

Cartoons, advertising and transmediality

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ANNA AMORÓS PONS, Universidad de Vigo, Pontevedra, España [amoros@uvigo.es]

PATRICIA COMESAÑA COMESAÑA, Universidad Isabel I, Burgos, España [patricia.comesana@ui1.es]

ABSTRACT

This historical, diachronic, descriptive and analytical study examines the advertising strategies in cartoons: indirect and well-established advertising, surreptitious and unregulated, emerging and unknown strategies and cross-media and transmedia actions. The research shows that the indirect modality is typical of European cinema, while the surreptitious one is present in all films. Credit-roll is the most abundant strategy, although its brevity veils it; there is a great presence of product placement and brand placement, barely noticeable due to its subtlety, and enhanced by its animated nature. Besides licensed products, there are interactive marketing actions (multiplatforms, Web 2.0) that produce transfers of audiovisual consumption in related industries and connected circles.

Keywords: cartoons, animated film, advertising strategies, persuasive messages, cross-media, transmedia.

RESUMEN

Este estudio histórico-diacrónico-descriptivo-analítico examina en los cartoons estrategias publicitarias indirectas consolidadas, encubiertas no regladas, emergentes, desconocidas y acciones cross-media y transmedia. La investigación evidencia que la modalidad indirecta es propia del cine europeo, mientras que la encubierta está en todas las filmografías, siendo el credit-roll la más abundante, aunque velada por su fugacidad; se encuentra gran presencia del product placement y brand placement, que apenas son perceptibles por su sutileza, apuntalada por el carácter animado de la imagen. Además de productos licenciados, se diseñan acciones de marketing interactivo (multiplataformas, Web 2.0) generando transferencias de consumo audiovisual en industrias adyacentes y circuitos anexos.

Palabras clave: cartoons, cine de animación, estrategias publicitarias, mensajes persuasivos, cross-media, transmedia.

RESUMO

O estudo, de tipo histórico-diacrónico-descriptivo-analítico, analisa nos cartoons estratégias publicitárias indiretas consolidadas, encobertas não reguladas, emergentes, desconhecidas e ações cross-mídia e transmídia. A investigação evidencia que a modalidade indireta é própria do cinema europeu enquanto a encoberta está em todas as filmografias, sendo o *credit-roll* a mais abundante ainda que velada por sua fugacidade; se encontra grande presença do *product placement* e *brand placement* que são quase imperceptíveis por sua sutileza reforçada pelo carácter animado da imagem. Além de produtos licenciados desenham-se ações de *marketing* interativo (multiplataformas, Web 2.0) gerando transferências de consumo audiovisual em indústrias adjacentes e circuitos anexos.

Palavras-chave: cartoons, cinema de animação, estratégias publicitárias, mensagens persuasivas, cross-mídia, transmídia.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the appearance of the first animated experiments, the *pantomimes lumineuses* of Reynaud (1892), to this day, animation cinema has experienced different fluctuations in its media repercussion. Initially, many of these productions served as proclamations in time of war, thanks to their persuasive power¹. Later, Disney expanded its hegemony as an entertainment product with the introduction of new techniques and artistic resources². But it was at the end of the 20th century when cinema –as a product of entertainment transmitted in various media, devices and screens– became a key content in audiovisual consumption, and not only for children (PRODESCON, 2002; Cartoon Forum 2005 and 2013; Rooter, 2012). It began to be considered a business (Martínez, 2008) due to tickets sale, and an advertising support, due to the synergy with other cultural industries (sale-distribution of licensed products) and through cross-media and transmedia actions capable of generate engagement in their consumers. This tendency aroused the interest of advertising agencies, since the cinematographic image offered the possibility of being a media of persuasive communication. This was reinforced by its ability to access a large number of viewers (children, adolescents, young people, adults), potential consumers first in cinemas, then on television, later in new media and audiovisual formats, and currently as prosumers of communication through new platforms.

STATE OF THE ART

Since the late nineties, the interest aroused by the advertising inserted in the cinema has generated several studies on the subject, which range from the analysis of the first gratuitous incorporations of products in the audiovisual productions of the twentieth century, or of cinematographic pieces of the 1930s that, thanks to “a series of market phenomena provoked by some films came to show that the cinema was a good way to promote consumption through illusion” (Baños & Rodríguez, 2003, p.50), to the examination of its repercussion as an advertising strategy (Wiles & Danielova, 2009). There are even those who question their real effectiveness (Soo & Meri, 1995), as well as significant contributions on the insertion of commercial

messages through the placement of products in props and advertising fiction. But in all of these theoretical-methodological contributions, there is a reluctance to address research that deepens the use of different typologies of non-traditional advertising (indirect and covert) in animated films, as a way to convey commercial and persuasive messages. Based on the fact that the link between cinema and advertising (Pérez, 1996; Eguizábal, 1998) goes back to the very beginning of the animated image, where its potential was manifested in the advertising-commercial, tourist-promotional, political-propagandistic discourse, it is interesting to approach the study of cartoons as a support for advertising actions.

Considering the above, it is necessary to take into account several considerations.

