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ABSTRACT

Advertisement is a highly technical language that lures the consumer to look for a product or service. This study examines the meaningfulness and adequacy of the language used by advertisers of three products that are mostly consumed by the youths namely; cigarettes, alcoholic and soft drinks. The study adopts the Grice's cooperative principle and used its four maxims in ascertaining the meaningfulness or other-wise of the adverts. The study found out that cigarettes and alcohol advertisers rarely focus on the chemical content of the product but rather use ambiguous and deceptive language to deceive and confuse the consumers. They also hide vital information from consumers. The soft drink advertisers on the contrary give the consumer limited information about the chemical content of their products. The study suggests that adequate measures should be put in place by regulatory authorities to ensure that advertisers feed the public with meaningful and adequate information.

KEYWORD: Advertisement, Semantics, Cooperative Principle, Promotional Mix, Cigarette Smokers

INTRODUCTION

Language is intricately related to human essence as it is an essential tool used in conducting the most mundane transactions in our daily lives. Language is a means of communication used in all human endeavour. In advertisement, language is used in a more technical manner to persuade the buyer not just to buy a product or service but to stand up almost immediately to search for such product. In line with this, Kotler (2003) observed that effective communication is needed in marketing/advertisement because of the geographical and psychological distance that separate intermediaries (whole sellers and retailers) and customers.

The language of advertising presents even a peculiar situation as it is usually rich and complex (Ciaramita, Murdock & Plachouras, 2008). According to Emodi (2011), 'advertising may be described as the science of arresting the human intelligence long enough to get money from it... precision and effectiveness in advertising depend on the careful use of words. Words are used to convey meaning exactly and vividly on the audience, even though according to Abonyi (2004), meaning is elusive.

Thus effective use of language entails using words that convey appropriate meaning (both those directly intended and others remotely intended) to the audience. This brings us to the fact that in communication, meaning is essential. Meaning of what is said in an advert is so essential that it can make or mar the actual product or services being promoted. Advertisement is generally central to the creation and maintenance of goodwill among customers. This can only be achieved via appropriate use of words (persuasive in nature) that are heavily packed with meaningful utterances/words that appeal to the target population.

Meaning or semantics is crucial in advertisement, because, the choice of diction involves exceptional skills. These skills according to Emodi (2011) will in no small measure help in finding the right word combination for a given situation. Wrong lexical choices will either inaccurately mar the purpose of communication or at best vaguely or partially convey the intended meaning. The author emphasized the fact

that the most important factor in communication is the attainment of a point of understanding of the meaning inherent in the advert.

The semantics/meaning of what is said or written is even more important in advertisement when the youth is the target population /audience. Youths are the productive group in any society and sometimes most vulnerable due to their actions and reactions. Ensuring that appropriate words that convey the exact meaning in advertisement is necessary to ensure that these group of people are not misdirected.

However, it has been reported that some adverts are either ambiguous or elective. This occurs according to Nath & Gardner (2014) when an advertisement is deceptive and when the information imparted is misleading and not performing its act. When an advert is deceptive or ambiguous, the consumer may get the wrong meaning and this may result to negative consequences. In this study, various advertisement from the television and billboards were sampled and analyzed to ascertain the various meaning(s) being conveyed to the youth. Grice (1975) theory of conversational implicature was used in the analysis of data collected.

Specifically the study focused on the semantics or the meaning inherent in the language used in the advertisement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Advertising is described as the science of arresting human intelligence (Emodi, 2011) as advertisers usually bombard their public with information aimed at turning the attention of onlookers towards a product, service or idea (Nitro Professional, 2015). For advertising to be effective, (Karlsson, 2007), advertisers should be aware of how the message may be met by customers. Advertisers can do this according to Karlsson (2007) by understanding the different behavioural levels that customers pass through and more importantly the meaning inherent in the message that gets to the consumer. In other words, in the view of Emodi (2011), the most important factor in communication is the attainment of a point of understanding of the meaning by both the sender and the receiver.

