

AN ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF INTERNET ADVERTISEMENT OF SOME SELECTED FACEBOOKS BLOGS

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Abstract

This research title “An analysis of the language of internet advertisement of some selected Facebook blogs” focus on examining the language used by internet advertisers in order to persuade prospective customers to patronize their products. The research makes use of stylistic (foregrounding) theory to examine five (5) internet advertisements collected from Bella naija and Linda Ikeja blogs. The findings of the study reveal a significant use of graphological, morphological, and syntactical deviations in the selected advertisement. The system of advertisement mostly deviate from the graphological, syntactic and stylistic usage in Laacaser drinks, Rice Krispies, GLO Nigeria, MTN Nigeria, and Nivea crème. Similarly, the advertisement agencies should adopt the use of internet more than any other advertisement media because is the medium that is faster and widely used by different individuals both old and young and with the rapid growth in technology.

Keywords: *Analysis, Language of internet, Advertisement, Facebook blogs and Nivea crème*

Introduction

Language is the most important tool through which various people from different linguistic background use their techniques to convey their different messages to the various categories of readers, listeners and audience (Kazemian & Hashemi, 2014). This happens usually when one intends to inform, entertain, advertised or persuaded his listeners, for instance, internet advertisers described advertisement as the science of arresting human intelligence long enough to get money from it. It is thus clear that advertising has played a decisive role in today’s business world. The issues of whether advertising language are attractive and persuasive or not has become the point of attention (African research review, 2011). However, the language of internet advertisement has been given much attention or consideration, and thus, my intention is to study and bring out the uniqueness of the language.

Advertising is the best way to communicate to the customers. Advertisement helps informs the customers about the brands available in the market and the variety of products useful to them. Advertisement is for everybody including kids, young and old. It is done using various media types, with different techniques

and methods most suited. Moreover, advertisements in mass media are fascinating, exciting and creative in this world of globalization. They are part of our day today's life. It plays a vital role for a company to promote its Sales and increases revenues.

Kress et al (2013) stated that, in the last decades, the market glut of advertising caused the increased intention and interest in linguistic aspect of advertising. Advertising has become a science. People began to describe, analyze the linguistic means and evaluate the language trying to find out the principles, create new kind of relationship between elements of language and improve the techniques, with the aim to be unique and maximize the effects at a blast. Furthermore, media of advertising is the central organ or channel through which consumers are communicated for the purpose of introduction, education and persuasion about the products in the market place. Kirkpatrick (2003) states that, advertising messages are to be directed at the target audience with maximum exposure and at minimum cost as a way of closing the gap between producers and consumers.

The style and language employed in this medium is so different that cannot be compared with any other language that is used in print media. It stands out with its peculiarities purpose and so, the need to analyse this brand of language with the hope that this will initiate and stimulate other works on the topic. Moreover, the competitions that exist in business sectors necessitate the use of advertising as a means of wooing customers. It is however observe that internet advertisement often make the use of slogan.

Statement of the Problem

The language used in internet advertisement contains elevated or sub-standard words that are hard to comprehend; the need to analyze internet advertisement is important for easy understanding. With the rapid growth in technology, the internet is becoming an important engine for consumers in finding most of their needs and style of language use differs from other forms of advertisement, which tends to be unreliable. Moreover, the language slogan used in internet advertising will be analysed from the linguistic aspect especially from the syntactic and semantic aspect and to describe the most commonly used linguistic devices and figure of speech in internet advertising. Nevertheless, language has an impact on internet, which is imperative to be explored for the users benefit.

Aim and Objectives

The aim and objectives of this research is exploring the language of internet advertisement. The work will rest on the impact, which the internet is making on language. The study will seek to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine various elevated and sub-standard words use in internet advertisement.
2. To investigate the reliability of the language of internet advertising.
3. To identify the language slogan used in internet advertisement.
4. To determine the impact which the language is making on internet users.

Research Question

1. What are the sub-standard words used in the internet advertisement?
2. How reliable is the language internet Advertisement?
3. What are the language slogans uses in internet advertisement?
4. What are the impacts of the language on the internet users?

Definition of Advertisement

Burke (2014:9) defines advertisement as: "A sales messages directed at a mass audience that seek through persuasion, to see goods, services, or ideas on behalf of the paying sponsor" a closer look at some of the items in this definition shows that the message of advertisement acts as a sales person. It must also do its best to convince the consumer of the advantages of the product or service described. The sales person can make a limited number of calls in a day but the advertisement sales messages can reach perhaps, million consumers through the advertising media. Nwokoye (1997:99) maintain that:

Advertisement is any form of non-personal communication through various media that is paid by an identified sponsor. Along with sales promotion, personal selling publicity relations it forms promotional or communication programme of the marketers.