First, that the audiovisual media, and now the new communication platforms, have a power of persuasion that influences the way of socializing of children and adolescents, through the transmission of values and the induction of consumption habits from an early age (Bringué, 2001). To this reality we must add the persuasive power of actions such as product placement, which becomes

a true source of stereotypes, not in the physical sense, but in terms of the institution of consumption patterns and, in general, behaviors that will have a clear incidence on the values and the formulas of action that the child will develop in his adult stage. (Jiménez, 2005, n/p)

The effects of this persuasive insertion on the child population have aroused interest among scholars (Auty & Lewis, 2004) and in those who deepen the use of the new advertising strategies implanted in the cinematographic image, the same ones that through cross-media and transmedia actions expand the film history from one media to another, seeking the interaction of the viewer/user (Davidson et al., 2010), seducing him for his participation (prosumer) in the story.

The idea of transmediality implies the exploitation of the narrative history in different media and devices, favoring the adaptation of its advertising message, making it subtler, more pernicious and effective, because it comes into contact with the audience through different channels. In this way, the brands/products incorporated in the cartoons are transported to other supports, adapted and/or substituted in

them, as in television (through animated series, spin off or documentaries inspired in the film), comics, videogames, online games, from the official sites of the producers and/or from the fan pages (fandom), or from blogs on social networks and where the viewer can interact with the characters, receive information on events related to the film, premieres and productions of the producers, etcetera. The revolution of the transmedia is that devices and media act globally, but also independently (Jenkins, 2003), so it is not necessary to consume one to access the other.

These advertising actions that are born in the cinema and expand to other media and supports make the spectators, especially children, leave their initial passive position to become active consumers with economic purchase capacity (although this is limited or conditioned) or with a strong influence on family spending (Martínez, 2005), by influencing consumer purchasing decisions or imposing their preferences on brands/products discovered in cartoons. Therefore, circumscribing this cinema to the children's sector as a potential audience –excluding adolescents, youth and adults– is to limit their ability of advertising. This contact with productions that often do not belong to their geographical area favors the knowledge of foreign brands that the child wishes to obtain, but also the contact with other cultures (Chevalier & Mazzalovo, 2005) that transmit consumption values different to those of his surroundings. It is a process that favors a homogeneity of tastes, preferences and behaviors (Pereira, 2005), perspectives that are not transmitted by traditional educational referents (parents, close family, friends, teachers, counselors).

In this context, it is complex to establish boundaries between what is considered a cinematographic image and an advertising one. The insertion of new strategies/typologies of non-traditional advertising in media/devices, which, at first, were not born with an advertising purpose can easily generate confusion. From this perspective, the study focuses on the analysis of the cinematographic cartoons of this millennium as an advertising support, and in its cross-media and transmedia actions. This type of cinema is characterized by the fact that, in its image, the drawing is animated; that is, by “creating an illusion of movement through

the union of a sequence of images” (Taylor, 2004, p.7). Such creation of animated movement becomes a

narrative made through a series of images that appear on the screen, constitute an easy and accessible resource for the majority of the child population (...), to transmit a series of cultural and educational values that, in parallel, are also represented through other media such as videogames, computer games, children's and youth publications. (Rajadell, Pujol & Violant, 2005, n/p).

This type of cinema uses similar advertising tactics as the real image cinema, although these strategies are certainly innovative when compared to traditional media advertising, as Otto Kleppner (1988, p. 27) pointed out at the time (1988, p. 27):

... is a method for communicating to many people the message of a sponsor through an impersonal media. The functions of advertising are numerous: it is designed to convince a person to buy a product, to support a cause or even to encourage less consumption (dis-marketing) (...). Regardless of its specific purpose, all advertising has two common threads: a marketing foundation and a persuasive communication.

From the advertising point of view, it becomes necessary to review the concept of advertising, which by its multiple meanings is complex to limit. It is understood that it is an “instrument of communication whose purpose is to create an environment and a positive disposition on the part of the consumer, regarding certain products or services and, moreover, that ends with their acquisition” (Codeluppi, 2007, p. 150). Although the content of the notion of advertising can vary according to the adopted perspective, from the theoretical-academic field it is understood as a means to disseminate an impersonal and sponsored message, with the purpose of offering goods, services or ideas to individuals (Haas, 1971; Stanton, 1980); marketing revises this notion from the perspective of increasing the consumption and sales of a product as a result of the advertising action (Santesmases, 1996; Rabassa & García, 1978); and finally, from creativity, definitions based on personal experiences differ considerably from one another. Thus, while some understand advertising as “the art of convincing consumers” (Bassat, 1994, p. 6), for others “it is not a form of art or entertainment, but a media of information” (Ogilvy, 1989, p. 7).

Based on these terminological meanings, the study focuses on the advertising generated through the cinematographic image in non-traditional indirect and concealed insertion modalities, which in a veiled way present brands/products/services. Its purpose is to understand how advertising actions are conducted in the cinema and how they are extrapolated to other media and formats, being the starting point to carry out cross-media and transmedia actions that seduce the new prosumers.

Among the typologies of advertising (see table 1) that are inserted in the cartoons, we find patronage, referring to that aid made by an organism, company or institution to conduct a scientific, artistic or cultural project. The importance of the analysis of this advertising strategy lies in an evolution of its foundations motivated by the emergence of new media and the globalization of content, which has been drifting towards the emergence of other similar financing models based on the idea of micro-patronage, such as crowdfunding, crowd sourced capital or Giving 2.0 model (Sedeño, 2011). Sponsorship is also indirect advertising, which will be those advertising actions

linked to what is known as “social responsibility”, a company has to assume its responsibilities regarding the society in which it operates, not only conducting a correct business activity, but actively intervening in the overall development of the community. (Verdugo & Otero, 1994, p.23)

Both modalities are in turn related to the covert advertising, since in addition to being inserted in the initial credits of the movie, usually they are also in the credit rolls, as acknowledgments or collaborations.

