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THE PERFORMER

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DEPARTMENT OF THE PERFORMING ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN

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Editorial Reflection

The primary *raison d'être* for the establishment of *The Performer*, the official Journal of the Department of the Performing Arts, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria is to deepen scholarship in the tripartite heritage of the African theatre. This heritage is represented by the multi-rhythmic, technophobic and essentially didactic total theatre aesthetics which has three children with one culturally reflective, critically assertive, informative and socially relevant umbilical cord. These children are: Dance, Drama and Music. Thus, an objective evaluation of the previous Volumes of *The Performer* since 1998 to date will show that this Journal has satisfied the artistic and intellectual desires of our contributors and the purpose for its establishment.

Interestingly, the 21st Century scholarship has expanded knowledge and it has made scholars and researchers to embrace interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary fertilisation of ideas beyond their main fortes or areas of academic interests. Thus, silos and artificial walls are literarily and artistically broken down to reflect on the current themes and tendencies of scholarship. Indeed, this present Edition contains Volume 17, 2015 and Volume 18, 2016 with 10 articles respectively, making a total of 20 carefully selected works.

Music and Musicological studies dominate the two Volumes with 7 articles whose theses and trends cover challenges of a career church organist, song aesthetics, political music and revolution, liturgical art music and musicians, popular music and so on. We have 2 relevant articles on film scholarship and the new media, 5 are on pragmatics, sociolinguistics and stylistics and in relation to culture, advertisement, speech acts and performance articulation. The remaining articles are on dance, drama-in-education, theatre management and dramatic theory and criticism. Beyond data presentations, theoretical framings and impressionistic imaginations of the texts and the performatives, all the 20 articles are reflective and critical of their areas and majority of them offer suggestions and recommendations that will continue to advance the course of the Arts in general and humanity in particular. Do not wait too much after reading this brief Editorial, read, and digest our Volumes 17 and 18!

Prof. AbdulRasheed A. Adeoye
Editor

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An Analysis of Deixis in Advertisements in Selected Nigerian Newspapers

By

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and

Monsurat Nurudeen*

Abstract

It is no gainsaying that man uses language to perform different functions that range from interpersonal to transactional, among others. These functions are often implied and to a larger extent, they need to be situated in order to be fully understood. This work sought to uncover how deictic expressions are employed by advertisers to manipulate the buying decisions of their target customer. The pragmatic tool that is employed for contextually showing the relationship between a word and what it stands for, that is, deixis taxonomy identified by Saeed (2009) will be deployed to the Fifteen randomly selected mobile telecommunication and bank adverts from the Punch newspaper. The content analysis of some is presented, while the tabular analysis is provided for the others. The study revealed that the predominant deictic elements used by the encoders of telecommunication and bank advertisements are personal and spatial. The study reveals that their usage is to craftily make the audience personalise the meanings in the advertisements, by reducing the distance between the products advertised and their target consumers. This basically suggests that there is a personal and at times communal common ground between discourse interactants. However, the usage of these deixis is a gimmick to entice their target audience to see themselves as of high value to them.

Keywords: Deixis, Newspaper, Advertisement, Telecommunication, Pragmatics.

Introduction

Language as a tool of communication is often used to sway the belief and opinions of people and a common aspect of human whose primary aim is to do this is advertisement or the act of advertising.

word 'advertiser', which means to turn the mind to. This means the advertising is aimed at appealing to the psychology of people. The advertising is usually subtle appeal to the emotions of people who view an advertisement piece. Kamath adds that the American marketing committee defines it as any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor. In his view, Babatunde (2010, p. 9), opines that advertisements overtly and clearly indicate how the products are of potential benefits to the consumer. So, advertisement therefore provide information as a means to an end, not as end in itself. Babatunde (2007, p. 1), states that the most important aspect of an advertisement is the way meanings are suggested using associations, emotions and drives.

In the stiff and highly saturated market we have in Nigeria today in telecommunication and banking sectors, the use of different pragmatic elements by advertisers is a tactic to turn the mind of their audience to think and act in the way they want them to. This study thus sought to investigate the use of one of the pragmatic principles, as one of the linguistic intricacies used by advert designers in manipulating the buying decisions of those perceiving an advertorial. The study chose telecommunication and bank advertisements because they are one of the commonest and consistent in Punch newspaper, a media outlet that has wide readership and patronage.

Literature Review

The concept of deixis as a pragmatic element is a given fact as it "refers by means of an expression whose interpretation is relative to the (usually) extra linguistic context of the utterance" (Dylgjeri and Kazaz 2013, p. 88). "Deixis", according to Yule (1996, p. 130), is a word derived from Greek which means 'pointing via language'. Saeed (2009, p. 191) opines that the deictic devices in a language commit a speaker to set up a frame of reference around herself. According to him, Pronouns like *I, you, he, etc.* are shorthand devices which need various forms of contextual support. In other words, elements of language that are contextually bound are called deictic. These definitions all suggest that deictic expressions are bound to context and are indexed by speaker who has the floor. They are reference to a person, place or thing and a considerable contextual knowledge and beliefs is usually required to identify the referent and other linguistic and extra linguistic features or facts surrounding such. Thus, contextual knowledge on the usage of these deictic elements is needed for the

in the published text, but described certain propositions as having common ground status.

