



## Assessment of the Use of English Language in Advertising and Marketing Strategies for Economic Development

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### Abstract

This paper examines the role of language as a powerful tool of communication among the people. It establishes that through language human beings are able to share ideas, opinions, views, emotion, feelings with one another. In advertisement to be precise, language serves as the medium of processing, transferring, advertising and marketing one's products or services. For people to know what anybody produces or sells, in order to patronize them, you need to advertise and market your goods and these are done through the tool of language, particularly through English, which is widely spoken in the global village. This paper investigates the importance of English language in advertisement utterances and slogans of varied products and services on billboards, newspapers, posters, radio and television adverts. Thirty (30) advertisement utterances/ slogans in English drawn by advertising agencies for different products are randomly selected. The study adopts simple random sampling techniques. Findings reveal that the impacts of English in advertising and marketing of goods and services is enormous.

**Keywords:** Assessment, English Language, Advertising, Marketing and Strategic

### Introduction

The use of language in executing advertisement and marketing goals cannot be achieved without a recourse to language. The slogan, "advertisement is the magic of sales," is incomplete without language either in the form of expressions or gestures or other paralinguistic mediums such as codes, symbols, diagrams and postal. The necessity of creating awareness for products and services reiterates the non-negotiable place of language in the circle of production. Research has shown that the best of any product and service may suffer seeing the light of the day without advertisement, and the poorest of any goods or service may spread like covid-19 all by the potency of advertisement. Hence, the marketing unit of every company must be stuffed with people who have nose for language and can use language to adequately prosecute this agenda. In other words, advertisers must be wizards of language use and wordsmiths in their own respect. English language has played a significant role in marketing of goods and services across the globe. The use of English in coding and encoding powerful messages in the form of anecdote, tale, catch phrases and teasers capable of triggering and appealing to the consumer's sense of taste and hunger cannot be waxed with dull and incoherent lingo. That is why advertising expressions are rife with homophone, coinage, slang, onomatopoeia and rhetoric. According to Bogdanova (2010), code-switching, loanwords and hybrids are used in advertisements. Such words are carefully coded so they can win the mind and appeal to the sense of taste of the target consumers. Therefore, at some point, language rules may be violated; truth may be trivialized, while code-mixing becomes the spice of life all in a bid to win attention for a goods or service. In Nigeria most importantly, where English language is an official code, the use of English-medium advertisements has a great appropriateness both to the advertisers and consumers. This assumption is predicated on the fact that English as channel is widely spoken in Nigeria, where it is adopted as Lingua Franca apart from being the country's official language.

### Objective of the Study

The primary purpose behind this study is to examine the use of English in Advertisement strategies of goods and services for economic development. In other words, the study investigates the employment of English so far in constructing expressions, statements and imperatives for the purpose of persuading the target consumers to buy goods and services. The observation of this role would further help the advertising agencies to scale up their creativity in the use of English, and this will by no means enhance the economic development of nation, Nigeria

in great extent. The primary focus of this study is to investigate the extent at which English Language has been adopted as a major tool in advertising, particularly in awareness creation for products and services on billboards, postal, in the newspapers, on radio and in TV and through handbills. In this study, we have collated several advertising utterances of English expression used by advertising agencies. These expressions were assessed with linguistic apparatus to find out what is linguistic in them and how such linguistic properties in the stretches of expression are capable of delivering the goods, that is, to spur the consumers to buying or purchasing goods and services as intended by the advertisers. In other words, the study is geared towards finding how effective linguistic properties in an advertising slogan is and to what extent would such enhance sales and ultimately contribute to the economic development of the nation. In other words, the economic growth through sales of goods and services highly hinges on how well advertising agencies can adopt English language to prosecute awareness; create publicity and win consumers' willingness to buy goods and services. If the job of the advertising agency will be strengthened and better attitudinal changes will occur on the part of product consumers that will move the economy to the height sublime, the craftsmanship of creating captivating advert slogans and taste triggers should become part of those working in advertising agencies. It is then the purpose of paying heavily on advertisement by the producers will be realized and the economic growth will cease to be a mirage.