Regarding the type of covert advertising—considered the most pernicious, since it goes unnoticed by the younger viewer—, we find the product placement, brand placement, bartering, merchandising and credit roll modality. As for the first, the placement is the most profitable: it is the placement of a product/brand in the props of the film, from an economic or collaborative exchange between the film production and the company or entity generator of the product/brand (Arconada, 2007; Boeing, Torres & Gentry, 2013). In these cases, the advertised object is easily perceptible to the viewer, although he is not aware of the advertising message. Wright's (2005) data on the entry of \$100 million for product placement/brands in

the film *Eight Crazy Nights* (2002, Columbia Tri-Star Films) is significant in understanding the economic importance of animation as a way of advertising. When the product-placement is “verbal” (Del Pino, 2006, p.43), it is also called brand placement, a notion according to which “a brand is included as part of a mass media program in return for some consideration from the advertiser” (Karrh, 1998, p.31).

In this way advertising becomes part of the fiction story, inserting the commercial message in the script and in the dialogues of the characters where they allude to the brand or extol their qualities showing the product-logo. Within this typology we find the so-called “hyperactive brand placement” (Pineda, Pérez de Albará & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2013, p.76), which occurs when the fictional character consumes or manipulates the product while verbally alluding to the brand and its qualities. It should be noted that both product placement and brand placement were until recently in a non legal situation, with a void in the legislation regarding it. Now, the institutions have begun to regulate their use, forcing the producers to warn the existence of product placement during the audiovisual broadcast (Organic Law 7/2010, General Audiovisual Communication). There are abundant cases where the brand that appears in the scene is loaded with the values of the characters and, in turn, transmits its own values to the fiction character or situation. Regarding bartering, it is an exchange of audiovisual spaces for advertising spaces between channel and advertiser (barter), where the program is produced through an advertising company (Rodríguez, 2012), in a way that generates a “production of content in exchange of advertising spaces” (Ramos, 2006, p.40). Although it is an extended format in the television, it is less usual in cinema, but there is already knowledge of such experiences in the cartoons. We find an example in *Tad, the lost explorer* (2012, Paramount Pictures), from which a space on TV has emerged, *Discover with Tadeo Jones*, a transmedia action that not only serves to self-advertise the premiere of the sequel; in addition, it promotes aspects of Spanish culture, science and heritage, such as the *Gran Telescopio de Canarias*, the *Caves of Altamira* or *Atapuerca*, for which it has the support of related scientific institutions, among them the Human Evolution Museum of Burgos.

Merchandising or editorial merchandising stands out within covert advertising as a hybrid between advertising strategies and cross-media/transmedia strategies, (Araújo, Reis & Soares, 2008); it is the “appearance of products in the video, audio or printed articles in their normal consumption situation, in an open declaration of the brand” (Feltrin, 2010, n/p). This type of support generates synergies between products/brands and a particular film, to promote the film seeking the attendance of spectators and favoring the sale of licensed products/official toys, by taking advantage of “the expectations and success of the films, and also decisively supporting their commercial release” (Miguel, Eizaguirre, León & Oter, 2004).

The credit rolls are also used with a commercial function, since they serve as a support to insert brands or to thank the participation in the realization of an audiovisual product. If the film has been commissioned and/or financed by a sponsor or group of sponsors, they are referred to as ‘produced by’, ‘in partnership with’ or ‘a production of’, so that the participation of the advertising companies is clearly identified (Taylor, 2004). Finally, the cinematographic image of cartoons is used as a tool for the transfer of messages that transmit values (ethical, moral, religious, social, political), but also generates a tourism-heritage promotion that brings

the individual closer to other cultures, builds its reality, models its behavior, brings it closer to a historical moment and socializes it from the infantile age (Rodríguez & Fraiz, 2011, Ley 16/1985, del Patrimonio Histórico Español).

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

This contribution is based on research on the use of the cinematographic image as an advertising medium³, focused on the analysis of the advertising strategies in the cartoons of this millennium and in their cross-media and transmedia actions. To methodologically approach the research, we choose a historical-diachronic-descriptive-analytical approach. Thus, in the first phase, it was based on the universe of cinematographic productions premiered commercially in cinemas from January 2000 to December 2014. Once viewed, we selected only those that incorporated –indirectly and covertly, through their different modalities– brands, products and advertising in the cinematographic image, establishing the corpus in 127 films.

In the second phase, we proceeded to configure the sample of films selected for the detailed analysis. The amplitude of the field of study conditioned to