Osho (2001:32) supports that, advertisement is a marketing tool whose sole aim is to build preferences for advertised brands or services. We can consider advertisement as any device, printed, oral, pictorial, which aims to sell anything that seller want to sold merchandized, service, and ideas. Richard (2006:380) further said that the cost of preparing and advertisement is born by the advertiser or the sponsor. The sponsor also bears the cost of inserting it in choosing media. Advertisement is then economic glue that holds most media industries together. It makes up more than half the space in most daily newspapers and consumers magazine. They are inserted into trait books and textbooks. The clutter web sites on the internet. They field our mail box and wall paper the busses we ride.

Roberts (1997:84) supported that, advertisement has become part of present day life. From everywhere around us, advertisement of diverse types attacks our privacy. In spite of it, there is an attractive power which is able to manipulate the consumer, and invisible boys of advertisement advocates, encourages, asks, announcement and deeply embeds in people mind.

Baldry (2000:29) further supports that, “advertisement is an inevitable part of our modern capitalist consumer society whose outstanding feature is its competitive fight”. He further states “it is everywhere around us: in newspaper, magazines, on billboards along the streets, on television, in radio, in means of public transport and any place the sponsor pays to distribute their message. Advertising is an inevitable part of our modern capitalist consumer society whose outstanding feature is its competitive fight. “...advertising is not some external curiosity which we examine, from which we are separate and superior, but something of which we are part, and which is part of us...”

Types of Advertisement

Advertisements are of different types categorized according to how they are advertised. According to Ibrahim (2000), there are seven different types of advertisement. These are:

1. The functional advertisement
2. The descriptive advertisement
3. The hard sell advertisement
4. The soft sell advertisement
5. The reminder advertisement
6. The reputation advertisement
7. The humorous advertisement

Effect of Advertisement

Osho (2000) states the effects of advertisement and they are as follows:

1. Advertisement sometimes provides false information, which makes consumers demand for goods and services.
2. Advertisement has effect on revenue generation of the radio. It makes the radio have a substantial fund generation base.
3. Advertisement has economic effect on the investment prospect of consumer.

Onah (2001) states that, goal of advertising is to communicate information about products, service or idea and thus to stimulate demand; which provides false impression, misinformation, and other obstacles to sales. However, advertisement is a marketing strategy that persuades a buy to purchase goods, which sometimes provide wrong information, expressive to pass through to have a substantial fund generation base on the channel communication.

Language of Internet Advertisement

According to Barthel (2003:34); the choice of language matters a lot in advertising in creating a relationship between the product and the meaning or the value it brings to its buyer. Furthermore, Arokoyo, T. A (2011:22) states that the functions of language are related to various advertisement objectives. Broadly speaking, an advertisement has at least one or two functions: information or persuading, though overlapping may often take place in one single piece. Moreover, in advertisement, language performs informative function as it informs the audience about new products and services. The language of advertisement also performs expressive function because the choice of words in advertisement is meant to affect the attitudes of the audience towards the advertised products and services.

Colson (2014:19) opines that the language of advertisement is informative, persuasive, and emotive and product claims. From this position, the language of advertising serves the function of informing the public about the availability of a product on the market. It is also a persuasive and emotive language meant to appeal to the minds of the consumers. Sharing the above view, Broom (2012:28) observes that... the language of advertising is audience oriented... this is because, notwithstanding the level of socialization and learning of the advertiser, he or she does not impose this on the listener, rather language that is transparent is used. In conclusion, the language of advertisement is an important means of presenting information to the society. It is the principal means used by human to communicate with one another.

Some Linguistic Means used in Advertising Language

Cook (2006:2-5) states that advertisement is identified as a type of discourse, because “it can tell us a good deal about our society and our own psychology. Cook (2006:2-5) further suggest that; the whole discourse of advertising could be analyzed, it means “the interaction of all elements that participate in advertising discourse: participant, function, substance, pictures, music, a society, language and a situation, other advertising and other discourse”. Although such analysis would be complete, it would be very difficult to elaborate it in such limited space. For that reason, in this work an analysis of language of internet advertising will be done from the linguistic aspect, especially syntax and semantic. So also the figurative expression used.

