



GSJ: Volume 11, Issue 3, March 2023, Online: ISSN 2320-9186
www.globalscientificjournal.com

ANALYZING MODES OF COMMUNICATION AND IDEOLOGIES IN TELEVISION ADVERTS: THE CASE OF MTN TV ADVERT “ETO’O PEUT”.

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims at examining how the modes of communication in TV advertisements interact to communicate the message to the consumer and bring out the hidden ideologies. These modes of communication which are: language, visuals, music and sound and paralinguistic elements are often seen and studied as semiotic resources. Very few look at it from a communication angle that is, how they are used to pass the advertising message to the consumer and even the ideologies present in the advert. Some studies have equally looked at each of these modes individually forgetting that in a TV advert, they automatically interact and share the message. This study is undertaken within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) drawing from Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MMDA) which provide methodological tools which are applied in the analysis of the TV advert “Eto’o Peut”. The data of this study consists of the linguistic, visuals, music and sound and non-verbal elements obtained from the advert. This paper shows that trying to get the meaning of the advertising message without considering the modes of communication is a delusion and that each of these modes contribute to pass an ideology. This is because as this study shows, in each of the modes

of communication, there is a level of the message but also some ideologies which is put across in a subtle manner and which may not be easily identified and so failing to look at each and their interaction leads to a partial understanding of the advert. The interaction of these modes of communication makes it easy to identify the ideologies prone in the advert.

1- Introduction

Communication is the process of transmitting a message by a sender to a receiver through a specific medium or different media. Therefore, for communication to be complete, the decoder must be able to interpret the message. To arrive at that, the encoder must ensure that the message is accurately communicated, using appropriate tools that will not hinder interpretation and thereby produce an unwanted response to the message. Advertising as a medium, communicates specific messages which is mostly about the product being advertised. In order to transmit the message and enable the consumer to interpret it appropriately, the sender has to use the various modes of communication available through the medium used. So, since it is a TV advertising, the sender will have to use the different modes of communication present in a TV advert which are language, visuals, sound and music and non-verbal communication modes. These various modes are not put in the TV advert accidentally, they are put for a precise purpose with the aim of helping the consumer to construe the meaning of the advert. To arrive at that then, the modes interact. This interaction, Cook (2001) states that, it is vital for the interpretation of the message without which the meaning of the TV advert.

In advertising two people are involved: the producer or advertiser and the consumer. In this form of communication, the communication is one-way type, that is, there is just one person doing all the talking who is the producer and the other is the consumer who is passive. So, each of the modes of communication used should be able to affect the emotions of the consumer to have a positive response but also draw his attention and persuade him to react to the advert.

In this activity, for the advertiser to persuade the consumer, audience or viewer, the advertiser designs his advert putting psychological, social, political, economic, cultural, environmental and linguistic contexts in the setting of the advert. The advertiser uses the advert to make a representation of the viewer's world or an illusory world. That is, the ideological

perception of some aspects of life. The advertiser will then use all kinds of strategies to create an identity between him and the consumer. To arrive at this, the advertiser will use powerful devices from the various modes of communication to ensure that their consumers can identify with them through the positive images and the perception of life they present. This leads to the analysis of the modes of communication, with the aim of demonstrating how the message is communicated and equally how the hidden ideologies are brought about.

2- Literature review

Bouvier and Machin's (2013) work is based on the use of sound and music to communicate ideas, values and identity by advertisers using the Multimodal discourse Analysis under which the Social Semiotic approach. This approach they adopted, draws on the linguistic work of Halliday (1978) and Kress (2010) and is been successfully employed to other modes of communication such as images Kress and Leeuwen, 1996, multimedia (Baldry and Thibault, 2006); three dimensional objects (O'Toole, 1994), to sound and music (Van Leeuwen, 1999) and to popular music (Machin, 2010). They used the qualitative method and purposive sampling technique in data collection and analysis. As findings, the new Peugeot is targeted at a woman with several children. Rather, the internal world of the woman that is; what she thinks and her attitudes, as well as her appearance and the settings where she appears that are utilized to load the car with its brand meaning. This is done through images, through words and through sounds. The music and sounds according to them, contribute to creativity and space to think and place her identity as a person who has the space to think but, in a way, where she is confident enough and capable of being intimate with us. The music and sounds are delicate and lively yet with a chilling promise, delivered as the car appears in the final scene.

