

A Stylistics Analysis of Language of Advertisement of GSM Providers in Selected Nigerians newspapers

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Abstract: No doubt, language plays a key role in communication and it is of paramount importance in advertising. Advertising is a form of communication because it involves the sender, the message and the receiver. The advertiser uses persuasive and creative language to draw the attention of his audience. It is against this backdrop, that this research paper tends to depict the stylistics analysis of language of advertisement in selected Nigerian Newspapers. The paper aimed at bringing out the stylistics features of language as used in these selected Nigerian Newspapers. Part of the objectives was to examine the stylistic features of GSM network providers' newspapers advertisements. Data were collected through the primary and secondary sources. Systemic Functional Linguistics was employed as the theoretical framework of analysis. The paper discovered among other things that telecommunications providers commonly use devices such as graphology and foregrounding for emphasis and to attract the attention of the reader. On the whole, the study concludes that the strategies and devices by the GSM network providers through the Newspapers advertisement are very instrumental to the effectiveness of GSM network providers' advertising in Nigerian newspapers.

Introduction

Sapir (1921:8), Language is a purely human and noninstinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols.

Since communication is an act of transmitting or conveying ideas, thoughts or messages, it can be deduced that advertising is a form of communication. As language plays a key role in communication, so is language of paramount importance in advertising. Advertising is a form of communication because it involves the sender (advertiser), the message (the advertisement itself) and the receiver (the target audience). The advertiser uses persuasive and creative language to draw the attention of his audience.

Advertising is an audio or visual form of marketing communication that employs certain creative techniques or methods to 'promote' or 'sell' products and services. In advertising, the choice of language varieties influences how advertisements are structured and conveyed to the audience. Okpaleke (1992:21) in Ezejideaku&Ugwu (2010) opines that the language of advertising must be informative, instructive, distinctive, alluring and persuasive. Language has a strong influence over people and their behavior. The language of advertising is usually positive and it emphasizes why a product

stands out in comparison with another. Advertising is a form of communication and it persuades us with the aim of influencing our decision towards acquiring a particular product. The advertiser's choice of language to positively influence the attitude of the audience is very essential. Advertisement is communicated through various means such as: television, radio, magazines, e-mails, bill-boards, internet, flyers, posters, newspapers etc.

According to Leech (1966:25) in Ezejideaku&Ugwu (2010), the four characteristics of successful advertising are: attention value, readability, memorability and selling power. By attention value, this means that it must provoke the consumer's attention and curiosity. Readability of advertising means that the message must be easily grasped and assimilated. Memorability involves the features in advertising such as: brand names, slogans that make it to be memorable and easily remembered while selling power refer to grammatical features such as imperative clauses that make advertising saleable. From the foregoing, Advertising as a form of communication requires a lot of imagination, creativity and logical thinking for it to be successful and effective.

Statement of Research Problem

Communication is an integral part of the society and since advertising is a form of communication, the domain of advertising is a domain where diverse researches have been

carried out. Indeed, Kadry (2015) explored the creative concept and its role in advertising design and even a stylistic analysis of English online advertisements by telecommunication providers. Thus, the current research paper delves into the stylistics analysis of language of advertisement as used by GSM network providers in selected Nigerians newspapers. The focus is on the four major GSM network providers in Nigeria: Mtn, Glo and Airtel.

communication, GSM communication which is a modern form of communication has not only provided a platform of job opportunities for the citizens, but it has also made communication easier because one can communicate with others through the GSM communication system across distance barrier. In Nigeria, there are four major top GSM service operators which are: Mtn, Glo, 9Mobile and Airtel. These four major GSM network providers form the focus of the source of data.

Literature Review and Theoretical Classifications Advertising as a Form of Communication

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research paper is to carefully examine the language features of network providers in the process of advertising their products. To achieve this aim, this research work would be hinged upon the following objectives. (i) The choice of language used in advertising

- (ii) The effects of the choice on the target audience
- (iii) To examine the stylistic features of GSM network providers' newspapers advertisements.

Research Questions

- (i) What is the choice of language used in advertising?
- (ii) What are the effects of the choice on the target audience?
- (iii) What are the stylistic features of GSM network providers' newspapers advertisements?

