PARATRANSLATING REGIONAL IDIOSYNCRASY IN COCA-COLA'S TRANSCREATION IN FRANCE

PARATRADUCIR LA IDIOSINCRASIA TERRITORIAL EN LA TRANSCREACIÓN DE COCA-COLA EN FRANCIA

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Abstract

The American brand Coca-Cola entered the French market in 1919 and has been present all around the country ever since. However, alternative cola brands have emerged in different French regions in the last decades. In this article, we focus on two French alternative cola brands to analyse their transcreation, which aims to paratranslate the idiosyncrasy of the geographical areas where they have been transcreated. Our cultural and paratranslational analysis will follow a dual approach: the first, based on the notion of "boundary object", will be social and anthropological; the second, based on the notion of "paratranslation", will be linguistic, paralinguistic, and semiotic. In this way, we seek to show how the success of alternative colas transcends Coca-Cola's corporate image, from the most subjective and intangible components to the most concrete aspects — its script, its slogan, its colours, and its material extensions.

Keywords: Paratranslation; Transcreation; Identity; Coca-Cola; Boundary object.

Resumen

La marca estadounidense Coca-Cola llega a Francia en el año 1919 y desde entonces está presente en cualquier rincón del territorio. Sin embargo, desde hace más de una década han surgido marcas de cola alternativas en diferentes regiones del hexágono. En este artículo, nos centramos en dos marcas de cola alternativas francesas para analizar el fenómeno transcreativo que han operado y que busca paratraducir la idiosincrasia territorial de los espacios geográficos donde han sido transcreadas. El análisis cultural y paratraductivo que adoptaremos contará con un doble enfoque: el primero, operará desde la noción de "objeto frontera", será social y antropológico; el segundo, operará desde la noción de "paratraducción", será lingüístico, paralingüístico y semiótico. De este modo, pretendemos descubrir cómo la propia efervescencia de las colas alternativas trasciende la imagen comercial de Coca-Cola, desde su percepción más subjetiva e intangible hasta su percepción más concreta, sus letras, su lema, sus colores y sus prolongaciones materializadas.

Palabras clave: Paratraducción; Transcreación; Identidad; Coca-Cola; Objeto frontera.

1. Introduction

The present article stems from the author's 2014 unpublished master's thesis, which explored alternative cola brands in France and the rest of the world from the perspective of advertising translation. The research on paratranslation carried out since then has enabled the author to look at this issue in depth, as shown in this paper. Imagine a tourist in a country whose language and culture he is not familiar with, sitting on a bar terrace and ready to order a soft drink. As he does not know the range of soft drinks on sale, he will most probably order a Coca-Cola. However, if he is in France, he will probably be offered an alternative cola brand. Before those brands emerged in France, we must go back as far as 1919[1], when the Coca-Cola brand broke into the French market. In the French soft drinks market there are well-established brands such as Pschitt[2] — Orange or Lemon — and Orangina[3], a highly-valued soft drinks brand. Orangina is

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1. Source: https://www.coca-cola.com/fr/fr
2. Created in 1954 by the Perrier company, it is currently owned by the Castel group.
3. Brand registered in France which makes a soft drink inspired in a Spanish soda.

a lightly carbonated beverage which tastes of orange, contains flesh and must be shaken before consumption. There is a wide variety of soft drinks in France, which are still or sparkling, based on bottled syrup or powdered drinks. In most French supermarkets there is at least an aisle to meet the increasing demand for sugary products. These brands and the alternative cola brands compete fiercely with the two world giants, Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola.

In fact, competition against the American cola brands came from a few alternative cola brands which appeared in some French regions in the early 21st century. They were manufactured by local companies which through the sale of their products became distinct from American cola brands in cultural and occasionally linguistic terms. It was not simply a matter of competing with the two American brands, but rather of appreciating the heritage of a region, namely its identity, its language and other aspects that differentiate it from other French regions. The French alternative cola brands seek to use the particular attributes of the two world leading cola brands, mostly taste and the pictorial mark, to transform them and make a local product, that is, a transcreated drink which appeals to tourists.

