion and to create a new story about it.

Here, the dominant discourse is an economic discourse, and we can clearly identify it in words such as “competitiveness”, “manufacturing”, “non-competitive”; Donald Trump supports Neoliberalism; according to this ideology, the more a country produces “competitive” goods, the more it is flourishing. From this point of view, “non-competitiveness” is one of the biggest problems, so the reader perceives that global warming, presented as a “concept” that has been “created”, could seriously damage the American economy. Trump eradicates the issue of “global warming” from the field of environment and puts it into another ideology, reframing it and transforming it into something completely different.

Using the linguistic device of metaphor, Trump describes global warming not as a problem, but as something that does not exist in reality. In fact, in the first tweet he defines it as “mythical”: the source domain is the area of the unreal, and this element reinforces the idea of global warming as “invented”. Moreover, he incites to “fight” this invention, as if it was a mythological creature, a dragon or a harpy. Thus, this metaphor indirectly produces another image in the reader’s mind, which represents America as the “hero” that will “defeat” this “enemy” and will save the entire nation from a Chinese-centred international market.

Likewise, Trump uses another linguistic device, metonymy. When he mentions “the U.S.” and “China”, he is not referring to the countries themselves, obviously, but to their

citizens. Nonetheless, not every single American or Chinese is involved in these economic issues, but the immediate perception about his statements is that each nation is one single, large group of people combined into one entity. This is reinforced also by the ironical exclamation “China is so happy!”, where “China” is personified as a human being with a strong national identity, shared by all its inhabitants.

Therefore, the metonymy “China” allows Donald Trump to shape the identity of the Chinese people as enemies who are working to damage the U.S.’s economy. This appraisal pattern is common in racist ideologies and wars; that is to say, the aim of this device is to create “the Others” to fight against, and to instigate hate and prejudices. In fact, in these two tweets we can find also words linked to the semantic area of war and conflict in general, such as “destroy”, or “fight”.

In conclusion, I would say that these two tweets convey an alarming message: global warming does not exist. Although there are several research studies that show the contrary, Donald Trump shamelessly erased it in his short tweets; statements like this may spread lies and fake information about a problem which continuously affects us and we need to be aware of.

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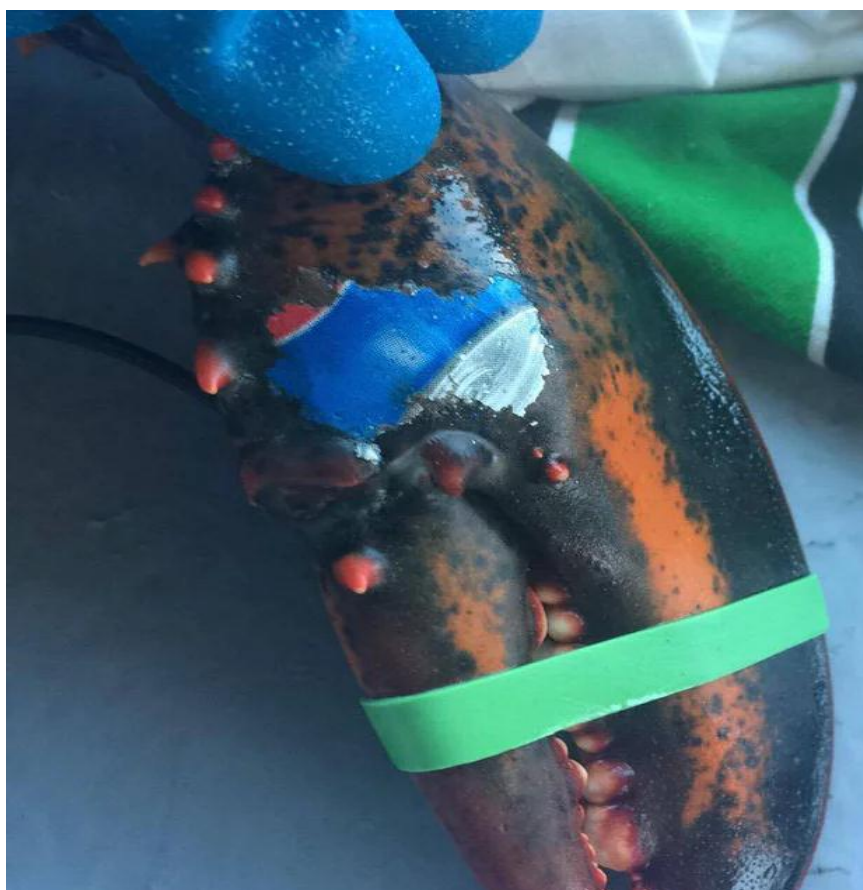
Ambivalent discourse: When a serious environmental problem can be interpreted as a weird event