Furthermore, Lapsanska (2006; p.11) affirms:

Advertising has become the part and parcel of present day life. From everywhere around us, advertisements of diverse types attack our privacy. In spite of it, there is an attractive power, which is able to manipulate the consumer, an invisible voice of advertising advocates, encourages, asks, announces and deeply embeds into peoples' minds.

Thus, advertising/advertisement is able to achieve this because the "voice" is communicating to the 'hearers' with the intention that the hearers understand and act accordingly. This is largely due to the fact that according to Saeed (2007, p. 204), "knowing that their listeners will flesh out their utterances with inferences give speakers the freedom to imply something rather than state it. The implication of the speaker's utterance is that the hearer will understand what he said and this according to Saeed is in line with what Grice called conversational implicature.

'Conversational implicature' is a term coined by Paul Grice. Grice (1975) proposed an approach to the speaker's and hearers cooperative use of inference. Explaining this, Saeed (2007) stated that in speaker's/hearer's platform, there seems to be enough regularity in the inference-forming behaviour of listeners

for speakers to exploit this by implying something, rather than stating it. According to Saeed, Grice argued that this predictability of inference forming could be explained by postulating a cooperative principle – a kind of tacit agreement by speakers and listeners to cooperate in communication.

In like manner, Agbedo, Uchendu & Alyebo (2011), opined thus;

Grices... theory of conversation starts with a sharp distinction between what someone says and what someone ‘implicate’ by uttering a sentence. What someone says is determine by the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered and contextual processes of disambiguation and reference fixing, what he implicates is associated with the existence to some rational principles and maxims governing conversation. What is said has been widely identified with the literal content of the utterance; what is implicated, the implicature, with the non-literal, what it is (intentionally) communicated, but not said by the speaker.

In furtherance of their explanation, Agbedo, et al went ahead to declare that according to Grice, the “calculation ‘ of conversational implicatures is grounded on a common knowledge of what the speaker said, the linguistic and extra linguistic context of the utterance background information and the consideration of the ‘cooperative principle’. Grice’s cooperative principle according to Saeed (2007) has four maxims which includes; the maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner.

The *quantity maxim* requires interlocutors to make their contribution as informative as required and not more or less as is required. That of quality emphasizes the truthfulness of the interlocutors, while the maxim of relevance requires that the interlocutors, stay on the topic. Maxim of manner states that comments should be direct, clear and to the point (Agbado et al, 2011). Using vague or ambiguous language when speaking should be avoided.

Advertising/advertisements are direct effort by producer aimed at reaching the consumers. Through this medium, the producer talks directly to the consumers or the would be consumers via persuasive language. The language/persuasions should be clear and unambiguous. Since Grice’s maxims are capable of detecting deception, un-clear and ambiguous language in statements, the theory of cooperative principles with the accompanying maxims has been adopted for this study. It has also been used in the analysis of data collected for this study.

THEORETICAL STUDIES

Advertisement is one of the powerful promotional mixes that introduce a product(s), sustain the product in the market, remind the consumers of the existence of such product(s) and announces any change in the quality and places where the product(s) and services could be bought. All these cannot be accomplished without effective and appropriate use of language that is meaningful to both the interlocutors which in this instance are the producers (advertisers) and the consumers. The meaning inherent in what is said and or the semantics is thus an integral part of advertisement(s).

Appropriate use of word is essential in advertisement. In addition to this, Emodi (2011) observes that precision and effectiveness in advertising depend on the careful use of words. This is due largely to the fact that words are used to convey meaning exactly and vividly to the audience. Meaning on its own is a subject-matter of semantics which Pecheux, (1982) defines as;

... a branch of linguistics. But ... we discover this branch of linguistics has some remarkable extensions, towards 'logic' on one hand, and also towards something described ('as'), the scientific theory of propaganda which thus, via politics, involves what was classically called rhetoric... logic, that is evidently, the 'theory of knowledge' as a theory of the 'laws of thought' and its apparent counterpart, 'rhetoric' as a reflection on the techniques of argument, the manipulation of beliefs, bluff and deceit. Thus 'rhetoric' is the inevitable supplement counterbalancing 'logic'...