In order to contextualize this research, we will first discuss France's regional organization and a few notions associated with an advertising strategy. We will then focus on alternative colas as "memory tiggers" and "boundary objects". Lastly, we will investigate the transcultural aspects of alternative cola brands, which will be analysed using the notion of paratranslating. Our analysis will thus touch upon the text, the brand names, the slogans, as well as the paratextual elements, those outside the text, such as images, colours, typography, etc. We will also study external elements around these brands which paratranslate a regional culture or the characteristics of a specific area. The notion of paratranslation is a translation and scientific tool developed at three levels —paratranslation, protranslation and metatranslation— by the Vigo school which allows understanding the text margins, which have increasingly expanded:

> In the last ten years, aspects outside the text have become a primary
> interest for T&P, the notion of paratranslation providing the basis for the
> analysis of the different cultural mediation processes in a paratranslation
> landscape. (Yuste Frías 2022: 510)

In the present article our purpose is to show cola brands as the result of a
transcreation process because:

> using paratranslation in the transcreation task is essential since paratrans-
> lation involves carefully considering – far more often than it is believed
> – any paratextual element that presents, introduces, surrounds, accom-
> panies or extends the text to be translated. The creativity of the person
> who translates the text and paratranslates the paratexts, in other words,
> creative translation and paratranslation is a key requirement in transcre-
> ation in the digital labour market where global communication based on
> advertising and marketing models prevails. (Yuste Frías 2023: 8-9)

We also aim to demonstrate how those elements that "surround, accom-
pany and extend the text" (Yuste Frías 2010: 289), namely the paratextual
and epitextual elements of two French alternative cola brands (Breizh Cola
and Auvergnat Cola) parainterpret and paratranslate the idiosyncrasy of
the region where the brands were transcreated.

2. Methodology

Our study has revealed that there is a huge number of alternative cola
brands all over the world. We had to narrow the scope of our research
given the space constraints. We thus chose a specific country, France,
because we can find the biggest variety of alternative soft drinks there and
we are familiar with the French language, the French culture and the char-
acteristics of each region. We have analysed two brands: Breizh Cola and
Auvergnat Cola.

We first classified the cola brands available in the metropolitan regions
and the overseas departments and regions, according to an administrative
territorial organization. We discarded own-label brands since they are not
relevant to this research from a transcreation perspective. We compiled
the data in an Excel table: the regions, the cola brand names along with
their website and their Facebook page, the date when they were launched

—or withdrawn—, and the manufacturer's name. We contacted the manufacturer and/or the distributor when we could not access the information required. The missing information was not available or was not provided by the people that we contacted.

We found thirty-five alternative cola brand names in France. The data gave evidence of the significant proportion of elements evoking the Coca-Cola brand, which had been reused in the transcreation process. Since the pictorial mark of the Pepsi-Cola brand has not been used, we will focus on the Coca-Cola brand, the feelings that the logo evokes, and the values conveyed by the brand.

3. The French context

3.1. Regions, territories and attachment to one's native soil

As earlier mentioned, French cola brands were classified following the country's territorial organization into metropolitan regions and overseas regions. France's current regional organization differs from the old classification into provinces and does not follow geographical or socio-cultural criteria. It actually follows effective management criteria. For instance, Beauce, a natural region located between Paris and Orléans, is divided into Île de France and Centre, and historical regions such as Anjou and Vendée belong to Pays de la Loire. In this light, according to the new territorial organization[4] approved under law 2015-29 of 16 January 2015 and its progressive implementation, the number of French regions was reduced from twenty-to to thirteen in January 2016. Five of the original regions remained while the other seventeen merged. According to the government, what was at stake was "to reduce public expenditure and to consider citizen needs". The names of the new regions and the new regional capital towns caused great controversy. The reform of the state territorial administration at the regional level was completed in October 2016. A reform of the *sous-préfectures* – administrative subdivisions of departments – started in January 2017 and the creation of territorial areas comprising several provinces in

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4. Source: http://www.gouvernement.fr/action/la-reforme-territoriale

the regions where the population was distributed in small communities was promoted.

