

## **IMPROVING ADVERTISING THROUGH INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The issue of advertising in any indigenous language is one area that will help to create awareness and in doing so the advertiser markets his/her goods and services. The writer looks at advertising through indigenous language by looking at advert as a form of communication, language as an essential tool in advertising, language of advertising and other means through which the advertiser can use to advertise his/her goods and services and at the end achieve the desired goal.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Advertising is used for different purposes. It takes has various definitions. Many scholars have defined advertising in many ways to suit many purposes and circumstances. Advertiser makes a creative use of the system and appropriate terms, words, phrases and pictures for good conveyance of information.

#### **Advert as a Form of Communication**

Njoku and Ewuzie (2011:131) state that “communication is a scientific way and system of expressing ideas from the communicator to the communicant. Otagburuagu (1999) believes that all normal human beings communicate through language. Jain (2001) describes communication as the process by which we exchange meanings, facts, ideas, opinions or emotions with other people. Ngonebu (2005) defines communication as any transmission of information from one person to another while Ijeoma (1988) defines it as an interaction by means of signs and symbols. Omu (1978) in Nwosu (2003:3) implies that the phenomenon of advertising which is so clear to modern media owners and marketers has been present in African markets and is still there.

Advert is a form of human communication intended to promote a product or service, to inform and influence public opinion, to gain political support, to advance a particular cause, or to elicit the sale of a product or service, to inform and influence public opinion. Human system of communication involves transmitting information, ideas and attitude from one person to another by a variety of means such as language (spoken, written or gesture). Advertising involves this and also much of the complexities of human beings in general. Advert which is a form of communication is principally concerned with, the goal of achieving commonness, or becoming in tune with public needs. The advert copy is delivered to its intended audience through the various media that is newspapers, magazines, television, radio, billboard and direct mail. Good advertising is as a result of good communication, and good communication depends on, common fields of experience of the people involved. Advert strategy should begin with a careful examination of the language, norms and value of the audience, and how they relate. Advertising is distinguished from other forms of

communication, in that the contemporary advertiser, pays the medium to deliver the message. For this payment, the advertiser has the opportunity to control the message within legal constraints.

Advertising contents, both as a medium of communication in itself as well as terms of its use by the mass media has become more sophisticated. The aesthetics have changed for the better, and more artistic layouts, better photography and far more intelligent advert copy now prevails. Composing an advert copy is an important form of communication which involves the combination of verbal and pictorial symbols, equally as signature in terms of numbers of readers, listeners or viewers. So much consideration has to be given to the grammar while composing an advert copy.

### **Language as an Essential Tool in Advertising**

Prasad (2009) views language as spoken or written system by means of which human beings communicate. Akudolu (2004) explains that language is a complex human phenomenon that cannot be adequately defined. Essien (1990) says that language is one of man's greatest, most complex and most enigmatic possessions. While Anagbogu, Mba and Eme (2010) define language as a mass devices by human beings for communicating ideas, techniques, emotions, desires etc through complex vocal or written symbols. According to Nwosu (1990), mass media are basically characterized by the fact that they reach many people at the same time. Idoony (2011) says that in developing countries the use of the old mass media is still widespread, although there is a growing trend towards the application of all media. Ofoegbu (2008) refers to language as a means by which human beings alone communicate. Language can be defined as the use of words, gestures and music applicable with the ultimate aim of achieving communication. Since the task of conviction and information is a very difficult task, a lot of creativity, intuition, ingenuity, and mastery of the language are needed. That is why the advertiser should be knowledgeable in the language he is using because the way he uses words would engender the desired connotations, association and psychological overtones.

The use of indigenous language will help the people to internalize the message being passed across and it will also help to improve any language and culture involved as observed in China where they use their native language in advertising their product and also in their daily activities. We should build our indigenous language into our technology in the same way the Japanese and Chinese are doing. Emenanjo (1988) opines that "no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality, all learning is more meaningful more creative when conducted in the mother tongue." Language is the raw material of the advertiser and greatest weapon because with it he makes new, unique, special and exciting everyday events, objects and experiences. His existence, originates, subsists and depends on his ability to make every word tell.