By Ilaria Franz

Canada

Lobster found with Pepsi logo ‘tattoo’ fuels fears over ocean litter

- Blue-and-red image appears on claw of lobster found off New Brunswick
- How the logo got there remains a topic of debate



The ‘tattooed’ lobster was found off New Brunswick, Canada. Photograph: Karissa Lindstrand

Ashifa Kassam in Toronto

Wednesday 29 November 2017 - 21.20 GM

Concerns over debris littering the world’s oceans are back in the spotlight after a Canadian fishing crew found a lobster with the blue and red Pepsi logo imprinted on its claw. [...]

[Karissa] Lindstrand, who drinks as many as 12 cans of Pepsi a day, quickly spotted the resemblance.

[...] “It looked like it was a print put right on the lobster claw.”

[...] The find comes amid growing concerns over the amount of debris accumulating in the world’s oceans. Between 5m and 13m tonnes of plastic leak into the world’s oceans each year to be ingested by seabirds, fish and other organisms, leading the record-breaking sailor Dame Ellen MacArthur to warn that

by 2050 the sea could have more plastic in it than fish, by weight.

Recently, researchers documented nearly 38m pieces of plastic – [...] – that had washed up in one of the world’s most remote places: an uninhabited coral atoll in the eastern South Pacific. Scientists found hundreds of crabs scuttling about in makeshift homes made of bottle caps and cosmetic jars, with one crab even converting the inside of a doll’s head into a home.

[...] After coming across the lobster, she snapped one picture before placing it – Pepsi image and all – into a crate with the other lobsters for sale.

[...] “I’m really wishing I would have kept it now,” said Lindstrand. “It’s the first time I’ve seen something like that, and it was pretty neat. Kind of bad, but pretty neat.”

The photo of a lobster’s claw with the image of a Pepsi can on it has become online news worldwide. *The Guardian* published an article with the positive intention of proving the destructive impact of litter on marine wildlife. However, the discourse of the article is ambivalent: depending on the reader, the concern about the environmental problem that the photo should evoke can be replaced by the curiosity towards something that has never been seen before.

The headline relates the event focusing on the increasing pollution of the oceans. With the verb “fuel” in the present tense the journalist uses epistemic modality at its highest level, presenting the consequences of the event as certain: people’s concern must increase. She also uses the word “fear” in order to get the reader to be more emotionally involved. Despite this intention, which is positive according to ecosophy principles, there are other choices which make the discourse ambivalent: the article does not belong to the Environment section of *The Guardian*, which also includes the sub-section devoted to Pollution; it is part of a more general section concerning Canadian news. As a consequence, the article can attract all sorts of readers. Those caring for the environment and the wildlife are more likely to keep on reading the whole article, which also gives data about the amount of plastic in the oceans: since lobsters live on the ocean floor, it means that plastic is filtering deep under the surface. Readers who do not care are more likely to be attracted by the exceptional nature of the event and could click on the article only for the curiosity of seeing the photo, which occupies a large space. The article gives visibility to the brand since the popularity of the drink makes the event even more interesting.

