

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

=====

Abstract

Advertising takes many forms, but in most of them language is of crucial importance (Vestergaard & Schroder 1985). Language has a powerful influence on people and the way they behave. This fact manifests in many human endeavours including the fields of marketing and advertising. Language is employed in advertising as a means of communicating specific information with the intention of influencing or persuading the consumer. Although visual images and design as well as audio techniques in advertising have a great effect on the consumer; nevertheless, it is language that enables people to identify a product and remember it. The language of advertising is normally very positive and it emphasizes why one product stands out in comparison with another. Commercial information in advertising is designed to entice the reader to explore the product or service being offered in greater detail. Advertising language is a style of immediate impact and rapid persuasion. The current study analyzed the use of the English language in advertisements in the Ghanaian print media. The method of the study was basically qualitative and the analysis of data was based on Fairclough's (1972) three-dimensional model. The study revealed that the English used in advertising in the print media in Ghana is characterized by the use of rhetorical figures, tropes and grammatical items which serve as persuasive elements.

Key Words: Advertising, Language, Communication, Persuasion, Figures of Speech, Print Media, Advertisements.

Introduction

Advertising is a complex form of communication that operates with objectives and strategies leading to various types of impact on consumer thoughts, feelings and actions. Language is employed in advertising as a means of communicating specific information with the

intention of influencing or persuading the consumer. In the Ghanaian print media the language of advertising is the English language. The reference to the language of advertising in the current study is the English language and not the indigenous Ghanaian languages.

The morphological and lexical features in the language of advertising covers a number of items which include the use of descriptive words like adjectives and adverbs and the use of imperative verbs which urge the reader to take action. There are two modal auxiliary verbs which are often used in the language of advertising and these are “will” and “can”. The use of “will” normally evokes the impression of promise and with “can” the consumer is told that the product provides the ability to act. The use of the first and second person pronouns establish a friendly and intimate relationship between the consumer and the advertiser.

Another morphological feature of the language of advertising is the use of pun which is a play on words that deliberately generates an ambiguity between similar-sounding words for humorous or rhetorical effect. The use of pun subjects the language to more than one interpretation. For instance, in the statement “Coke refreshes you like no other can” the advertiser is playing on the word “can”. In one sense, “can” could mean the container in which the drink (Coca-Cola) is stored; in another sense, it could be used as an auxiliary verb (Coke refreshes you like no other drink can refresh you).

The use of pun in the advert has also resulted in semantic ambiguity and this can stimulate the reader’s imagination, and arouse their interest. The language of advertising also makes use of numerals to define the characteristics of a product exactly. Advertisers manipulate numbers to give an exaggerated notion of their gain and a minimize version of their expenditure. There is also the use of technical terms and scientific words which leave a technical and professional impression.

Negative words are often used in advertising to show the uniqueness and unparalleled quality of a product, for instance, “never has a perfume provoked such emotion”. Coined words are also used in advertising. They stimulate the interest of the reader by making them ponder over the meaning of the new word. Coined words make the reader remember and recognize the

product. Foreign words are also used in advertising to emphasize the origin of the product or the exclusiveness in relation to a particular country. For instance, in “La crème de la crème of lip colour”, the French word “crème” evokes the impression of high-class French cosmetics. Another characteristic feature of the language of advertising is the use of sound effect devices such as rhyme, alliteration, rhythm, assonance, onomatopoeia and homophones. These devices are normally used in poetry and in the language of advertising they attract the reader’s attention and they become memorable.

The language of advertising can be analyzed syntactically. A number of syntactic structures form aspects of the language of advertising. Some of these structures are declaratives, interrogatives, exclamatives and imperatives. Another syntactic feature is parallelism which is the presentation of two or more similar ideas in identical structural forms. For instance, in the following text; “Tips for a good night’s sleep: Drink less caffeine, Take warm baths” The parallel clauses express the same idea and have the same structure which begins with an imperative verb followed by a direct object.

