



Rhetorical Analysis of the Persuasiveness of Advertising

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ABSTRACT

The critical analysis of marketing communications argues that the rhetorical elements of advertising – the verbal and visual signs and symbols—manipulate consumers to achieve marketing goals. In fact, this is the dominant practice of advertisers in Africa. Deeper analysis shows, however, that consumers are not simply carried along by mere rhetoric but much depends on how consumers actively “make sense” of the signs and symbols of advertising in the light of the ruling ideology of a culture. This study therefore examines how marketers, advertisers and public relations practitioners can structure advertising with rhetorical power, but also with greater respect for the identity of the consumers.

INTRODUCTION

Advertising, a form of marketing communications has been widely studied as a concept, a discipline and as a profession. In this study, advertising is treated as a form of media content which has potentially affected the field of marketing and consumer behavior.

The practice of advertising in Africa dates back to the 1920s when multinationals opened in-house advertising units to enable them promote their products. Over the past eighty years, advertising like marketing and public relations, has grown from dependence on foreign creative expertise to a fully African industry. Yet, the patterning of its message has been grounded in the linear perspective, thus conflicting with contemporary transactional marketing communications approach on social and relationship marketing. A linear approach is persuasion laden and does not take into consideration the information need nor does it recognize the consumer as a partner in the marketing process.

There is no advertising copy, concept or philosophy which does not have as major preoccupation a persuasive intent with predetermined goal. Advertisements, as contents of advertising should therefore be seen as structures, which function by transforming objects into something which is

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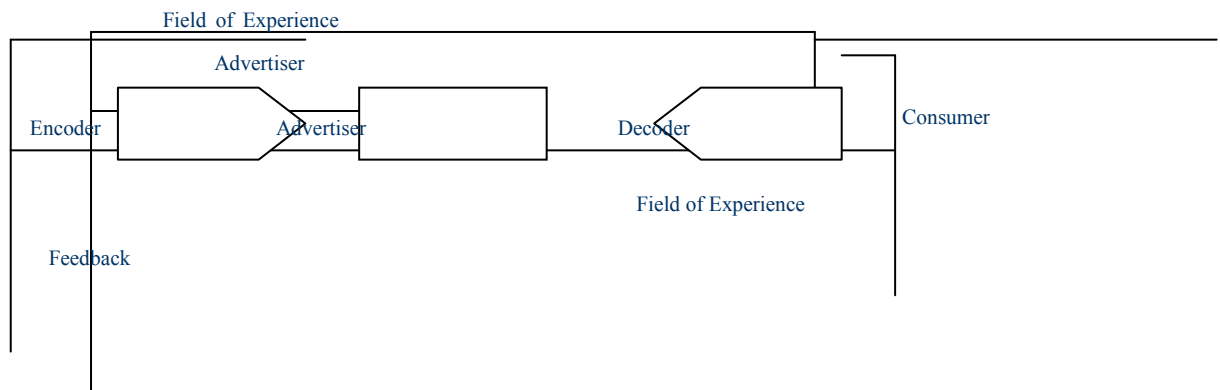
given meaning by people; thus shifting media studies concern from prosocial – antisocial paradigm to rhetorical signification values.

The preoccupation of this study was therefore to analyze the various rhetorical devices employed deliberately or otherwise in advertisements to persuade consumers, so as to establish the signification value in relation to rhetorical standard that would be of mutual benefit to all in the marketing interplay.

SYMBOLS AND SIGNIFICATION IN ADVERTISING: RHETORIC, SEMIOTIC AND IDEOLOGY.

Rhetorical communication as a purposeful and intentional communication art uses symbols significantly rather than force to exert persuasion. A significant symbol generates identical meaning in the source and the receiver. A symbol or sign can only represent the object and tell about it. It is not the object itself. As such, meaning is not in the symbol but in the symbol user. Meaning is not transmitted in communication what we transmit are symbols and signs which evoke meaning. This only happens when the field of experience of both the sender and the receiver overlaps. Dunn et al (1990) model is self explanatory.