The work of Stefano Cara (2017) on the Power of Music: a multimodal critical discourse analysis of music in audiovisual advertising is intended to present a new methodological approach for the critical analysis of musical discourse in audiovisual advertising. She investigates the social meanings communicated by musical discourse in audiovisual advertising with different types of targets. She uses the Critical Discourse Studies pioneered by Wodak, Van Dijk and Fairclough. Her intention is to merge contributions from social and cognitive studies in linguistic investigation, to reach a wider view on the correlation between languages, powers and ideology. It should be noted that, CDA has as objective of study linguistic texts such as newspapers, articles, textbooks, speeches, etc. This approach was enriched especially by the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen, who considers that meaning, is not only communicated through language but also through many other semiotic modes. It gave rise to Multimodal

Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA). This branch investigates the material resources of human communication as well as the way their usage is socially regulated (van Leeuwen, 2005). She used the qualitative methodological approach to the study of musical discourse in audiovisual was used. The analysis showed that music serves as a brand narrative and sometimes it participates in the process of persuading consumers by means of its semiotic modes. The results were as follows: that the tendency in YouTube commercials of women's and men's perfumes is to use exclusively original recordings or incidental music as soundtracks. She came to realize that it is difficult to unambiguously interpret such trend and that the absence of any other typology of advertising music in the corpus (e.g. Jingle Ad song or cover version) could only be explained by analyzing a more extended number of commercials for fashion products or comparing them with different market segments. The results showed that explicitly giving a voice to female characters in the audiovisual narration is not considered necessary by advertisers for the purpose of effective persuasion; therefore, they are more likely to let music speak for women.

3- Statement of the Problem

Research on TV advertising concentrates mostly on either the linguistic aspects or the visual aspects. From the research carried out, they rarely present both to my knowledge, that is, none have looked into studying the different modes of communication used in TV adverts to transmit the message and ideologies as well in order to understand its meaning. Whereas in TV adverts the message as well as the meaning is distributed unevenly among the various modes of communication and therefore failure to consider it that way leads to a partial understanding of the advert. The trending is that most research look at the structural aspects of some of the semiotic resources used, still very few look at the functional aspect whereas each of the modes or means of communication are not used and structured the way it is unwittingly. What trends in most researches on TV adverts is the fact that, the message as well as the meaning are mostly seen from the linguistic and visual modes of communication, neglecting the other modes of communication equally present in the TV ads. Thus, the message and ideologies are derived not just from two modes of communication disregarding the others which also carry part of the message. This study questions this irregularity with the objective of demonstrating the importance of considering the other modes of communication to get the message clearly but to also bring out the hidden ideologies.

4- Theoretical Framework

This paper is undertaken within the framework of Critical discourse analysis abbreviated CDA which draws from the Multimodal Discourse Analysis. MMDA is concerned with the analysis of both written/verbal and visual texts as modes of communication (O'Halloran, 2011). Therefore, looking into specific elements such as contact, social distance, linguistic elements, pitch, rhythm, sound qualities dress code and tone enables us to show how they interact to help the consumer get the meaning.

In a TV advert, the modes of communication include visuals, verbal, sound and music, as well as non-verbal elements. This approach then helps to demonstrate how the different semiotic resources considered as modes of communication interact among themselves. This article, uses this approach due to the fact that it combines almost all the semiotic resources to communicate the message and disclose the ideologies present in the TV advert. The analysis of contact and social distance will be interpreted following Kress and Leeuwen's visual grammar, language from Halliday's Systemic Functional language and Music and sound from the social semiotic of Halliday.

The distribution of the message to the different modes of communication in an advert makes in such a way that the meaning of the message of the advert, can be clearly understood but one can also identify the hidden ideologies put across. This is because each of the communication modes carry a certain degree of the message and at the same time its meaning. So each of the modes of communication from the most salient to the less salient communicates in one way or the other. Cook (2001) states that the meaning of each of these means of communication cannot be gotten only by looking at them in isolation. It must be analysed in relation to the other modes because each of these modes overlaps with each other, in the sense that language can be sung and this is the case of this advert.