The lobster was fished and photographed by Karissa Lindstrand, who described the image of the can as if it were a tattoo: this is a conceptual metaphor since it transfers something human to an animal. Lindstrand claimed to drink 12 cans of Pepsi a day: her social awareness does not encourage people to preserve the ecosystem, so the message that can pass along is destructive. She also specified to have sold the lobster without cleaning the image of the can, as if it were a characteristic which increased its economic value, and she considers the whole event to be pretty neat. Through her words, the woman reframes the story of the environmental pollution provoked by humans into the story of humans separated and superior to nature, where animals are reduced to objects to be dominated

and the planet is reduced to a never-ending producer of resources to be exploited, while humans are not responsible for its safety.

Reference

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“Extinction can’t be fixed”: An ecolinguistic analysis

By Sara Decorte





In this article, I will analyse a print advertisement created by BBDO Spain for WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) in 2013. The campaign, entitled *Extinction can't be fixed*, aims to inform people about extinction through three provocative images of three endangered species.

The images represent respectively a tiger, a polar bear and a rhino in an unusual context. We see the scene from above: the animal is in the middle and all around it we can recognise some mechanics and garage tools. The advertisement contains no words, except those of the campaign's title, which occupies a very small area in comparison with the whole picture.

The target domain is extinction and the source frame is car fixing. This frame displacement creates a metaphor, which is both visual and verbal. Visual, because the animals replace the car that we would expect to see in that context. Verbal, because in the headline the verb "to fix" is used to refer to extinction. The story told by this advertisement is that nowadays people are convinced that everything can be repaired or can be replaced by something new. However, the ironic message given by these images is that extinction is irreversible.

Furthermore, replacing the car with an animal is a thought-provoking technique, because it makes people think about what is important for us, i.e. cars and material assets in general, and what is actually important for our planet and animals in particular. Irony lies also in the fact that extinction, along with other causes, is due to pollution and global warming – especially in the case of the polar bear –, and cars produce a lot of this pollution. This is a means of making people realise that extinction is not a natural process, but it happens because of us.

In the pictures there is also the human component, represented by the mechanics. They are committed to trying “to fix” the animals, as if they were cars. This brings us back to the story of “everything is repairable” or “everything is replaceable”. If a car is broken, we can fix it or buy a new one. On the contrary, animal species are not like cars. They cannot “be fixed” and they cannot be resurrected if they disappear, as the title of the campaign underlines with a very powerful metaphor: “Extinction can’t be fixed”.