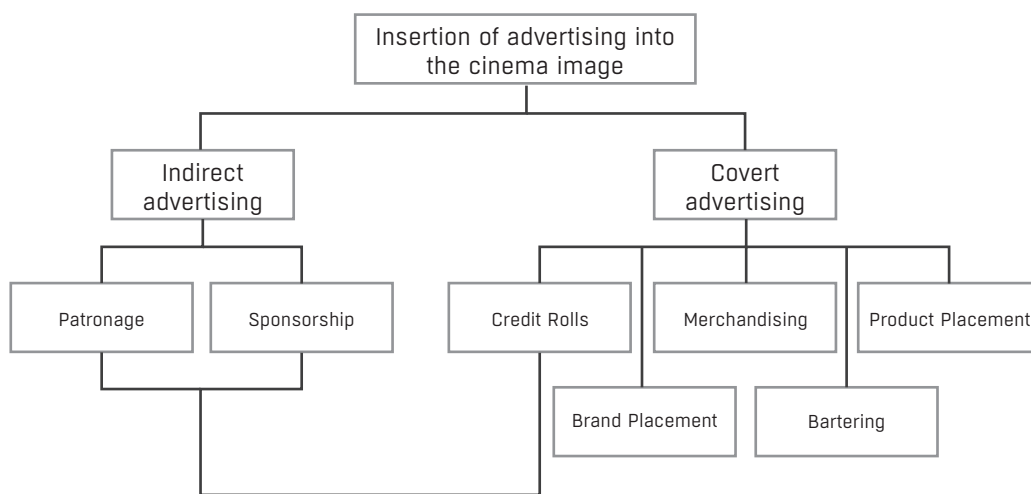


Diagram 1: Advertising strategies in the cinematographic image

Source: Own elaboration, March 2015

a cataloging of the films according to different parameters: (i) geography (place of origin of the film); (ii) corporate policy (majors, independent production, co-production, pan-co-production ...); (iii) recognition of production (whether by spectators in cinemas, prizes and awards received, international distribution ...); (iv) financing model (patronage, sponsorship, subsidy, advertising, crowdfunding, crowd sourced capital ...); (v) creative styles (2D, 3D, anime, go-motion, claymotion, pixelation, rotoscoping, stop-motion, tweening ...). The field of animation film production was territorially limited to the United States, Asia and Europe. In this last one, we analyzed Spain separately (since the investigation was conducted in this country), where Galicia (Autonomous Community of the Spanish State) maintains a remarkable position, both with a significant production of animation cinema⁴ in the 21st century.

From this categorization, we configured the sample for the detailed analysis in five models of animated feature, meeting the following established criteria: (i) each production corresponds to a geographical area of those established; (ii) the productions encompass different styles of animated filmmaking; (iii) they are recognized productions; (iv) they have a variety of funding models; (v) they are productions commercialized and distributed in the different lusters of this century (to have a wide panorama of the fourteen years). Of these five models of animation films, four films were produced in the first two lustrums (at the beginning and end of each period) and one at the middle of this lustrum (depending on the time frame established in the research).

In the third phase, prior to the process of detailed analysis of the films, we proceed to the elaboration of tables for the collection of concrete data and their systematization. These methodological tables are divided into typologies that contemplate different variables and a relation of categories with their corresponding items:

- **Table A.** Identification of production: Code-sheet 1. Technical-artistic data (scriptwriter, director, producer, country, year, style of animation, duration, awards, etc.).
- **Table B.** Modalities of insertion of brands/ advertising products in cinema: Code-sheet 2. Indirect advertising (patronage, sponsorship); and code-sheet 3. Covered advertising (product placement, brand placement, bartering, merchandising, credit roll).
- **Table C.** Multiplatforms: Code-sheet 4. Cross-media actions (in TV, series, spin off, documentaries, etc.); and code-sheet 5. Transmedia actions (Internet, comics, social networks, video games, blogs, products for mobile devices, etc.).

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

ADVERTISING STRATEGIES IN CARTOONS

In the analysis conducted, and in reference to the presence of indirect advertising (figure 1), we observe that cinema produced in both Galicia and Spain usually resorts to patronage and sponsorship as a way

Origin	Movie	Producer	Production/Premiere*
Galicia	<i>The Apostle</i> [O Apóstolo]	Artefacto Producciones	2012
USA	<i>Toy Story 3</i>	Walt Disney Pictures/ Pixar Animation Studios	2010
Spain	<i>Gisaku</i>	Filmmax	2005/2006
Europe	<i>Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit</i>	Aardman Animations/ DreamWorks Animation	2005
Japan	<i>Spirited Away</i> [<i>Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi</i>]	Studio Ghibli	2001/2002

Table 1: Models of animated feature films

* Premiere in Spain

Source: Own elaboration, March 2015

of financing their productions. It should not be forgotten that it is only in the 21st century that the animation sector in Spain takes off definitively, which is why the company's foundations are still being laid. This type of productions, like traditional cinema made with real image, seeks funding either through collaborators (private and/or public entities), or through grants or creative initiatives (crowdfunding).

In the case of *The Apostle*, both indirect types (100% sponsorship and 41.6% patronage) were used; for *Gisaku*, meanwhile, it was almost exclusively patronage (about 59%). Entities such as *Gadis* (*Gadisa*, food distribution chain) are sponsors, while *IGAPE* (Galician Institute for Economic Promotion), *ICO* (Official Credit Institute), *ICAA* (Institute of Cinematography and Audiovisual Arts, Ministry of Culture), *RTVE* (Spanish Radio and Television), *TVE* (Spanish Television), *TVG* (Galician Television), the Board of Galicia – Council of Culture and Sport or the Galician Audiovisual Agency have been patrons of the Galician production. *Gisaku* was designed as a promotional product from an institutional initiative where

of the 4 million euros that the production cost, 1,800,000 € came from the *SEEI* [State Society for International Exhibitions] and the rest of the producer *Filmmax*, the exhibition rights in Spanish Television (*TVE*), a contribution of the Institute of Cinema and The Audiovisual Arts (*ICAA*) and another of the Board of Galicia. (Mestre, 2007, p.205)

The mentioned institutions, among others, participated like patrons of the project. The direct

consequence of the use of both types of indirect advertising is that a beneficial collaboration relationship is established for both the producer and the sponsoring entity or patron. In the opposite pole would be the productions of Japanese and American origin, with a great capacity of self-financing with the blockbusters success and sale of rights for TV. In *Spirited Away* and *Toy Story 3* there is no evidence of this type of advertising activity. *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, follows the American model, since it is a co-production with the United States.