3.2. *Languages and dialects*

While the taste of cola is the shared feature of the soft drinks that we have analysed, each brand has a distinctive logo, slogan and language. The majority of the sample brands use French as a vehicular language, but a few brand names and even some slogans appear in the language of the region where the drink is made and distributed, as exemplified by Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola. In the development of the French language there was a stage characterized by the distinction between the *oil* language in the north and the *oc* language in the south. However, this simplified view masked high linguistic diversity[5]. The northern area was the domain of a range of *oil* dialects such as Picard, Norman, Walloon, Gallo and Angevin. Klinkenberg (1994: 251) remarks that the French Academy was founded in 1634 and that Latin was no longer in use. This was a milestone in the standardization and regulation of French as a literary and official language. The Villers-Coterêts treaty (1539), signed by king Francois I, was a prior milestone. The treaty imposed the French language in all the acts with legal scope of the administration and justice of the kingdom, thus replacing Latin. Nevertheless, this standardization process resulted in a standard-dialect diglossia, since most of the population continued using only the dialect well into the 20th century. In line with this, Klinkenberg points out that the dialect prevailed until around the end of I World War.

Therefore, since the early 20th century dialects or regional languages have been relegated to a secondary role after "the language of Molière" protected by the French Academy. We will not provide an in-depth analysis of the French complex linguistic landscape, but we wish to mention a relevant fact in French modern politics, namely the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and its recognition in the French Constitution. This is an achievement in the recognition of French

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5. Source: Lexilogos http://www.lexilogos.com/france_carte_dialectes.htm

linguistic plurality, which some people considered a threat to national unity. In contrast, alternative cola brands are determined to promote their region and/or their regional language. As a result, regional names of alternative colas have appeared across the country. Those brands use words from twentieth-century spoken and written regional languages which show their singularity and territorial and cultural identity.

4. Advertising, tourism and paratranslation

4.1. Alternative colas as "memory triggers"

The goal of advertising is to trigger an act of consumption legitimized by support for the message and the values that an advertisement aims to convey. Such behaviour will lead to a boost in sales for the brand. As García-Uceda remarks, the goals of advertising are to inform and to persuade:

> The ultimate aims of advertising are to inform and to persuade. To inform means to communicate knowledge, which is related to the way of communicating it. We convey the appropriate information in such a way as to ensure that the goal we pursue will be achieved. We give information about any product issue that may interest consumers so that they will decide to buy the product. We then turn the information into a persuasive argument.
> To persuade means to cause someone to do something, which requires motivation. Advertising only uses the information that motivates the target audience and induces them to buy the product which will satisfy their need. (García-Uceda 2011: 34)

As advanced above, the two world cola giants are Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola. Yet the Coca-Cola brand will be the referent in our analysis for the reasons already mentioned. Established 138 years ago, with a turnover of nearly 46,000 million dollars in 2023[6], Coca-Cola has become the top-selling cola brand in the world mainly thanks to its advertising impact. If we mention a white ribbon in a red background, we do not need to add text or

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6. Source: https://www.coca-colacompany.com/media-center/fourth-quarter-full-year-2023-results

music. The image evokes the Coca-Cola brand. This is what García-Uceda calls "the psychological traits of the brand":

> The psychological traits of the brand constitute the brand image, a concept associated with the target consumer's reception of the advertising message. Message reception is shaped by the audience's perception and decoding process (of the set of signals given by the brands through the product, corporate identity, packaging and company announcements) and by their personality. Those psychological traits enable consumers to identify and differentiate the products.
> Bearing in mind that the product is what the advertiser manufactures or distributes and thus what he offers to consumers, while the brand is what consumers buy, what is beyond the product. (García-Uceda 2011: 102)

When those psychological traits are retained, the brand becomes well-established in the market and finds a niche. Consequently, the brand becomes successful, and success is achieved, according to Leduc (1986), through communication, mostly through advertising, which enables it to survive the passage of time. The first target is the consumer, who will recognize the Coca-Cola brand thanks to the white ribbon in a red background. Whether the consumer is in the soft drinks section of a supermarket or sitting at the bar, this element will indicate that he can buy or consume Coca-Cola there.