Field of Experience {Adopted from Dunn et al [1990. 52]}

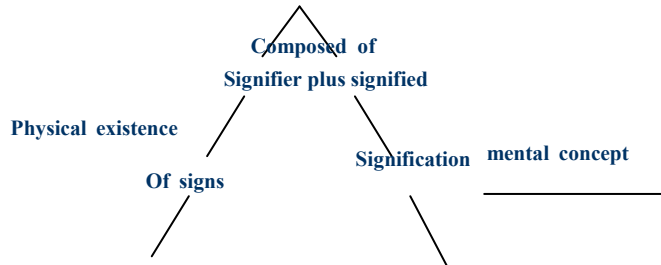


An advertisement regardless the medium, is a collection of signs – words, pictures and sounds. Advertising people are sign manipulators. As Dunn et al (1990:55) observe, “Signs could be manipulated structurally to reduce subjective interpretation or unstructurally to provide subjective interpretation”.

Semiotics sees communication as the generation of meaning in messages. Fiske (1989:42), identifies three ways of understanding semiotics, which is the study of signs and how they operate—the sign itself, the codes and systems into which signs are recognized, and the culture within which signs operate.

Signs we must note are human constructs and can only be understood by those who use them. Semiotically, a sign whether verbal or visual is divided into two parts—the signifier (material vehicle), and the signified (the mental concept). Saussure’s (1974) model of element of meaning explains it further:

Saussure’s Elements of Meaning

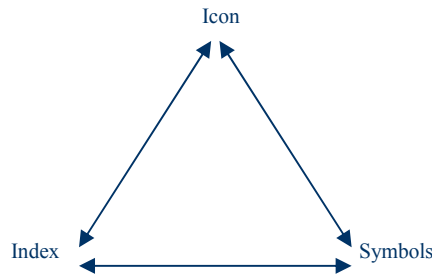


External reality or meaning

Pierce (1931), divided signs into three types: icon – ability of sign to partake in the character of the object, index – being really connected to the object, and symbol—by interpretation that it denotes the object. Advertising language is a system consisting of distinct signs. It is as Dyer (1982) puts it, “a system of differences and opposites which are crucial in the transfer of meaning”.

Pierce’s categories of sign-types

{adopted from Fiske 1989}



Human beings have developed from signs, certain myths and values, which have made them look at others, their belief and values as foreign through ideological practices. It is ideology that determines the meanings, which are found in our interaction with sign and symbols. Ideology is therefore a term used to describe the process of social production of meaning in every culture

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and as such is not static. Advertising therefore borrows from cultural linguistic codes and signs to create some of the most exciting sales messages.

Theoretical Perspectives and Empirical Studies

The theory of structuralism/semiology summarized by Burgelin(1972), shows that a text has its own immanent, intrinsic, more or less objective meaning, apart from the overt intention of the source and selective interpretation of the receiver. “There is nobody, and nothing, outside the message which can supply us with the meaning of one of its elements” (burgelin1972:317). This theory supplies us with an approach for helping to establish the cultural meaning of advertisements and media content. McQuail(2003:187) affirms that “it certainly offers a way of describing content and shed light on those who produce and transmit a set of messages”. The structuralist/semiological theory see the consumer as an active participant agrees with the uses and gratification model and contrast the process models of mass communication. Fiske (1989:43) confirms that in semiotics, the receiver or reader is seen as playing a more active role than in most of the process models. The central and substantive concern as noted by Curran et al (1999:24) has been the systems and processes of signification and representation.

Underneath the theories of rhetoric is the assumption that all intentional communication is persuasive and capable of achieving a predetermined goal; that a good content will ensure effective presentation, and it is not only what you say but how you say it that matters.(McCroskey,1992:30). Dyer (1982:158) observes that “the word rhetoric comes up frequently in the analysis of advertising since it refers to those techniques designed and employed to persuade and impress people”. Psychologists Brown and Herrnstein (1995:63) assert that “motivation tells how behavior is controlled by particular stimuli”. Motives are group into two broad categories: biogenic and psychographic drives (Stanton, 1988:98). A motive is a force, which activates behavior intended to satisfy a need. The objectives of advertising are to: motivate, modify, or reinforce consumer attitude, behavior, perception and beliefs. Bovee and Arens (1998:226) argue that to be successful, advertising people must understand the complexity of human behavior and the variety of influences on behavior.