5- Methodology (*Data Choice and Justification*)

This paper makes use of qualitative research design and analyses MTN TV advertisement 'Eto'o Peut' translated as 'Eto'o Can'. The rationale from the choice of this MTN TV advert was due to the presence of the various modes of communication. Due to a checklist the TV advert was watched and the different modes of communication identified and analysed in line with the selected theory. The analyses considered discourses as verbal communication, contact and social distance as visual communication, dressing style and tone as non-verbal

communication and the pitch, rhythm and sound qualities as “musical” communication. All these elements were examined as the communicative components of a TV advertisement.

6- Data analysis and Discussion

Eto’o advert used in this study portrays the different modes of communication where each carries a degree of the message and how from these modes of communication ideologies are conveyed.

One of the ways MTN has seen to draw the attention of their consumers to their TV adverts on internet services *linguistically* is through naming, the use of lexical items such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. In the TV ads, this is done to arouse the interest of the consumers to the internet service which according to what they say it is abnormally fast and there is the possibility to do whatever you want to do. In the description of the internet service, MTN is trying to portray a lifestyle that will obviously attract the youths who are the main target here. Since, Eto’o is a known public figure admired by the youths, they use him as the main protagonist for the youths to continue to dream to be like him but also to do the things he does. One of the linguistic choices is the noun phrase ‘*Eto’o Peut*’ translated ‘*Eto’o Can*’. There is the use of adjectives such as ‘*amazing, pretty, fast, impossible*’, verbs such as ‘*can, do, make*’ adverbs (abnormally). MTN’s use of the vocabulary in this advert is positive, familiar. For example, the images shown come to sustain what is said linguistically. Part of the lyrics says: “he makes the impossible an easy task” and this is sustained as he is shown doing something really impossible to do and with no stress. He is carrying two people on a bike, kicking pineapples and browsing on his phone. When looking at his facial expression, he is smiling and there is no presence of wrinkles due to the fact that he shows no sign of his face being frowned out of doing something very strenuous. The music too, especially the sound quality particularly the plainness of the voice which implies that he is unaffected also accentuate the linguistic message of the advert.

In the interaction of the modes of communication seen above, the idea the advertiser is trying to build and put in the minds of the consumer is that of strength. This idea is portrayed by the words such as “impossible”, “amazing”, “can”, “do” and “make”. The advertiser addresses himself to the youths because, it is at this stage of life that power is mostly seen and used. It is at this very stage of life that they like to show that nothing is impossible to do and they are seen trying hard and difficult this just to show that they have strength. So the advertiser agrees with them by making them to see that just like Eto’o they have the strength to do

whatever they want to as they want to. He equally makes them believe that if Eto'o can, then they too can do.

Music and sound are used by the advertisers to communicate ideas, attitudes, values and identities (Bouvier and Machin, 2013). Each of the aspects of music have a potential meaning which indicates an idea, attitude, value and identity about the service advertised. In the advert 'Eto'o Can' there is a number of music and sound elements used such as tension and plain in sound qualities, rhythm and pitch meaning. The sound qualities found in this advert is that of tension versus relaxed and plain. The voice of the male singer is relaxed and at the same time plain but that of the music is tensed. According to Van Leeuwen (1999) a tensed music connotes energy, therefore, since the music in the advert is tensed it connotes energy and the relaxed and plain voice implies nature, innocence and faith. Rhythm in Bouvier and Machin (2013) is either even or uneven as well as fast or slow. So the rhythm of the music in the advert is even and at the same time slow. This indicates ease, relaxation and lightness. That of pitch meaning is accentuated mostly on the pitch movement which shows that the music is static and this implies unchanging. Visually the energy reflected from the tensed music is demonstrated as Eto'o is shown doing several things at the time. The gesture of the hand also reflects energy or strength in the sense that, the hand lifted up indicates a sign of strength and energy.