> The pictorial mark provides [consumers] with information, a quality guarantee and satisfaction; it allows them to quickly identify the product on the shelves; and its availability in most selling points involves saving time when looking for it. Brands and their image enable consumers to compare products.
> Purchasing-making decisions are frequently based on the symbolic value conveyed by the brand rather than on its attributes. Those brands meet the psychological need for personal and/or social assertiveness. (García-Uceda 2011: 114)

Consumers of alternative colas such as Breizh-Cola and Auvergnat-Cola, whether tourists or native Bretons living in Brittany, may engage in a double process.

The first process is semiotic interpretation, which will lead them to perceive the values that the pictorial mark seeks to convey. Breizh-Cola probably conveys the feeling of belonging to the Brittany region, to be part

of a culture, a language —and even of a climate— that are singular and different from the other French regions. The other process is remembrance, the pictorial mark will arouse the memory of a particular occasion on which they consumed that product and which like the "Proust's *madeleine*" brings back vivid memories associated with a past and pleasant experience.

In other words, those colas are like memory triggers in the same way as a keyring, a cup, an embroidery, a figure, etc. The object brings back memories of journeys and holidays and elements of Coca-Cola's brand symbolism, not to mention the evocation of youth, friendship, etc. We can thus claim that alternative colas work as "memory triggers" with the added bonus of the connotative meanings conveyed by the Coca-Cola brand, and that all these elements are stored in the subconscious.

4.2. Alternative colas as "boundary objects"

To explore the relationship between Coca-Cola and alternative colas on the basis of the notion of boundary object, we adopt the view of social and anthropological studies. According to Star & Griesemer (1989: 409) the *boundary object* is "an object which lives in multiple social worlds and which has different identities in each".

Twenty years later, in their article *Retour sur la notion d'objet frontière*, Trompette & Vinck remarked that they intended to revisit the notion and invest it with a greater theoretical charge "where the object which serves a linking purpose carries infrastructures and knowledge models":

> The notion of boundary object is explored here as a counterpoint to that of the "intermediary object", a notion introduced by the author; it comes out of this invested with a greater theoretical charge where the object which serves a linking purpose carries infrastructures and knowledge models. (Trompette & Vinck 2009: 6)

Trompette & Vinck claim that, along with the function of convergent object proposed by Star & Griesemer, the boundary object performs other functions such as shaping new or renewed knowledge models. In the context of our research, the function of the boundary object would be to promote a consumption model based on more homeland-rooted local identity criteria,

on something more tangible and closer to consumers in contrast with the globalized and globalizing original product that the Coca-Cola pictorial mark represents. As Trompette & Vinck (2009: 8-9) point out:

> The boundary object is "multiple": abstract and concrete, general and specific, conventional and user-adapted, material and conceptual (a database, a protocol). It is a partial and temporary bridge which is fairly unstructured when used jointly and highly structured when used within one of the worlds involved. It has different meanings in the different worlds, but those meanings are sufficiently structured to be recognised by the other.

In line with this, if we apply the dichotomy to the Coca-Cola brand and alternative brands, *l'abstrait* should be understood as the values and the ideas about the brand conveyed by *le concret*, namely by the signifier —the product, the slogan, images, colours, typography and everything that they represent as materialized objects and that support and extend the brand pictorial mark.

The signifieds for the different cola brands are structured enough to be recognized in each market. We must thus acknowledge the flexibility of alternative cola brands to transcreate from a single brand, Coca-Cola.