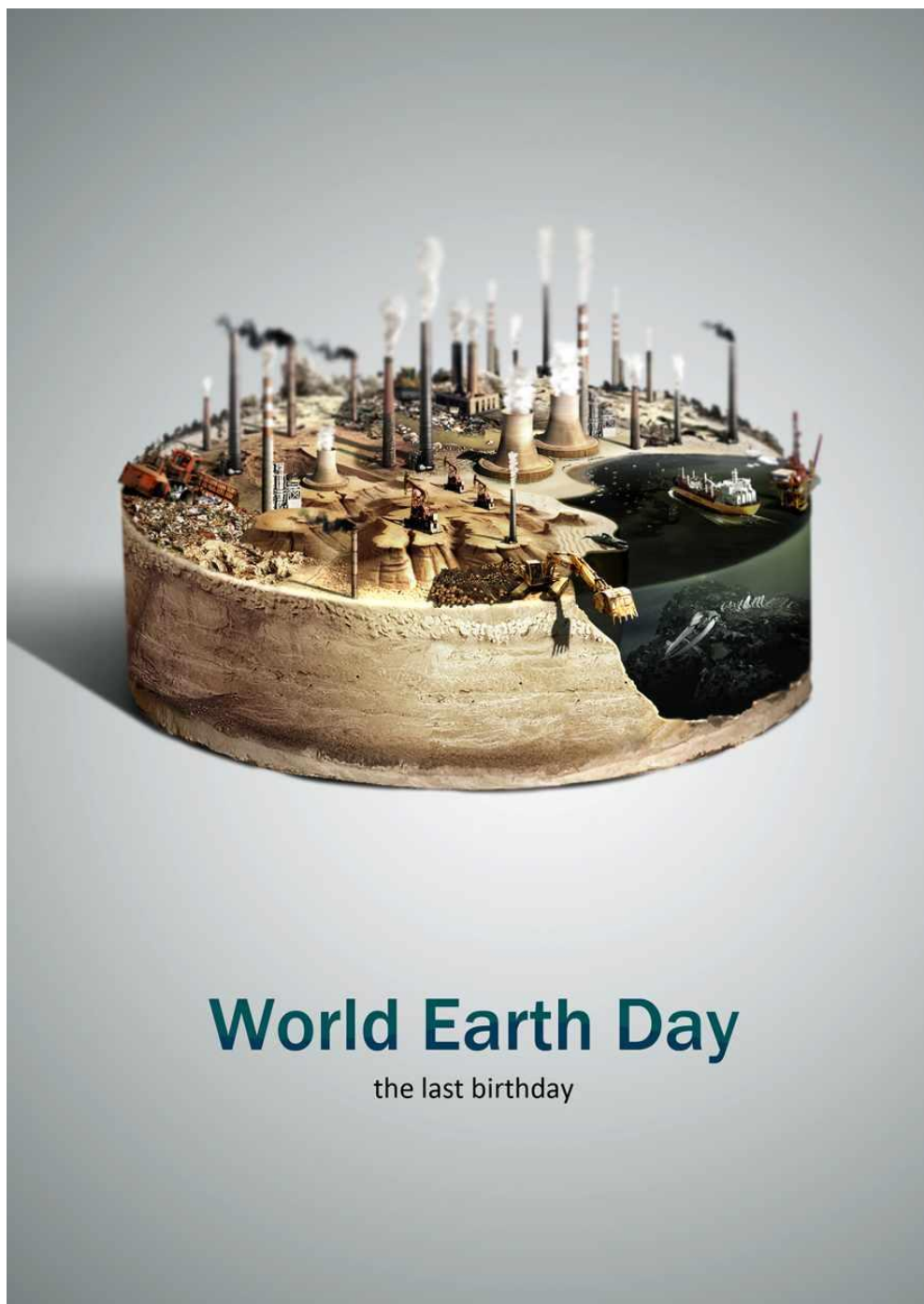
In conclusion, I think we are dealing with an ambivalent discourse. The underlying idea is certainly beneficial, because the campaign is a critique and it makes people reflect. However, at the same time, it does not show the way we can safeguard species and it reinforces the “story we live by” in which humans are superior to animals, even if it does this through irony and for a good cause.

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“World Earth Day”: The last birthday

By Ilaria Boato



World Earth Day

the last birthday

In this article I will analyse a multimodal text from an ecolinguistic perspective in order to determine whether its impact on the audience can have a positive or destructive consequence in relation to the environment.

This advertisement was created by Shuang Xie for the Earth Day Network on the occasion of the World Earth Day's 40th anniversary on 22nd April 2010. The Earth Day Network is a non-profit organisation whose aim is to spread the environmental movement

worldwide through sustainable and eco-friendly campaigns and activities. This advertisement was not chosen as the official poster by the organisation; however, many blogs share it because of its strong impact on the audience. The multimodal text provides an apocalyptic vision through the metaphor of a deserted earth reshaped as a cake with chimney stacks as candles and the slogan: “the last birthday”.

The word “birthday” is usually connected to words that portray happiness and joy as “happy”, “party” and “celebration”; but in this context the ad reframes the traditional idea of birthday using the adjective “last”. This unexpected association immediately shocks the viewer and focuses his/her attention on a real and current problem: if we treat our planet as the image shows, we will destroy it. Despite society’s current state and the ideology of consumerism which invites us to buy and consume without caring about the excess waste, the realistic image of a deserted earth without natural elements and living beings and the word “last” invite us to reflect on the environmental limits. Thus, this advertisement resists the framings “earth as the source of infinite resources” and “nature as a resource” that we continually exploit.