Though the above definition may look technical, and broad, however the fact that semantics combines logic and rhetoric as its essential elements cannot be disputed. The inherent argument structure in an utterance which can deliberately or otherwise be manipulated by the speaker which may be aimed at convincing the audience in line with his belief or outright deceit cannot be underestimated in any semantic analysis of utterance/statement.

In a more precise manner, Saeed (2007) states that semantics is the study of meaning communicated via language. It is the study of the meanings of words and sentences. Based on this, Emodi (2011) averred that in advertising just like in other areas where meaning of utterances, statements or words are necessary, it is always necessary to look at the meaning of words.

Basically according to Emodi, (2011);

... Meaning is of two kinds - denotative and communicative meaning. Denotative meaning is the literal or common dictionary meaning while connotative is the evaluative, inferred or emotional meaning. The denotations will be roughly the same for people who use the same dictionary but words have different connotations for different people. Here meanings are influenced by the context in which they are used by the relationship between the sender and the receiver and by other variables.

Emodi concludes by stating that the denotational meaning of word is the explicit or literal meaning while the connotation is the meaning with which it is associated. Advertisement in addition to express meaning, uses words with extension, which often connotes strength, reliability, perfection notability and other such qualities.

At this juncture, it should be stated that, according to Nath & Gordner (2014), advertising is charged with the responsibility of disseminating information about a product to its current and potential consumers. Advertising brings about social persuasion through this dissemination. Advertising is thus charged with the dissemination of information about products to its wide audience.

According to *Nitro Professional* (2015),

The term, 'advertising' is derived from the Latin word 'advert' means, to turn' the attention. Advertising aims to turn the attention of onlooker towards a product service or idea. Advertising is known as the activity attracting public attention to a product or business as by paid announcement in the print, broadcast or electronic media (p.5).

In our contemporary societies, advertisements are everywhere; on television, internet, radio, bill boards and even on the empty coffee mug. Advertising has thus successfully transcended from the most unwanted

commercial medium to one that people now pay attention to. This is because advertising in the view of *Sage publications* (2005, p.1),

Advertising is central to the creation and maintenance of the wider meaning ... and ... have powerful significance for non-consumers as well as consumers. For many consumers branded items carry a promise of quality and value. But the symbolic meaning the brands carry cannot be discounted as a factor in its appeal.

However, Aurelija (2011, p.46) remarks that, "... theorists and various researchers agree about the impact commercials have on individuals, ..." the question why advertising is so effective even when the message receivers are aware of the deliberate intentions of these communicative items, still has no clear answer. People continue to reach for products even when it is clear that what is said about the advert is misleading and deceptive. In what seems to be an answer to the above question, Saeed (2007) states that the process of creating and interpreting symbols, sometimes called signification, is far wider than language and in linguistic palace, the study of linguistic meaning is a part of the general study of the use of sign systems, and the general study called semiotics.

Though this study focuses more on the meaning of utterance, statements or the words used in advertisements, it analyzes both the linguistic and other features attached to adverts which may distort the meaning of the advert and extend the meaning even further. The study basically focus on the meaning therein in advertisements especially those that target the youth.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Many scholars have carried out studies in the area of advertisement, and linguistic analysis of different aspects of human communication. In relation to the linguistic appraisal of the language of advertisement, Emodi (2011) carried out a study with the caption. "A semantic analysis of the language of advertising". The major objective of the study according to Emodi (2011) is to take,

A close examination ... of the various word manipulations and arrangements, the choice of words – word order, denotative and connotative meanings of advertisement slots, and other deviations fore grounded on established English language code. The idea is to find out how writers create awareness and to provide fuller understanding and appreciation of texture, meaning and comprehension of the language employed (p. 317).

Emodi did not directly state the method that was used in the analysis of data used in the study. However, it can be inferred that the researcher used descriptive approach in the analysis of data. Descriptive approach was used in the analysis of this advert,

Bournvita is *delicious refreshing vitality* giving food drink ideal for the whole family.
Bournvita hot or cold, can be drunk any time of the day.

In the above advert Emodi observes that the language of advertisement is connotative and in this instance used a lot of adjectives. The advertiser wants to use these adjectives to drive home in the mind of the consumer that bournvita is nutritious and could be taken by the whole family, hot or cold ant time, any day.