Let us examine some studies in this area within and outside Africa:

The French critic Durand (1970), carried out the most extensive and systematic exploration of rhetoric in publicity mages from an analysis of advertisements. He constructed a near exhaustive inventory of rhetorical figures used in advertising and concluded that rhetoric brings into play two levels of language: language proper and figurative language. Durand identified in his study two modes of rhetorical figures – the nature of operation and the nature of relations. (This equates Barthes’ (1977) *metabolas* and *parataxes* used in this study).

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Dyer (1982) in a similar approach analyzed 12 advertisements and submits that:” the success of advertising depends not on its logical proposition but on the kind of fantasies it offers. People and objects are taken out of their material context and given new symbolic meanings.

Marquez (1976) carried out a content analysis of 600 advertisements that appeared in six American publications and concluded that 43.3% carried basic information, high persuasion/low information accounted for 22.4% , while high information/low persuasion accounted for 10.2% , with only 1.2% of the sample intimidating readers.

In order to determine the informativeness of Nigerian print advertisements, Okigbo(1990) selected 308 advertisements randomly from the print media. Three from Nigerian newspapers and two international magazines. He developed 18 information cues for the study and 12 product categories. Okigbo concluded that advertisements studied contained various kinds of information a prospect would use to make buying decisions. But, the study did not state how this could be possible.

In another study, Akpan (1994) carried out a semiotic analysis of select Nigerian print advertisements as signifiers of signified ideas about products as reflectors of prevalent ideological appeals. A total of 20 advertisements covering: pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and corporate sectors were analyzed using semiotic criteria in the copy elements. He submitted that those copies reflected elements of the signifier while the signified meanings were found to be limited mainly to the denotative order than the connotative. The study also revealed that professionalism, expertise, romance, love, celebrities, class, glamour and luxurious lifestyles were prevalent ideological appeals.

The Study

Most content studies make use of traditional content analysis because it catalogues the characteristics of a given body of communication content. Rhetorical analysis is mostly antipathetic to quantification as such, the structuralist/semiological method was used. This method is concerned not only with verbal languages but also with any sign system, which has language-like properties. It directs its attention less to the sign system itself than to chosen texts and the meaning of text in the light of the host culture ;(Fiske 1989, Pierce 1931, McQuail 1994&2003).

Design

Structuralism is not quantitative as a way of arriving at significance, since meaning derives from relationship, oppositions and context, rather than from quantity of references. Attention is given to more to latent rather than manifest content. In order to understand the principles of rhetorical analysis based on the structural/semiological method, Barthes proposed a two type classification of rhetorical figures – *metabolas*, based on the substitution of

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one expression for another and parataxes, based on the relationship between elements in a text. These elements are classified by Durand as nature of operation and nature of relations. Besides rhetorical figures, rhetorical canons of delivery, rhetorical proofs and rhetorical signification systems were criteria for structural analysis.

Universe and Sample

The first study period was December 1999-December 2000, and December 2006 and December 2007. This was seen as peak campaign period with less hiatus. A total of 172 copies were recorded. The product categories were: medicine, cosmetics, political, food, non alcoholic beverage, alcoholic beverage- beer and spirit, tobacco, children products and corporate/ financial products. Ten copies were purposely selected based on their dominance in major media of advertising: radio, television, newspapers and magazines, and billboards. They were: Nivaquine(medicine), Obasanjo(political), Delta Soap(cosmetics), Quaker Oats(food), Maltina(non alcoholic) Gulder(beer) Chevalier(spirit) St Moritz(tobacco) Peak Milk(children) First Bank(corporate/financial).

Content Category and Units of Analysis

To successfully analyze the advertisements, the following category systems and their units were used:

Rhetorical Figures: all elements in the advertisements which violates the normal use of language or logic, morality, social rules and physical reality (metabolas and parataxes).

