PRAGMATIC FEATURES OF SELECTED CONSUMER PRODUCTS’ ADVERTISEMENTS IN NIGERIAN PRINT MEDIA

BY

AGBA, OREVAOGHENE
Matric no.: 16PBC01390

A DISSERTATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND GENERAL STUDIES, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY, OTA, OGUN STATE

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTERS’ (M. A.) IN ENGLISH

MAY, 2018
DECLARATION

I, Agba Orevaoghene, declare that this research titled “Pragmatic Features of Selected Consumer Products’ Advertisements in Nigerian Print Media” was undertaken by me under the supervision of Professor Rotimi Taiwo in the Department of Languages and General Studies, Covenant University. The research project has not been presented, either wholly or partly for any degree elsewhere before. The sources of scholarly information and all the opinions of others used in this project have been duly acknowledged.

…………………………..                      

Agba, Orevaoghene
CERTIFICATION

I certify that this research was carried out by Orevaoghene Agba of the Department of Languages and General Studies, Covenant University. I approve this research as adequate in scope and quality for the partial fulfillment of the award of Masters’ of Art degree in English Language, Covenant University.

PROF. ROTIMI TAIWO
Supervisor

DR. TUESDAY OWOEYE
Head of department

External examiner

Signature & Date

Signature & Date

Signature & Date
DEDICATION

To the memory of my late father, Mr. S. U. Agba Ojile, who always believed in my ability to be successful academically and encouraged me to begin this journey, but sadly could not live to see this programme completed.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My profound gratitude goes to the Almighty God whose grace has kept and given me the strength and enablement to complete this programme. Also, I wish to express my indebtedness to my admirable supervisor and mentor, Prof. Rotimi Taiwo, for his patience, time, understanding, words of advice, and constant motivation. Additionally, I want to appreciate the Head of Department of languages, Dr. S. T. Owoeye and my superb lecturers, Prof. C. Awonuga, Prof. C. Ogbulogo, Prof. T. Abioye, Prof. I. Chiluwa, Prof. Arua E. Arua (University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana), Dr. E. Uba and Dr. E. Ajiboye who have also been sources of motivation for academic excellence.

I also want to express my unreserved gratitude to my late dad, Mr. S. U. Agba who was always concerned about my welfare in Covenant University. God bless his soul. To my mom, Mrs. C. O. Agba, I am deeply grateful to her for the constant affection and support she gave all through this programme. I also wish to appreciate my sister, Uyoyoghene Ogundipe, who encouraged me both in exemplary ways to be up and doing. I am thankful to my brothers, Ajiri, Ewoma and Zino for their care and encouragement. I also wish to acknowledge the efforts of my brother in-love, Mr. Olakunle Ogundipe, for his concern for my academic progress, for always being available to assist in possible ways, and for never failing to give good answers to my endless questions.

Also worthy of mention are my wonderful friends, Vivian O. Enomate, Augustina A. Omonogie, Maryjane Ataiwrehe, Ejiro Onogure, Sunday I., and Isaac ‘Black’ U. for supporting my academic progress. Also, to Oreoluwa ‘Oreo Adeyummie’ A., I am grateful for being ever supportive; Mrs. Anakpoh ‘Lady Gaga’ for her love; Mr. I. A. Oyewole for his constant prayers; and Dr. E. J. Amodu (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria) for making his M.A. thesis and PhD dissertation available without delay when requested for, and for his support ever since then. To Oluwasegunota Ajayi, my virtual friend, I am thankful for helping out with some Yoruba – English translations and explanations. I appreciate my wonderful course mate, Mrs. A. Feyisitan, for being a fabulous friend and also her cousin, Mr. Olaitan Omoya for his hospitality in Canaan land towards us especially during examination periods. I also wish to acknowledge the rest of my course mates, Mrs. E. I. Ugoji, Miss Sharon Offiong and Miss Adeola Muritala, for making this programme an interesting one. God bless you all.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title Page</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>xii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>xiii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study 1
1.2 Statement of the research problem 4
1.3 Research Questions 5
1.4 Aim and Objectives of Study 5
1.5 Scope of the Study 6
1.6 Justification of Research 7
1.7 Organisation of Work 7
1.8 Definition of Terms 8
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Pragmatics: An Overview 10