Syntax

The way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences. Merriam (2016). Quirk et al (2019:231) states that; ‘Syntax is a set of rules in a language. It dictates how words from different parts of speech are put together in order to convey a complete thought. It deals with sentence types and sentence structure’ Goddard (2008:125) states that; sentences are normally associated with four discourse functions: statement, question, directives, and exclamation. Syntax is the way in which linguistic elements such as words are put together to form a constituent such as phrases or clauses.

Semantic Aspect

Semantic deals with the study of meaning in language. It is the meaning or interpretation of a word, sentence, or other language form. Collins (2014:19) opines that semantic also means the meaning and interpretation of words, signs, and sentence structure. Gentry (2006:12) states that semantics largely determine our interpretations, it deals with the literal meaning or denotative meaning and the figurative meaning known as connotative meaning. However, semantic is the study of meaning and interpretation of a language.

Figurative Expression

Richard (2015:211) states that figurative meaning is the metaphorical, idiomatic, or ironic sense of a word or expression, in contrast to its literal meaning. Figurative language can be found in poetry where the writing appeals to the senses. It can do this by giving a word or a phrase a specific meaning that may be different from the literal definition. Oxford advanced dictionary (2006) states that figurative expression is a word or a phrase that is used in a way that is different from its usual meaning in order to create a particular mental image or effect. Some types of figurative language are:

a. Personification

Personification gives human characteristics to inanimate objects, animal, or ideas. For example ‘the sun greeted me this morning, the sun is laughing at me’.

b. Simile

A simile compares two things like a metaphor; but, a simile uses the words ‘like’ and ‘as’ for example: “clean as a whistle” (Myers 1997:127)

c. Hyperbole

A hyperbole is an outrageous exaggeration that emphasizes a point, and can be added to fiction to add color and depth to a character. Example: “you snore louder than a freight train”. (Richard 2015:15).

d. Metaphor

Metaphor is a statement that doesn’t make sense literally, like “time is a thief.” It only makes sense when the similarities between the two things become apparent or someone understands the connection between the two words. For example: “the world is my oyster”.

e. Onomatopoeia

This is the sound devices. It uses words that sound like their meaning, or mimic sounds. They add a level of fun and reality to writing. For example: “tick, tock, tick, tock, say the clock”.

f. Antithesis

Antithesis is a figure of speech, which uses the same or similar structure to express two opposite ideas so as to achieve the effects of emphasizing the meaning and the contrast. For example: “talk inside, Shouts outside, New 2006 fiesta”.

g. Alliteration

Alliteration is a sound device. It’s the repetition of the first consonant sounds in several words. Example: “big, bigger, biggest”.

h. Metonymy

A figure of speech that consists of the use of the name of one object or concept for that of another to which it is related, or of which it is a part, as ‘scepter’ for ‘sovereignty’ or ‘the bottle’ for ‘strong drink’. (Spencer 1994).

Theoretical Framework (Stylistic Foregrounding)

The theoretical framework adopted for the analysis of data in this research is foregrounding, a theory in stylistic.

Richard (2016:97) defines the term stylistic as a branch of applied linguistic concerned with the study of style in a text, especially (but not exclusively) in literary words. Stylistic is also called literary linguistics. According to Wales (2001:15) “the goal of most stylistic is not simply to describe the formal features of texts for their own sake, but in order to show their functional significance for the interpretation of the text; or in order to relate literary effects to linguistic ‘cause’ where these are felt to be relevant.”

Furthermore, Richard (2016:22) maintains that, style involves examination of grammar, lexis, semantics, syntax, phonological, properties and discursive devices in a given work. In this way, stylistics encompasses discourse analysis. Since a major part of stylistics has always been focused on studying literary texts, it is also known as literary linguistics or literary stylistics. Crystal and Davy (1996:22) states that one of the assumption held by proponents of stylistic criticism is that “Style is the way language is used with the aim of relating it to its artistic and aesthetic function. The importance here is that wherever a writer makes use of language, it is the function that determines the ‘style’.

Foregrounding

Simpson (2007:4) states that, foregrounding is germane to the field of stylistics and can be described as a “a form of textual patterning which is motivated for literary aesthetic purpose.” Simpson further stated that, foregrounding works in two ways: firstly, by distortion against a norm and secondly, by imposition regularly in grammar patterns over and above those designated by the language, which can be called repetition or parallelism. Halliday (1971:342) states that, foregrounding means giving unusual prominence to one element or property of a text. It refers to a process which brings something into the most central and prominent figure during a certain stretch of discourse. It can be achieved by deviation