Rhetorical Proofs: Modes of persuasion employed in the copy consisting either in the moral character of the advertiser- ethical; or in the production of certain disposition in the consumer,pathetic; or in the message itself by means of real or apparent demonstration, logical.

Canons of Delivery: The styles of presenting a copy rhetorically; exordium-introduction, partitio-clarity,narratio- self explanatory,confirmatio or probatio-provision of advantages and disadvantages, confutatio or reprehensio-refutatio of negative argument,peroratio-highlighting essential points and , digresio- digressing from the point of argument.

Rhetorical signification: The latent and manifest meaning, which could be generated by a reader from the verbal and visual signs based on first order meaning- denotation or second order meaning- connotation.

Coding Reliability

Coding was based on the pi Index formula of Scott (1955), which unlike Holsti(1969), corrects for the number if categories used and also for the probable frequency of use(Wimmer and Dominick,(1991). Each of the categories coded obtained reliability as follows:

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RHETORICAL FIGURES CATEGORY (METABOLAS)

UA= 4

N=10

%Of observed agreement=75

%Of expected agreement= $(.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2$

=.01+.01+.01+ 01

=.04

Pi = $\frac{.75 - .04}{1 - .04}$

= .71/.96

R = .740

UA – Unit of Analysis

1. N - Number of codes copies

RHETORICAL FIGURES CATEGORY (PARATAXES)

UA=5

N=10

R – Reliability
%of observed agreement= 80%

%of expected agreement=

$(.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2 = .01+.01+.01+.01+.01$

=.05

Pi = $\frac{.80 - .05}{1 - .05}$

= $\frac{.75}{.95}$

R= .789

RHETORICAL PROOF CATEGORY

UA=3

N= 10

%of observed agreement = 67%

%of expected agreement=

$(.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.90)^2 = .01+.01+.81$

=.83

Pi = $\frac{.67 - .83}{1 - .83}$

= $\frac{.16}{.17}$

.16

.17

R=.941

RHETORICAL SIGNIFICATION CATEGORY

UA=3

N=10

%of observed agreement=67%

%of expected agreement=

$(.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2 = .81+.01+.01$

=.83

Pi= $\frac{.67 - .83}{1 - .83}$

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1-.83
 =.16
 .17
 R=.941

CANNON OF DELIVERY CATEGORY

UA = 7

N= 10

% of observed agreement = 85%

% of expected agreement =

$(.100)^2 + (.80)^2 + (.90)^2 + (.80)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2 + (.100)^2$
 =.01 + .64 + .81 + .64 + .01 + .01
 = 213

Pi = % of observed agreement - % of expected agreement
 1-% of expected agreement

= .85-.213

1- .213

=.637

.787

R= .809

The clarification of rhetorical figures is based on Durand's (1970) classification below.

ADDITION EXCHANGE	SUPPRESSION	SUBSTITUTION
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PARATAXES		METABOLAS		
Identity Similarity of form and content Difference Opposition of form and content False homologies Ambiguity paradox	Repetition Rhyme Simile Accumulation Zeugma Antithesis Antanaclasis Paradox	Ellipsis Circumlocution Suspension Dubitation Reticence Tautology Preterition	Hyperbole Allusion Metaphor Metonymy Periphrasis Euphemism Pun Antiphrasis	Inversion Hendiadys Homology Asyndeton Anacoluthon Chiasmus Antimetabole Antilogy

FIGURE OF ADDITION

Conies	Ellipsis	Circumlocution	Suspension	Dubitation	Tautology	Preterit
St. Moritz First Bank Quaker Oats Nivaquine Peak Maltina Delta Gulder Chevalier Obasanjo	• •	•	•			•
		318				

DATA PRESENTATION
FIGURE OF SSUPPRESSION

Copies	Parado	Rhym	Simil	Accumulation	Zeugma	Oxymoro	Anton
St. Moritz	•	•				•	
First Bank		•	•	•			
Quaer		•					
Oats							
Nivaquine		•		•			
Peak		•	•				•
Maltina		•					
Delta		•					
Gulder							
Chevalier							
Obasanjo							