It is worth noting that the power to adapt to idiosyncratic characteristics, which is a feature of alternative cola brands, is not a strength of the North-American brand. Indeed, Coca-Cola conveys the image of a global brand in a globalized world. It is a standard product which is recognisable globally. The brand name Coca-Cola written on a poster or a red and white logo (Image 1[7]) on a facade is easily recognisable by for almost any potential consumer nowadays. This is the strength of this brand and at the same time its weakness.

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7. Source: Fusion Studio.

Image 1. Coca-Cola background

Coca-Cola has not tailored its marketing strategy to the local market, as evidenced by the small number of advertising campaigns adapted to the French regional markets. Adaptation to the local market has a great impact on sales and consumption. For instance, the first campaign adapted to the French market was launched in Brittany in 2010 (Image 2[8]) maybe because Breizh-Cola had achieved a 14 % share in the cola drinks market[9].

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8. Source: https://media.letelegramme.fr/api/v1/images/view/639f6b412d09bb2b725 dd1af/web_golden_xl/639f6b412d09bb2b725dd1af.1
9. Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hS6N3fWWN_8

Image 2. Advertising campaign in Britanny

In section 5 we will explain how the textual and paratextual elements of alternative cola brands attain a high level of flexibility by emphasizing and paratranslating a singular context, by reusing, adapting or creating textual and semiotic messages easily recognized in a specific sociocultural environment which is familiar with the North-American brand and its values. The main reason for their flexibility is that they must adapt Coca-Cola's global image to their localized brand. This is an ability developed in many martial arts, which consists in using one's rival's strength against him.

The boundary object is not thus the Coca-Cola brand, but the cola-based drink, a world-renowned soft drink. The boundary object is the sugary fizzy drink with a taste of cola, which is dark brown and refreshing. It is a boundary object which is at the same time common to all brands and characteristic of the areas where it is commercialized since it reflects the local culture. In short, the boundary object adapts to the needs and

demands of any market, from globalization to localization through adaptation, translation and paratranslation processes.

4.3. *Alternative colas as elements of a culture repertoire*

In order to understand the expression "culture repertoire", we will provide Even Zohar's definition (2008: 218): "The culture repertoire is the aggregate of options utilized by a group of people and its members for organizing life".

In Zohar's view, the concept of group is not fixed and can refer to "a number of individuals whose life is organized around a specific culture", society, family, etc. In this context, an individual as a sociocultural agent will have a passive and/or active attitude depending on whether he receives and accepts a cultural reading of his environment or regards it as the basis to transform it through his own action.

Much in the same way, the different brands, viewed as sociocultural agents, adopt a passive attitude to transform the "culture" of the Coca-Cola brand. They operate a transfer, understood as the paratranslation process of a globalized culture repertoire to a localized one. The acceptance of the new culture repertoire,

> depends on an intricate network of relations, which can be referred to as "the culture system", and which includes elements such as the market, power holders, and potential users in between who serve as dynamic interface. (Even-Zohar 2008: 220)

The success of the transfer depends on the adoption, superposition and acceptance of new and/or transformed semiotic codes, as Even-Zohar remarks (2008: 220): "The transferred 'goods' thus make up a set of hidden instructions about how to act upon the world rather than about how to perceive it."

On the whole, alternative cola brands do not only aim to sell a product, but also to influence consumers to take action and buy a local product which through different semiotic codifications promotes and supports a more localized culture with which they feel more identified.

4.4. Alternative colas as touristic paratranslations

We have already mentioned one of the most popular alternative colas in France: Breizh-Cola. Launched in 2002, it is the pioneering alternative cola in France. Several factors favour its distribution. Brittany is a region with many idiosyncratic elements which make it a top tourist destination in France. It is a region with a great number of identity thresholds on its coast and the interior such as the menhirs and the dolmens in the Carnac alignments. The "thresholds" are so common that they transport us to ancient times when myth combined with history and magic with religion, when exploration journeys became adventures across all seas. In addition, Brittany boasts a highly-varied gastronomy with seafood and land-based products, exported abroad as a marker of French identity. All in all, Brittany is a melting pot from which to obtain a substance worthy of alchemists, or the recipe of the famous magic potion in the village of the fearsome Gallic characters Asterix and Obelix.