Brief Historical Overview of GSM Network Providers in Nigeria

It is a common belief that every human society relies on some form of telecommunication. Communication defines a society because without communication, it would be impossible for any group of people to define their collective identities or make decisions. Telecommunication facilities in Nigeria were established in 1886 by the colonial administration. Telecommunication is the transmission of signs, signals, messages, words, writings, images and sounds or intelligence through electromagnetic systems. The history of Global System for Mobile Communication in Nigeria can be traced to the deregulation of the Telecommunication industry which paved way to the GSM revolution from the year 2001. Audile (2000) described the Global System for Mobile Communication as part of the evolution of wireless mobile telecommunication. The emergence of GSM revolution can be traced to the administration of former President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2001. It is also worthy of note that the advent of GSM communication in Nigeria has immensely improve the communication system and the rate of the development of the country. Unlike the previous times when traditional means of communication such as letter writing, town criers and so on are used for

Advertising is derived from the Latin word 'advertere' which means "to direct attention towards something". Advertising is a form of register in that it has its unique style, distinct language and mode of expression. According to Oxford dictionary, to advertise is to present or describe a product, service or event in the media in order to increase sales. Citing (Boove 1992:7) in Taflinger, "Advertising is the non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature about products, services or ideas by identified sponsors *through the various media*". From the above definitions, it can be construed or explained that advertising involves notifying, calling or drawing attention to or communicating products, services or ideas. Cook, Guy. (2008) affirms that advertising's creative use of language makes it a rich domain for language and discourse analysis. Relating this assertion to the given definitions of advertising, advertising and language are interwoven. Suffice it to say that advertising is a form of communication used to influence individual towards acquiring products and services. For any communicative event to take place there must be a language which could be verbal, written or non-verbal and the purpose of this language is to influence people and their behaviour. To support this fact, *Oyedokun- Alli in A Linguistic Exploration of Propaganda in Advertising in Nigeria (2013) asserts:*

Language is man's major means of communication and social intercourse. It is also used to influence the behavioural patterns of others". It is a natural instinct that advertising must be communicated in a language which is comfortable to the audience and influences them in a positive manner. (63)

Advertising often attempts to persuade potential customers to purchase or to consume a particular brand of product or service. According to Vestergaard and Schroder in Lapsanka (2006), communication involves six types of language function which are: expressive, directive, informational, contextual, poetic and interactional. The expressive function focuses on the addresser's feelings and wishes, directive influences the

addresser's actions, beliefs or emotions, informational function deals with meaning, contextual and poetic functions are also associated with meaning (poetic uses poetic devices) while the interactions function of language is mostly associated with advertising. This is so because it is used to express, terminate and maintain contact between the addresser and the addressee (Wejher, 2015).

Language has a powerful influence over people and their behaviour. The choice of language to convey messages with the intention of influencing people is paramount to advertising. Advertisement must catch the attention of the reader or audience and identify the product. To achieve this effect, uncommon, surprising, interesting and fascinating texts with 'catchy' phrases or slogans are created. **Classification**

of Advertising

Advertising according to (source: <http://www.managementstudyguide.com>) is classified into five parts which are: print, broadcast, outdoor, covert and public service advertising. In addition, advertising information or messages are communicated to the target audience through various media such as: print media, electronic media, and outdoor media and so on.

(i) Print advertising: this form of advertising is communicated through the print media which are physical printed materials such as newspapers, brochures, magazines and so on. (ii) Broadcast advertising makes use of electronic media such as television, radio or internet for advertisements.

(iii) Outdoor advertising makes use of outdoor media such as billboards, handbills, kiosks, tradeshows to advertise products and services. (iv) Covert advertising involves the inclusion of advertisements in a movie or TV serial

(v) Public service advertising is for public causes. Important social issues such as AIDS, political integrity, illiteracy, poverty and so on are the focus of public service advertising.

As stated previously, print media advertising uses physically printed media such as: newspapers, magazines, etc. for advertising. It would therefore be essential to note that the primary source of this study is the print media and due to time limitation, this study would focus on only one of the forms of print media which is the newspapers.

Stylistics: Conceptualization

Stylistics is the linguistic study of style in texts. Stylistics focuses on the function which a chosen style has fulfilled. Style may be regarded as a choice of linguistic means, as deviation from the norms of language use, as recurrent features of linguistic forms, and as comparisons. Style arises from the possibilities of choice among alternative forms. It is the study of the ways in which meaning is created through language in texts. Texts in this sense could be literary or non-literary, oral or written. Stylisticians use linguistic models, theories and frameworks as their analytical tools in order to describe and

explain how and why a text works as it does, and how we come from the words to their meaning (Norgaard et. al 2010:1). The goal of Stylistics is to describe the formal features of texts such as morphology, phonology, grammar, semantics, cohesion, coherence, foregrounding and so on and their functional significance for the interpretation or semantic relation of the text.