### Scope of the Study

This study is delimited to radio, TV, billboard, poster, handbill and newspaper advertisements.

### Review of Literature

Many researchers have viewed the language English as a potent tool for advertising business. This is not unconnected with the fact that the language has gained a wide status across the world. It has functioned in different capacities and different human endeavours. It is a language of law, of legislature, of commerce and of classroom instruction. In the face of multilingual challenge, English language is the escape root, Nigeria as a case study. For advertisement of any reasonable degree to take place among people that adopt English language as their official code or Lingual Franca for business purposes, the use of English in encoding advertisements is sacrosanct. As opined by Modric (2016), English language is advantageous to creating advert attitudes of English speakers. Looking at the current world order, particularly that English is used across the globe as the world official code, advertising industry will find English as useful as sailors will find water to navigate the nautical world. *Alli and Ademola* (2019), as a corollary to the above, viewed English as a needed linguistic tool to convey messages to the consumers. They observed both linguistic and non-linguistic elements that would enhance advertisement of goods and services (Binta & Galata). Bogdanova (2010) supported the claim of *Alli and Ademola* (2019) when he opined that English language was a language widely and profusely used in advertising. A critical at the constituents of advertisement slogans language units like imperative and adjective are used to persuade and, perhaps, lure the consumers into buying a given product. These English lexes are employed to encourage the public to take actions towards buying a product. Hashim (2010) discussed the primary role of English in advertising in the book entitled, *The Handbook of World English* by Routledge. The book makes particular references to language choice and code-switching in advertisement. Musa and Basanova (2020) revealed the exigency of language in advertising by discussing the concepts and phenomenon of the language game in advertising in their book *Pragmatic Aspect of Language Game in Advertising*. This further strengthens the important landmark of use of English in the contemporary business of Advertising as a professional field. To put it succinctly, English language is a key factor in advertisement, most especially that the larger chunk of educated consumers domiciles in the urban where they can be "captured" to go for a product through posters, billboards, banners, handbills etc. most of which are written in English language. This is made easier because English language has occupied a wider matrix in the linguistic sphere of the world of today. Observation so far has shown that the use of English as a prominent medium of advertisement cannot be taken with a paltry assumption. It occupies a centre page in the discourse of advertising as a profession (Xueping, L. (2020).

### Methodology

This study is an assessment of use of English language in Advertisement and Marketing strategies for economic development. The population of this study consist of Advertisement utterances and slogans of varied products and services on billboards, newspapers, posters, from radio and television. For the sample size, thirty (30) advertisement utterances/slogan in English drawn by advertising agencies for different products were randomly selected for this study. The study adopted simple random sampling techniques. This technique was necessitated by the fact that there are so many adverts in the public domain written by different advertising agencies and they are drawn for the purpose of winning the consumers' attention to buy or purchase those goods and services. These utterances were put to linguistic analysis to observe the import of English in the drawing or crafting of those utterances/messages by the advertisers and how the linguistic properties in the stretch of utterances help in

achieving the goal of winning the consumers' minds and ultimately increase sale and marketing of products for economic development.

### Data Collection

The slogans and advertisement utterances used in this study were harvested from those in the public domain of internet sources and from products available to consumers in sale shops (Customs Buttons Manufacturer, 2016; Burns, 2023).