Regarding the covert advertising modality (figure 2), the closing credits have abundant references to brands, entities and companies collaborating in the cinematographic production as acknowledgments. In *The Apostle*, there is about 47%: *Concello de Santiago*, *Deputación de Lugo*, *Bodegas Martín Códax*, *ROSP Coruña*, *Film Arante*, *AIE* (Spanish Society of Performers), *Audiovisual AVAL SGR*, *Polygon Entertainment*, *Cinemar Films*, *Fundación Paideia Galicia*. Regarding this type of advertising, although it is the most abundant in most of the productions, it is the one that has lesser visibility for the potential consumer. Their presence goes unnoticed by the characteristics of the format (location at the end of the film in the roll, reduced typographic size and rapid movement of the roll that prevents the readout and, therefore, the identification of the brands); it is the moment in which the spectators leave the room, or, in the television, the data are eliminated directly by the continuous broadcasting of the programming.

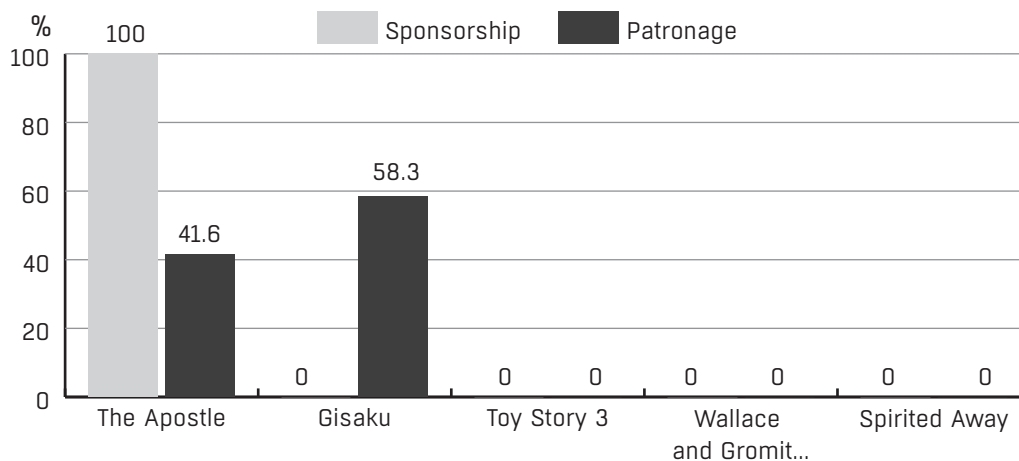


Figure 1: Indirect advertising modalities

Source: Own elaboration, March 2015

Regarding brand placement, it is less usual, although it gives high levels of notoriety to the product/brand named, since the mention does not go unnoticed for the spectator. In *Gisaku*, brand placement amounts to 81.4% of advertising inserts, and there are multiple references to Hispanic culture (Picasso, Velázquez, Miró, etc.), to sporting events (the Copa America in Valencia in 2007), cities (León, Burgos ...), companies and infrastructures (the Spanish high-speed train, AVE). Such insertions constitute advertising, giving messages of tourism, cultural, historical promotion of a country. In the rest of productions, there is a stable amount of presence of brand placement, that varies between 7.4% of the advertising in *The Apostle* and *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit*, and 3.7% of *Spirited Away*.

In relation to product placement, the presence of brands/products is abundant, so that, in a passive and/or active way, advertising interacts with fiction, where the characters manipulate and talk about the characteristics and benefits of the product. The presence of advertising sites in the cartoons cannot be associated with 'chance', as it happens in the real image cinema. Its presence is sought *ex profeso* (in the department of artistic direction each form, line, volume of all brands/products is designed) for their insertion in a passive and/or active way in the props and, therefore, in the cinematographic image, where it is easily recognizable by the viewer. In *The Apostle* (12.5%) this resource is used as a geographical, historical, cultural and religious reference point of the Galician city (Santiago de Compostela and the Camino de Santiago) and as a tourist product. That is, its presence is subject to the artistic-scenic direction as an element of contextualization, an advertising action called city placement (Méndiz, 2011). On the other hand, *Gisaku* (35.7%) opted for both commercial (Volkswagen, Iberia, AVE, Maremagnum) and institutional, promoting the brand image of Spain (Madrid Airport, Doñana National Park, X centennial of the Quijote, Hispasat satellite, Guggenheim Museum, Seville-1992 Expo, La Giralda, Praza do Obradoiro, Park Güell, etc.). Regarding *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit* (23.21% of product placement), the references to traditional brands (the Austin A35 cars or the AZ Wigan guide) coexist with other brands with slight visual modifications in design, but which

remain easily identifiable, while maintaining aesthetic characteristics similar to the actual brand. This is the case with the brand of Smeg refrigerators (called Smug), or the DIY tools Bosch (under the name of Botch) or the toy multinational Toys"R"Us (with the pseudonym "Tubes"R"Us). On the other hand, in the American film (19.6%) and in the Japanese film (8.9%) we find a traditional location of brands in the backgrounds and props (All Star, Barbie, Fisher Price, Mr. Potato of Playskool, Samsung, Audi, Bridgestone, among others), that do not interfere in the action, but that come into visual contact with the potential consumer in order to increase the sales of the products and transmit sociocultural and consumption values.