The researcher randomly selected adverts that were analyzed from different sources and at the end found out that advertisers use adjectives, coinage of words, metaphors, puns, and other figurative expressions.

The researcher concludes that, they try to persuade the consumer to buy the product via appropriate language use.

The above study is significant and relevant to the present study as it focused on the semantic analyses of language of advert. However, the study failed to pin-point the target group for the study and did not equally use a specific semantic theory to analyze the data collected and used in the study. The present study not only focuses on a particular group of people (youth) but also focuses on adverts based on products that are consumed by youth (cigarette and alcohol). This study also uses Grice's theory of cooperative principle in the analysis of adverts collected for the study.

In another study, Aurelya (2011) looked at, "persuasive visuals: Body language and semantic relationship patterns in press commercials". According to the author, the objective of the research is to identify the communicative patterns in advertising that are background for prevailing persuasive strategies. In other words, the study aims at finding out semantic patterns of body language that function as communicative strategies in visual discourse.

Semiotic analysis was applied in the study while the data (advertisements) collected for the study came from the press magazines, professional and entertainment publications. The data used in the study were collected within five years. The study analyzed many adverts with attendant pictorial evidence and the findings as stated by Aurlija (2011) reveal,

... That body in visual discourse functions simultaneously as means of meaning expression (semantics) and as an instrument of persuasion. These overlaps make the commercials so simple in transmission of the message meaning and so effective in offering unnecessary benefits and pleasures. (P. 81).

The researcher thus states, based on the above that the main conclusion from the study is that visual discourse of commercials is reduced to the instrument of persuasion body figure simultaneously generate the meaning of the message and inscribe certain values.

The study is good and uses semiotic analysis in the analysis of data unlike the present study which uses a purely semantic theory in the analyses of its data.

"Language use in Advertising: An analysis of linguistic features across readership domains" was the caption of another study that was conducted by Kalven (2001). The main objective of this study was to analyze the linguistic features and or how language use in advertisement affects the reader at the cognitive level. This is because according to Kalven (2001, P.2), "commercial verbiage is designed to entice the reader "read on" to explore the product or service being offered in greater detail". This is because every linguistic element of an advertisement's text is now chosen based on intricate psycholinguistic model of human language processing.

The study uses a descriptive approach in the analysis of data. The study makes use of adverts from two magazines, namely *Entertainer Weekly* and *AAPG Explorer*. The *Entertainer Weekly* is a magazine targeted at the public at large while *AAPG Explorer* is a trade journal published by American Association of petroleum Geologists. The researcher observes that not only are two readership domains represented in the study, the two distinct classes of periodicals, one magazine designed for professionals and the other for a much broader general viewing audience.

The findings of the study reveal that the advertisements in the two areas both make use of subjective claims which cannot be quantitatively supported. Also the attention span of a magazine's readers is central in *Entertainment Weekly* as words that capture the attention of readers are used more unlike in *AAPG Explorer* where specific jargon and technical terminologies were used more as the target audience belong to the same profession. The study concludes that the discrepancies between the two advertisement corpuses seem to be representative of the dialect of each magazine's readership. Also the shared knowledge and expected language competence of each advertisement's audience contributed heavily to its overall construction, lending a unique insight into human perception.

The study is relevant to the present study as it focused on the language of advertisement. However, it differs in methodology and target population. While the present study focuses on the youth, Kalven's study focused on the general public.

From the review so far it is evident that studies have been carried out in language of advertisement and more importantly, the linguistic analysis of advertisement. However, to the best of the knowledge of the present researcher, none has focused on the youth or how these adverts affects the youth. The present study focuses on the semantics of adverts statements, this is with a view to finding out the effect these adverts have on the youths and how they comply with Grice's theory.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Under this heading, the analysis of data collected for the purpose of this study and the discussions are handed thus;

(i) Adverts from cigarette producers

(ii) Adverts from alcoholic drink producers.

Adverts displayed and analyzed here came from either the billboards, products labels or packets. The adverts and or information are of two types; adverts meant to promote the products by the producers and those mandated by the regulatory agencies.