Quoting Crystal (1989) in Zyngier's Towards a Cultural Approach to Stylistics:

Style is seen as the (conscious or unconscious) selection of a Set of linguistic features from all the possibilities in a language. The effects these features convey can be understood only by intuitively sensing the choices that have been made... and it is usually enough simply to respond to the effect in this way. But there are often occasions when we have to develop a more analytical approach... Here... our intuition needs to be supplemented by a more objective account of style. It is this approach which is known as stylistics. (66)

From the above excerpt, it can be deduced that style arises from the possibility that, there are numerous forms from which one could choose. The focus of stylistics is to analyse these forms used in texts and how they contribute to the semantic relation of the text. Hence, style is primary to stylistics.

Simpson (2004:2) asserts that Stylistics is a method of textual interpretation in which primacy of place is assigned to language. Simpson further says, "to do stylistics is to do language, and specifically, to explore creativity in language use".

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that without language, stylistic analysis would be impossible. Stylistics focuses on the styles of language use in both literary and non-literary texts. The units and levels of language analysis form the basis of stylistic analysis. Furthermore, stylisticians help to establish and analyze various speaking and writing habits through stylistics. Through it, one learns why language is used the way it is in various situations. Style could be variation in language used in texts and this language variation as it occurs in texts is the focus of stylistics. **Levels of Stylistic Analysis**

Stylistic analysis attempts to provide a commentary which is objective and scientific, based on concrete quantifiable data and applied in a systematic way. When carrying out stylistic analysis, there are certain features that one would look out for. Texts whether written or spoken are organized through several distinct levels of language such as: phonology, graphology, lexico-semantics and grammatical. These levels of language form the basis of the stylistic analysis. The stylistic features to be highlighted and discussed are: graphology, phonology, grammar, semantics, lexis, cohesion, coherence, foregrounding etc. Below are the various levels of stylistic analysis which stylisticians aim at investigating when analyzing texts:

Graphology and Graphetics: Graphology is the study of a language's writing system and the formalized rules of spelling in texts while graphetics is the study of written or printed shapes in texts. Features such as punctuations, capitalizations, orthography, font style and size, spellings, pictures and images, emphatic devices such as boldening, underlining, italics, block letters, quotation marks and coloring are the basis of graphological analysis.

Phonology: This is the study of sound system of a language. Phonological analysis focuses on the analysis of sound patterns, utterance of different words and forming systemic use of sound in language in order to know the meaning, ideas, focuses, idiosyncratic behaviors in a text. Phonological features that are analyzed here are: alliteration, repetition, consonance, assonance and onomatopoeia.

Grammar: Grammar is classified into morphology and syntax. Hence, the grammatical features of texts are divided into morphological and syntactic features. Generally, grammatical features include, word classes, phrases, clauses and sentences. Morphological components are word formation processes such as: affixation, neologisms, compounding, back formation, blending, abbreviation, coinages and acronym and so on. Syntactic features include phrases, clauses, and sentences. The essence of this level of stylistic analysis is to put through an analysis to discover what the norm is and what is in some way deviant against the norm.

Lexico-Semantic Features: This is the combination of both lexical and semantic qualities of texts. Focus is on words that is lexical relations and their meanings according to the context – types of meaning and change in meaning. Lexical-Semantic features include: simile, metaphor, irony, synecdoche, metonymy, denotation, connotation, collocation, synonymy, antonyms, polysemy, homonymy, hyponymy, holography and homophony.

Reference: This is a relation of pronouns in texts used to achieve cohesion. An act by which a speaker or writer uses language to enable a listener or reader to identify something. In texts, reference is used to describe the functions of words like pronouns and determiners to designate a noun phrase they identify with in the immediate co-text that is the endophoric reference Wales (2011:360). Reference is subdivided into four parts which are: endophoric, exophoric, cataphoric and anaphoric which are depended upon the usage by the language users.

Foregrounding: This is an important concept in Stylistics that refers to the act of making certain features prominent in a text. Foregrounding are elements of a text which stand out or are deviant from or parallel to what one would expect or what is conventional (Norgaard, et al 2010:95). From the foregoing, it can be deduced that deviation and parallelism are the elements used to achieve deviation in texts. Citing Aklier and Hayat (2012), foregrounding involves a defamiliarisation,

deautomatisation or highlighting of some kind in the lexemes or syntax of some discourse. Hence, it is the central means of defamiliarisation which is an act of making unfamiliar what is familiar. The term foregrounding relates to linguistic devices on all levels of language that somehow stand out against the background of the text in which they occur (Norgaard et.al 2010:94). Deviation and parallelism are examples of foregrounding. Deviation refers to the movement away from a norm on all linguistic levels while parallelism is characterized by repetitive structures. Foregrounding enhances the meaning potentials of a text. Also, an object may be foregrounded through words or visually through features such as size or colour which can make it prominent in contrast to other representational elements.