The language of advertising is also characterized by repetition of words or group of words to emphasize an idea or image. The semantics of the language of advertising is the ways in which the language conveys meaning. In advertising, a linguistic expression may have both literal and figurative meaning. A word may connote additional meaning and evoke associations.

According to Vestergaard and Schroder (1985), in advertising language the most frequent word for acquisition of product is “get” and not “buy”, because “buy” has some unpleasant connotations, like money (and the parting with it). The language of advertising may contain a trope which is a word, phrase, clause or statement that is used in a way that is different from its usual meaning in order to create a particular mental image or effect. The advertising language that contains a trope becomes a figurative expression. The tropes that are employed in the language of advertising are personification, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, metonymy, synecdoche, antithesis and so forth.

The language of advertising can also be ambiguous. The copywriter can employ the ambiguity device in order to draw the reader's attention to a product. The ambiguous language appeals to the reasoning of the reader and it can have a mnemonic effect. Furthermore, in terms of the semantics of the advertising language, copywriters use proverbs and idioms that many potential consumers are familiar with. These idioms and proverbs are figurative expressions and they paint a mental picture of the products. For instance, in the statement "Challenge us and get yourself a bigger slice of the cake", the idiom "a bigger slice of the cake" means a share of the available money or benefits that one is entitled to.

Harris (1989) asserts that in print advertising, grammatical rules are systematically broken so that maximum persuasive effect is achieved for the product or service. According to Leah (2001), a lot of the texts that are used in advertising do not adhere to some norms that are conventionally adhered to in natural language. However, despite their infringements on these rules of natural language, adverts are still readable, coherent and cohesive and can still be comprehended.

Manipulating language affords the advertiser the opportunity to unlimited means of expression and also to tap into communicative resources that are not available in the day to day functions of language. Advertisers use persuasive techniques like unorthodox use of language to attract consumers' attention as this is unexpected and surprising (Leech, 1966). Harris (1989) explains that advertisers manipulate linguistic forms and structures to undergo certain change and transformation and this has the effect of surprising the audience. This is done with the purpose of providing a means of directing the audiences' attention directly onto the subject and substance of the particular discourse in which the manipulation occurs.

REVIEW OF LITREATURE

In his pioneering and comprehensive study on English in advertising in Great Britain, Leech (1966) analyzed in detail different aspects pertaining to grammar, vocabulary, discourse, and rhetoric of advertising with special reference to television. In the study, simple and colloquial style and vocabulary are connected with readability. Phonological features such as alliteration, rhythm, rhyme and jingle are related to memorable experience while frequent use of imperatives

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

and superlatives are connected with selling power. The unique property of advertising language was closely identified with the use of clauses, phrases and words as minor sentences, which constitute a different kind of grammar called disjunctive grammar. Similarly, Cook (1992) provided a framework for analysis of adverts as a discursive genre. Cook dealt with concepts from discourse analysis and showed how stylistics and linguistics are applied to examine the textual and conceptual features of adverts in a bottom-up approach that allow the identification of their interaction and combinations.

Leetaru (2001) examined samples of the current language patterns of selected readership domains. The researcher used two magazines which were targeted towards an extremely specific viewing audience and which makes use of the jargons, general domain knowledge, and other linguistic elements present in that field. The two magazines were: Entertainment Weekly which is targeted at the public at large and the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG Explorer) which focuses on high technology issues in the field of petroleum geology, as well as general petroleum industry news. The two magazines provided the most dissimilar corpus of advertising text, which demonstrated a marked difference in language use. With the Entertainment Weekly, the tremendous range of shared knowledge and specific language comprehension in such a domain necessitated the use of simplistic language to ensure universal readability. On the other hand, AAPG Explorer is targeted towards a selected group of professionals, all of whom share the common bond of employment in the petroleum industry. It therefore has greater freedom to use industry specific jargon and technical terminology which its readership is assumed to understand. The discrepancies between the two advertisement corpuses definitely seem to be representative of the dialect of each magazine's readership demographics. The shared knowledge and expected language competence of each advertisement's audience contributed heavily to its overall construction.