ADVERTS FROM CIGARETTE PRODUCERS/ ADVERTISERS

- A i) Benson & Hedges: Special filter
The Benson & Hedges Hallmark
Is your Guarantee of the
Gold standard in smoking pleasure
- ii) The Federal Ministry
Of Health warns that
Smokers are liable
to die young.
- iii) Tar: 10mg
Nicotine: 1.0mg
Carbon monoxide: 10mg.
- iV) 18 and Above only

What people say is greatly determined by the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered and contextual processes of disambiguation and reference fixing and what he implicates is associated with the existence to some rational principles and maxims governing conversation (Agbedo, Uchendu & Alyebo, 2011). An advertiser or a producer is not only speaking to a person but to a heterogeneous audience and this makes the task of planning what to put down and the process of disambiguation even more cumbersome.

In advert samples A (i) to A (iv), the producer/advertiser is communicating to the public information that will propel the general public/target groups to buy the product on one side and equally informing them of the health risks involved in taking the product on the other hand. But the questions now are, to what extent they ensured that the processes of reference fixing and disambiguation were pursued. Also, to what extent did they comply with the maxims therein in Grice's cooperative principle?

In advert samples A (i) Benson & Hedges producer or advertiser is either introducing the product to the would be consumer, or reminding the longtime customer that the cigarette is still the best choice. The questions now are, how does the advertisers relate this in unambiguous language and even if this was presented in unambiguous language, does it comply with the cooperative principle of Grice?

Simply put, Grice's four maxims state that a speaker should, try to make his contribution truthful (maxim of quality), make his contribution informative but not more than required (maxim of quantity), make the contribution relevant (maxim of relevance) as well as avoiding ambiguity, and obscurity, just as he tries to be brief and orderly (maxim of manner) (Saeed, 2007).

In A (i), the advertiser announces to the public that his product has special filter. "In relation to the maxim of quality and quantity, the proposition has neither made any truthful contribution nor has he provided adequate information to the consumer. An average smoker in the Nigerian context may not even know the particular place where the filter is located in the cigarette and even if he knows, the producer/advertiser has not adequately given him enough information as he was not told what is being filtered. This is because, if the smoker/consumer knows that among what come out of the so called filter is what is contained in A (iii), the consumer may have a re-think". The information is neither relevant nor unambiguous as he hid vital information from the public.

The advertiser continued towing the part of ambiguity in A (ii) when he affirmed;

The Federal Ministry
Of Health warns that
Smokers are liable
To die young.

The advertiser is equally economical with the truth here. This is because it is not just the federal ministry of health that knows that smoking is dangerous and may lead to death, even though the advertiser knows this. It could equally be said that the information provided all aimed at deceiving the consumer. The advertisement would have been more apt if it stated,

Smokers are liable
To die young.

But even if it read as stated above, the proposition would also be ambiguous as the statement may mean two things to the average smoker. These include;

- ❖ People who smoke will continue looking young even at old age till death.
- ❖ People who smoke die while still young.

The first statement is even supported with pictorial evidence if it is in a bill board as the person captured in the advert looked energetic and strong. It is also worthy of note that the font size used for this warning is always small and to worsen the situation, an average smoker, based on our findings, do not buy in packets and may never read the warning. At the bill boards, this warning is written in small font/character that one cannot read it at a distance or while in motion.

A (iii) states the chemical compositions/contents of the product. All the smokers interviewed and even the whole sellers and retailers did not know what ‘tar’ is, nor did they know that the “carbon monoxide” in cigarette is the same, as the one that comes out of exhaust pipe (of generators and vehicles) which has killed many. In relation to the maxim of quantity and quality, the producers did not want to tell the consumer the truth hence the chemical content is written in small fonts and hidden on the little spine of the packet and never seen on the bill board. The advertiser did not also make the meaning of the chemical explicit to the consumers.

The last one A (iv), did not contain the necessary vocabulary that can provide the consumer with the required information. The statement is equally irrelevant and ambiguous and was just coined to deceive the consumer. Thus, the warning that only adults (18 years and above) should smoke cigarette cannot be easily seen by the consumer. Even the way it is written make it even look more ambiguous. The proposition, 18 and above only “may mean,

- ❖ That smokers can smoke 18 sticks of cigarette and above
- ❖ That persons who are 18 years and above are free to smoke.