Theoretical Framework: Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language that centers on the notion of language function. It is an interface between choices of words and how they are structured and the meaning made by those words. Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) accounts for the syntactic structure of language and places the function of language as central (what language does and how it does it). Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) looks at how language acts upon social context and how it is constrained by it. It explores how language is used in social contexts to achieve particular goals. Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) grew out of the work of JR Firth, a British linguist of the 30's, 40's and 50's but was later developed in the early sixties by M.A.K. Halliday who studied under him. SFL attempts to understand the manner by which language is utilized for various reasons and in various scenarios thus serving as a communicative motivation in the learning of language. A central notion of Systemic functional linguistics (SFL) is "stratification". This implies that language is analysed in terms of strata which are: context, semantics, lexicogrammar and phono-graphology. This study aims at analyzing the network providers' language of advertising based on the models of language stratification mentioned above. The context of the advertising language of network providers in this study is 'newspapers' and as the advertisements are presented in newspapers, the semantic, lexico-grammatical and phonographological components of the newspaper advertisements.

Procedures

Sampling is a way of selecting a number of things from a larger group for the purpose of getting invaluable information. For the purpose of this study, focus is on the advertising language of the four major network providers in Nigeria which are: Mtn, Glo, and Airtel. Three advertisements in Nigerian newspapers were chosen from each GSM service providers making a total amount of twelve research samples.

Data Presentations and Discussions Analysis and Discussions of Data 1



(mtn yafunyafun)

MTN YAFUN YAFUN TARIFF PLAN

YafunYafun offers a myriad of benefits to customers after registering and activating a new SIM card. The following are YafunYafun offers: 700% bonus on every recharge of N100 and above. 300% is used for data on all websites, whereas the remaining 400% is used for national voice calls and SMS.

Recharge Amount (₦)	Main Account (₦)	Total Bonus Value (700%) (₦)	All-Net Voice Bonus Value (₦)	Data Bonus Value (₦)	Data Bonus (MB)	Special Data Bonus on 1st Recharge of The Month (MB)
100	100	700	400	300	40mb	mb
200	200	1,400	800	600	80mb	mb
500	500	3,500	2,000	1,500	200mb	mb
1,000	1,000	7,000	4,000	3,000	400mb	1,000 mb
5,000	5,000	35,000	20,000	15,000	2,000 mb	5,000 mb



Analysis and Discussions of Data 2



(GLO BEREKETE)

GloBerekete is a prepaid tariff plan which rewards customers with amazing voice and data benefits every time they recharge their Glo lines with a minimum of N100. With Berekete, customers can satisfy their browsing and talking needs from the same recharge

(Mtn Beta Talk)

This advertisement was gotten from the mtn page.

MTN BETA TALK:

This is a package introduced that will enable it users to enjoy some benefit such as airtime bonus, data bonus and faster browsing etc. The image of a smiling woman beside the image of the first woman, MTN BETA TALK this is to emphasize the fact that the picture is an uploaded caption from social media, which enable the users to enjoy faster browsing on the MTN network as it was shown in the picture of the advertisement. The next things to be consider here, is declarative statement, Declarative statements make the assertions of truth, this means you can do amazing things with the MTN BETA TALK, this is to say that MTN in Nigeria widest network and without it one cannot enjoy the amazing things in term of calling and browsing.

Analysis and Discussions of Data 3

The first statement in figure 3 is 'Introducing GLO

BEREKETE package. The subscribers stand to enjoy not only call rate at 11k/sec but also free incoming calls while roaming and data for browsing.

Image

On figure 3, the image showing a Nigerian popular actress, the actress is dressed with GLO logo advert's intent to target the audience. The actress on the bill board displaying "GLO BEREKETE, this is to lay more emphasis and to catch the readers' attention, the word BEREKETE would attract audience and arouse them into taking further interest in the advert and its content.

Analysis and Discussions of Data 4



Glo Yakata

GloYakata plan is one of Glo's major mobile tariff plans. It is a prepaid plan, which rewards customers with amazing data and voice benefits every time they recharge their Glo lines. The plan allows customers to satisfy their browsing and talking needs from the same recharge. It offers customers both amazing voice and data bundles. GloYakata favours both existing and new customers. In other words, you do not have to buy a new Glo sim for you to enjoy the benefits of the Yakata plan.