Nga (2010) is a comparative study on the syntactic and semantic features of linguistic devices used in adverts for persuading buyers in English and Vietnamese. In terms of the semantic features of linguistic devices for persuading prospective buyers used in adverts in English, the following rhetorical devices were realized: pun, simile, metaphor, personification, alliteration, repetition, parallelism and euphemism. The investigator used newspapers, men's magazines and women's magazines. The latter print media brought into the research the issue of gender identity. The research revealed that adverts on daily consumer goods: hygiene, beauty, food and

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

detergents were dominant in the women's magazines while technical equipment adverts dominated the men's magazine. It was also realized in the study that the linguistic devices used in textual adverts categorized into some main semantic fields such as: entertainment, human emotion and relationship, daily consumer goods, technical equipment, service. According to Nga (2010), textual advertising is regarded as the most effective one since it is the best place where advertisers used lively colourful images, and words in convincing customers to use a new product or service. Nga (ibid) is also of the opinion that among the two main components of advertising (images and words) in almost all adverts, words are considered the key component since by them people find it easier to grasp the advertising message. Hence, how to choose words appropriately in an advert can be seen as a very important task in making an effective advert.

In the Ghanaian context, Duah (2007) focused on the discourse strategies that advertisers use and how elements in the target culture are exploited by advertisers to persuade their audience. Using a sample of English and Akan adverts from print (Graphic & Times) and electronic media (Peace FM, Joy FM, Adom FM, Gold FM and Happy FM) in Ghana, the study explores the discourse strategies found in advertisements and how they reflect Ghanaian culture. Duah (2007) examined the following discourse strategies: Language of identity, ideological elements, hedges, personalization, interrogatives, colloquial language, elliptical comparatives, apposition and intertextuality. The study revealed that one of the strategies that advertisers use to persuade their audience is the use of language forms that help them to identify with their audience. According to him, the advertiser uses expressions, address forms and words which are similar to or the same as those used by the audience. By this strategy, the copywriter tries to establish rapport with a certain classes of people in society. This will incite the audience to take interest in the copywriter's message and this will elicit from them, positive responses leading to some future action, like taking a purchasing decision on a product. Duah (2007) also identified ideological elements in the language of advertising in Ghana. According to him, the message associated with a product fits into the value system of the audience. The linguistic symbols employed in adverts need to have significant meaning for the target audience to be able to influence their thoughts and actions. Duah's work also revealed that there is a general conception in Ghana that products from the developed world are superior to those from developing nations. Therefore, if a product is said to have come from the USA, there is a tendency for people to associate the product with attributes like good quality, originality. In this regard, the source of the product alone is enough

motivation for people to prefer that product to other parity products or similar products manufactured in Ghana. The audience believes that goods and services from abroad are of high quality. Such foreign goods evoke a perception that fits into the prevailing cultural reality and maintains a particular pattern of consumption. In Duah (2007), it can be realized that the term personalization is simply the way in which an advert attempts to address the individual, and this is one way by which a conversational tone is created in adverts. As advertising language evolves and one-to-one interaction becomes the only real option for a wide range of advertisers, the message written will be a more personal one, crafted with a desire to present products and services in a friendly and familiar fashion. Thus, to create a conversational tone and strike a personal relationship with the audience, copywriters write as if it is only one person receiving the message. As O'Tool (1985:9) points out, "The only kind of language that can effectively persuade in advertisement is that which is targeted at the consumer as an individual and not just as one of the masses".