Later Schaffer in 1968 refers to this same notion as 'mutual belief'. Stalnaker in (2002, p. 701), however relates the notion of Common ground to presupposition. According to him, Common ground is what the speaker has taken to be mutually known by him and his target audience based on what exists in the world. Mey (2008, p. 11) states that although common ground is similar to presupposition, they are not referring to the same thing. He states that Common Ground is a meta-pragmatic element.

Enfield (2002, p. 223) identifies two functions of common ground: informational and socio-affiliational. An informational imperative compels individuals to cooperate with their interactional partners in maintaining common referential understanding, mutually calibrated at each step of interaction's progression. He adds that this aids the economy of expression. This is so because in interaction, not everything is being stated, instead intention and inference are both made on common ground. Affiliation imperative compels interlocutors to maintain a common degree of interpersonal affiliation (trust, commitment, and intimacy), proper to the status of the relationship, and again mutually calibrated at each step of interaction's progression.

Nettle and Dunbar (1997), cited in Enfield (2002, p. 224) identify two levels of common ground:

1. Personal Level: at a personal level, shared experiences between interactants are in Common ground as long as the interactants know (and remember) they were shared.
 2. Cultural Level: at a cultural level common ground may be indicated by signs of ethnic identity, and the common cultural background. Such signs may entail. Nettle and Dunbar (1997) cited in Enfield (2002, p. 224) say such marker is native dialect (as signaled, for example, by accent), a readily detectable and reliable indicator of long history of common social and cultural experience.
- Clark (1994) cited in Saeed (2009), distinguishes between communal common ground for the knowledge shared by members of communities and personal common ground for knowledge two people share from their past experience of each other. Saeed (2010, pp. 201-202) illustrated the importance of common ground in the following conversations:

Spatial

Saeed (2009, p. 191) asserts that every language carries an implicit division of the space around the current speaker: a division of time relative to the act of speaking, and, via pronouns, a shorthand naming system for the participants involved in the talk. Adverbs of location can be used deictically. For example, the adverbs 'here' and 'there' pick out places according to their proximity to the location of the speaker. If the speaker moves, the interpretation of the adverbs will change. Demonstratives work in similar a way. The current speaker occupies the reference point: items closer to her will be described as *this/these*, items further away as *that/those*. While when languages contain such deictic divisions of space, their use has to be calculated by participants in actual contexts.

Temporal Deixis

The word temporal means time, thus, temporal deixis refers to the deictic elements that are used to show or point to time

Person Deixis

A deictic system also grammatically indexes the roles of participants in a discourse: the current speaker, addressee (s) and others. This information is grammaticalised by pronouns: Typically, a first person singular pronoun is used for the speaker, second person pronouns for addressee (s) and minimally a third person category 'neither- speaker -nor- addressee (s)' (Saeed, 2009, p. 196). This type of deixis is used to refer or point to the object(s) or referent(s) in a discourse. The knowledge of common ground can also be used to infer the relationship the person deixis signals between the discourse interactants.

Social Deixis

Social deixis is a type of deixis and they grammaticalise information about social relationship. Saeed (2009, p. 197) explains that the most obvious example is the distinction in many European languages between 'familiar' and 'polite' pronouns, e.g. *tu/vous* in French, *du/sie* in German.

Since, it has been said that contextual pressures on the usage of deictic elements is required for successful communication, it is important that common ground, a pragmatic element that explains the assumptions in the usages of deictic should be reviewed.

The Concept of Common Ground

Stalnaker (2002, p. 701), states that the expression 'Common

knowledge not present in any reasonable dictionary entry for the words *food* or *money*.

A: Come over next week

B: It's Ramadan

If A and B are Muslims then A will infer that B's reply means 'No'.

This paper relies on the insight of communal common ground to identify the stereotypes (communal) that is implicated in the usages of the deictic elements used in telecommunication, bank, and drink advertisements in Nigeria's Punch newspaper. The following subsection was devoted to the content analysis of 11 data and statistical analysis of the fifteen purposively selected data.

Data Analysis

The following is the content analysis of some of the sampled data which is followed by a statistical analysis. The statistical analysis strengthens the findings of the data.

Telecommunication Advert

Datum 1:

... but it can refresh your relationship

The second person (singular or plural) possessive deixis above suggests the encoder of the advert knows each of his target consumer's relationship. The usage of this deixis is aimed at making the advert less formal and more attractive to people. It carries a friendly undertone; and since every customer aims at achieving friendly interactions with the people they relate with, it appeals to their positive faces. This is one of the ploys advertisers use to attract people to their products and it reveals the stereotyping of people as love, attention, and friendly-relationship seekers.

Datum 2:

I get free credit...