The lexemes attached to internet connection advertised by MTN from music and sounds are words such as relaxation, energy, ease, innocence and lightness. These characteristics of the internet connection is mostly directed to the younger generation since they do have a lot of energy as compared to the older generation whose strength is fading away due to old age. Since the younger generation have a lot of energy to give out, they are therefore able to do several things at the time, especially things that give them pleasure. This can be seen as Eto'o is presented doing three things at the time and even more: he is kicking pineapples, holding a bike with two people on top and most importantly browsing by texting and twitting, skypeing and bipping. One of the factors that shows that this advert is concentrating on the youths, is the fact that, the advertiser provokes them to compete with Eto'o to see if they can do the same as him by saying this: "*if Eto'o can do it, then so can you*". This implies that, the idea put across by the advertiser to the consumer is the idea of competition. Life in a sense is a life of competition to know who is best at what than the other. They are equally trying to portray the idea that with the internet connection everything becomes easy to achieve or to get. What was difficult to get, with the internet connection it has become so easy to acquire as it is said in the lyrics of the song of the advert "*he makes the impossible an easy task*". MTN advertisers indirectly are trying

to bet that their internet connection service is better than that of the other mobile telephone companies. The use of phrases such as “while surfing the internet abnormally fast, crazy, crazy fast internet” turns to show that their internet is faster than the others.

In *visual communication*, one of the ways used to address viewers directly or indirectly is through *contact*. Contact is constituted of two kinds of image acts: demands and offers. Demand has to do with the demand of particular goods and services and it takes place when the represented participant looks directly at the viewer and what is demanded depends exclusively on how the look is conveyed. This demand is realised through the use of gaze which indicates a form of direct or indirect statement to the viewer. Gaze usually takes the form of a vector which is formed by the glance of one or more of the animate represented participants outwards to the viewer of the visual which is most often supported by a gesture (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996). Offers have no contact made between the participant and the viewer. At this point, the viewer is the subject of the look and the represented participant is the object the viewer looks at. This makes that the represented participants is being offered as an item of information, object contemplation.

In the advert under this study, the contact fluctuates between visual demands and offers. *Visual demands* occurs when towards the end of the advert Eto’o Fils gazes directly at the viewer with a smile and makes a gesture with his phone towards the direction of the viewer. In doing this he establishes a contact between him and the viewer, which is a sort of relation because the represented participant Eto’o Fils shows the viewer the image of him he searched on Facebook. This is seen in the images below



Plate 1: images showing visuals demands

Visual offer is seen from the beginning of the advert where the whole body of the Star Eto’o is being presented but the represented participant who is Eto’o does not look directly at

the viewer. As the advert continues, he is shown as an object of contemplation as he is shown doing several things at the time. As it can be seen below



Plate 2: images showing visual offers

In the interaction of the different modes of communication at this level brings out another idea directed to the youths and which is that of presenting life as being easy. The lyrics of the song of the advert talks of Eto’o making the impossible an easy task, the musical notes of the music are made of 3 simple notes and this brings us back to the idea of ease which is portrayed throughout the advert. The dress he wears is simple reflecting the idea of ease. The advertiser’s aim is to offer to the youths everything that is simple and easy, things that will not complicate their lives. So, MTN offers them this opportunity with the advert Eto’o Can where chatting, skyping becomes something very easy and stress free.

Social distance is another means of communication in *visual communication* which builds an imaginary relation between the represented participant and the viewer. They can be portrayed as friends or as strangers. It is equally used to establish or show the respect for authorities in face to face interaction or even on television. This relation therefore is portrayed or presented through the size of frames. These size of frames goes from extreme close up to medium long shot.

The size of frames can be used to convey a sense to the viewer of his or her social closeness in relation to the represented participant (op.cit 124) in Micheal O’Toole (2011). These social relations are realised by the varying size of frame that goes from very close-ups shots to long or distance shots as presented below.

Frame Size	Characteristics	Social Relation
Extreme close up	Face and head	Intimate distance
Close up	Head and shoulders	Personal distance
Medium close shot	Cuts approximately at the waist	Far personal distance

Medium shot	At the level of knees	Close social distance
Medium long shot	Shows full figure	Social distance



Plate 3: images showing the social distances between Eto’o and viewer

In the advert Eto’o Can, Samuel Eto’o Fils is presented as a very close friend to the viewer as he is presented from the head and gradually taking his distances as the size of frames becomes longer and stops at the medium long shot which shows a social relation with the viewer. This implies that the advertiser consider that Eto’o is intimate since he is loved and admired by many especially the younger generation but also must be respected viewing or looking at his social status. This is also reflected in the lyrics of the song which says: “*this guy Eto’o is amazing..., if Eto’o can do it, then so can you*”. The rhythm of the music also plays a role in emphasizing the kind of relationship between the viewer and the represented participant. This is shown by the fact that the rhythm is slow and even.