2.2 Context and Pragmatics 13

2.3 Deixis 15

   2.3.1 Person/Personal Deixis 17

   2.3.2 Spatial/Place Deixis 17

   2.3.3 Temporal/Time Deixis 17

   2.3.4 Discourse (or Text) Deixis 18

   2.3.5 Empathetic Deixis 18

   2.3.6 Social Deixis 18

2.4 Context and Indexical Meaning 18

2.5 Presupposition 21

   2.5.1 Existential Presupposition 23

   2.5.2 Factive Presupposition 23

   2.5.3 Lexical Presupposition 23

   2.5.4 Structural Presupposition 23

   2.5.5 Non-Factive Presupposition 23

   2.5.6 Counterfactive Presupposition 23

2.6 Advertising 24

   2.6.1 Importance of Advertising 25

   2.6.2 Types of Advertisements 29

2.7 Language Use in Advertising 31

   2.7.1 Context and Advertisements in Nigeria 34
2.7.2 Deixis and Advertisements in Nigeria 34
2.7.3 Presupposition and the Language of Advertising 35
2.8 Review of Empirical Studies on Advertising 36

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/ METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework 42

3.1.1 Speech Acts Theory 42

3.1.1.1 Austin’s Speech Act Theory 43
3.1.1.2 Searle’s Speech Acts Theory 46

3.1.3 Felicity Conditions 46

3.1.3.1 Preparatory Conditions 48
3.1.3.2 Condition for Execution 48
3.1.3.3 Sincerity Condition 48

3.1.4 Speech Acts and Advertising in Nigeria 49

3.2 Grice’s Maxims of Conversational Cooperation 49

3.2.1 Implicature 52

3.2.2 Cooperative Principles and Advertisements in Nigeria 53

3.3 Research Design 55

3.4 Sources and Procedure for Data Collection 55

3.5 Procedure for Data Analysis 56

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Speech Acts 57
4.1.1 Representative Acts

4.1.1.1 Assertions/claims

4.1.1.2 Boasting/Bragging

4.1.1.3 Describing

4.1.2 Directive Acts

4.1.3 Commissive Acts

4.1.3.1 Promises/dares

4.1.3.2 Offers

4.1.4 Expressive Acts

4.1.5 Multiple Speech Acts

4.1.6 Indirect Speech Acts

4.2 Cooperative Principles

4.2.1 Maxim of Quantity

4.2.2 Maxim of Manner

4.2.3 Maxim of Quality and Relevance

4.2.4 Implicature

4.3 Presupposition and Deixis

4.3.1 Presupposition

4.3.1.1 Lexical Presuppositions

4.3.1.2 Factive and Counterfactive Presuppositions

4.3.1.3 Existential Presuppositions
4.3.1 Deixis

4.3.1.1 First Person Deixis

4.3.1.2 Second Person Deixis

4.3.2.2 Temporal/time Deixis

4.4 Context

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

5.2 Findings

5.3 Conclusion

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

5.5 Recommendations

5.6 Limitations of the study

5.7 Suggestions for Further research

References

Appendix
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 1</strong> Selected Newspapers and their Frequencies in the Data</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 2</strong> Multiple Speech Acts</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 3</strong> Definite Names as Existential Presupposition</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 4</strong> Socio-cultural Specific Lexemes</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX

Lists of Sampled Data

106
ABSTRACT

Advertising has become a norm in the society today as it surrounds us daily. Its importance cannot be overemphasised as it can make or mar a product in the market. In crafting advert messages, language is largely relied on. For best results, copywriters add some form of creativity in their use of language and some features of pragmatics are largely exploited. However, aspects of pragmatics like deixis and the role of context in advertisements, have not received adequate attention in Nigerian print food & beverages advertisements. Thus the aim of the study was to investigate some of these basic pragmatic features and how they are used by copywriters in crafting consumer products’ advertisements in Nigerian Print Media. A total number of eighty food & beverages advertisements selected from four Nigerian daily newspapers namely The Punch, Vanguard, The Nation and Daily Trust, published between 2013 to September 2017 were qualitatively analysed focusing on specific pragmatic features such as speech acts, cooperative principles and implicature, presupposition, deixis, and context. The results showed that copywriters made adequate use of presupposition, deixis, and speech acts as persuasive strategies to coax the target audience to purchase the advertised products thereby fulfilling the goals of advertising. The cooperative maxims however were largely disobeyed because they did not give advertisers room to express themselves to their satisfaction. Copywriters also made use of context-specific lexemes to appeal to target customers mentally and emotionally. Focusing analysis only on the written part of the advertisements was a limitation as pictures may also be used to communicate meaning. It was suggested that advertisements published during festive periods and other types of consumer products’ advertisements should be studied focusing on the same pragmatic features. Amongst others, it was recommended that Advertisers should continue to structure their advertisements based on the socio-cultural context of Nigeria, and they should do so more often as it is also a way of promoting the Nigerian English that reflects our cultural and social values.