As for bartering, we can see that although the first practices related to the cartoons are beginning to be perceived, as mentioned above in relation to the film *Tad, the lost explorer*, these are still limited and have not been put into place in any of the films studied.

If we analyze the different typologies of advertising insertion (figure 3), we verify that covert advertising (product placement, with 23%, and brand placement, with 14%) acquires a great presence and protagonism in the cartoons. The repercussion of these advertising strategies means that since 2010 the first efforts are being conducted regarding the protection of the spectator-consumer facing these commercial practices, through article 17 of Law 7/2010, of March 31, General of the Audiovisual Communication, which establishes the obligation to inform the audience of the product placement. Sometimes credit rolls do not refer to all the brands that appear in the fiction story, which makes this technique pernicious, especially for children, who are not yet aware of the commercial implications surrounding the cinema. Although covert advertising is numerically the most abundant type of advertising insertion (with 57%), qualitatively the acknowledgments—used as a strategy to insert brands, references to public and private entities—do not offer too much visibility as an advertising strategy, by the very characteristics that define them, and usually go unnoticed for the viewer. On the other hand, with regard to indirect advertising, we observe that this is the least abundant in the animation film, being used almost exclusively by European, Spanish and Galician cinema, that need these supports from institutions or

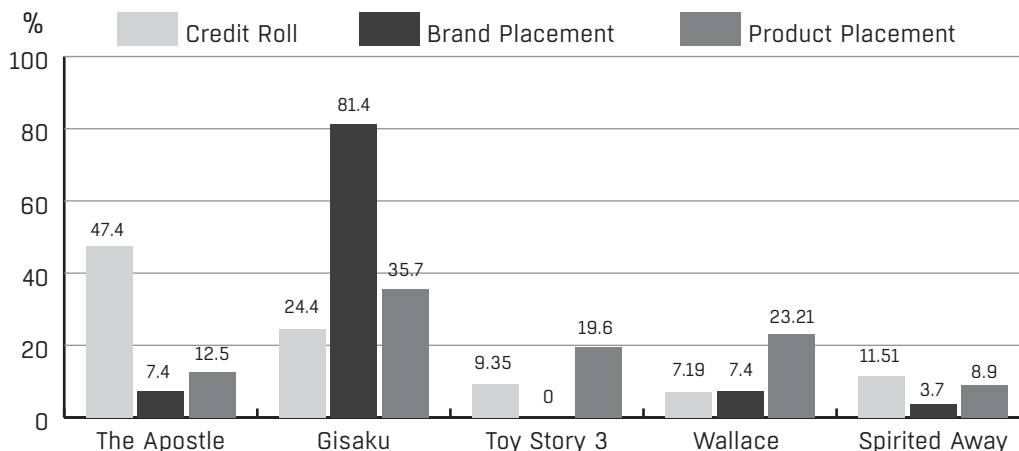


Figure 2: Covert advertising modalities

Source: Own elaboration, March 2015

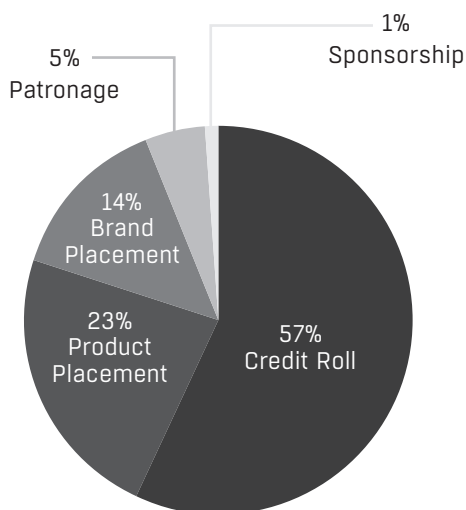


Figure 3: Modalities of advertising insertion in cartoons°

Source: Own elaboration, March 2015

companies that finance the productions in exchange for being included as collaborators.

The investigation shows that most of the advertising insertions in the cinematographic image are made through the covert modality. By way of acknowledgments and collaboration in the production, we find the credit roll, the more veiled insertion by its fleeting character

in the screen. Next, product placement in the props, which, despite being the most visible modality, is the most accepted by the viewer, giving the scene realism. The most pernicious by its subtlety, being reinforced the fiction nature of the animated character of the image, is the brand placement in the story. Merchandising is the most common due to the aura it creates to offer the product as an object of daily consumption. And the most distant of the cinema, when exhibited in different devices (such as television) and in different media programs (such as a program of the television programming or palimpsest), is bartering.

FROM MERCHANDISING TO CROSS-MEDIA AND TRANSMEDIALITY

The current situation of technological consumption in individuals of all ages has generated a new field for the transmedia exploitation of audiovisual products. It takes place through phones and mobile devices in teenagers and adults, but also screens and tablets in childhood, where children consume content on the network, watch movies and play video games. Thus, the transmedia narrative in the cartoons derives towards other cultural industries, favoring the design of multiple audiovisual products and advertising strategies, in different screens and supports as on the

Internet through the generation of contents, apps, social networks, webpages, online video games and graphic adventures, videos, that favor the commercial exploitation of the cinematographic product with an economic purpose.