When you call me

The first person singular pronoun 'I' and 'me' (nominative and objective) here refer to the female in the ad, while 'you' refers to the male in the ad as well as the target audience. The uses of these direct referents reflect a friendly pre-existing relationship between the participants in the ad and even the target audience; it thus encourages the target audience to call their friends and relations so that the 'free credit' can go round.

Datum 3:

Call that someone on Glo this Valentine season and

deixis one needs a previous knowledge of the persons involved in the discourse.

Datum 4:

Call someone this Valentine's season

Call that special person

The demonstrative pronoun 'this' in the first expression shows that the Valentine season is near. The demonstrative pronoun 'that' is usually said to mean that the referent (the object or person) being referred to is far from the current speaker. However, in the expression above it is used to express a certainty that the target audience have a particular special someone. The information here is based on assumed knowledge about the decoder of the Ad. That is, it has been taken as a known fact that the target audience has someone special that exists in the world that is also known to the encoder of the ad.

Bank Advertisement

Datum 5:

We identify with all Nigerians at home and in the diaspora

We remain committed to our heroes past

The first person plural pronoun 'we' refers to FCMB, while plural possessive pronoun 'our' refers to what is owned by FCMB and Nigerians. These deixis reflect a cordial relationship between the target audience and the bank. These pronouns are employed by the bank to show a presumed oneness of dreams and desires by FCMB and Nigeria.

Datum 6:

Our dedicated call centre

We are happy to answer all your enquiries

The deixis underlined are used to indicate that both the encoder and the decoder of the ad know the people that are being referred to. It presupposes that a previous relationship is in existence between the people the deixis refer to. This is used to make the ad less formal and it thus appeals to the shareholder and customers who will feel that their bank extends friendly relationship to them and has their interest at heart.

Datum 7:

More value for you in Nigeria and across Africa

We are pleased to inform all Ecobank customers....

Call me if you need....

The first person singular pronoun (objective case) 'me' refers to the model, a supposed customer call centre agent (representing other call centre agents), while you refers to the target audience of the ad (customers of First bank). The underlined deixis suggest an existing close relationship between the bank and their target audience.

Datum 9:

A contact centre so versatile, it speaks your mother tongue

Choose a bank that speaks whatever language you speak

The underlined deixis are reference to the audience and their individual languages. These deixis are employed in a way that suggests that there has been a close (former) relationship between the bank and the referents. This is used by the banks to convince the people that they are always in close touch with their customers. This reveals another reason why advertisers or service providers have been stereotyped to be manipulative.

Drink Advertisement

Datum 10:

I know exactly what I want from my drink

So, you can imagine my joy when I discovered La Casera Apple

The person deixis 'I' in the above extract refers to the speaker. When a person refers to himself as 'I' and not his name, it signifies that there has been a previous reference to him and that the hearer knows who the 'I' refers to. The use of both 'I' and 'my' are used here to tell a personal experience. People are always ready to listen to the experience of others, they tend to try or adopt methods or things that work for them. That is, they believe more in results (tested things). This reveals the stereotype of customers (common ground held by encoders of advertisements) as always in need of assurance that that they will get value for their money.

Datum 11:

Whatever is your definition of fun, you will always that your calypso is good in DA MIX

The use of these underlined pronouns appeals to the positive face of

Statistical Analysis and Discussion of Findings

The following table shows the percentage distribution of person deixis in the data analysed for the study. It was closely followed by the discussions of the findings from the data.

Types of Deixis	Numbers	Percentage
First person(subject and object) singular pronouns	6	8.75%
Second person singular or plural pronouns (possessives inclusive)	2	7.5%
First person plural pronoun	4	3.75%
Total	2	00

Table 1: Showing the statistical distribution of person deixis in the data

From the table above, it can be seen that First person plural pronoun had the highest percentage of occurrence. It thus buttress the point made earlier that advertisers try as much as possible to achieve personal communication ground between them and their target audience. Their main aim is to make it seem to each target consumer that they are interested in him or her, reachable and are willing to stay friends with them. Bank advertisers make more use of the first person plural pronoun 'we' more than telecommunications.

Coming next on the table is: Second person singular or plural pronouns (possessives inclusive). It thus buttress the point made earlier that advertisers try as much as possible to achieve personal communication ground between them and their target audience. Their main aim is to make it seem to each target consumer that they are interested in her or him, reachable and are willing to stay friends with them.

Generally, it can be said that the deixis expressions found in the data were employed by advertisers to make customers identify with the product. They built on the stereotype of man as having needs for cordial relationships by using synthetic personalisation to convince individual target audience that the message of the ad is specifically directed to him or her.

Conclusion

analysed. This, thus, proves that deictic are rhetorical strategies that may be used in different domains to serve humanity.

Since, deictic elements are veritable linguistic tools in appealing to the buying decision of people, it is recommended that a close attention should be paid to their implications in political discourses. Also further studies may investigate its relationship with the pragmatic concept of 'reference' in advertisements in order to burrow deeper into the linguistic enquiries on the purpose of elements that indicate and, index relationships between encoders and decoders in a communicative event.