The frame of birthday and the idea that the earth celebrates its birthday are related to the metaphor of “the earth/nature as a person”. As Arran Stibbe (2015) points out, the personification of the earth can be related to an anthropocentric view but it has also some positive implications for ecolinguistics because it creates a link between humans and nature. By personifying the earth and nature, they are not seen as something separate from humans, as mere resources to be exploited. Therefore, the audience can be deeply touched by the dying earth and the clear representation of the cause of its death: humankind.

The image of the cake can be a metaphor of how humanity has shaped the earth but also a metaphor of how humanity “nurtures” the earth and nature. As the advertisement shows, we are responsible for rendering our planet deserted and infertile through the pollution of our factories, the deforestation due to the extraction of fossil fuels, the rubbish produced by our consumerism, etc.

However, this advertisement can also be critiqued. It does not promote any positive or concrete solution in order to encourage people to protect the ecosystem. Nevertheless, the aim of its strong and impactful image and slogan is to make people become aware of what we are doing to our planet and what the earth will become if we do not stop exploiting its resources instead of protecting them.

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Climate change: A multinational perspective

By Georgia Salvador

climate change

we take prudent, practical and cost-effective actions to address climate change risks



Chevron shares the concerns of governments and the public about climate change risks and recognizes that the use of fossil fuels to meet the world's energy needs contributes to the rising concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in Earth's atmosphere. GHGs contribute to increases in global temperatures. We apply cost-effective technologies to improve the energy efficiency of our base business operations and capital projects. As we work to address climate risks, we must create solutions that achieve environmental objectives without undermining global economic growth and our aspirations for a better quality of life for all.

According to data published in *The Guardian*, among the 90 multinational leaders in the extraction of carbon-based fuels and responsible for global warming and climate change, ChevronTexaco Corporation figures at the top of the list because of its high percentage of greenhouse gas emissions. However, the website of the American corporation includes a section entitled “corporate responsibility” and then “climate change”, which deals with the topic (see reported image and text).

Analysing the information of the text from an ecolinguistic perspective, we acknowledge that climate change is immediately framed as a risk for the atmosphere. Nevertheless, in the title and in the subtitle, climate change is introduced as an issue that can be overcome. Through the use of the parallelism “prudent, practical and cost-effective”, the company (referred to by the pronoun “we”) means that the challenge of coping with climate change is something that has to be faced with caution but at the same time with financial support (the source domain of “economy” is here introduced and the concept will be reinforced later on in the text).

The image chosen represents a peaceful landscape not affected by climate destruction,

not upsetting for the viewer, which suggests that climate change can be overcome and this is in conflict with the story that “climate change is a risk”.

In the description of the company’s purposes a metonymy is used: “Chevron” indicates the people in charge of the company, those who “share the concerns” (neutral expression and personification of the company) of the governments and the public in terms of global warming. Furthermore, fossil fuels are assumed to be positive, since they help achieve “world’s energy needs”.

As far as the central part of the text is concerned, “climate change” (target domain) is framed in economic terms; economy is the source domain to which belong the trigger words “cost-effective”, “business operations”, “capital projects”, and the expression “without undermining global economic growth”. “We must create solution” is another important sentence, where the modality shown by the modal verb “must” implies certainty, since the company wants to find solutions, but it also presupposes that the process of finding them is not completed yet. For these reasons, environmental issues are seen as less relevant if compared to economic growth.

The aim of the company in reality is not to reduce climate change but to offer a “better quality of life for all” in financial terms, thus repeating and highlighting the ideology that profit is a fundamental value and goal to achieve in present-day society.

It is possible to argue that even a company accused of producing gas emissions tends to face the problem of climate change in a controversial way. On the one hand, it recognises that it is a global risk but, on the other hand, this aspect remains backgrounded when compared to economic growth, the topic foregrounded by the company’s ambivalent discourse.

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