If initially the exploitation of cartoons began in the cinematographic screens, to later shift towards the generation of licensed products and merchandising with the brand image of the film that the spectator could acquire of multiple forms (dolls, games, school material, garments, etc.), the new way of conceiving the media world demands 360° communication strategies, where the individual is sought to interact more through more complex experiences than the mere reception of a unidirectional message, as it was with the traditional media. In this way, people goes from being a passive spectator to an active consumer who searches through various supports and screens and simultaneously in all of them, a feedback and an interaction that allows him to be a participant of the filmic action and, at the same time, creator of stories (prosumer), either through a video game or comments on networks, forums or official blogs. Technology multiplatforms and Web 2.0 become the fundamental tools for new audiovisual consumptions, which at the same time generate a transfer to adjacent leisure industries (museums and interactive theme parks, virtual zoos, related recreational areas ...), of prosumers eager to experiment with new forms of consumption. In the words of Croce (2008), there is a “transit to the adjacent commercial circuit, materializing the consumption of such products” (p. 295).

In this study, we observe that cartoons are betting for advertising in new technology platforms, without renouncing to traditional merchandising licensed products (official comic of Gisaku; games, activity books and puzzles of Wallace & Gromit: The Curse of the Were-Rabbit; figurines, dolls, food products of Spirited Away; Mattel, Hasbro and Lego toys based on the Toy Story 3 film; cross-promotions with large food chains such as Wensleydale cheese in Wallace & Gromit, and of Toy Story with Kraft, Kellogg's, Cheez-It and Burger King and McDonalds; Samsung-branded products in Toy Story 3, and Audi in Gisaku).

This spiral of consumption of globalized content has favored the transmedia derivation of cartoons towards new channels of distribution of cinematographic products where to generate new experiences of consumption. Since the beginning of the 21st century, there have been evident efforts to create products linked to the cinematographic image capable of being consumed on other screens. Thus, there are video games for mobile phones (Gisaku); or for different platforms, such as PC, PSP, Xbox, Wii, among others (Toy Story 3 and Wallace & Gromit: The curse of the Were-Rabbit); or paid online broadcast of a film in the official sites of the producers (The Apostle can be seen from the projection room of its official website, with a cost of 1.50 euros)⁹; or a special video clip inspired by Japanese aesthetics and recorded with real actors of the feature film Gisaku that can be seen on the official website of the film. There is also a continuity of film stories in traditional media. This is the case of Toy Story 3, in which Pixar-Walt Disney Pictures creates a series of short films, Toy Story Toons, to continue the film experience after the premiere of the third part of the saga (Hawaii Vacation, Samll Fry, Partysaurus Rex and Toy Story of Terror). This transmedia experience even offers the possibility of adapting the cinematographic product to the new technologies, where the viewer can select between analogue, digital and 3D animation format to view Toy Story 3, or users could participate in a dubbing contest of characters of the film whose prize was to be the voice of one of the protagonists.

More special cases are found in the various modalities through which large American producers generate sites that become an integral experience for the viewer. These webpages become spectacular showcases where people can access a multitude of audiovisual consumption offers (movies, games, videos and special contents, shows), as well as online stores where they can buy the official products. Such is the case of Disney major, not only with Toy Story 3, but also with the other films produced.

The transmedia actions find in Web 2.0 a field for the interaction of the user through social networks and blogs (the case of The Apostle). Its power and influence to generate expectation and actions of cross-media

and transmedia marketing generates that all the films have their own space, with fandom, in the networks (Facebook, Twitter, Tuenti, YouTube ...), including those films that were released before the creation of these social networks. In these cases, the walls serve as a timeline to keep the user informed, to invite him to take part in promotional actions and competitions, to encourage him to buy merchandise with a license for merchandising (puzzle games, among others), to present the trailer (teaser, making-of, clip, theatrical, videogame), to create expectations before the premieres and addiction to audiovisual consumption. In the case of the movie *Toy Story 3*, social networks were used to promote the new characters that were to be introduced in the last part of the saga of toys. In order to do this, "fake 'commercials were made (...) whose objective was to promote the film in an indirect way, offering information related to one of the toys of the new delivery" (Gallego, 2011, p 56). Lots-o-Huggin 'Bear is a commercial with the aesthetics of the eighties that presents Bear Lotso as its protagonist, relevant for the development of the film, but the video does not reflect its importance. It was posted on YouTube by the user MrCrazyCommercials, who in his description stated the following: " I totally had one of these growing up. I don't even know what happened to it. My mom probably put it in the attic. I don't like going in there, so it's as good as gone. "(MrCrazyCommercials, 2010).

A new transmedia action linked to a cartoon product that had a great impact in Great Britain was the one arising from the feature film *Wallace & Gromit: The curse of the Were-Rabbit*, where the characters went from the film screen to be used as models for several commercials of advertising and image of British television channels. Among the most prominent is the 2008 campaign to promote a Harvey Nichols store in Bristol, where characters from the saga appeared in costumes from great designers such as Dolce & Gabbana, Alexander McQueen, Christian Louboutin or Zagliani⁶.