BEREKETE' and it has some geographical features. GLO is written in block letters in the text and this is peculiar to this particular network provider because writing GLO in block letters gives it a bold and drawing attention of audience. With **GLO BEREKETE** call rates to both local and most international destinations would be enjoyed as low as 11k/sec. The table above is highlighted through the use of bullets to catch the readers' attentions that there are additional benefits for the

Image

FIGURE 5, there are set of image, the first one showing the image of two people smiling at phone because of the data bonus given for browsing, this is to attract the attention of the audience to persuade the audience to subscribe to GLO NETWORK most especially to migrate to GLO YAKATA.

Analysis and Discussions of Data 5



Airtel 8X Bundle.

Another amazing package that Airtel users neglect to fully enjoy the benefits of, is the Airtel 6X bundle. The Airtel 6X bundle lives up to its name because it is a bonus-on-recharge bundle that gives all Airtel active subscribers, eight (8) times the value of your recharge for data, SMS and calls to **ALL NETWORKS.**

Analysis and Discussions of Data



Airtel Unlimited

Airtel Nigeria has announced the introduction of its unlimited ultra-plans, a new value offering that is designed to ensure its home broadband customers do not run out of data while enjoying superior, uncapped speed and continuous broadband connectivity to the internet.

According to Airtel, the new offering, which is available only to routers and outdoor unit (ODU) customers, would offer telecom consumers the freedom to do more and become more productive without worrying about data speed reduction and utilization, and ensuring that customers never run out of data.

Results and Discussions

This research work discovers that images, celebrities' images graphological features such as: capitalizations or block letters, emboldening, colours, large fonts, orthographical modification are present in newspapers or online advertisements by GSM network providers. Also, lexical items such as: noun, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are also employed in the adverts though; verbs, adjectives and nouns appear to be quite frequent. In addition to that, the personal pronouns "you and your" are also used by GSM network providers in the advert. The adverts also contain slogans and logos of each network provider. These two features are parallel in the adverts in order to catch the readers' attention and to familiarize the readers with them in such a way that one cannot confuse the logo or slogan of MTN with that of GLO. There are also images of social media sites and handles on the adverts. This is to inform the readers about the social media sites where services are offered by the network.

The study also shows that telecommunications providers commonly use devices such as graphology and foregrounding for emphasis and to attract the attention of the reader; lexical devices such as – positive adjectives, nouns, adverbs, imperative verbs and pronouns to encourage the audience to be a part of the telecommunications provider. Adjectives are used to describe the positive and attractive aspects of the products, adverbs are used to create a sense of immediacy and personal pronouns are used to

address the audience more personally. Advertisers also use pictures, colours, celebrity endorsements to accredit the products, create attention in order to attract potential customers and maintain already existing customers thereby improving sales of the products. There are also diverse offers of incentives in form of instant, daily, weekly or monthly promotions, bonuses and discounts to attract new customers and maintain existing customers. These incentives help to encourage and motivate customers and keep them anticipating for more.

Finally, another feature that is common to the four GSM network providers' newspapers or online adverts is "terms and condition" which is always at the background. Most times, it is often discarded and ignored by the readers because the fonts may appear too tiny or it may even be abbreviated. If the readers fully comprehend the essence of this "terms and condition", they might be get discouraged and lose interest in the advertised product or service. Hence, it is always somewhat concealed in the advertisements. All the features mentioned above are employed in newspapers' and online advertisements by GSM network providers to attract potential customers and to motivate already existing customers to keep on patronizing them.

Conclusion

The researcher also discovers that persuasive language is a language of manipulation. GSM network providers tend to use this persuasive language to manipulate the audience's feelings and emotions thereby inducing them to accept the message and change their attitude towards what is being promoted, the advertisers have to create an imagined interpersonal relationship with the audience this is achieved through the use of reference, personal pronouns – your and you. To cap it up, the advertisers make conscious effort at creating an atmosphere of joy, happiness, celebration and a stress-free world of communication to give the impression that being a part of the advertised network take away worries, sadness, hopelessness, disappointments and frustrations occasioned by poor service delivery. GSM network providers therefore focus on the positive and fascinating aspects of their network to attract the audience and keep them optimistic with regards to the network and what they have to offer. Therefore, the strategies and devices discussed above are very instrumental to the effectiveness of GSM network providers' advertising in Nigerian newspapers.

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