This particular statement failed in the area of the maxim of quantity and more importantly, the whole statement is ambiguous. It can thus be said that the advertisement placed by Benson & Hedges failed in terms of complying with Grice’s four maxims/cooperative principles.

- B (i) St. Moritz
Master of Menthol
- (ii) St Moritz
Choose the freshest
Menthol Blend
- (iii) Aspen
Simply the Best
Finest Virginia Blend
- (iv) Dorchester
International

Advertisement is all about providing information about a particular product to the consumer. In B (i) and (ii) above the producer of St Moritz cigarette informs the consumer that they are particularly known for including ‘menthol’ in their product. However, the producers may not have provided the consumer adequate information about the product. He may have provided information about one of the active ingredients contained in the cigarette but has hidden the other vital (negative) information on the little spine of the cigarette packet. Here, the fact that the same cigarette that contains ‘menthol’, also contains some dangerous substances like, ‘tar’ nicotine and carbon monoxide are hidden. The advert is therefore lacking in quality and quantity.

The information that it contains mentol is needed because why cigarette smokers take the product is not because of the mentol, so it can be said that the information, though half truth, is not all that relevant. “choose the freshest mentol Blend’ is ambiguous and does not give the consumer the clear view of what is being said. The consumer may not be able to understand what was blended with mentol and what makes this cigarette ‘freshest’.

In B (iii), the producers of Aspen cigarette announces to the consumer that the product is ... simply the best, finest Virginia Blend’. In this statement, the advertiser did not provide the consumer with any vital information about the product. The above proposition/statement has not given the consumer any reason why the product is fine or the best. Even the phrase, “Virginia Blend” is unnecessary here as most of the average smokers may not have even known much about the city ‘Virginia’ and there is no connection between Virginia” and anything that was blended as it relate to the cigarette.

ADVERTS FROM ALCOHOLIC AND SOFT DRINK PRODUCERS

- A
- (i) Turbo king
Great New look
Some Bold Taste
... for real men
 - (ii) Gulder
Ebube Dike
Same Gulder Taste
 - (iii) Life
Maka Oganiru
Mmanyia Odogwu
Life... for progress
 - (iv) Guinness
Think Black
Drink Black
Drink Responsibly (18*)

In 3.2 A (i) Advert above, the advertiser seems to be introducing a re-package “Turbo king”, an alcoholic drink to the consumer. As the information states that what is contained in the bottle is still “Same Bold Taste” and that it was produced only for “real men”, it could be said that the information is neither qualitatively nor quantitatively adequate to provide the consumer with the needed information about the nutritional or other values of the drink. In actual sense, ‘taste’ cannot be ‘bold’ and telling the consumers especially the adolescents that the drink is for ‘real men’ will even induce them to take the drink rather than avoid it.

The information provided in this advert cannot also be relevant as it has not said anything that educates both the would be consumers and even the existing. For the information to be relevant, it should have stated that the drink is meant for men that are 18 years and above in addition to providing the nutritional values of the drink. The advert is obscure, brief and un-orderly and as such lacking in the area Grice tagged, “the maxim of manner.

In 3.2 A (ii) and (iii), the advertisers of ‘Gulder’ and ‘Life’ beer use code-switching to lure the consumer. In A (ii) Gulder is likened to a companion to brave men (ebube dike). Life beer is introduced as being made for;

Maka Oganiru	For progress
Mmanyà Odogwu	Drink for the masquerade (strong and brave)
Life ... for Progress	

“Life” was thus made for the drinkers progress and just like the advertisers of ‘Turbo king’ is said to be, for real men as it is only the strong and brave, men in Igbo land that are referred to as ‘Odogwu’. Odogwu is equally a powerful masquerade in Igbo land, thus any body that is referred to as ‘Odogwu’ must be brave. The statement is not information (lack quality) as there is no link between an alcoholic drink and somebody’s progress. The advertisers of Gulder and life beers have just used code – switching to give incoherent information about the product. The adverts could not as it contains inadequate information which is obscure and irrelevant to the consumers.