FIGURE OF SUBSTITUTION

Copies	Hyperbo le	Allusi on	Metaph or	Periphra sis	Euphemism	Pun	Antiphras is
St. Moritz			•				
First Bank	•		•				
Quaker			•				
Oats	•		•				
Nivaquine	•		•				
Peak			•				
Maltina	•		•				
Delta							
Gulder							
Chevalier	•		•	•			
Obasanjo							
Obasanjo							

FIGURE OF EXCHANGE

Copies	inversi on	Hendia dys	Homolo gy	Anaculoth on	Asyndet on	Chias mus	Antilo gy	Anti- metabol
St. Moritz								
First	•							
Bank			•	•				•
Quaker				•				
Oats								
Nivaquine								
Peak								
Maltina								
Delta								
Gulder				•				
Chevalier								
Obasanjo								

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FIGURE OF PARATAXES

Copies	Similarity	Opposition	False Homology	Ambiguity	Paradox
St. Moritz	•	•			•
First Bank	•		•	•	
Quaker Oats	•				
Nivaquine	•				
Peak	•				
Maltina					
Delta	•				
Gulder		•			
Chevalier		•			
Obasanjo	-				

Copies	Exordium	Probatio	Digressio	Narratio	Peroratio	Partitio	Reprehensio
St. Moritz	•	•			•		
First Bank		•			•		
Bank	•			•	•	•	
Quaker	•	•		•	•	•	•
Oats	•	•		•	•	•	
Nivaquine	•	•		•	•	•	
Peak	•	•		•	•	•	•
Maltina	•			•	•	•	•
Delta	•			•	•	•	
Gulder	•			•	•	•	
Chevalier							
Obasanjo							

RHETORICAL PROOFS IN THE SELECTED COPIES

Copies	Pathetic	Ethical	LOGICAL PROOFS	
			Artistic Logic	Inartistic Logic
St. Moritz	•		•	•
First Bank		•	•	
Quaker Oats		•	•	
Nivaquine		•	•	•
Peak	•	•	•	•
Maltina	•		•	•
Delta	•	•		•
Gulder	•			
Chevalier		•		
Obasanjo		•		

DISCUSSION

In all the copies, more than one rhetorical figure was used. This confirms Dyer's (1982:179) observation that "you will often find several rhetorical figures in a single advertisement". The dominant rhetorical figure used by the advertisers in the selected copies was metaphor. Fiske (1989: 97) observes that the "visual language that mostly frequently works metaphorically is that used by the advertisers" Repetition, hyperbole, and metonymy have also been used extensively in the selected copies. These figures as used were meant to create emphasis and drive home the sales message. All the figures used have shown the intention of the advertisers to use symbols to persuade consumers to buy their products. Agbakoba (1992: 13) opines that products are clearly portrayed as offering a "bundle of benefits" on the functional and emotional dimensions. As a result:

A deliberate attempt is then made to match product to customer, skillfully, by branding the product and giving it such human attributes desired by customers as warm, reliable, supportive, reasoning, faithful, friendly, protective, pleasant and so on... the persuasion act is obviously on.

In discussing the sweet language of persuasion, Dawson (1992:132) states that "grammar provides us with the essential structures that underlie all languages and thought, rhetoric is the use of that grammar with power and grace". The selected copies have shown through their structural systems the advertiser's intentions in using the various rhetorical figures identified in the study. Dyer (1982: 139) observes that "copywriters are well known for playing with words and manipulating or distorting their everyday meaning; they break rules of language for effect".

The various rhetoric figures used by advertisers either as figures of addition, suppression, substitution, and exchange or as parataxes were not for mere attention catching but to stimulate desire to purchase. Littlechild (1992: 22) warns that, "anyone who tried to persuade others knows that consumer's attention is not simply there for the asking: and attention is only the beginning of the perceptual process which is fully capable of screening out unwanted messages at any stage".

Table VI shows how the ten selected copies used rhetorical proofs pathetic proof was dominantly used in the St. Mortiz, Nivaquine, Peak, Maltina, Delta and Obasanjo copies. Ethical proof was not used in the St. Mortiz, Maltina and Gulder copies. Logical proof at the artistic level was the most used of all proofs. Maltina copy was the only copy, which did not employ this proof. Inartistic logic was dominant in St.Mortiz, Nivaquine, Peak, Maltina, Delta and Gulder.