To achieve the same fame as those invincible Bretons, all alternative cola brands have used the Internet to advertise their product through a website or on social media. Internet is nowadays an essential way of reaching the audience. As Valdés Rodríguez (2004: 55-56) points out, the transmission of information transcends the limitations of space and time. Globalization is the dominant trend thanks to mass communication. The greatest communication tool in the 21st century is the Internet, which is also the most powerful advertising medium across the globe. We have quickly switched from static or animated websites to social media. We have witnessed the quick adaptation of advertising to the environment of the most widely used social media: Facebook, Instagram, X (Twitter) and more recently TikTok. Advertising currently uses a new and even more proactive strategy:

> Internet communication has changed the traditional sender-receiver relationship dramatically since the receiver plays a much more active role (and frequently it is not the message that reaches him, but is it the receiver himself who looks for it). Moreover, the receiver responds actively to those messages, thus becoming the sender – not only in bidirectional communication with the original sender but also with other receivers who

> may in turn become new senders, thus completing an intercommunica-
> tion network. (Martí Parreño 2011: 35)

Alternative cola brands have successfully adapted. Of the 35 brands in the sample, 57 % have a Facebook profile. The use of social media is evolving very quickly and users become the product, subjected to the social media algorithms. Bloggers' comments, information tracking systems and computer technology allow marketing strategies to develop at an unprecedented pace and oblige marketers to pay close attention to market trends. As Martí Parreño (2011: 48-49) points out:

> The appearance of blogs, wikis and podcasts has turned Internet users into content managers, into authors whose opinions about a brand or product spread like wildfire in this new online micromediatized environment. Before the emergence of social media, a company could be aware that its products or services were lower quality than those of its competitors and was able to beat competition through large-scale media campaigns that succeeded in persuading prospective consumers. Social media have reversed the roles: if a user sees the brand he buys as low quality, he will share his opinion with the user community with which he has established interpersonal relationships, and those users will share their opinion with others, so that the information will spread across the web so quickly that the company will not have time to react.

To conclude, advertising is an extremely complex machine that implements strategies aimed at ensuring the success of a brand which is distinctive from the others. Besides, advertising must be able to adapt to communication tools and build an advertising strategy based on the knowledge of consumer needs.

5. Analysis

5.1. Textual elements

5.1.1. Brand names

The French alternative colas in our sample use the name of the natural or historical region where they are made and distributed (Image 3[10] and Image 4[11]), and their names follow the pattern of the North-American brand Coca-Cola.

Image 3. Breizh Cola logo

Image 4. Auvergnat Cola logo

In both cases, brand identity resonates with a natural or historical region. Consumers identify themselves with the product because they live in and/or come from that region. It should be mentioned that most alternative cola

10. Source: https://www.breizhcola.bzh/
11. Source: https://www.auvergnatcola.com

brands, except Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola, sell their product regionally. They operate in small geographical areas and sell soft drinks that promote the region at local level. Yet the success of Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola has made it possible to commercialize them in Paris, for example.

The Auvernia brand results from the merger of two brands —Bougnat Cola and Auvergnat Cola—. The term *bougnat* seemingly comes from the word *charbonnier* (coal merchant), a job often done by the inhabitants of the Auvergne region in the capital city, and probably blended with the noun referring to the person from that region, Auvergnat, to form the word *charbougnat* and eventually *bougnat*, a term whose meaning was probably broadened to refer to the owners of cafés and *bistrots* in Paris, most of whom had emigrated from Auvergne. This can account for the presence of the Auvergnat Cola brand in some Parisian bars, cafes and restaurants.

Alternative cola brands do not only aim to reveal a regional area and a common culture but also to support a regional language. Consumers thus buy a product from their region, but their buying decision may also be driven by their strong attachment to their regional language, regarded as a different language from French and by their wish to assert their distinctiveness against the other French regions.