Paralinguistic communication is part of the various modes of communication and some of them fall under non-verbal or paralinguistic communication. This form of communication deals with the act of communication with the entire body. David Abercrombie (1968) says, "We speak with our vocal organs, but we converse with our entire bodies. Paralinguistic phenomena occur alongside spoken language, interact with it, and produce together with it a total system of communication. The study of paralinguistic behaviour is part of the study of conversation: the conversational use of spoken language cannot be properly understood unless paralinguistic elements are taken into account". As an important component of communication, it can either enhance or alter the meaning of verbal communication. Its features are so important because they can completely change the message in the sense that they are cues, which are intentionally used to express real thoughts and emotions alongside the verbal message.

One of the first elements used to communicate is the **tone** which represents the quality of sound. The tone of a voice according to Mehrabian (2013) in Tameh (2016), is responsible for about 35-40 percent of the message sent. Tone includes the volume used, the level and type of emotion that is communicated and the emphasis laid on the words chosen. The tone used in the MTN's advert Eto'o Can is that of jovial. This joviality is seen from the lyrics as follows:

Look at those people and the man with the knife,

Just wishing they could be amazing at life,

tatatara tatarata.

Just wishing they could be amazing at life

Tatataratatarata) 2x

Texting and twitting, skyping and bipping

Crazy, crazy fast internet)2x

Ta ta ta ra ta ta ra ta

The images also contribute in emphasizing on this joviality as he is shown shaking his body left to right and at the same time smiling. Life is stressful especially nowadays, where things have changed for the worst and so when the advertiser uses such a tone, to present their internet services, they are presenting illusionary ideas in the sense that a real normal human being cannot carry a bike with two fat people on top of it with a finger and he does not have a fracture.

The producer tries or wants to bring the consumer who is also the observer to trivialize the hardness of life, demonstrating that the human being can do anything if he wants. He still gives the idea that, the impossible can become possible. In the sense that Eto'o is able to carry

with his finger two people on a motorcycle. He invokes a strong and serene state of mind. The youth is the future of tomorrow

Dress Code is another paralinguistic form of communication. Dressing is able to speak, that is, communicate a particular message with the person with whom the wearer is interacting with. For example, the kind of dress a lady wears when being invited by a man sends a message to the man either to woo him or show her indifference. From someone's dressing, the person can communicate his or her social class, its identity and even the image the person wants to be seen from.



Plate 4: images showing the dress code of Eto'o fils in the advert

In the advert under the study, the advertiser uses the dress code to equally communicate to the consumer. The idea the advertiser communicates then is the idea of simplicity and from the dress code, it is clear that it is addressed to the youths. Eto'o in the advert is wear a brown trouser with a white t-shirt and sneakers as seen below. His dressing is not just simple but is equally the type a youth will easily wear and this makes in such a way that the youth will effortlessly identify himself with Eto'o Fils who is a model for them. The youths need a model that they can emulate.

7- Conclusion

This paper sought to investigate the interaction of the various means of communication to transmit the message and bring about the hidden ideologies. Despite the fact that it is necessary and important to consider the other means of communication apart from language and images to get the message and meaning in the advert, researchers and advertising agencies still concentrate only on the language or only on the visuals or go to the extent of considering both. Very few have come to understand that not taking into account the other means of communication which are also vital for the comprehension of advertising as a text is erroneous. Each of them has a specific way to pass across the message and give the meaning. So, if the

consumer is unable to understand a specific mode, he can easily understand the other because each of them are passing along the same message and meaning but in different manners. The interaction of the modes of communication reveal hidden ideologies the advertiser is trying to pass across in such a way that the consumer should identify with the service advertised but it is a means for the advertiser to direct the consumer how to consume their services and in what domains.

8- Funding

This paper received no internal or external funding.

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ATANGA Lem Lilian and NGU Nkwah Bertrand (2019) critical discourse studies of Mobile Telecommunication Network Advertisements of 'Eto'o peut' in Cameroon. *Global Scientific Journals*. Vol 7, Issue 6, ISSN 2320-9186, 255-285.