The advert in 3.2 A (iv) is even more obscure as it says nothing meaningful apart from the fact that the drink is ‘black’ – the colour. The advertiser of Guinness tells the consumer to “think black’ and “Drink Black” which absolutely has not provided the consumer any information other than the one he sees by looking at the drink either in the bottle or poured out. The advice that the consumer should drink responsibly means nothing to an average consumer as it has not stated the quantity that should be taken. Also, it is written in small character/font and in a colour that could not be easily read even at close range. As it relates to Grace’s two maxims of quality and quantity, the advert is found wanting. Also the information is irrelevant and ambiguous.

- B (i) Malta Guinness
Bursting with Goodness
Packed with Vitamins
Energy and Vitality
- (ii) Amstel Malt
Enriched with Pure
Vitamins and Minerals
Low Sugar
- (iii) Put a smile
In every moment
Maltina Classic
Multi - Vitamin enriched

In 3,2 B(i), the advertiser gives the consumer information about the product. These include the fact that the product contains a lot of “Goodness” which are vitamins and carbohydrate (energy) and thus full of life (vitality). The statement is quantitative and qualitative as it relatively introduced the product with adequate information. The information provided is relevant and unambiguous.

The second advert 3.2 B (ii) introduces Amstel malt in clear and unambiguous terms. It states that the product is rich with vitamins and minerals and concluded by informing the consumer that though the product contains sugar, the content is relatively low. This informs the consumer about the inclusion of little quantity of sugar in the product. This advert could be said to be clear, direct and unambiguous and thus meets all the maxims put forward by Grice.

In the last advertisement, the advertiser started by informing the consumers that Multina is needed at every occasion. At the last part of the advert, the consumer is at least told that Multina contains vitamins. This advert also can be said to contain vital information. This advertisement is both qualitative and quantitative as the information contained in it is relevant and unambiguous.

From the analysis given thus far, it can be seen that cigarette advertisers do not most of the time give any hint of the “goodness” derivable from the consumption of the products. Rather than give the consumers information that relates to the products, information is either hidden or may just end up playing on the intelligence of the smokers by confusing them. This is also true of alcohol drink producers. They also try to entice the consumers with statements that have nothing to do with the product. Also, they use ambiguous statements to deceive the consumers.

The soft drink advertiser however gave useful hints about their products based on the data analyzed in this study, though the information provided were incomplete and nebulous. They give vital information in relation to the nutritional values of the various products.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Advertisement is a marketing tool used to give appropriate information that can compel the consumers and more importantly the youths to buy a product. The youths are vulnerable and as such, information intended for them should be meaningful in order to achieve the needed objective. The study which hinged on meaning (semantics) and language of advertisement, focused on three products, namely; cigarette, alcohol drinks and soft drinks advertisement and found out that;

- i. Advertisement on cigarettes do not give adequate information about the different brands to the youths/consumers as most of what is said says nothing about the product.
- ii. There is no vital information to show the youths that the chemical composition of the products is deadly. The available information is put in ambiguous language.
- iii. Equally advertisers of alcohol drinks do not provide the youths/consumers relevant information about the chemical composition of the products. Even the regulation that states the amount, age of drinkers are given in ambiguous language.
- iv. Soft drinks advertisers however give relatively more adequate information about the products as they state some of the vital contents of the products. They however state this with much exaggeration.

CONCLUSION

Advertisement is an effective way of communicating to the consumer's vital information about a product(s) via a clear and unambiguous language. The language should not be deceptive, especially since the target populations of these products are the youths. However, as can be seen from the findings of the study, both the advertisers of cigarettes and alcoholic drinks feed the youths and other consumers with inadequate information. They confuse and deceive the youths by providing them with little or no information about the chemical contents of the products. They also deceive the people by using a font size that is hard to read and most often hidden.

Most youths and other consumers of cigarette products would cease to take the product if they knew that it contains dangerous chemicals like 'tar' and 'carbon monoxide' which are deadly chemicals. The present research recommend that regulatory authorities should wake up and rise up to their responsibilities by ensuring that advertisers of products give valid, accurate and meaningful information to the youths/consumers.

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