5.1.2. Mottos and slogans

A curiosity about Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola is that the name of the former brand is Breton: *Breizh* (Brittany) while the slogan is written in French "Le cola du Phare Ouest". Francophone or Francophile readers will seemingly notice the pun *Phare Ouest* (Far West) and thus the reference to —maybe a mockery of – the North-American culture, meant to show that France also has its own far west: Brittany.

Unlike Breizh Cola, the latter brand, Auvergnat Cola, has a French name —*Auvernhat* in the dialect spoken in Auvergne— and the slogan is written in Auvergnat: *Fai tot petar miladiu!* "It makes everything burst, my God!" (author's own translation).

The humorous slogans of the two brands evoke joyful experiences. Auvergnat Cola presents other semiotic elements which enhance humour and contribute to build brand engagement.

There is indeed a close relationship between text and image in advertising and other disciplines. The motto or the slogan relies on the image. According to Guidère, there are two types of slogans:

> The slogan and the image clearly complement each other at both the structural and content level. The slogan typography does not simply match the text typography but also guides the interpretation of the image by creating a particular meaning. In this respect, *descriptive* slogans should be distinguished from *explanatory* slogans. The former reinforce the apparent meaning of the image, while the latter help to understand it. (Guidère 2000: 237)

Any characteristic of a region that may be translated and paratranslated in the brand name can be used to launch an atypical product. This partially accounts for the purchase made by a cola consumer who has a strong sense of place that offers him a sense of belonging to a French region or the purchase made by a tourist keen to buy an unusual souvenir of the region.

Likewise, we have found that there is a wide range of mottos and slogans whose meaning is closely related to the brand and the region they represent. Moreover, we have identified other mottos and slogans with a recognisable North-American cultural referent. Those references lead us to propose a third category of slogans based on puns along with the two types suggested by Guidère (2000). Such new category might be called "paronymic slogans", since the brand uses a humorous paronym to attract customers.

5.2. Paratextual elements

5.2.1. Introductory remarks

As earlier mentioned, the advertisement message should be regarded as a combination of text and image in which verbal and visual elements have a symbiotic relationship, which means that our research also deals with the image outside the text but linked to it. As Guidère (2000: 31-32) remarks:

> Based on a brief examination of commonalities found in a large contrastive corpus, researchers can provide an overview of advertising messages. From this perspective, the research focus is text-image interaction,

> whether in a press ad, a hoarding or an advertorial. Three categories of features must be considered, which are actually endogenous variables: the features of an advertisement at the graphic level; its characteristics at the iconographic level; and its semiotic description.

In line with this, we will carry out an iconographic analysis to identify the elements that surround, accompany and enhance the text meaning, namely those elements that can be paratranslated following the approach of the Translation and Paratranslation (T&P) Research Group at the Universidade de Vigo.

5.2.2. *Typography*

Coca-Cola's original script consisted of interlocking cursive letters that gave the impression of being hand-written, as shown in image 5[12]. That script makes the brand human and more natural, since it reminds us of pen writing as practised by our parents and grandparents in French primary schools a few years ago. The logo consisted of two curved C's and a hyphen. The first C holds up the second C, which in turn holds up the small letters. The hyphen symbolizes the secret of the union between coca and cola: the secret formula of the famous soda.

Image 5. Coca-Cola logo

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12. Source: https://www.facebook.com/CocaColaEsp/

Many brands have adopted this wordmark. Why should something which works in the Coca-Cola Brand be changed? Consider the wordmarks of Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola (Image 6[13] and Image 7[14]) as examples:

Image 6. Anjou Cola logo.

Image 7. Vendée Cola logo.

5.2.3. Colours

Alternative cola brands mostly use Coca-Cola colour palette: red —in different shades— since it is often used as background colour; white as the text colour, and black in those brands commercializing "sugar free" and/ or "caffeine free" versions. Some alternative brands use grey rather than black.