1. Original taste – less sugar (Coca-Cola)
2. Energy of future champions (Activ -GO Nestle Milo)
3. Bring out the inviting flavor (Chicken flavor tasty cubes)
4. More Bubbles (Magic Detergent)
5. Your "Rite" Solution (Magna pen)
6. Xtra Strong; xtra life; xtra yield (Dangote 3x Cement)
7. Ideas for life (Panasonic)
8. Go Further! (Ford)
9. Let's Go Places (Toyota)
10. The Ultimate Driving Machine (BMW).
11. Just Do It (NIKE)
12. Connecting People (Nokia)
13. make.believe (Sony)
14. It could be you (Lotto)
15. "All the news that's fit to print" (The New York Times)
16. Got milk? (California milk Processor Board).
17. Think Different (Apple).
18. "It's Finger Lickin' Good" (KFC)
19. "Expect More; Pay Less" (Target)
20. Advancement through Technology (Audi).
21. "There some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's Mastercard." (Mastercard).
22. Have a Break, Have a Kit Kat" (Kit Kat).
23. "Be the First to Know" (CNN).
24. It's Everywhere You Want to Be." (Visa).
25. "Let's Make Things Better"(Phillips)
26. "Don't Leave Home Without It" (American Express).
27. "The Milk Chocolate Melt in Your Mouth and not in Your Hand" (M&M).
28. "Don't Be Evil" (Google).
29. "Hello Moto" (Motorola).
30. "One thing leads to Another" (Nescafe).

### Data analysis

Data collected for this study were put to linguistic assessment. This assessment ranged from lexical standpoint to syntactic characteristics. The utterances were also viewed from functional point of view. One, to find out whether it is an imperative, i.e. a command or interrogative, i.e. a question. Not only that, the study found out whether a message was coded as a declarative statement or an exclamation, i.e. an expression of emotion. The second functional perspective used in the analysis was to find out the aesthetic quality or value of a given advertorial utterance. That is, is it a pun; a metaphor; a personification; an innuendo, a rhetoric or oxymoron. The literariness in a given utterance goes ahead to determine how the consumers' attention will or will not be captured for the intended purpose.

### Lexical Analysis

There is no doubt that the major aim of advertisement is to enhance the sale of goods and services. As such advertisers are fond of putting words of English language together to promote the quality of any goods and services for increase in sale. Most often, such words are catchy phrases with qualifiers as *adjectives* and *nouns*.

### Use of Adjective of Quality

For example: (1) Original taste – less sugar (Coca-Cola)

This advertisement is aimed at telling the public that the reduction of sugar in Coca-Cola (with the use of adjective “less”) does not reduce its real taste (with the use of adjective “original”). So, the consumers should not reduce their consumption rate or intake. This message was well worded with the use of these two adjectives.

(2). More Bubbles (Magic Detergent)

This advert has the comparative adjective “more” to trigger the consumer’s passion to purchase this because sometimes ago there was less bubble in the detergent. So, now there is more bubble when you use to wash.

(3) Xtra Strong; xtra life; xtra yield (Dangote 3x Cement)

This use of extra three times is deliberate. It is aimed at etching in the mind of the consumers that brand of Dangote Cement has special quality. One, “strength”, two “life” and three “yield.” The way the adjective “xtra” is written and used triggers the sense of assurance of its quality, not minding whether it evokes personification or not.

### Use of Coinage

Many adverts drawn in English language make use of coinage. The advertiser is deliberate in using such coined or loan words to foreground. That is to create an effect through the expression. All in a bid to be different and win more consumer of the given product or service. This will increase the sale and marketing of that product. Consider these advertorials.

1. “It’s Finger Lickin’ Good” (KFC)

2. “Hello Moto” (Motorola).

In the above examples, Licking is shortened to Lickin’ while Motorola is reduced to “Moto”.

### Use of Catchy Imperatives

At some point, advertiser agents love to address the consumers to do something in the form of advert utterance. The command is soft appeal to sell the product. Several examples are highlighted below:

1. Bring out the inviting flavor (Chicken flavor tasty cubes)

2. Go Further! (Ford)

3. Let’s Go Places (Toyota)

4. Just Do It (NIKE)

5. Have a Break, Have a Kit Kat” (Kit Kat).

6. “Don’t Leave Home Without It” (American Express).