Another study on the language of advertising in Ghana is Anim-Ayeko's (2012) analysis of metaphors in the political advertisements of the National Patriotic Party (NPP) and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in three newspapers (Daily Graphic, Daily Guide and The Palaver) in the six-month period leading to the first and second rounds of the December 2008 presidential election in Ghana. From the analysis of an NPP advert, a number of metaphors such as Nana Akufo-Addo is Moses, Ghanaians (under NDC rule in Ghana) are Israelites (under Pharaoh's rule in Egypt), Nana Addo is leader (light) can be realized. This NPP advert is structured by metaphors in the verbal, pictorial and gestural modes. The further analysis of the political advertisements in Anim-Ayeko (2012) revealed that the candidate of the NPP, Nana Akufo-Addo is conferred with the astute leadership qualities of Moses in the Bible and the Ghanaian electorate is compared to the Israelites. The description which equates Nana Addo to Jesus (Nana Addo is light) serves mainly to extol the leadership qualities of Nana Addo. The gesture by the NPP supporters in the advert, depicting forward movement typically means progress. There is the picture of Nana Addo and a massive group of supporters with their arms raised in a gesture. In Anim-Ayeko (2012), another NPP advert expresses gratitude to those who made the first round of voting successful. In the advert Nana's picture is extra large and his features were visible while his supporters formed the background. From the advert, the metaphor "importance is size" is elicited and this shows the value placed on the size of the expression of gratitude. The

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

importance is shown pictorially in the size of the headline font. This metaphor is given further support by the candidate's picture. Thus, this is a multimodal metaphor shown pictorially and linguistically. The placement of the candidate's image above the supporters also elicited the metaphor of importance and leadership. Anim-Ayeko (2012) also discovered metaphors in the NDC adverts she analyzed. The NDC is associated with good things (jobs, lower prices, better health care, selfless leadership, good education, personal safety and prosperity) while the NPP with bad attributes (greed, injustice, armed robbery, failed promises, family government, unsolved murders, corruption and cocaine). The NDC thus used the downplaying persuasive strategy as mentioned in Adamu (2009). In the advert, Ghanaians were shown sitting or standing on the country (Ghana) and they were at a crossroad because it was time for them to choose who would govern them. The description of Ghana as the Berlin wall connotes the perceived suffering and deprivation on one side of the wall while there was luxury and abundance on the other. The reference to the dawn, rising sun, the star and the vehicle connote direction or movement towards a certain goal. From the analysis the metaphors identified include: Politics is decision making, Hope is light, Politics is a journey, Major choices are crossroads. The next NDC advert Anim-Ayeko (2012) analyzed bears the picture of the then NDC candidate John Evans Atta Mills in the traditional multicoloured Kente cloth with a white jumper underneath. Though the outfit of the candidate was ceremonial or official it was interpreted as a type of attire preferred for obituaries.

The current study is also situated in the Ghanaian context. The study is a contribution to the literature on the language of advertising in Ghana. The author's goal is to add his voice to Vestergaard and Schroder (1985), Nga (2010) and others who stress the importance of language in advertising. The linguistic aspect of an advertisement is a key component as it enables prospective consumers or purchasers to grasp the advertising message easily. The language of advertising will contribute immensely to the production of effective advertisements.

Methodology

The qualitative research design was employed in the current study. This research design was appropriate because it offered the investigator a chance to study naturally occurring phenomenon through an analysis of the English used in the print media in Ghana. With the qualitative research design, analysis, description, explanation and interpretation are expressed in

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

non-numerical terms. The qualitative research method was suitable since the advertising texts exhibited different shades of meaning and textual distinctions. According to Neuman (2003: 141) the qualitative method is the most effective approach for “... grasping subtle shades of meaning, for pulling together divergent information, and for switching perspectives”. Researchers who employ the qualitative approach, are more into finding out how people experience their lives and their goal is rather to come to an understanding of issues or phenomena.

Data Analysis and Discussion

The analysis of data was based on the three-dimensional model of Fairclough (1992). According to Fairclough, every instance of language use is a communicative event consisting of three dimensions: First, it is a text (speech, writing, visual image or a combination of these); second, it is a discursive practice which involves the production and consumption of texts; and third, it is a social practice. With Fairclough’s three-dimensional model, the analysis of text is focused on the linguistic features of the processes relating to the production and consumption of the text and the wider social practice to which the communicative event belongs. Furthermore, the textual analysis concentrates on the formal features (such as vocabulary, grammar, syntax and sentence, coherence) from which discourses and genres are realized linguistically. According to Fairclough, it is only through discursive practice – whereby people use language to produce and consume texts – that texts shape and are shaped by social practice. Fairclough’s three-dimensional model provided the analytical framework for the linguistic analysis of the advertising texts selected for the current study. The data for the current study comprise extracts from advertisements in the newspapers in Ghana. The next section is the presentation and analysis of the data from the print media in Ghana.