### **Language of Advertising**

Advertising is based on the communication of ideas that give rise to meaning, directed towards the audience. Language, as an essential tool is derived from everyday vocabulary of the society. It is laconic, concise, tight, loaded and vigorous. The advertiser makes creative use of syntax and appropriate terms, words and phrases, pictures and actions, to achieve the desired goal. If one accepts the view that the purpose of news is to inform the masses, one

would well agree that, for news to achieve this purpose, it should have a style and structure. This style and structure enable quick and effective communication delivery. However, as we have a style that is attributed to an individual, so do we have a style that is inherent to different media. This is shown in the way they present news to the public. This necessitates accuracy, brevity and coherence.

Every language including English has rules which govern its usage. However many media have metamorphosed the language into several forms and spellings. We now have different forms of English, which has rendered a very serious problem to reader and thereby discouraging many from reading newspapers. Another source inherent language problem with the print media is the improper co-ordination of phrases and words in their advertising messages. The effectiveness of an advert, rest in the powerful presentation of its message through a language medium. It should be achieved through indigenous language which everybody whether literate or not will understand.

### **Means of Communication**

Over the years, scholars and communication practitioners have determined what qualify as mass media by looking at the source, channel, direction or the nature of information that is transmitted. The media, especially in modern times, have gripped the world by the ears and pushed it to new frontiers of information sharing and usage. Media role are classified under news, commentary, public relations, education and entertainment. Because the media are purveyors of news and information, they are the major determinant of what make news. Therefore, the ability to communicate ideas and the skill to communicate such ideas to the general audience in an effective way is the hallmark of a good communicator which should better be done in indigenous language. The mass media communication is different from other forms of communication because of its peculiar mechanical device and the presumed level of impact on the society. All mass media through which advertisement is carried out can be grouped into class namely: electronic media and print media.

The breakthrough in technology worldwide has means of communication via electronic means. The means of communication offers a very high premium in the advertising profession. The channels of electronic media of advert are radio, television, picture, audio visual recordings that appeal to the sense of sight. The print media have a substantial reality that impact definite character to them. They also can make deliberate comparisons and choices, a factor that makes them adaptable to a reader's mood and pace. The printed words have lasting value. The popular among these are newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, direct mail, billboards or any technical device that carries a message to the masses by appealing to their sense of sight only. The Nigerian print media pay attention to the impressionistic embellishment of their reports, essays, articles, in this present study, the invigilator is mainly concerned with advert, despite opinion and propaganda, a good deal of advert is written in reported speech, and is informative and factual in nature. Communication from the journalist and the general public can only be effective with the use of correct language at a particular time. This is to say that with the use of language, they select and bring to the waiting crowd a constant flow of detailed information involving the society.

### **Benefits of Advertising in Indigenous Language**

English is the official language of the country but not all Nigerians are proficient in the use of this language. That is why indigenous language should be use and it should attract the attention of the audience or reader especially now the masses are looking for something different. Here is example in igbo language:

Lee ọgwụ na – agwo onye agwo tara ọ laa kpam kpam.

Ifo eze anaghi ewuzi onye ọbula eze na – enye nsogbu  
bịa goro ọgwu anyị ka nsogbu eze gi laa ozigbo ozigbo .

Dọkinta Ọzoigbondu abiala inye ndị niile afo na – enye  
nsogbu ọgwụ mkpocha na nzacha, bịa goro ka nsogbu afo  
gị buru ihe akuko.

English is Nigeria's the language of government, business, commerce, education, the mass media, literature and much internal, as well as, external communication. Against this multi-lingual backgrounds stated above, it is not surprising, that most advertisements are done in English language. Following Bambgose's observation, that the English the language is the language of education and mass media, it could be deduced that most of the printed advertisement, are targeted on those that have attained some level of proficiency in the English language reading and comprehension. Such adverts would be meaningless to the uneducated, or illiterate who may have needs of those things advertised but may not get them due to gap in communication. Language of advertisement should be fine, clearer and effective, aimed at producing the desires on the target audience. According to crystal (1971) speakers desire to retain their native language minor or major because language is a weapon and symbols of ethnic identity.

### **CONCLUSION**

Good advertising is as a result of good communication and good communication depends on common fields of experience of the people involved. Advertising in the indigenous language is a sure means of making available products or packages made known to every class in the society thereby making it household products or packages. It is also a way of improving the indigenous language and save it from becoming endangered. Advertisers should be aware of importance of promoting indigenous language and apply it in their advert.

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