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13. Source: https://www.facebook.com/anjoucola/?locale=fr_FR
14. Source: https://x.com/vendeecola

5.2.4. Epitextual elements

In paratranslation epitextual elements are those elements external to the product that extend the brand pictorial mark. They are widely used by cola brands, much in the same way as Coca-Cola puts its seal on bags, caps, etc. Cola brands develop a marketing strategy including characters, a mascot and various objects that boost brand identity by materializing the brand pictorial mark, that is, by extending it into a more "palpable" and closer image.

Let us take the example of the mascot created by the Auvergnat Cola brand (Image 8[15] and Image 9[16]). The mascot shows how Auvergnats use self-mockery and caricature as tools to engage customers because the product represents local culture.

Below we present Gaston (Image 8), a true Auvergnat wearing a big moustache, who reminds us of the prototypical French man, although he is not wearing a beret in the visual. This is undoubtedly the Auvergnat drawn by Goscinny and Uderzo in their book *Le bouclier arverne* (*Asterix and the Chieftains's Shield*).

Image 8. Gaston, Auvergnat Cola mascot

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15. Source: https://www.auvergnatcola.com/actualites/gaston-a-la-theoule/
16. Source: https://www.auvergnatcola.com/galerie-photos/gaston-au-faisan-dore/

Image 9. Gaston, Auvergnat Cola mascot

Image 10. *Le bouclier arverne, Astérix et Obélix* (Alambix the Auvergnat's inn)

Gaston runs a tavern "*charbougnat*" —the coal bags piled on the left cor-roborate it. He wears a thick moustache which looks like Asterix's or Obelix's, and when he speaks, he produces a sort of whistle sound which used to be a feature of the Auvergnat accent. Leaning on the bar counter,

the *charbougnat* does not drink beer but red wine, a table wine which he also exports to the French capital city.

Some would say maliciously that he likes fermented grape juice too much, but the Auvergnat Cola brand has wisely looked for the value of sport: Gaston is very keen on rugby. The sky-blue colour of his shirt and his scarf reminds Auvergnats of the blue colour of the Clermont Ferrand rugby team, Association Sportive Montferrandaise (ASM Clermont), a team they are proud of as they won the French XV Rugby Cup in 2010 and 2017. The tournament trophy is a shield, Brennus' shield, which evokes the adventures of the two Gaulish heroes in *Asterix and the Chieftains's Shield.* Th epitextual elements of Auvergnat Cola thus extend the text and the pictorial mark of this local cola brand.

Within the framework of the translation and paratranslation research carried out between 2014 and 2018 and being currently developed, we believe that all those elements are essential. Professional translators and interpreters should consider them in their practice to fully understand the advertising message on the basis of the notion of paratranslation and to help the audience understand the paratranslation.

6. Conclusion

The alternative regional soft drinks brands Breizh Cola and Auvergnat Cola have been analysed as products which reflect attachment to a culture and a regional identity. Moreover, we have shown that the advertising strategy of most regional cola brands in Francia relies on the adaptation of Coca-Cola advertising tools, namely the text and the image that surrounds, accompanies and extends it. What does the future hold for brands? In Guidère's view, cultural specificity is becoming less important in advertising:

> In the advertising ideology the sense of belonging to an ethnic and geographical group is replaced by a new sense of belonging that transcends national borders. […] The fight for "cultural specificity" is thus viewed as a rearguard action, and the notion itself is not applicable to advertising discourse. In fact, two approaches to culture clash in the field of global trade: on the one hand, a global approach in which culture is not a national phenomenon but an international one, namely a human and

humanistic one; on the other hand, a national approach where culture is defined in relation with a particular territory and a particular group of people. (Guidère 2000: 22)

Whatever the future of regional cola brands in France is, consumers will be responsible for their development and the dissemination of their message. Yet the translator will always have to integrate the reading, the (para)interpretation and the (para)translation of the verbal and visual elements and of the image components (patterns, colours, figures) into his task to be able to render the underlying symbolism and localize it in another language, in the cultural and identity codes of another audience.

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