Text 1: Rhetorical Questions

A rhetorical question is a sentence in the grammatical form of a question which does not request information, demand an answer or invite a reply from the audience, but to achieve a greater expressive force. In advertising the rhetorical question device is employed for a certain effect. Such questions have the answer embedded in them; the answer seems obvious, so this is a very powerful manipulating device. The following is an advert in which the rhetorical device is used.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

THE L 200

SPORTERO AUTOMATIC 4

What do you look for when buying a new pickup?

Value for money and comfort?

Tough and reliable with outstanding mileage per litre?

The highest specification of any double – cab 4 x 4 pickup in Ghana?

(Daily Graphic, June 16, 2014, p. 67)

The advert above contains series of rhetorical questions which involve the audience in thoughtful consideration of the questions. These are questions designed to get the reader to agree with the advertiser. The questions are set in such a way that the expected answer is obvious. In the above advert persuasion is achieved through the asking of rhetorical questions designed to provoke further exploration or generate a certain predicted response.

Text 2: Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a figure of speech that uses deliberate exaggeration to achieve an effect. Hyperbole is the use of overstatement or exaggeration, intentionally, using adjectives and adverbs to achieve emphasis. Hyperbole tells more than the truth about the size, number or degree of something without intending to deceive. In advertising, the hyperbole device is employed for persuasive effect. The following text illustrates this:

The new ATTRAGE exceeding all your expectations

Mitsubishi's new ATTRAGE brings together everything you're looking

for in a compact saloon, from efficiency and comfort to low fuel consumption,

high quality and ample features. But best of all is the price. (Daily Graphic, June

24, 2014, p. 46).

The element of exaggeration in the advert dramatizes the message in order to reinforce it. The introductory phrase *The new Attrage exceeding all your expectations* is an overstatement

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

which is stating the case very strongly, magnifying interest and desire. The other hyperbolic aspect of the advert *Mitsubishi's new Attrage brings together everything you're looking for in a compact saloon* is also trying to persuade by making an exaggerated claim.

Text 3: Imperatives

An imperative is a sentence that gives a command or an order; in other words, an imperative sentence tells or asks someone to do something. In terms of structure the imperative sentence is introduced by an imperative verb which is in the base form. In general, imperatives have no overt grammatical subject; however, the subject is always understood as the second person singular pronoun “you”. Imperatives are used in advertising as they seek to influence the behavior or action of the person addressed. The following adverts illustrate the use of the imperative as an element of persuasion:

1. *Experience*

A unique

Burst of

Flavours

Embrace your individuality and reach out for what you want (Graphic Showbiz, 9-12 Jan, 2014, p. 9)

2. *Enjoy*

A great new

Taste

Fresh new

Look

(Daily Graphic, 16 June, 2014, p. 56)

From the above illustrations the first advert is on Club Minerals while the second is on Stone Lager Beer. Structurally, the two adverts are imperative in form. These imperatives encourage the reader to do something quickly or make them feel as if they have no other choice in forming their opinions. The imperative language is urging the reader to act in an assertive, enterprising and subtle manner. Imperatives are used in advertising and they try to persuade the

reader to acquire a product, consume or use a product or simply draw attention to something. In advertising, imperatives persuade by establishing a one-to-one interaction between the consumer and the advertisement.