The Obasanjo copy made use of ethical proof extensively in the provision of information about the candidate, the party logo and signature. But, it is unethical for the copy to have provided no evidence of the claimed achievement of the candidate. Caywood(1992: 58) identifies as unethical advertisement, which tout the great leadership of a candidate without example or any proof.

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The first bank copy showed a good application of ethical proof in its building, signature, logo, year of establishment and corporate history as pragmatic values.

The Nivaquine copy also satisfied the ethical principle through the advertiser's signature and logo. May and Baker is presented as a long-standing name in the pharmaceutical products.

The Chevalier copy used ethical proof as a point of persuasion by depending on its 'foreign root'. Other copies showed an implied ethical proof except the Gulder copy, which did not have any ethical indicator. Accordingly Aristotle (cited in Griffins, 1991: 270) it is not enough for a speech to contain plausible argument. The speaker must seem credible as well. Many audience impressions are formed before the speaker ever begins.

Pathetic proof was dominantly used in the Delta copy. The three main factors of pathos: the attentum, benevolent and docile were used to get attention, build favorable disposition and stimulate product need. Maltina copy was another good application of pathetic proof meant to put the reader in a responsive action. The Peak milk copy used pathos to prepare the children to accept the product as a necessity for growth and good health. Pathos was also used in the Nivaquine copy. Aware of the endemic nature of Malaria in tropical zones like Nigeria, the various brands of the product were presented as pathetic answers to Malaria attack. The first Bank, Quaker Oats, Gulder and Chevalier copies did not really use pathos.

Advertisements depend on emotional and psychological appeals, which are part of pathos. Griffin (1991: 270) says that Aristotle in his rhetorical theory believed that the effective speaker must know how to stir up various emotions in the audience.

The copies selected for the study used Logical proof at artistic and inartistic level.

Copies such as St. Mortiz, Nivaquine, Peak, Maltina and Delta, showed a combination of artistic and inartistic proofs. The Chevalier, First Bank, Quaker Oats and Obasanjo's copies depended solely on the artistic proof using enthymemes, defective syllogism, and circular logic, fallacy, short-circuiting logic and ipse dixit to present their points of persuasion. The Gulder copy shows a total dependence on inartistic proof. Testimonial dominated the creative verbal display of this copy.

Logos operates on the concept of the consumer, as an active participant in the communication process as a rational functional entity. Oliver (1965) observed that the human mind functions at four distinctly different ways: impressionistically, empirically, logically and rhetorically. Logos works on these levels in advertisements to create a favorable disposition towards products. The combination of artistic and inartistic logos and their dominance in the selected copies suggest the tendency of the Nigerian advertisers to concretize persuasion to create sales for their products.

Table VII shows that not all the selected copies used these cannons and for the same purpose. The St. Mortiz copy was the only copy that used the *disgressio* pattern to create the suspense to take readers away from the effect

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of smoking by creating the fantasy of high taste, class and beauty. Nivaquine, Gulder and Delta copies have implied reprehensio to establish product superiority over competing brands. The Gulder advertisement showed the lack of synergy between the verbal rhetoric in the headline and the visual syntagm in the exordium. Although other copies used exordium, the Nivaquine, Delta soap and Obasanjo copies were good example of the application of the exordium principle. Some of the copies strived to use confirmatio or probatio to show product advantage except St Moritz, as seen in the warning, perhaps it is forced to do so by law.

Peroratio was used by all the copies to strengthen their persuasive positions. The St. Moritz and the First Bank's copies showed lack of proper use of partitio. The copies were not self explanatory. As noted earlier in digressio, the intention of the advertiser may be to create suspense. This technique is common with American and European agencies. An assessment of the 1999 television advertisement of Western Europe and United States of America on videotape by this researcher showed that visual digressio was used by western agencies to create suspense. The Nigerian or African reader may not be able to decode this technique. Nzimiro (1992: 9) comments that:

The greatest danger done by advertising is precisely that it incessantly demonstrates the prostitution of men and women who lend their intellect, voices and artistic skills to purposes in which they themselves do not believe and it reaches the emotional meaninglessness of all the creation of the mind image ideas.