These advertisements that are aimed at spurring the consumer to buy goods and services concerned. The subtle command used in examples 1 and 2 above “Go” and “Let’s Go” shows that the adverts are for drivers or motorists. They are being invited to buy Ford and Toyota vehicular products. In example 1 above, the house wives are the targets of the advert. Before their soup can bring out the inviting or intended aroma, they have to include the Chicken flavor tasty cubes. In example 5, the advert calls on consumer to take snacks from Kit Kat. “Just Do it” is a popular advert slogan from NIKE. The appeal is an imperative to wear the brand of Nike sport wear.

### Syntactic Characteristic of Advertisements

The language level above the phrase is the clause, which has the structure of the sentence, particularly when it is a main clause which structurally has the same element as the simple sentence. Looking at most of the samples of advertising expressions, many of them have this structure. In great many cases, the advertisers use these expressions to ask questions, and so, they are interrogatives or questions. Some functions as declarative statements while some are used to express emotions. All in a bid to catch consumers’ whims and fancy.

### Use of Declaratives.

When declarative statements are used, the aim is to tell a fact or disclose the truth. Advertisers knowing this have taken to the use of declarative statements in their advertorials to create the feeling that what they are saying about this product is simply dependable. Because they are meant to be sharp, direct and pungent, adverts in the form of statements may have the subject subsumed like subjects of imperative (command) sentences (See examples 1, 4 and 5). At another time, advertiser may replace the product’s name with another word. This is found in example 2.

1. Connecting People (Nokia)

2. Energy of future champions (Activ -GO Nestle Milo)

3. It could be you (Lotto)

4. make.believe (Sony)

5. Advancement through Technology (Audi).

6. “There some things money can’t buy. For everything else, there’s Mastercard.”

(Mastercard).

7. “One thing leads to Another” (Nescafe).

### **Use of Interrogative**

There is also the use of interrogation in English utterances of advertisers. Although we do not have many of such in the examples sampled for this study. However, one sample in the study is:

Got milk? (California milk Processor Board).

The question means to demand from the consumers if they have milk to take. The full expression is: Have you got milk?

### **Use of Rhetoric**

Rhetoric is used to persuade and indirectly lure people to action. This device is common in political statements. Advertisers also use rhetoric to attract, compel, and stimulate intended consumers to buy a product or service. Under rhetoric, we have cases where advertisement utterances will fall under pun, simile, metaphor, personification or parallelism.

### **Use of Parallelism and Paradox**

“Expect More; Pay Less” (Target)

It is contradictory to pay less and expect more. However, it is an advertorial technic to lure the consumer to buy the product.

### **Use of Pun**

“The Milk Chocolate Melt in Your Mouth and not in Your Hand” (M&M).

Here, the advertiser decided to repeat ‘M’ in many of the words in the utterance.

### **Findings:**

In this study, the following findings were made:

1. To boost Nigerian economy through advertising as a key sector in mass media, proficiency in English by advertising agencies is sacrosanct.
2. Producers should embark on English- medium advertisement since English Language is a major language of communication in Nigeria.
3. Advert utterances should be crafted with creativity in other to achieve its goal of winning the minds of the target consumers.
4. The way to make the indigenous or home-made good and services sell and thereby improve Nigerian economy is through advertisement that is worth its sort.

### **Conclusion:**

The study so far has confirmed the indispensability of English language in the business of advertising and marketing of product. It is like one will find it virtually impossible to break ground in any business today without advertisements. The question is how is the advert worded? How pungent is the utterance? Does it drive the intended consumer to putting their hands in their pockets to buy?. This study has revealed that linguistic properties and tools should be not be far from the fingertips of advertising agents because a product can fly when it falls in the hand of a skillful advertiser. However, the best product and service will fail in the hand of an inept, newbie and inexperienced advertisers particularly those who lack language capacity most of English. The economy development through sales and services of any nation is gauged or measured by how much they are sold or how much they are patronized which the work of advertisement. Hence, advertising agent should have the grip of English language to boost sales and services in the nation and thereby increase the economic development of the same.

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