Text 4: Alliteration

Alliteration is a poetic device and it refers to the recurrence of the same consonant sounds, often at the beginning of words, in close succession (Abams & Harpham, 2005). Alliteration is a sound effect device in poetry. Poets use the alliteration device to create powerful musical effects and to highlight and emphasize key words, concepts and relationships. In advertising the use of alliteration draws the audience attention to a section of the text and emphasizes it. The following texts illustrate the use of alliteration in advertising:

1. *The All New Skoda Octavia
Bigger, Bolder, Better
(Daily Graphic, August 26, 2014, p. 57)*
2. *Uniquely brewed with the choicest grade rice with no sugar added, the
New Stone Lager is full of flavor. (Daily Graphic, June 16, 2014, p. 56)*

In the first advert, the alliterative words are *bigger, bolder and better*. In these words, the initial consonant sound /b/ is repeated in close succession. These alliterative words are also comparative adjectives and with these two attributes the words attract the reader's attention to the car that has been advertized. With the second advert above, the alliterative words are *full of flavor*. In this example, the consonant sound /f/ is recurrent. The alliterative structure is also complementing the subject *The New Stone Lager*. The alliteration in the second advert, in conjunction with the subject complement function, also draws the consumer's attention to the product. By repeating and playing upon the same consonant, alliteration persuades by adding emphasis and reinforcing meaning.

Text 5: Personification

Personification is a figure of speech that bestows human characteristics or attributes upon anything non-human; from an abstract idea to a physical force, to an inanimate object, to a living

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

organism (Torto, 2010). In other words, in personification non-human entities are referred to as if they were human. In advertising, the personification device is used to draw our attention to what has been personified in the advert. The following adverts illustrate the use of the personification device:

1. *Mateus Rose is a light, fresh, youthful and slightly sparkling wine ideally suited to accompany all life's moment. (Daily Graphic, June 16, 2014, p. 59)*
2. *Born in Africa
And proud of it
(Daily Graphic, September 1, 2014, p. 44)*

In the first advert, the wine Mateus Rose has been personified. By describing the wine as *youthful*, an image of a new brand is created in the reader's mind. The wine is also understood as a person who is capable of rendering service on any occasion. This is because from the advert Mateus Rose is *ideally suited to accompany all life's moment*. The second advert is on the drink Castle Milk Stout (CMS). The new brand on the market is referred to as a human being who was given birth to. The personification of the drink creates a mental picture and this attracts the consumer's attention to it. The second part of the CMS advert *And proud of it* further portrays the drink as a human being who is capable of exhibiting pride which is a human attribute. The personification device employed in the two adverts persuades by painting a picture of the products and this enhances memorization and subsequent purchasing decision.

Text 6: Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which one thing is represented by another that is commonly and often physically associated with it (Murfin & Ray, 1998). Metonymy also involves the use of a single characteristic to identify or represent a more complex entity. There is normally an association between the name used and the thing that it stands for. Examples of metonymy in advertising can be seen below:

1. *The new black, bodily vibrant, passionately committed.*

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 15:12 December 2015

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.

The Language of Advertising in the Ghanaian Print Media

The rich and distinctive attitude of Africa deserves a truly African taste to celebrate with.

(The Mirror, August 29 – September 4, 2014)

2. *There's a flavor for everyone!*

(Graphic Showbiz, January 9-12, 2014, p. 9)

The first advert is on the drink Castle Milk Stout. The product name is not part of the text. It is embossed on a glass filled with the drink (This is a background picture). In the text the phrase *the new black* is representing the name of the drink. There is an association between the name used and the thing it stands for. Another aspect of the advert that explains the new name is the portrayal of the drink as an African beverage because of its dark colour or appearance. An African reader can easily identify themselves with the drink. The second advert is on Club Mineral. The advertiser is using an aspect of the drink that will attract the attention and interest of the consumer to represent the drink itself. The advert contains the drink in bottles and not just the flavours. The latter are a single characteristic or quality that is used to represent the whole drink. Metonymic adverts persuades by attracting the attention of the reader. Such adverts stimulates the thinking and reasoning of the audience and when they unravel the real meaning they are able to remember the product and later take a purchasing decision on it.

