

Lingua Inglese II
Political Science

The Language
of Politics
Unit 4

Michela Giordano



Unit 4



Winning
elections:
slogans
and
posters

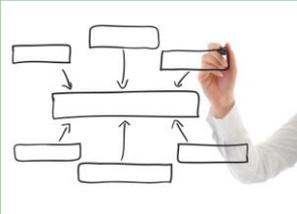
Persuading people...

- In a democratic nation, to gain power you must win elections.
- Persuading people is a vital part of the political process.



Campaigns...

Politics often shares its vocabulary with military activity: both winning elections and winning wars involve **RUNNING SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGNS**.



Negative and positive campaigning

Political campaigns with their speeches, written texts and broadcasts, need to **INFORM AND INSTRUCT VOTERS**, but all the written and spoken texts produced during an electoral campaign are designed to **PERSUADE PEOPLE TO VOTE IN A CERTAIN WAY**.

NEGATIVE CAMPAIGNING ⇒ candidates attack opponents rather than sell themselves

POSITIVE CAMPAIGNING ⇒ candidates, usually not in power yet, sell themselves as a brand new product.

Negative campaigning



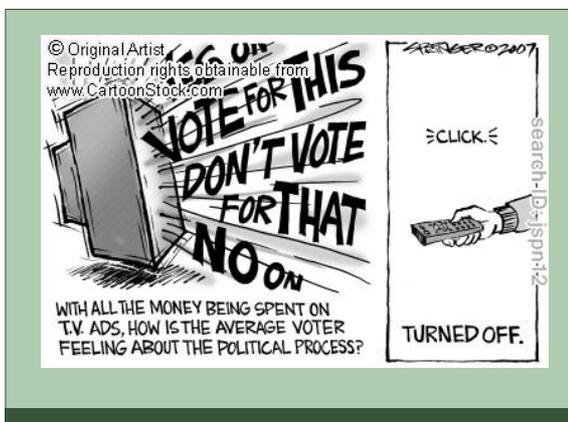


Party political broadcasts

- Language is a vital part of this process of selling, but not the only one. **Television** is seen as the most important part of the **political battleground**.
- Party political broadcasts and advertisements, paid for by the political parties, are often sophisticated media productions produced by well-known film directors.

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com

search-ID: gpm1-107

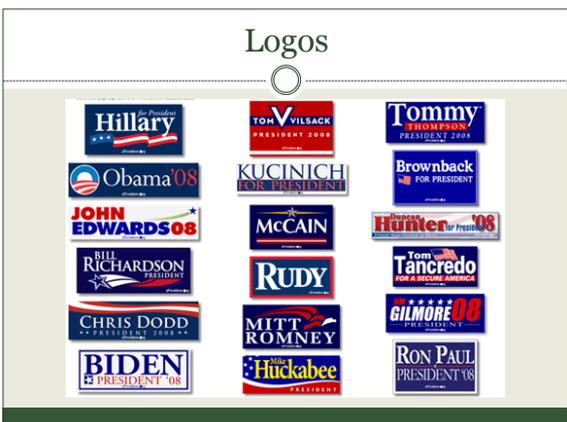


Logo and slogan (1)

- Many organizations and institutions (hospitals, the police, schools and colleges), and commercial companies selling products and services incorporate a **LOGO** and a **SLOGAN** into their corporate (= aziendale) identity.

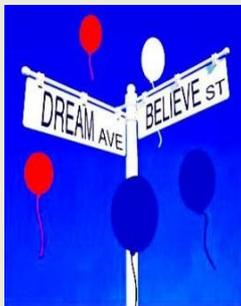
Logo and slogan (2)

- When the name of the institution, organization, or company is written it is accompanied by or replaced by a **logo** which symbolically represents an idea which is associated with the institution, organization or company; followed by a **slogan** which briefly and memorably suggests something about what the institution, organization, or company does.



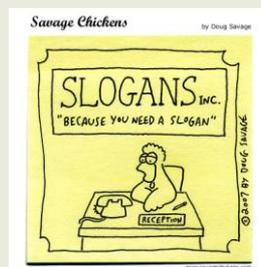
Slogans (1)

- SLOGANS ARE CONSTRUCTED TO CATCH THE ATTENTION OF READERS AND MAKE THEM THINK.
- They play with words and meanings.
- The words in the slogan aim at giving a **positive view** of the institution or organization's work.



Slogans (2)

- Slogans are devised to sell products and institutions: political parties use them as part of their persuasive package.
- SLOGANS APPEAR ON POSTERS, BROADCASTS AND ADVERTISEMENTS.



SLOGANS MUST BE BRIEF... (1)

BREVITY CAN BE ACHIEVED IN A NUMBER OF WAYS:

- 1) use of noun phrases: new hope, new life for Britain
- 2) using implicatures: the reader has to supply the full meaning
- 3) ellipsis: omitting words
- 4) particular use of pronouns (without any explicit reference)
- 5) ambiguous use of pronouns (what/who do they refer to?)

SLOGANS MUST BE BRIEF... (2)

- 6) use of modal verbs (Yes, we can!)
- 7) use of comparative forms (without an actual comparison: *better than what?* The reader has to supply the 'elliptical' answer)
- 8) use of superlatives
- 9) use of conjunctions: *because* connects things in a relation of cause and effect; *because* can be positioned between two clauses or at the beginning. When one part of the causal relationship is omitted, the reader has to supply it.

SLOGANS MUST BE BRIEF... (3)

- 10) verbs without an agent/ -ing form of a verb: we are not told explicitly who is doing the action
- 11) -ing form of a verb/ no aspect, the verb is timeless: -ing form implies continuity



Political posters (1)

- One of the most striking/spectacular ways in which political parties sell themselves during an election.
- Placed on advertising billboards. Billboard space is bought by political parties: it is almost impossible to ignore the huge signs that surround us in our everyday environment.



Political posters (2)

- Posters must **catch our attention** and hold it long enough for the message to be taken in.
- Posters must be **visually eye-catching** (attention-getting) and must not take too long to read.
- The amount of text must be limited, but it must be phrased to make an impact on the readers.



Political posters (3)

- Sometimes a series of posters is released (at the same time, or in sequences) so that readers become familiar with that format.
- They can rely solely upon words to get their message across.
- Election campaign posters often include **significant visual material** along with words.
- Sometimes leading political figures or party leaders are represented in posters.



Political posters (4)



- Party posters can represent a party leader in an impressive light, **promoting** him or her, or they can portray their opponents, in ways which **ridicule** them.
- Sometimes, even if the implied message is understood it is not approved of or agreed with.



The Punch and Judy show

Questions Unit 4 Winning elections: slogans and posters (6 cfu exam)

1. What is meant by 'negative' and 'positive' campaigning in elections?
2. What effect are slogans designed to produce and why are they so important?
3. Comment on the linguistic aspects used in the posters on pages 67,68,69.