Finally, transmedia marketing actions allow to take the promotion of the films to the traditional media and screens. Thus, the appearance of Spanish actor Carlos Chamarro in the television program *Pasapalabra* (Telecinco) with the promotional t-shirt of the film *The Apostle* managed to advertise the film in other media prior to its release.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTION

After the study, it can be verified that there are several typologies that use cartoons as support for the insertion of advertising messages; covert advertising highlights over the indirect, in which product placement and brand placement stands out (with a 23% and 14%, respectively) compared to others that, despite being abundant, do not reach notoriety, as roll credits (with 57%). These models of advertising insertion consist of communicative strategies of persuasion that resort to animated film as an effective support to massively disseminate messages and advertising claims to an audience eager to acquire a wide variety of consumer products. "The faculty of cinema to induce the sale of consumer goods" (Perales, 2007, p. 129) stands out. It is an advertising strategy rooted in the world of television, radio and cinema with real image, which begins to consolidate in the modern animation cinema as a method to obtain extra funding and make the films more profitable beyond theaters, generate transmedia products to be consumed in other media, screens and over the Internet. It should be noted that the American industry is the one that exploits covert advertising the most, with highly profitable animation products at the box office, advertising, licensed products and transmedia narrative and promotion strategies.

Once the relationship between cartoons and the advertising strategies is analyzed, we can deduce that at the moment the children acquire their cultural baggage through media of communication and leisure products. Thus, they come into contact with other cultures, consume certain brands and become admirers of real or animated characters. This leads us to affirm that cartoons, along with other audiovisual products, become a tool for manipulating and/or promoting consumer values. They impact on a naive children's audience, but considered a potential consumer, so, from a formative point of view, a school education in consumption is necessary (Del Moral, 1999). Of the cartoons we emphasize their great effectiveness, since from the access to the diverse audiovisual products in different screens and supports, they are targeted to a spectator that does not distinguish between the ludic and the advertising strategy; this way, the sympathy towards the product provokes a sympathy for the character, the movie, the video game, the toy, the app

or the book that later or in parallel will be acquired and/or consumed.

It is important, then, for parents, teachers and counselors to know how, through animation films, children acquire non-formal knowledge, come into contact with cultures that are different from theirs and assume diverse behaviors, ideas or beliefs, so that they can accompany this learning, instilling a critical vision and advising them before this veiled pressure. Therefore, there is a need to train teachers and mentors through training courses (seminars, masterclasses) in audiovisual language and advertising communication (literacy on mass media).

In summary, from the professional field of advertising, new paths are opened for persuasive communication through new types of interactive advertising, adapted to the different targets (social networks, websites, video games, mobile phones, apps, etc.). In this way, cartoons can continue to be exploited in other media beyond the

cinematic image in the cinemas or on the television. This versatility of cartoons favors its use as a support for new actions of transmedia advertising communication.

Finally, from the transmedia narrative a wide field of commercial possibilities opens, where animated films, official video games and apps are integrated, while they can be acquired from different platforms – such as Google Play or iTunes– and generate integral experiences in the user. Thus, the consumer will be able to extend the cinematographic experience to multiple platforms, both online and offline with multiple formats (audio or video through podcasts, texts, images, video, streaming content, infographics, etc.), as well as in the emerging technologies. Within these, augmented reality becomes the new technological challenge to which the cinematographic products derive, supported by the first experiences that will allow the viewer to enter the narrative thanks to the new technological systems of virtual reality⁷.

FOOTNOTES

1. The image of many animated characters was used as a political-propagandistic element in war periods.
2. Disney experimented with sound in the Silly Symphonies series (The Skeleton Dance, 1929), technicolor with Flowers and trees (1932) and multiplane cameras in The Old Mill (1937) and Fantasia (1940).
3. Project ref. 64102N801 (R & D Group CS2, UdV, IP: Anna Amorós Pons, Ph.D.). This study was conducted in a research residency at the University of Aveiro (CETAC, Media, Portugal, 2012) on the consumption of animation films/cartoons/ video games in university students.
4. According to data referenced in the reports produced by PRODESCON (2002), EOSA Consultores (2005) and ROOTER (2012).
5. <http://oapostolo.es/>
6. BBC News:Wallace given designer trousers, in <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/7582111.stm>
7. El Día.es: Los dibujos se alistan al futuro [Cartoons are ready for the future]. In <http://eldia.es/agencias/7983610-CINE-ANIMACI-N-Prevision-dibujos-animados-alistan-futuro>

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Anna Amorós Pons, is a Tenured Professor of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising (UdV). She holds a Ph.D. in Sciences of the Communication (UAB). IP Group I + DCS2. Screenwriter and director of Documentaries. Honorary Journalist 2010-Vigo Press Association. Good Practices Prize for non-sexist communication 2012- Associació de Dones Periodistes de Catalunya. Professor: EINA, UAB and USC. Head of the Communications Office Col.legi of Directors of Cinema of Catalonia (Barcelona). Director of Obradoiros de Cine-AGAG. Coordinator of AUGAL (Audiovisual Consortium of Galicia/AGADIC). Member of the Advisory Committee of the White Paper of the Galician Audiovisual Sector and of the Evaluation Committee for Grants to the audiovisual sector (Xunta de Galicia).

Patricia Comesaña Comesaña, is member of the Communication Department (Isabel I University of Burgos). She is part of the Research Group "Economy in the Digital Age". Ph.D. in Advertising, Public Relations and Audiovisual Communication (UdV, 2011). Degree in Advertising and Public Relations (UdV, 2009). Specialist in Advertising, Marketing and Consumer UdV, (2011) and in Directorate of Communication and Education for Consumption (UdV, 2006). Degree in Advertising and Public Relations (UdV, 2005). Diploma in Primary Education (UdV, 2002). Investigating Member of the R&D Team CS2 (UdV, 2009-2013). Invited teacher at UdV (2007-2008 and 2009-2010). Technique of Integral Training Solutions (Adquero - Grupo Femxa, Vigo). Winner of several prizes of creativity.