How best the advertiser employs the cannons of delivery would determine the effectiveness of his message. The selected copies have shown lapses in the use of these cannons but the fact that they have been incorporated into the copy concept, platform and philosophy would definitely heighten persuasion. For images to be of significant value there must be a relationship between the element in the copy described by the terms, paradigm and syntagm. Fiske (1989: 61) suggests that "we must remember that Saussure insisted that a sign's meaning was determined mainly by its relationship to other signs". Advertisements consist of different signs which are crucial in the transfer of meaning. The copies selected have shown iconic, indexical and symbolic relations in their signs through verbal and visual rhetoric. Apart from the St. Moritz and First Bank's copies, the verbal and visual rhetorical elements of other copies are easy to understand by any reader.

Persuasive synergy is obtained when rhetorical elements in any copy are effectively blended and related to the host culture and ideology. Apart from St. Moritz and Delta Soap's copies, other copies have tried to create images, notions, myths and ideologies not foreign to the Nigerian culture.

The different products' copies studied positioned their products as signifiers of the following signified: social class, quality, taste, social acceptance, belongings, protection, security, motherhood, care, unity and togetherness, merriment and happiness. Persuasive synergy is also effective when the signifying system promote values that are accepted in the host culture.

These significations are dominant at the second order (connotation) except for Obasanjo and Maltina's copies, which indicated the perfect use of

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Barthes' (1977) two order of signification, where the second order (connotation) generates meaning from the first order (denotation) in the value system of the Nigerian culture. Hall (1982: 67) submits in his analysis of ideology that:

Things and events in the real world do not contain or propose their own integral, simple and intrinsic meaning, which is then merely transferred through language. Meaning is a social production, a practice. The world has to be made to mean. Language and symbolization are the means by which meaning is produced.

Because advertising language and symbolization systems through its rhetorical techniques create images of ideology in order to generate meanings, Dyer (1982: 187) warns that, "it is important to be aware not just of the content, but of the structure of signs in ads." This is necessary because the combination of elements and their relevance in generating meaning determine the level of the text's persuasive synergy. Woollacott (1982: 95) asserts that "the internal relationships of any structure are therefore, what gives meaning to any element in the structure". This means that when a text lacks persuasive synergy of its verbal and visual rhetorical elements, relational meaning will not be generated and persuasion will be low in value in relation to predetermined goal. This factor could be responsible for the failure of most advertisements to move the consumer through a gradient response process to purchase action.

Generally, advertising language is informal and colloquial; but some the copies contained conventional sensuous and high class language used to attract attention, persuade or create fantasy.

Most of the copies avoided monologue technique in their testimonials, thus moving away from the impressionistic approach, perhaps because monologue technique is more suggestive than persuasive.

The mood and rhythm of the copies were persuasion specific, with low information.

The signification values of the copies were dominated structurally by connotative signified of the signifiers. The paradigmatic and syntagmatic elements were of significant metaphorical and metonym values, which generated meaning at the second order signification than first order.

The dominant cultural ideologies in the copies were: taste, class, health, security, innovation, belongingness, care, luxury, merriment, wealth and unity.

CONCLUSION

The strength of the rhetorical elements is no doubt to heighten persuasion. But as media content, it is important to be aware of the advertising messages in terms of their content, structure of signs, rhetorical devices and values, the way meaning is exploited and exchanged, and the way the signifier and signified work within the referent system and prevalent ideology to sell products.

To the marketer, the realization and acceptance of the fact that the African consumer as come of age and is a partner and a reader who hates being talked down to should help him package marketing communications to encourage social and relationship marketing.

It is therefore time for the public relations consultant, the advertising professional and the marketer to come together to build sales messages, which rhetoric will build bond of relationship and a consumer culture based on mutual respect ;for what people buy is not just products but satisfaction.

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