Text 7: Repetition

Repetition is a literary device in which words, phrases, clauses, statements, rhetorical questions and so on, are repeated in a literary work. The repetition device gives emphasis and prominence to the idea or information that has been repeated. In advertising, the repetition device is used to reinforce the message and this enhances memorization. The following advert illustrates the use of the repetition device in advertising:

A new Pack for the new black

The new CMS 500

The familiar black, rich and creamy taste, now in a distinctive premium new bottle. And that's the New Black (Daily Graphic, September 1, 2014, p. 41)

From the above advert, the phrase *the new* and the word *black* are repeated. The phrase *The new black* is also given prominence through repetition. The repetition device persuades by drawing the reader's attention to the repeated item or idea. Repetition in advertising also persuades by reinforcing and ensuring that a reader remembers key ideas, words, phrases and so forth.

Conclusion

The kind of English used in the Ghanaian print media is highly persuasive. It is full of rhetorical figures, tropes, ambiguities and sometimes linguistic violations (some language purists frown upon the latter). Paradoxically, one of the strategic ways the language of advertising can be attractive is for it to express new ideas in new ways – including innovations, new creations and coinages even if it means violating the rules governing the language, as long as it achieves its goals through these techniques persuasively. Language has creative characteristics which enable the advertiser to make exciting appeals in the advertisement. Language meant for advertising is very witty, charming and sometimes mysterious. Its objective is to convert an indifferent customer into a potential purchaser. In fact, whatever strategy that advertising employs, language is the main carrier of the message.

References

- Abrams, M. H. & Harpham, G. G. (2005). *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. US: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Adamu, A. (2009). *Language of Advertisement as a Persuasive tool in some Nigerian Newspapers*. Unpublished M.A Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Anim-Ayeko, J. (2012). *Metaphor in Politics: A verbal and non-verbal analysis of selected political advertisements in the Ghanaian print media*. Unpublished MPhil Thesis, University of Ghana, Legon.
- Cook, G. (1992). *The Discourse of Advertising*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Daily Graphic*, August 26, 2014, P. 57.
- Daily Graphic*, June 16, 2014, P. 56.
- Daily Graphic*, June 16, 2014, P. 56.
- Daily Graphic*, June 16, 2014, P. 59.

- Daily Graphic*, June 16, 2014, P. 67.
- Daily Graphic*, June 24, 2014, P. 46.
- Daily Graphic*, September 1, 2014, P. 41.
- Daily Graphic*, September 1, 2014, P. 44.
- Duah, I. (2007). 'Advertising as persuasive Discourse: A Linguistic Analysis of Advertisements in Ghana.' Unpublished Mphil Thesis, University of Cape Coast.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Graphic Showbiz*, January 9-12, 2014, P. 9
- Graphic Showbiz*, June 9-12, 2014, P. 9
- Harris C. A. (1989). *Semiolinguistic Manipulation in Print Advertising*. Unpublished Article. Los Angeles: University of California.
- Leah, S.C. (2001). *Rule-breaking in the language of Advertising*. Linguistics 100/195: Senior Seminar. Linguistics Senior Thesis.
- Leech, G. N. (1966). *English in Advertising in Great Britain*. London: Longman, Green and Co. Ltd.
- Leetaru, H. K. (2001). *Language use in Advertising: An Analysis of Linguistic Features Across Readership Domain*. May 9.
- Murfin, R. & Ray, S. M. (1998). *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*. US: Bedford/St. Martin.
- Neuman, W. L. (2003). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 5th ed. USA: Person Education Inc., p. 141.
- Nga, T. T. V. (2010). *An Investigation into Linguistic Devices for Persuading Product Buyers used in Textual Advertisements in English and Vietnamese*. Unpublished M.A. Thesis in the English language, University of Danang.
- O'Tool, J. (1985). *The Trouble with Advertising*. New York: Times Books, Random House.p.9.
- The Mirror*, August 29 – September 4, 2014
- Torto, T. R. (2010). *General Knowledge of Literature: Introduction to Literary Devices, Terms and Concepts*. Ghana: Nyakod Printing Works, Cape Coast.
- Vestergaard, T. & Schroder, K. (1985). *The language of Advertising*. UK: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Richard T. Torto, M.Phil., B.A. (Hons.), Dip. Ed.
Department of Communication Studies
University of Cape Coast
Cape Coast
Ghana
rchrdtorto@yahoo.co.uk